

Rubens's Legacy in Book Design

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In his lifetime Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640) was world-famous: his works were sought-after and omnipresent at the courts of Europe. The printed reproductions and painted copies of his religious paintings, although created in the spirit of the Counter-Reformation, found their way into households and churches of all denominations. Rubens painted portraits, powerful allegories, pictures of mythological and historical content and towards the end of his life even genre scenes and landscapes. He provided designs for tapestries, for sculptures, architectural decorations, for gold- and silversmith's work, but also for book illustrations and title-pages.

Rubens' contribution to the development of book design was first systematically investigated in 1977.¹ Since then, the art-historical study of the book illustrations and title pages Rubens produced during his career has yielded numerous new insights.² Nevertheless, the preoccupation with his book illustrations and title-pages, generally recognized as significant, has not yet received the attention it deserves. Evidence of the outstanding importance of Rubens' innovations in the field of book design is provided by the numerous copies of his title pages and illustrations, but above all by the broad reception of his pictorial inventions. In contrast to Rubens's own works, these title designs in his succession have hardly been investigated.

The quantity of books with title pages inspired by Rubens is so large that a complete overview cannot be provided here. Therefore, I will mainly focus on works ascribed to Rubens until the 20th century or those that were created in his immediate succession. A comparison with works that can be attributed to Rubens with more certainty can and should clarify what was still seen as a typical Rubens title page long after his death. Indeed, some of these attributions were made long before the systematic analysis of written sources began and

- 1 Judson J.R. – Van de Velde C., *Book Illustrations and Title-pages*, Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard, XXI, 2 vols. (Brussels – London – Philadelphia: 1978); Held J.S. (ed.), *Rubens and the Book: Title Pages by Peter Paul Rubens*, exh. cat., Chapin Library (Williamstown: 1977).
- 2 Bertram G., *Peter Paul Rubens as a Designer of Title Pages. Title Page Production and Design in the Beginning of the Seventeenth Century* (Heidelberg: 2018); Bertram G. – Büttner N., *Sinnbild / Bildsinn. Rubens als Buchkünstler* (Stuttgart: 2018); Imhof D., *Balthasar Moretus and the Passion of Publishing*, exh. cat., Museum Plantin-Moretus (Antwerp: 2018).

are based on aesthetic similarities.³ Rubens' own works, which were mainly produced for the Antwerp publishing house *Officina Plantiniana*, were prepared by drawings or oil sketches, some of which have been preserved to this day. The payments the artist received for his work were recorded in the ledgers of the publishing house of Balthasar Moretus (1574–1641), which also survived. The attribution of the partly unsigned title pages is thus based on a wide range of sources. At the same time, they show that the transition from Rubens to his successors can almost be called fluid. This applies both to the formal principles of design, which will be examined in the first part of this essay, and to the demanding concepts of content, which will be discussed in the second part.

The seamless transition from Rubens to his successors is shown, for example, by the title page of a book by the Spanish Augustinian monk Bartholomeo de los Rios y Alarcon (1580–1652).⁴ [Fig. 11.1]

The confessor of Archduchess Isabella, who worked as a priest at the Brussels court between 1624 and 1641, had written several anonymous pamphlets and books of the Blessed Virgin Mary. His writing culminated in the six-volume treatise *De Hierarchia Mariana*, in which he described Mary's superiority over all creatures (I) and her authority and dominion (II). Moreover, he argues for solemn surrender to holy slavery (III), propagates the virtues and the rule of life of the slaves of Mary (IV), describes the privileges granted to Mary by the Trinity (V) and proclaims the excellence of the name of Mary (VI). De los Rios was one of the most important propagandists of the 'Mancipium Mariae' ('the slavery/a slave of Mary'), a Marian devotion that went as far as self-sacrifice. In his book, he instrumentalised this devotion politically, in that the victory of the Habsburg troops in Kallo in June 1638, north of Antwerp, was interpreted in terms of Catholic propaganda. The genesis of this title page is well documented, because the publisher, the engraver and the author exchanged numerous letters. They provide a detailed insight into the production process. The letters show both the demands on the designing artist and the artistic liberties he could take. Above all, however, it is obvious that all decisions concerning form and content were in the hands of the publisher.

The Brussels resident author de los Rios y Alarcon wanted his work to be exclusively decorated and had already asked the Antwerp publisher Moretus in

3 See Basan François, *Catalogue des estampes gravées d'après P.P. Rubens, avec une méthode pour blanchir les estampes les plus rousses, & en ôter les taches d'huile. Nouvelle édition, corrigée, considérablement augmentée, & précédée de la vie de Rubens. Troisième partie faisant suite au dictionnaire des graveurs anciens & modernes* (Paris, Junior Dessain: 1767) 167–168.

4 Judson – Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages* 324–326, no. 80; Bertram – Büttner, *Sinnbild/Bildsinn* 1 172–173, no. 50; Imhof, *Balthasar Moretus and the Passion of Publishing* 57–58.



FIGURE 11.1 Cornelis Galle II after Erasmus Quellinus II, title page for de los Rios y Alarcon Bartholomeo, *De Hierarchia Mariana* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1640). Engraving, 28.3 × 18.3 cm
PRIVATE COLLECTION

February 1638, 'D. Rubenium de titulo delineando commonefacere, vt tempus sit sculptoribus laminam praeparandi' ('to remind M. Rubens to design the title, so that the engravers have time to prepare the plate').⁵ Obviously Rubens did not immediately start work after that, because on 7 May 1638 the author again contacted the publisher with the same request. This time the author added a description of the requested image and the motifs that seemed central to him.⁶ The image should show the Virgin Mary as central figure, 'Regem Hispaniae se et regna sua singula signatè expressa auxilio vel suasu Ordinis D. Augustini caelorum Reginae, imperiali coronâ redimitae, compedita mancipii obsequio offerre, Regibus omnibus idem faciendi exemplum dare, seu viam modumque ostendere' ('the King of Spain, with the aid of the Augustine order, offers himself and his dominions to the Virgin. By doing this, he is setting an example for all other monarchs').⁷ After this second request, Rubens seems to have gone to work and produced a design. Unfortunately, this first draft is only documented by the correspondence of the engraver Cornelis Galle II (1615–1678), also living in Brussels, with the publisher Balthasar Moretus. On 9 March 1639 the publisher expressed the wish to see this drawing before Galle set to work.⁸ The engraver then informed Moretus on 18 March that he did 'heb die noch niet maer P. Rios seijt dat Rubbens die heeft voor hem gemaect (want hy heeft die gesien), ende bidt v.L. die aan Rubbens te willen eijschen ende dan hier oversenden' ('not have it yet, but Father Rios says that Rubens has made it for him, because he has seen it, and he begs Your Lordship to demand it from Rubens and send it over here').⁹ At the time, the design by Rubens was thus neither in the hands of the author nor the engraver, and does not appear to have been in a form that Galle could have worked with. On 11 April 1639 Moretus wrote that 'Den titel van P. Bartholomeus de los Rios, heeft myn heer Rubens geinventeert; E. Quellinus sal die teeckenen, ende daer naer sal aen v.L. gesonden worden' ('Rubens has invented the title of Father Bartholomeus de los Rios; E. Quellinus will draw it and afterwards it will be sent to you').¹⁰

5 De los Rios to Moretus, 23 February 1638, in Judson – Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages* II 417.

