

JORDAENS'S READING

Nils Büttner

When Jacob Jordaens's *Bagpipe Player* was finally acquired by the Rubens House in 2009, the fact was widely acknowledged by the press (fig. 1).¹ The press echo revived the established image of the painter who was usually characterized as rustic and sturdy in contrast to his famous contemporary Peter Paul Rubens. Almost all newspapers emphasised the clichéd contrast of a peasantlike Jordaens with the aristocratic and well educated Rubens. That both art historians and art critics declared the image not to be a self-portrait, although the *Bagpipe Player* of course depicts Jordaens, remained unheeded. And that Jordaens did not usually depict himself as a rosy cheeked bagpipe player, but rather as a connoisseur and collector of antiques, was not taken into account.² Nevertheless, Jordaens did not only represent himself as an art lover, he was acknowledged as such by his contemporaries. Cornelis de Bie, for instance, in his *Gulden Cabinet vande Edel Vry Schilder-Const*, i. e. the *Golden Cabinet of the Noble Free Art of Painting*, dedicated verses to Jordaens which not only compliment his own paintings, but also highlight his sophisticated education:

“Whoever begins with noble art, shall fathom everything, when nature and inclination have luckily connected, formed by serious schooling to be prudent, wise and firm, as especially youths in their prime are susceptible and bendable, just as can be seen with Jordaens, who has to stand down for nobody in the art of his time.

His art is strong, honest and wise, especially that inspired by the noble art of poetry.”³

The portrait accompanying the text praises him as an ingenious painter of history paintings. Likewise, his German contemporary Joachim von Sandrart, who seems to have been aware of de Bie's comments, praised the artist's intellectual talents as “the highest gift of a brilliant mind.”⁴ Yet how well-educated was Jordaens really?

Unfortunately, his formal education remains a mystery. So far no documents could be found that bear witness to Jordaens's educational vita – a fact that was lately regretted by Irene Schaudies in the catalogue of the recent exhibition *Jordaens and the Antique*.⁵ The first known biographical milestone in Jordaens's life is the date of his birth on 19 May 1593, noted in the baptism chronicles of the Cathedral of our Lady in Antwerp.⁶ The next known biographical station is his apprenticeship in the workshop of Adam van Noort in October 1607, documented in the *Liggeren* of the Guild of Saint Luke in Antwerp.⁷ Frans Jozef van den Branden, who relates this fact in his *Geschiedenis der Antwerpsche Schilderschool* in 1883, was confident of the successful outcome of the education: “Our Jacob was a diligent and industrious student, but he was not yet fourteen years old when he declared that he wanted to become a painter.”⁸

It seems likely that Jacob Jordaens received a formal education, especially if the vitae of bet-



Fig. 1: Jacob Jordaens, Self-Portrait as a Bagpipe Player, 1644, oil on canvas, 80 × 61 cm, Antwerp, Rubens House

ter documented contemporaries are taken as comparative evidence. However, a fourteen year old boy making decisions on his own

about his professional future seems highly unusual in the given historical background. Accordingly, Roger d’Hulst made only guarded

assumptions about Jordaens's education; he assumed that Jordaens received all the advantages of an education usually provided for children of his social class. This assumption is supported by the evidence of Jordaens's clear handwriting in both a receipt written in 1642 and in a letter to Constantijn Huygens dating back to 1649.⁹ According to d'Hulst, various documents and of course the painter's works themselves bear witness of his competence in French and his knowledge of mythology.¹⁰ As early as the nineteenth century hints were discovered showing that Jordaens did not only write occasionally, but that he in fact was an active author.¹¹

A fascinating note in the volume 1651–1658 from the ledgers of the Schout of Antwerp – a local official taking precedence over all magistrates – states that the painter Jordaens, who had written some scandalous pamphlets, had been fined with 200 Ponden and 15 Schelling:

“Van dat den schilder Jordaens eenighe schandaleuse geschriften geschreven hadde, statisfecit [...] II^c P[onden], XV sc[hellingen].”¹²

This was a considerable amount of money which Jordaens was charged with, and was, according to Van den Branden, connected to the edict from 25 August 1655 stating that a certain book containing the *geusen-cathecismus*, i. e. the *beggar's catechism*, had been circulated in town. Whoever was to hand over the author was promised a hundred guilders: “Alsoo seker boecxken met eenen geusen-cathecismus in dese stadt is gestroyt geweest, is geordonneert aen den aenbrenger van den autheur van dit feyt, te geven hondert guldenen.”¹³ The accompanying notice explains that the writings in question were several small volumes in Flemish and French, “sommighe kleyne Boeckskens

in Duytsche ende Fransche taele, wesende eenen Geuzen-Catechismus”¹⁴ The term *beggar's catechism* usually meant the *Heidelberg catechism* and those catechetical writings based on it, such as a widely reprinted work by Pieter de Witte which at the time apparently circulated in Antwerp.¹⁵ The success of the Catholic policy of prohibition is shown by the fact that some of the writings banned by the authorities are only known by the titles assigned to them in the *Index librorum prohibitorum*, such as “De cleyne Colloquie int Vlaemsche ende Franckois, by Joos Lambrecht Gandeau anno 50. & Antuerpiæ, apud Waesberghe.”¹⁶ Just as no lead could be found that would point to the writings leading to Jordaens's conviction. Nevertheless, the fine he had to pay can in any case be seen as proof of his literary education.

Further evidence of Jordaens's knowledge of literature can be found in his works of art, especially in those paintings with classical topics that de Bie summarized as “Const van d'eel Poëterey.”¹⁷ Unquestionably, Jordaens's extant works show a great sensitivity and awareness for the audience's expectations and the educational background of his audience.¹⁸ Roger d'Hulst also mentions these works, noting that the painter's knowledge of classic mythology can probably be traced back to Karel van Mander's *Uytlegghingh op den Metamorphosis Pub. Ovidij Naonis*, first published in 1604.¹⁹ However, it is just as likely that Jordaens could also have read Ovid whose works were not only widely circulated in the Latin original but also in various Flemish, French, German and Italian translations. So far no Latin comments in his own hand have been found, so that it remains unclear what knowledge of Latin Jordaens had and whether he could read or even write or speak the language of the educated. Unfortunately, it is not documented whether

Jordaens owned the book by van Mander, or any other books for that matter, as no inventory of his belongings has been found so far. Bearing in mind his literacy, which is proven by writings in his own hand, the assumption that he could have owned and read books is valid. If those books could not be located in the painter's own estate, research in the extensive archives of the printer-dynasty Plantin-Moretus might prove enlightening. After all, the painter lived in the immediate vicinity of this great centre for the production and world-wide distribution of books. Should the painter have used the back entrance through the cellar, which still exists today, it would have been a mere three minute walk from his house to the printer's bookshop.

According to the entries in the books of condolences on the deaths of Jan Moretus on 11 March 1618 and of Melchior Moretus in 1634, he was on good neighbourly, if not close terms with the Moretus family.²⁰ The archive of the publisher's family has survived the centuries in unique completeness. The well kept account books of the publishing house list a great number of its customers. The name Rubens appears several times, for instance, whose literary interests could be reconstructed thanks to this remarkable source.²¹ However, as concerns Jordaens, my research proved fruitless, and even further research by one of the most skilled experts on the archive, Dirk Imhoff, whom I want to thank cordially for his efforts, did not produce any results: the name of Jacob Jordaens could not be found in the account books of the 'Officina Plantiniana'.