6 De los Rios to Moretus, 7 May 1638, *ibidem*, II 417.

7 *Ibidem*, II 417.

8 Moretus to Cornelis Galle, 9 March 1639, *ibidem*, II 391–392.

9 Cornelis Galle to Moretus, 18 March 1639, *ibidem*, II 392.

10 Moretus to Cornelis Galle, 11 April 1639, *ibidem*, II 392.

Rubens had apparently left the execution of the drawing to his assistant Erasmus Quellinus (1584–1640) and, as later noted on the engraving, limited himself to the ‘invention’ of the composition.¹¹

This invention may have had a visual form which Bartholomeus de los Rios saw and found to be good as described above. The drawn design for the copper engraving was completed on April 18th and was rewarded with 24 guilders,¹² the payment of which Quellinus confirmed on 25 May 1639.¹³ The drawing was sent to Galle on 8 May 1639.¹⁴ On 15 May he reported to Moretus that the drawing made by Quellinus pleased him but was rejected by the author, to whom Galle attributed a lack of artistic sense: ‘doch hij en verstaet die const niet, en is daer in onverstandich’ (‘however, he does not understand this art and is not knowledgeable about it’).¹⁵ The publisher nevertheless contacted the author on 18 May, to whom he expressed his own dissatisfaction with this drawing: ‘Mihi displicent mancipia humi sedentia, manibus et pedibus vincti: malim genu flectentia et Dominam Virginem adorantia. Nescio quid R.V. mandarit et in quem finem’ (‘I do not like the slaves sitting on the ground, with their hands and feet bound; I would prefer them kneeling and adoring the Virgin Lady. I do not know what Your Reverence will order and to what purpose’).¹⁶ De los Rios, for whom the project was obviously very important, agreed in his reply to travel to Antwerp himself and explain his ‘tune pictori mentem meam, quae toto caelo, quam mancipiorum delineatio, alia est, explicabo’ (‘thoughts to the painter, which are entirely different as regards the drawing of the slaves’).¹⁷ Sometime after 25 May 1639, when Moretus wrote a letter expressing his satisfaction with this proposal, the changes requested by the author and publisher were made.¹⁸ This intervention can be seen in the drawing by Quellinus [Fig. 11.2]:¹⁹ the scene on the base of the pedestal was pasted over with a piece of paper now showing the composition later engraved in copper. The artist

11 Erasmus Quellinus II after Peter Paul Rubens, title page for: De los Rios y Alarcon, *De Hierarchia Mariana*, Bister, 191 × 294 mm; Antwerpen, Museum Plantin-Moretus, Inv. no. MPM.TEK.401. Judson – Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages* I 324–326, no. 80; De Nave F. (ed.), *The Illustration of Books Published by the Moretuses*, exh. cat., Museum Plantin Moretus (Antwerp: 1997), 121–123.

12 Judson – Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages* II 505, no. 10.

13 Ibidem, II 490, no. 128.

14 Moretus to Cornelis Galle, 8 May 1639, ibidem, II 392.

15 Cornelis Galle to Moretus, 15 March 1639, ibidem, II 393.

16 Moretus to De los Rios, 18 May 1639, ibidem, II 418.

17 De los Rios to Moretus, 23 May 1639, ibidem, II 418.

18 Ibidem, II 491, no. 129.

19 Judson – Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages* I 324–326, no. 80; De Nave, *Moretuses* 121–123.



FIGURE 11.2 Erasmus Quellinus II after Peter Paul Rubens, title page for de los Ríos y Alarcon Bartholomeo, *De Hierarchia Mariana* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1640). Bister, 29.4 × 19.1 cm ANTWERPEN, MUSEUM PLANTIN-MORETUS, INV. NO. MPM.TEK.40

thereby implemented what Moretus had already suggested in his letter to the author. The drawing thus altered was sent to Brussels and engraved between 12 February and 31 May 1640 by Galle, who was paid 55 guilders.²⁰ A further four and a half guilders were paid to a certain Peter Verbiest on 30 October of this year for engraving the letters of the title page.²¹

The story of this title page is as instructive for the great attention paid to the title illustration by the publisher and author as it is for a form of intellectual authorship increasingly practiced by the ailing Rubens in the last years of his life. It was above all Erasmus Quellinus who was entrusted with the realisation of concepts developed by Rubens, such as, for example, the title page for Moretus' 1640 edition of the work by Bishop Luitprand of Cremona (c. 920–972). The title page again proclaims Galle as engraver, Quellinus as draughtsman and Rubens as inventor.²²

In this case, no indications of any kind of design by Rubens have been found. Preserved, however, is the drawing by Quellinus, which technically and stylistically corresponds to the drawing for the title page of *De Hierarchia Mariana*.²³

The same applies to the title page of Hubert Goltzius' *Icones imperatorum Romanorum*, which was drawn by Erasmus Quellinus as early as 1637 and of which the printing-plate, completed in 1638, was not printed and published until 1645.²⁴ Again, Rubens is indicated as the inventor of the composition, and here, again, the hand of Quellinus is evident in the drawing.²⁵

The intellectual authorship of Rubens, here attested by the inscription of the engraving alone, was something that was important for the publisher to point out. The three works attributed to Rubens as the intellectual author are very similar in their compositional arrangement. They all show very lifelike figures on an architectural stage, embodying allegorical allusions to the content of the books.

The central figure on the title page of *De Hierarchia Mariana* is Our Lady, venerated by the emperor kneeling on the right. Genii hovering around him are carrying the handcuffs of the 'Slaves of Mary'. On the opposite side stands

20 Cornelis Galle to Moretus, 12 February 1640, Judson – Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages* II 395; payment receipt dated 31 May 1640, *ibidem*, II 492, no. 134.

21 Payment receipt dated 30 October 1640, *ibidem*, II 492, no. 135.

22 See Judson – Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages* I 319–324, no. 78–79; Bertram – Büttner, *Sinnbild – Bildsinn* 166–169, no. 48.

23 See Judson – Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages* I 319–324, no. 78–79.

24 Judson – Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages* I 340–343, no. 83; De Nave, *Moretuses* 67.

25 Judson – Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages* I 340–343, no. 83; Bertram – Büttner, *Sinnbild / Bildsinn* 182–183, no. 53.

an Augustinian monk with a flaming heart in his hand. This title page is characterised by a high mimetic quality achieved by graphic means. It shows the same liveliness that also characterises the title page to the works of Luitprand, which is also composed around a central figure on a pedestal [Fig. 11.3]. Here it is the figure of *Historia*, enthroned centrally on a pedestal framed by two trees that symbolise the growth of spiritual and secular power and strength, writing into a book. Both trees are being decorated with the chains of *Successio*: to the left it is the chain of the secular rulers, to the right the chain of the Popes. Mercury, as patron of diplomacy, is putting a banner to the left tree and a female personification, which can be interpreted as *Vetustas*, the personified Age, or the *Successio papalis*, is tying the knot on the right chain.²⁶ As in *De Hierarchia Mariana*, a bas-relief forms a kind of visual footnote to the main motif. While in the case of *De Hierarchia Mariana* it is the veneration of the Virgin Mary practiced by kneeling representatives of the clerical and secular classes, in Luitprandus' *Opera* it is Europe abducted by a bull thus referring to the history of Europe.

The composition is directly comparable to the title of Goltzius' *Icones imperatorum Romanorum* [Fig. 11.4], published only five years after Rubens' death. Once again, the central figure is enthroned on a pedestal, in this case it is the first Roman emperor, Julius Caesar. To his right stands the first Christian emperor Constantine, to his left the first Habsburg emperor Rudolph I. Unlike his laurel-wreathed ancient predecessors, the latter wears the imperial crown. These imperial figures correspond to a type that Rubens developed for the so-called Portico of the Emperors as part of his designs for the *Pompa Introitus Ferdinandi*, the Joyous Entry of the new Habsburg governor Cardinal-Infante Ferdinand into Antwerp.²⁷ Again, the emperors are figures of high mimetic quality, acting in a centrally arranged architectural setting. A directly comparable arrangement is also to be found on the title page of the Commentary and Interpretation of Ovid's *Fasti*, which was engraved by Jacobus Neeffs (1604–1667) after a design by Quellinus in 1639.²⁸ [Fig. 11.5]

On the printed title page there is no written reference to Rubens.²⁹ The compositional arrangement of the sheet with Caesar on the right and Romulus on the left of the drum-shaped pedestal obviously has its prototype in Rubens' design for Goltzius' *Icones Imperatorum*. However, Quellinus not only borrowed

26 Bertram – Büttner, *Sinnbild / Bildsinn* 167.

27 Judson – Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages* I 61.

28 Jacobus Neeffs after Erasmus Quellinus II. Engraving, 28.5 × 18.5 cm. Title page for Neapolis Carolus, *Anaptyxis ad fastos P. Ovidii Nasonis*.

29 Rooses M., *L'Oeuvre de P.P. Rubens. Histoire et description de ses tableaux et dessins*, 5 vols. (Antwerp: 1886–1892; reprint 1977) V 107–108 (as: not by Rubens).



FIGURE 11.3 Cornelis Galle II after a design by Erasmus Quellinus II, title page for Luitprand of Cremona, *Opera* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1640). Engraving, 27.6 × 18.0 cm
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FIGURE 11.4 Erasmus Quellinus II after an idea by Peter Paul Rubens, title page for Goltzius Hubertus, *Icones imperatorum Romanorum* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1645). Bister, 31.0 × 21.3 cm
ANTWERP, MUSEUM PLANTIN-MORETUS, INV. NO. MPM.TEK.398