That leaves only two possible ways to draw conclusions on the education of Jordaens: on the one hand there are his paintings, which are undoubtedly a central source, and on the other hand there is a sociological comparison

with the educational careers and libraries of other contemporary painters.²² Next to the inventories of painters' libraries, the reading recommendations in works of art theory are valuable sources strongly connected to the common educational canon of the time.²³ As early as the Middle Ages, a canon of authors had evolved comprising those authors that were read in schools: alongside Cicero, Vergil, Ovid, Horace and Justinus, the works of Cato and Terence were part of this canon. Furthermore, several Greek works were included, usually read in Latin translations, including Homer, Herodotus, Hesiod, Aesop and Euripides. This educational canon for art lovers is reflected in the reading recommendations for painters.²⁴ These recommendations underwent next to no changes throughout the 17th century and correspond to the recommendations made by Gerard de Lairesse in his *Grondlegginge der Teekenkonst* in 1701 where he advises to read "Herodoot, Tacitus, Justinus, Titus Livius, Flavius Josephus, Plutarchus, en booven al de Heylige Schrift [...] Homerus, Virgilius, Ovidius, en Horatius."²⁵ In his *Groot Schilderboek*, Lairesse advised painters to first read the primary texts but then also the commentaries made by the best authors, so as not to twist the true meaning of the histories.²⁶ Some painters seem to have heeded this advice and thus owned the necessary books for this approach. However, libraries as extensive as Rubens's with over 500 titles or the library of Pieter Saenredam with 424 books, remain an exception.²⁷ Even Pieter Lastman, who owned about 150 books, was an exception among the artists of his time.²⁸ Gillis van Coninxloo left only 17 books when he passed away in Amsterdam in 1607, while Adriaen van Niculandt, owned a total of 69 volumes in 1658.²⁹ According to the inventory of his estate, the famous citizen of

Delft, Jan Vermeer, owned a total of five folio books and 25 of all sorts, “van alderhande slach”.³⁰ And Hendrick van Balen from Antwerp left a small library of 78 volumes.³¹ Unfortunately, the various documented ownerships of books are not conclusive on the question of what literature Jordaens possibly owned. With regard to his oeuvre and his circumstances, he could just as likely have belonged to the circle of bibliophiles as to that of those who did not care for books. And even his artistic renderings of literary topics offer little or no decisive evidence on which books Jordaens might have known or used as sources. Jacob Jordaens’s painting of the tale of Diana and Actaeon (fig. 2), dating back to approximately 1640, can by all means be interpreted as an illustration of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (3, 138–252).³² Yet, just as likely is a depiction after Karel van Manders’s *Uytlegghingh* and other miscellanies.³³ To access these sources, Jordaens did not need to own these books; they would have been accessible to him in the nearby library of the ‘Officina Plantiniana’, where texts of all sorts and scholarly commentaries were abundant.

However, literary sources are not the only important influences – just as vital are visual precursors: there was next to no scene from the *Metamorphoses*, however minor, that was not accessible in various artistic interpretations. These illustrations were widely distributed through the medium of print, and it is no coincidence that Ovid’s work was also called the “Painters’ bible” by Joachim von Sandrart.³⁴ Thus, Jordaens might well have known the engraving of Diana and Actaeon by Aegidius Sadeler II after Joseph Heintz the Elder, or the etching by Jonas Umbach depicting the same scene.³⁵ It is equally likely that some of his characters were inspired by antique master-