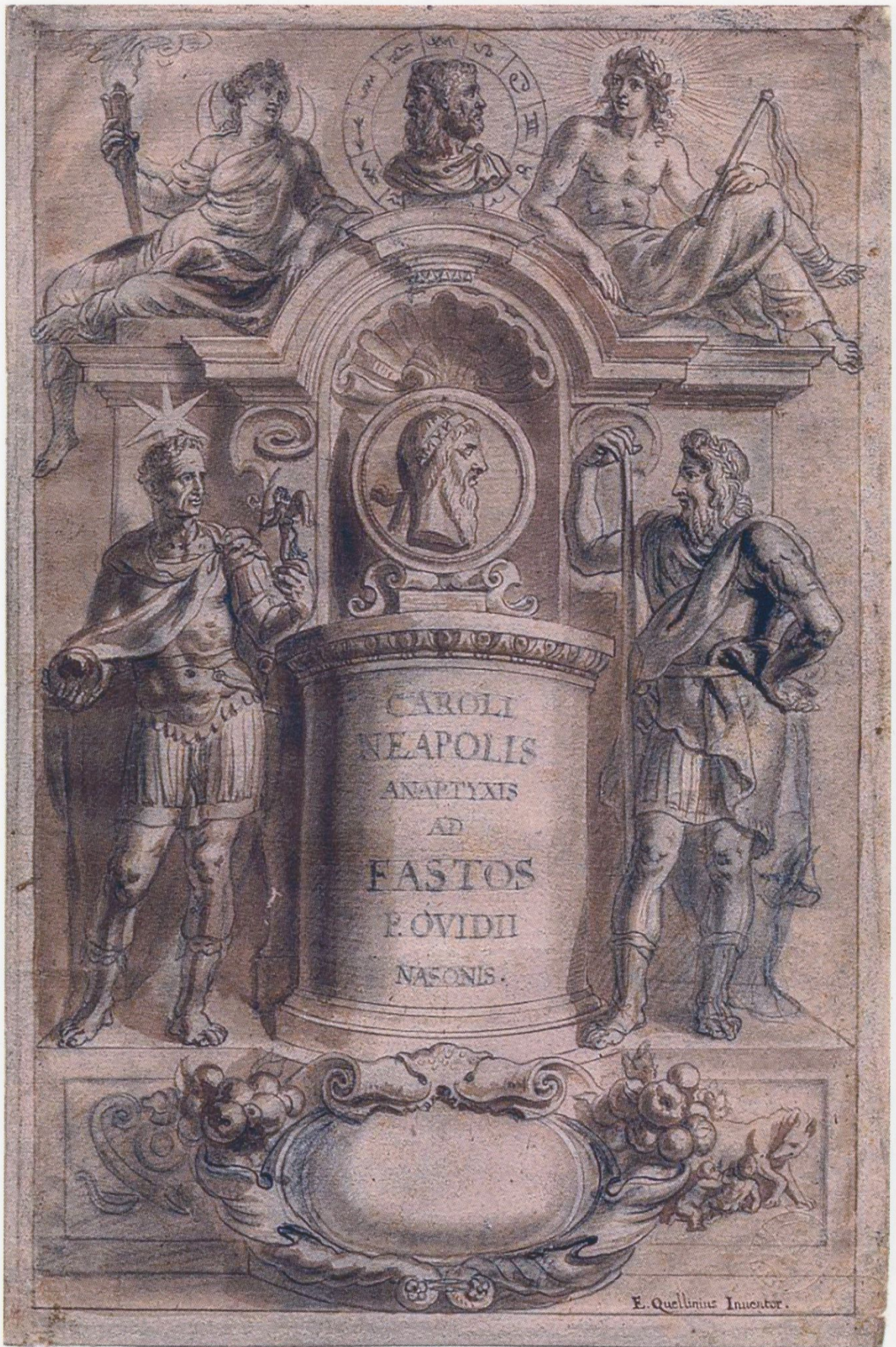


FIGURE 11.5 Erasmus Quellinus II, title page of *Neapolis Carolus, Anaptyxis ad fastos P. Ovidii Nasonis* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1639). Bister, 31.0 × 21.3 cm
ANTWERP, MUSEUM PLANTIN-MORETUS, INV. NO. MPM.TEK.398

the entire layout with the enthroned ancient type by Rubens, but also the lively looking figures flanking the pedestal. They correspond to the type designed by Rubens for the Portico of the Emperors. The entire invention appears as a pastiche of different details from Rubens' designs such as the title pages to Justus Lipsius' (1547–1606) *Opera Omnia*, François van Haer's (1554/5–1631) *Annales Ducum Brabantiae*, and François Tristan's (1601–1655) *La Peinture de la Sérénissime Princesse*.³⁰ Despite this apparent stylistic proximity, this title page was never ascribed to Rubens, probably because the pastiche character is all too obvious.

Another title page, which looks 'Rubensian' in style and which was also designed by Quellinus without the master's intervention, was produced in 1638 for the edition of Pope Pius v's letters compiled by François Goubau (1611–1647).³¹ According to the account books of the *Officina Plantiniana*, on 25 May 1638 Quellinus was given 24 guilders for designing the title page of Goubau's book.³²

According to these ledgers the drawing was engraved by Cornelis Galle I, for which he was paid 30 guilders on 3 September 1639.³³ The design of the title page for this book published in 1640 is apparently derived from Rubens' design for the title page of Goltzius' *Romanae et Graecae Antiquitatis Monumenta*.³⁴ It is the same dynamic grouping of the figures, ascending and descending around a central pedestal. In addition, the figure types used by Quellinus are apparently also based on Rubens and find a correspondence in the *Generale Kerckelycke Historie*.³⁵ The way the portrait of the Pope is presented is reminiscent of the heads designed by Rubens on the title pages of Lipsius' *Opera Omnia* and the *Pompa Introitus Ferdinandi*.³⁶ Goubau's book is already listed in the catalogue of Rubens' prints published by Robert Hecquet (1693–1775)

30 Judson – Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages* I 61.

31 Cornelis Galle I after Erasmus Quellinus II, title page for Goubau Franciscus, *Apostolicarum Pii quinti pont. max. epistolarum libri quinque* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1640). Engraving, 19.0 × 13.4 cm.; Voorhelm Schreevoogt C.G., *Catalogue des estampes gravées d'après P.P. Rubens, avec l'indication des collections où se trouvent les tableaux et les gravures* (Haarlem: 1873) 193, no. 5 (as: Rubens); Rooses, *L'Oeuvre de P.P. Rubens* v 81–82, no. 1274 (as: Quellinus).

32 Judson – Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages* II 505–506.

33 Rooses, *L'Oeuvre de P.P. Rubens* v 81–82.

34 Bertram – Büttner, *Sinnbild / Bildsinn* 180, no. 52.

35 Ibidem, 112, no. 26.

36 Judson – Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages* I no. 73, fig. 246; no. 81, fig. 273; Bertram – Büttner, *Sinnbild / Bildsinn* 174.

in 1751.³⁷ The engraving is also listed in the catalogue by François Basan (1723–1797), who based his work on Hecquet's catalogue.³⁸ Basan already knew that by far not all book title designs attributed to Rubens were actually designed by him. He warned his readers at the beginning of the part of his catalogue dedicated to the title pages, 'that there are several attributed to Rubens without any foundation. If I have included them in this Catalogue, it is only to make concessions to certain curious people who are warned of the contrary: I have distinguished them, as I usually do, by the letter D'. (J'avertis d'ailleurs qu'il y en a plusieurs d'attribuées sans aucun fondement a Rubens. Si je les ai insérées dans ce Catalogue, c'est uniquement par complaisance pour certains Curieux prévenus du contraire: je les ai distinguées, comme à mon ordinaire, par la lettre D').³⁹

Basan did not mark the title page to Goubau's book with the letter *D*. He probably considered it an indisputable part of Rubens' oeuvre. Likewise, Carl Gottfried Voorhelm Schneevoogt (1802–1877) had no doubts about Rubens' authorship and in 1873 included the title page in his *Catalogue des estampes gravées d'après P.P. Rubens*.⁴⁰ It was Max Rooses (1839–1914) who was the first to publish this title page as an invention of Erasmus Quellinus on the basis of the sources he carefully studied and analysed.⁴¹ He rightly removed this sheet from Rubens' oeuvre and attributed it to Quellinus alone. The surviving drawing [Fig. 11.6] clearly shows the draughtsmanship of Quellinus and can be easily compared with the other sheets mentioned, including those which are considered to be intellectually designed by Rubens. The use of pen and brush, the colours used and the overall effect resulting from the interplay of the drawings' technical structure, composition and design can be easily compared. The later transformation into engravings and the uniformity of lines sought by the engravers makes it impossible to attribute those title pages where the drawing is not preserved, that preceded the execution of the engraving. In the documented cases the engraver never followed his own invention. And while the drawn designs reveal the handwriting of the executing artist, the engravers' aim was not to create their own stylistic expression. In the case of the Galle family it is often hardly possible to decide whether an engraving was made by

37 Hecquet Robert, *Catalogue des estampes gravées d'après Rubens: auquel on a joint l'oeuvre de Jordaens et celle de Visscher; avec un secret pour blanchir les Estampes et en ôter les taches d'huile* (Paris, Charles-Antoine Jombert – Antoine-Claude Briasson: 1751) 96, no. 5.

38 Basan, *Catalogue* 169, no. 5.

39 Ibidem, 167–168.

40 Voorhelm Schneevoogt, *Catalogue* 193, no. 5.

41 Rooses, *L'Oeuvre de P.P. Rubens* v 81–82, no. 1274.

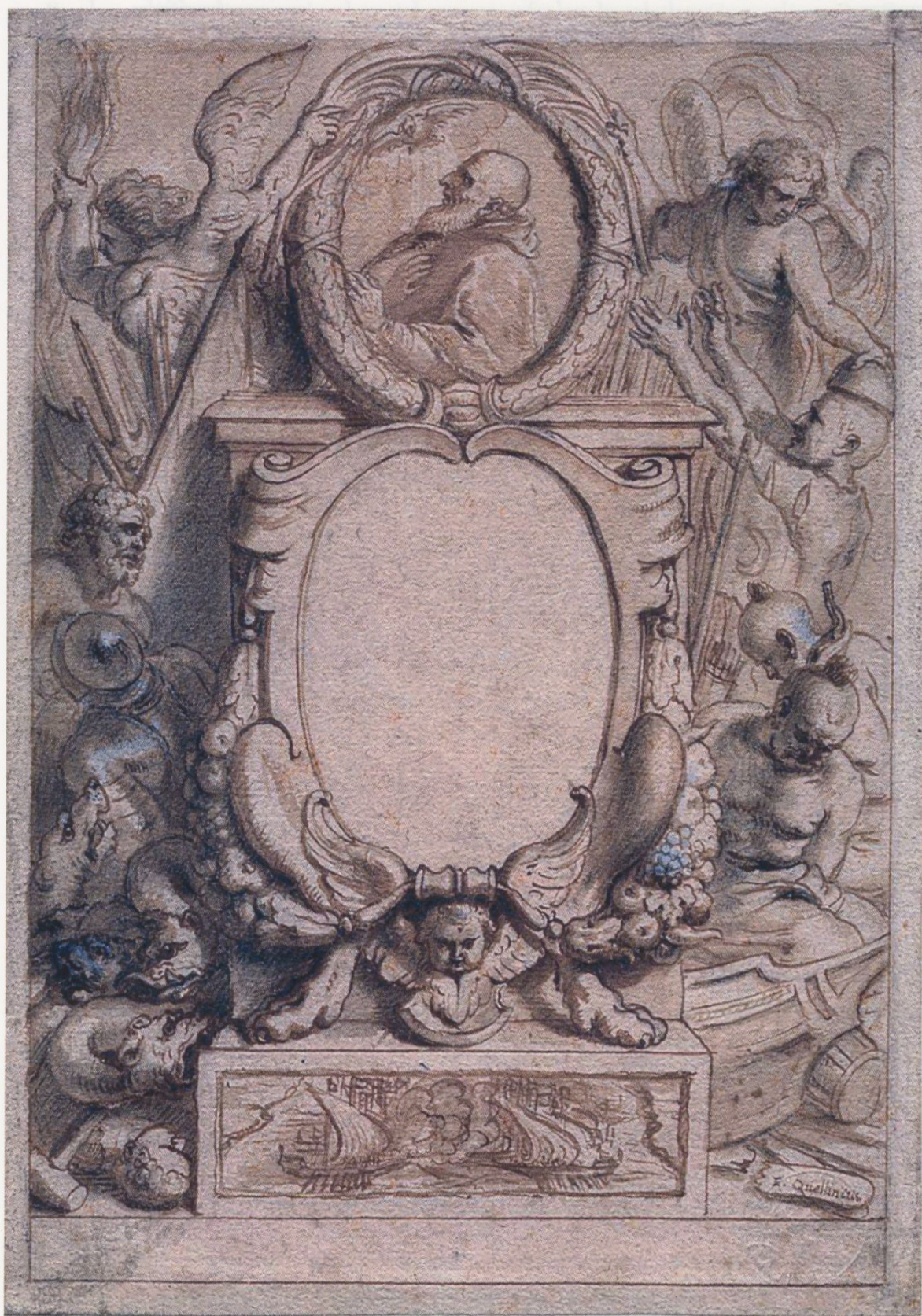


FIGURE 11.6 Erasmus Quellinus II, title page for Goubau Franciscus, *Apostolicarum Pii quinti pont. max. epistolarum libri quinque* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1640). Bister, 20.2 × 14.2 cm

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FIGURE 11.7 Cornelis Galle (possibly after Jacques Francquart), title page for Curtius Cornelius, *Virorum illustrium ex ordine Eremitarum S. Augustini Elogia* (Antwerp, Joannes Cnobbaert: 1636). Engraving, 18.4 × 12.9 cm
 PRIVATE COLLECTION

father or son, because the precise technique of engraving makes the individual style of the engraver invisible.⁴²

42 Büttner N., *Allegories and Subjects from Literature*, Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard XII (London – Turnhout: 2018) I 366.

Such a difficult case is the title page of the book by Cornelius De Corte (1590–1638), *Virorum illustrium ex ordine Eremitarum S. Augustini Elogia*, published in 1636 by the Antwerp publisher Jan Cnobbaert (1590–1637).⁴³ [Fig. 11.7]

No preliminary drawing has survived, nor is there any documentary evidence that could provide information about the title page and the illustrations of this small book, which contains the biographies of important members of the Augustinian Order and their portraits. The title page, engraved by father or son Galle, is very close to Rubens' oeuvre in its clear architectural structure and the lively figures, but without a concrete model. The imaginative architectural stage modifies the one Rubens had developed for the *Annales Sacri* of 1620, which already features putti sitting on volutes.⁴⁴ The Hermathena motif designed here as a Janus head is also found in the printer's mark of Jan van Meurs (1583–1652).⁴⁵ Rubens is also recalled by the way in which the lifelike figures seem to move beyond the boundaries of the pictorial space. Rubens first practiced this creative concept in the title page of Giacomo Bosio's (1544–1624) *Crux Triumphans*, published in 1617.⁴⁶ The composition of the *Virorum illustrium* title-page in general seems like a pastiche of Rubens' design concepts. Moreover, also the allegorical references to the contents of the book are indebted to Rubens' use of references to ancient numismatics and classical art.