pieces, known to him in drawings, prints or plaster casted reproductions.³⁶ Additionally, it is highly possible that they were inspired by such graphic antecedents like those engravings known as *Lascive* by Agostino Carracci. That he was inspired by these goes without saying because there is proof that he had seen these images. Together with a number of other painters he attested on 29th August 1647 that several print series depicting the amorous affairs of Gods were circulating in Antwerp and were in high demand. On their honour as gentlemen they declared under oath that they knew it to be true that there was daily traffic in books with copper engravings by Carracci, Rosa and De Jode, showing amours of Gods and such (“boeleringen van de goden ende diergelijcke”); and that the same books of copper engravings were common among lovers of such art and that such books of engravings by Raffael of Urbino and Marco de Ferrara and new ones, made in Paris by Peter de Mol, were even more scandalous than the formerly mentioned by Carracci, Rosa and De Jode.³⁷ Bearing this testimony in mind, it really is a pity that the circumstances of the scandalous writings, which led to Jordaens’s fine, are not documented. While it is rather unlikely that the “schandaleuse geschriften” were erotic texts, there is no doubt that erotic images were a speciality of his workshop.³⁸ The story Canaules und Gyges, related by Herodotus in his *Histories* (1, 8–12), offers an impressive example in various versions (fig. 3).³⁹ For Gerard de Lairesse, Herodotus’s work was one of the most useful sources for painters; the Amsterdam painter Pieter Lastman was just as familiar with that work as was Peter Paul Rubens, whose library contained two copies of the work: one in Latin published in Frankfurt in 1595 and a bilingual edition in Latin



Fig. 2: Jacob Jordaens, *Diana and Actaeon*, c. 1640, oil on wood, 53,5 × 75,7 cm, Dresden, Gemäldegalerie

and Greek, published in 1608.⁴⁰ Although a Flemish translation had not been published as yet, Jordaens could also have read the text in a German or French translation.⁴¹ But to come across the story of King Candaules, it was not at all necessary to read Herodotus as the story is also related by Marcus Iunianus Iustinus. His work, which in Jordaens's time was also available in a Dutch translation, had been widely circulated and read since the Middle Ages, as people confused the Roman author with his namesake, the Christian martyr.⁴² Later Justinus "served as a compact edition of the other sources on antiquity."⁴³ The *Historiarum Philippicarum libri* of Iustinus (I, 7) reveal that "the Lydians had many kings before Croesus, remarkable for various turns of fate; but

none to be compared, in singularity of fortune, to Candaules. This prince used to speak of his wife, whom he doted on for her extreme beauty, to everybody, for he was not content with the quiet consciousness of his happiness, unless he also published the secrets of his married life; just as if silence concerning her beauty had been a detraction from it. At last, to gain credit to his representations, he showed her undressed to his confidant, Gyges; an act by which he both rendered his friend, who was thus tempted to corrupt his wife, his enemy, and alienated his wife from him, by transferring, as it were, her love to another; for, soon after, the murder of Candaules was stipulated as the condition of her marriage with Gyges, and the wife, making her husband's



Fig. 3: Jacob Jordaens, *Candaules and Gyges*, oil on canvas, 193 × 157 cm, Stockholm, Nationalmuseum

blood her dowry, bestowed at once his kingdom and herself on her paramour.⁴⁴

Most probably, this version of Candaules and Gyges was circulated through Justinus even-

tually becoming part of the emblematic literature.⁴⁵ And as likely as not it is this version that inspired Jordaens to his painting, and that Antonio de Guevara, a courtier of Charles V,

mentioned in his letters. His correspondence, first published in Spanish, was circulated all over Europe, both in Latin and vernacular translations. In 1589, for instance, a German edition of the “missives or epistles of Master Anthonii of Guevara to the honourable Master Moises Pusch of Valence” was published, together with an illustration by Tobias Stimmer.⁴⁶ Another narrator is Jacob Cats with his *Toneel vande mannelicke Achtbaerheit* of 1623, in which a copper engraving by Pieter de Jode after Adriaan van de Venne vividly illustrates the events.⁴⁷ Even if Jordaens was aware of these previous graphic illustrations of the topic, they obviously did not influence his choice of pictorial language.