The title page, which is designed as an architectural monument, shows two female figures next to the central title block. Their antique garments and their attributes present them as allegorical personifications. In the context of this book, the woman on the left, writing in a book, can be interpreted as *Memoria*, embodying memory and remembrance. The woman on the right is wearing a helmet while holding in her hand a gladius, the Roman short sword. She can be interpreted as *Virtus*, the personification of virtue often depicted on ancient coins.⁴⁷ The motif of the *Hermathena* also has ancient roots. Although it was not depicted in the ancient world, it was described by Cicero as an appropriate decoration for an academy.⁴⁸ The attributes, books and oil lamp, held by the

43 Cornelis Galle I possibly after Jacques Francquart (1577–1651), title page for Curtius Cornelius, *Virorum illustrium ex ordine Eremitarum S. Augustini Elogia* (Antwerp, Joannes Cnobbaert: 1640) Engraving, 18.4 × 12.9 cm; Judson – Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages* 1 68.

44 Bertram – Büttner, *Sinnbild / Bildsinn* 92, no. 20.

45 Ibidem, 190, no. 57. The motif also appears on a print by Cornelis Galle that is – because of its motif – also attributed to Rubens. See <<http://hdl.handle.net/10934/RM0001.COLLECT.114114>> (last accessed 12.04.2020).

46 Bertram – Büttner, *Sinnbild / Bildsinn* 70, no. 11.

47 Fondation pour le Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae (ed.), *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae*, (LIMC) I–VII (Zürich – Munich: 1981–1999) VIII 273–281.

48 Cicero, *Epistulae ad Atticum* 1, 1, 5; 1, 4, 3.

genii sitting on the volutes, also refer to the context of science and education. However, they could also be read as allusions to an honourable memory, symbolized by the laurel festoons at the foot of the pedestal. The title page gives no indication on the inventor of this allusive composition. Only the engraver is mentioned there. Probably because of the obvious connection to Rubens, the British Museum lists the design as an invention of Erasmus Quellinus II.⁴⁹ But apart from the closeness to Rubens, there is no reference to his authorship, which is why one might rather think of another artist. In fact, the thirty portrait copper plates illustrating the volume are in many cases inscribed with the name of the painter and architect Jacques Francquart (1577–1651). He could also be credited with the invention of the title page with its exuberant architectural decoration. This is suggested, for example, by the design of the comparable title page and the illustrations engraved by Cornelis Galle I for the publication about the funeral of Archduke Albrecht in 1623.⁵⁰ The figures on the title page of this book, written by Erycius Puteanus (1574–1646), can be attributed to Francquart. Yet the very vitality of this title page places it in Rubens' succession.

It is this liveliness in the depiction of human figures that characterizes, for example, the title page of a publication which Basan attributed to Rubens in 1767 without any doubt and which he included directly as number 2 in his catalogue raisonné.⁵¹ [Fig. 11.8]

The title page of the commentary by Father Matthias Hauzeur (1589–1676) on the writings of the Church Father Augustine published in Paris in 1646 bears no reference to the inventor or the engraver.⁵² However, Hecquet had already been certain of Rubens' authorship and had listed the sheet, whereby he also included as number 3 an edition of the same composition published six years earlier in Leuven.⁵³ In fact, the Augustine Commentary by Cornelis Jansen (1585–1638), published by Jacobus Zegers in Leuven in 1640, was also decorated with the same title illustration.⁵⁴ But this earlier publication also contains no reference to the engraver or the inventor of the sheet. This circumstance made

49 London, British Museum, Inv. no. 1891,0414.1035, object reference no.: PPA199267.

50 Cornelis Galle I after Jacques Francquart, title page and illustrations for Puteanus Erycius, *Pompa funebris optimi potentissimiq[ue] principis Albertii Pii* (Brussels, Jan Mommaert: 1623). Engraving, 11.4 × 38.5 cm.

51 Basan, *Catalogue* 177, no. 26.

52 Anonymous, title page for Hauzeur Matthias, *Anatomia totius Augustissimae doctrinae B. Augustini episcopi, Sub duplici* (Paris, Michael Solis: 1646). Voorhelm Schneevooft, *Catalogue* 193, no. 2 (as Rubens); Rooses, *L'Oeuvre de P.P. Rubens* v 88, no. 1278.

53 Hecquet, *Catalogue* 96, nos. 2 and 3.

54 Anonymous, title page for Jansen Cornelius, *Cornelii Jansenii Augustinus seu doctrina Augustini tribus tomis comprehensa* (Leuven, Jacobus Zegers: 1640). Voorhelm



FIGURE 11.8 Anonymous, title page for Hauzeur Matthias, *Anatomia totius Augustissimae doctrinae B. Augustini episcopi, Sub duplici* (Paris, Michael Solis: 1646). Engraving
PRIVATE COLLECTION

it possible to Voorhelm Schneevoogt to attribute this title page to Rubens still in 1873.⁵⁵ It is highly probable that the composition was originally designed for the publication published by Zegers. The two title pages were not printed from the same plate, so that the copy in Paris was probably designed after the Leuven print.

The visual message of the title page is simple. With his raised flaming heart St. Augustine, surrounded by divine light, stands between four seated popes, identified by rotuli inscribed with 'S. Bonifacivs', 'S. Innocentivs', 'S. Zosimvs' and 'S. Coelestinvs'. St Augustine is standing on three figures lying on the ground, identified by inscriptions on the edge of the volute as 'Coelestivs', 'Pelagivs' and 'Ivlianvs'. Above all, the love of God shines from heaven, with an inscription referring to the Letter to the Romans: 'Caritas Dei diffusa est in cordibus nostris' ('the love of God is shed abroad in our heart').⁵⁶ Two years after the author's death, the discussion of Augustine's writings, published in three voluminous volumes, prompted a theological controversy which, under the banner of Jansenism, stirred up the entire European continent. In the first volume Jansen dealt with Pelagianism, in the second with original sin and in the third with grace. Five of the theses represented in this work were branded heretical by the Roman Curia on 31 May 1653 with Pope Innocent X's bull *Cum occasione*.⁵⁷ Jansen's publication had already attracted great attention among theologians when the title page was adopted largely unchanged for Hauzeur's publication in Paris in 1646. Only the name of Pelagius was erased from the volute and the title and publisher's details were replaced. There is no question that the Franciscan Matthias Hauzeur, a devoted controversial theologian and a great admirer of St. Augustine, would draw attention for his interpretation of Augustine's work directed against heretical slander and Erasmian errors.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, the title page does not reflect any of the theological subtleties that characterized both Jansen's publication and Hauzeur's interpretations. It will probably never be known who invented this composition. Certain is what Max Rooses remarked as early as 1892: 'Le titre est attribué, sans fondement sérieux, à Rubens, par Basan et par Voorhelm Schneevoogt' ('The title

Schneevoogt, *Catalogue* 193, no. 2 (as: Rubens); Rooses, *L'Oeuvre de P.P. Rubens* 88, no. 1278 (as: anonymous).

55 Voorhelm Schneevoogt, *Catalogue* 193, no. 2.

56 *Romans* 5, 5.

57 Denzinger H., *Enchiridion symbolorum definitionum et declarationum de rebus fidei et morum* (Freiburg: 2005) 614–615.

58 Ceysens L., "Matthias-Hauzeuret le jansénisme", *Bulletin de la Société d'Art et d'Histoire du Diocèse de Liège* 41 (1959) 165–194.

is attributed to Rubens by Basan and Voorhelm Schneevoogt without serious proof').⁵⁹ At the same time, however, it is also an example of Rubens' legacy in the design of illustrated title pages, which found a legitimate succession in the works of his pupils Erasmus Quellinus and Abraham van Diepenbeeck (1596–1675).

Like Quellinus, Van Diepenbeeck had also worked with Rubens.⁶⁰ He, too, was included in Rubens' title page production and learned to create lively compositions alluding to the respective content of the books. He created, for instance, the preliminary drawing for the title page of Heribert Rosweyde's *Vitae patrum*, dated 1628 and based on Rubens' design.⁶¹ According to accounts of the *Officina Plantiniana*, Rubens was rewarded with 20 guilders. On 12 September 1627, however, Abraham van Diepenbeeck was also paid 20 guilders 'for drawing the new title of *Vitae patrum*' ('voor teecken en van den nieuwen titel van *Vitae Patrum*').⁶² Since these drawings are missing, it is no longer possible to make a reliable statement about the creation process. However, it can be assumed that Van Diepenbeeck made his drawing after a cursory sketch by Rubens. After Rubens' death he regularly worked for the *Officina Plantiniana* as a designer of title pages in Rubens' tradition.

A good example of this is Van Diepenbeeck's design for the title page for a commentary on the biblical book of Job published in 1646, written by the Jesuit Balthasar Cordier (1592–1650).⁶³ [Fig. 11.9]

Cordier was born in Antwerp in 1592 and joined the Jesuit Order in 1612. He taught theology at the University of Vienna and specialized in the study of Hellenistic authors. His first book with comments on the Gospel of Luke by 65 Greek church fathers had already been published by the *Officina Plantiniana* in 1628 with a title page design by Rubens. The work did not become a bestseller, which did not prevent the publisher from publishing Cordier's next book in 1630.⁶⁴ However, for this collection of comments on the Gospel of John from 21 church fathers, Moretus printed only half the number of copies. Furthermore, he did not plan to print a full-sized title page executed in copper engraving but

59 Rooses, *L'Oeuvre de P.P. Rubens* V 88.

60 Diels A., *The Shadow of Rubens. Print publishing in 17th-century Antwerp* (London: 2009) 74.

61 Judson – Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages* I 246–248, no. 57; Bertram – Büttner, *Sinnbild / Bildsinn* 122–123, no. 31.

62 Judson – Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages* II 483, no. 105.

63 Cornelis Galle II after Abraham van Diepenbeeck, title page for Corderius Balthasar, *Job ehydatvs* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1646). Engraving, 30.5 × 19.8 cm.

64 Judson – Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages* I, 253, no. 59; Bertram – Büttner, *Sinnbild / Bildsinn* 124–125, no. 32.



FIGURE 11.9 Cornelis Galle II after Abraham van Diepenbeeck, title page of Corderius Balthasar, *Job elvicidatus* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1646). Engraving, 30.5 × 19.8 cm
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only a title vignette. Although the author had sent a draft, Moretus decided to commission Rubens, who drew the emblematically enriched coat of arms of Ferdinand III. Until Rubens' death the Officina Plantiniana had ordered several sketches for title pages and vignettes from the painter, and after his death they commissioned the drawings from the former members of his workshop. Thus, when a title page was needed in 1646 for Cordier's comments on the Book of Job drawn from the Church Fathers, this commission went to Abraham van Diepenbeeck.

In a scene given as a vivid history painting, Job is enthroned on the dung heap at the centre of the picture. Scolded by his wife and abandoned by his friends, he is stretching his arm to the sky, looking up hopefully. Bright light is breaking through the clouds, and a quotation from the Book of Job explains both the scene and the allegorical content of the motif: 'Post tenebras spero lucem' ('After darkness, I hope for light').⁶⁵ In this interplay of text and image, the scene becomes an emblem without the need for a *subscriptio*. Further emblematic images are added in the form of shields at the base of the platform bearing the title of the book and structuring the image. Two genii are pointing to these shields, each of which shows an image and a short quotation from the Book of Job. In the upper left corner, for example, a phoenix is shown rising from the flames towards the sun. The emblematic image is taken from a collection of four hundred emblems created by the physician Joachim Camerarius,⁶⁶ first published in Nuremberg in 1604.⁶⁷ The picture opposite also finds its prototype there: it depicts the eagle perching on its nest on the summit which sees the smallest things in the valley below. Camerarius had depicted this eagle under the lemma 'et profundissima quaque' ('also the deepest').⁶⁸ On the title page, the image is accompanied by the inscription 'in arduis' (in Schwierigkeiten) and a reference to Job 39, thus expressing the power of God and the hope founded on it: 'Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high? She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place' (Job 39.27 and 28). The other two symbols, which I could not find in any of the emblem books that were in circulation at the time, could be interpreted in a similarly wide-ranging way. The image on the left shows a hand testing a coin in fire and refers to Job 23.10: 'when he hath

65 Job 17, 12.

66 Camerarius Joachim, *Joachimi Camerarii Medici. V. Cl. Symbolorum Et Emblematum Centuria Tres* (Nuremberg: 1593–1605) III, no. 100.

67 Henkel A. – Schöne A., *Emblemata. Handbuch zur Sinnbildkunst des XVI. und XVII. Jahrhunderts*, 2 vols. (Stuttgart: 1967–1976) I, 795. See also Hesius Guilielmus, *Emblemata sacra de fide, spe, charitate* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1636) 365.

68 Camerarius, *Emblematum Centuria* III, no. 3.

tried me, I shall come forth as gold'.⁶⁹ The other shield shows the image of a dead tree stump from which young twigs grow. The image refers to the saying 'Rursum virescit' ('sprouting again') from Job 14.7: 'For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease'. The central scene of the title page illustration and the emblematic images within the picture correspond to each other. At the same time, they allow a wide range of cross-references between the pictorial messages of the title page and the content of the book.

Van Diepenbeeck probably also designed the title page of Cordier's *Expositio Patrum Graecorum in Psalmos*, which Balthasar Moretus published in 1646.⁷⁰ This title page is also 'Rubensian' in style. Figures of high mimetic quality are shown here in a church interior, with King David with the harp in the foreground. He is kneeling in front of a velum hanging diagonally in the room, on which the inscription of the book title is written. A similar disposition is shown on the title page signed by van Diepenbeeck for Grégoire de Saint-Vincent's *Problema Austriacum plus ultra quadratura circuli*, published in 1647 by Johannes and Jacobus van Meurs.⁷¹ That he was able to mimic Rubens' style may have been the reason that van Diepenbeeck was commissioned by the Antwerp publishers Hendrik Aertssens, Petrus Bellerus, Johannes van Meurs and others after the death of his master.⁷² This is probably one of the reasons why not all of the *Officina Plantiniana's* commissions went to the busy Van Diepenbeeck or the equally sought-after Erasmus Quellinus. Other artists familiar with Rubens' visual language were also commissioned, such as Nicolaas van der Horst (1587/98–1646) and Jan Boeckhorst (1605–1668). The latter, for example, was entrusted with the illustrations and title page of a new edition of the *Breviarium Romanum* in 1651.⁷³ In the tradition of Rubens, his successors designed title pages rich in allusions and of the highest liveliness, which subsequently became the central criterion for attributing unsigned works as the given examples show. Indeed, there are no criteria other than the

69 See also the commentary by Corderius, *Iob elvcidatvs* 453.

70 Corderius Balthasar, *Expositio Patrum Graecorum in Psalmos* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1646).

71 Sain-Vincent Grégoire de, *Problema Austriacum plus ultra quadratura circuli* (Antwerp, Johannes and Jacob van Meurs: 1646).

72 See for example the title pages for Vincentius Moles y Garcia, *Philosophia Naturalis* (Antwerpen, Hendrik Aertssens: 1639); Haefen Benedictus van, *S. Benedictvs illvstratvs sive Disquisitionvm monasticarvm libri XII* (Antwerp, Petrus Bellerus: 1644); Bollandus Joannes, *Acta sanctorvm* (Antwerp, Johannes van Meurs: 1643); Butkens Christophe, *Trophées Tant Sacrés Que Profanes Du Duché De Brabant* (Antwerp, Christophe Jegher: 1641).

73 See Van Mulders C., in: De Nave, *Moretuses* 82–83; Galen, *Johann Boeckhorst* 262–336.



FIGURE 11.10 Anonymous, title page for Chigi Fabio, *Philomathi Musæ Juveniles* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1654). Engraving, 14.8 × 9.5 cm
PRIVATE COLLECTION

aesthetic comparison, the basis of all connoisseurship, already attempted by de Piles. Another example of this is the title page to Fabio Chigi's (1599–1667) *Philomathi Musæ Juveniles*.⁷⁴ [Fig. 11.10]

The title page to the poetic work of the later Pope Alexander VII, published in 1654 by the Officina Plantiniana, was engraved by Cornelis Galle the Younger and shows a laurel tree in the centre of the picture, with the Chigi family coat-of-arms hanging in the branches. At the foot of this tree, on a massive stone block bearing the title, Apollo is sitting on the left with his harp in his lap. He is looking into the eyes of Mercury, who is sitting on the other of the tree, with a hiking hat and caduceus. In the background on the left the sun is rising, which is not only an attribute of Apollo, but also a symbol of youth and still easily understood as such. Mercury, in Greek Hermes, was the ancient protective god of traffic and travellers, but also the god of eloquence and diplomacy. Both concepts fit equally well with the content of this booklet, which contains a large number of early occasional poems as well as poetic descriptions of diplomatic missions. Chigi, who was born in Siena, had travelled to Münster as a representative of the papal chair during the negotiations for the Peace of Westphalia.⁷⁵ He undertook this journey before he was elected pope in 1655 and the experiences during this and other diplomatic missions are collected here. The high poetic standard of the author is also reflected in the visualization of the Muses' god Apollo, whom the author begs for the leisure necessary to write poetry.⁷⁶

It is not documented who designed the title page. Basan and Voorhelm Schneevoogt did not doubt the attribution to Rubens, for which, however, there is no proof, as Max Rooses already pointed out. The booklet, published 14 years after Rubens' death, had not yet been written during his lifetime. The authorship of Rubens can therefore be excluded for this reason alone. However, the later perception of this title page of Chigi's early works is a good proof of how formative Rubens had been on the title page design far beyond his death. His style and the combination of an allusive richness and maximal liveliness remained closely associated with his name. In this way, the attributions that are today, with good reason, rejected as false, also become a visual reference to

74 Anonymous, title page for Fabio Chigi, *Philomathi Musæ Juveniles* (Antwerp, Balthasar Moretus: 1654). Engraving, 14.8 × 9.5 cm. Basan, *Catalogue* 184, no. 47 (as: Rubens); Voorhelm Schneevoogt, *Catalogue* 201, no. 55 (as: Rubens); Rooses, "P.P. Rubens en Balthasar Moretus" (1883) 45 (as: not by Rubens).

75 Hugenroth H., *Zum dichterischen Werk des Fabio Chigi (1599–1667)* (Cologne: 1999) 1–40.

76 Chigi, *Philomathi Musæ Juveniles* 166, no. LXXVII: 'Clarius exponam, si fecerit otia Phoebus'.

Rubens' established ideal of title page design. To systematically investigate the broad aftermath and succession remains a worthwhile task.

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