It remains open which literary or pictorial sources did influence the composition of Jordaens’s painting and which literary references influenced the gaze of the contemporary audience. Maybe it is precisely the fact that this story was circulated in many different versions and with varying moral implications that contributed significantly to its popularity, as there is no doubt that Jordaens’s renderings of the topic were popular with his audience. This is proven by notarial files from August 1648 in which Jordaens declared that the five paintings which he had sold to the art dealer Martinus van Langenhoven of The Hague two years ago were Jordaens’s own intellectual property; that every brush stroke, alteration or retouched passages were executed in the painter’s own hand, even if he had painted the similar topic before, using sketches that were the foundations for previous paintings. The applicant testified that he had contemplated to have the works copied and to make improvements and corrections only where necessary.⁴⁸ Yet the necessary alterations had been so extensive that he had painted over the

copies in his own hand to such an extent that he now deemed them just as artistically significant and equally his intellectual property as his other paintings, “heeft die veranderende alle met zyn eygen hant geschildert, overschildert ende herschildert, in der vuegen dat hy comparant die hout voor principalen, zoo goet als zyne andere ordinaere wercken”. The paintings in question are for instance *As the Old Sing*, *Candaules*, *Argus* and *Vulcan*. These pieces the applicant testified to have begun on his own, without malice. This is issued in the notary’s house in the presence of Guiliam van Craesbeeck, His Majesty’s Master of the Mint, and Caspar van Cantelbeck, merchant, citizens of this town and called upon as witnesses.⁴⁹ According to this file, Jordaens had had copies made of his best selling pictures; subsequently he added the painterly finish – just as it is documented of Rubens – which he deemed sufficient to declare the paintings originals. The incredulous client received a notarial certificate of the originality of the paintings and was apparently satisfied with it.

The *Candaules* mentioned in the legal document can be assumed to be the painting nowadays in Stockholm although most probably several versions were painted. The image might have caused a stir amongst the contemporary audience, not only because of the nearly life sized nude back, but also because the depicted scene leaves plenty of room for interpretation. The scene could be read in several ways: besides a moral lesson, the topic could have given rise to an art-theoretical discussion. A paragraph in Pliny had led to a confusion of the mythical King Gyges with the legendary inventor of the art of painting, who went by the same name.⁵⁰ That Jordaens himself saw the topic within the popular discourse of art theory, is illustrated by the painted *Kun-*

stkammer from 1663 that was a project by artists from Antwerp for the newly established Academy (fig. 4).⁵¹ In this joint venture, Jordaens had painted the right front corner, where he depicts an assembly of Gods and allegorical figures in front of a variation of his *Candaules* painting. The moralistic message of the scene receives here an art-theoretical commentary, which is conveyed by the gods and especially by the putti assembled before the picture-within-the-picture. One of those putti is closing the back of Apollo's coat, while Apollo is gazing at the painted nude, thereby mimicking the action of the two male figures within the painting before him.⁵² The veiling of the God's exposed back thus becomes a commentary on the scantily clad woman in the painting, whose body is busily studied and sketched by a putto sitting in front of the picture. And while Mercury, approaching the

scene from the right, is pointing towards the woman in the painting, the cupid holding his hand is pointing out the women standing in front of the picture. One of them is identified as the allegory of *Pictura*, carrying a maulstick and a palette.⁵³ She is immersed in conversation with the allegorical figure of *Poetry*, who has been convincingly interpreted as such by Matthias Winner in 1957.⁵⁴ In accordance with the discourse in popular art theory, the "sister arts" of painting and poetry meet on equal terms here.⁵⁵ Regardless of how the painting might have been received in Jordaens's time, the identification of the topos of a painting within a painting would not have been an intellectual challenge to the contemporary audience – unlike another painting kept in Schwerin nowadays, connected to the *Candaules* painting, and doubtlessly one of the most remarkable works of art of its time (fig. 5).⁵⁶

Fig. 4: William Schubert von Ehrenburg/Charles Biset/Jacob Jordaens/Theodoor Boyermans/Cornelis de Heem/Pieter Boel/Jan Cossiers/Philips Augustyn Immenraet/Robert van der Hoecke, *Kunstammer*, 1666, oil on canvas, 141 × 263 cm, München, Alte Pinakothek



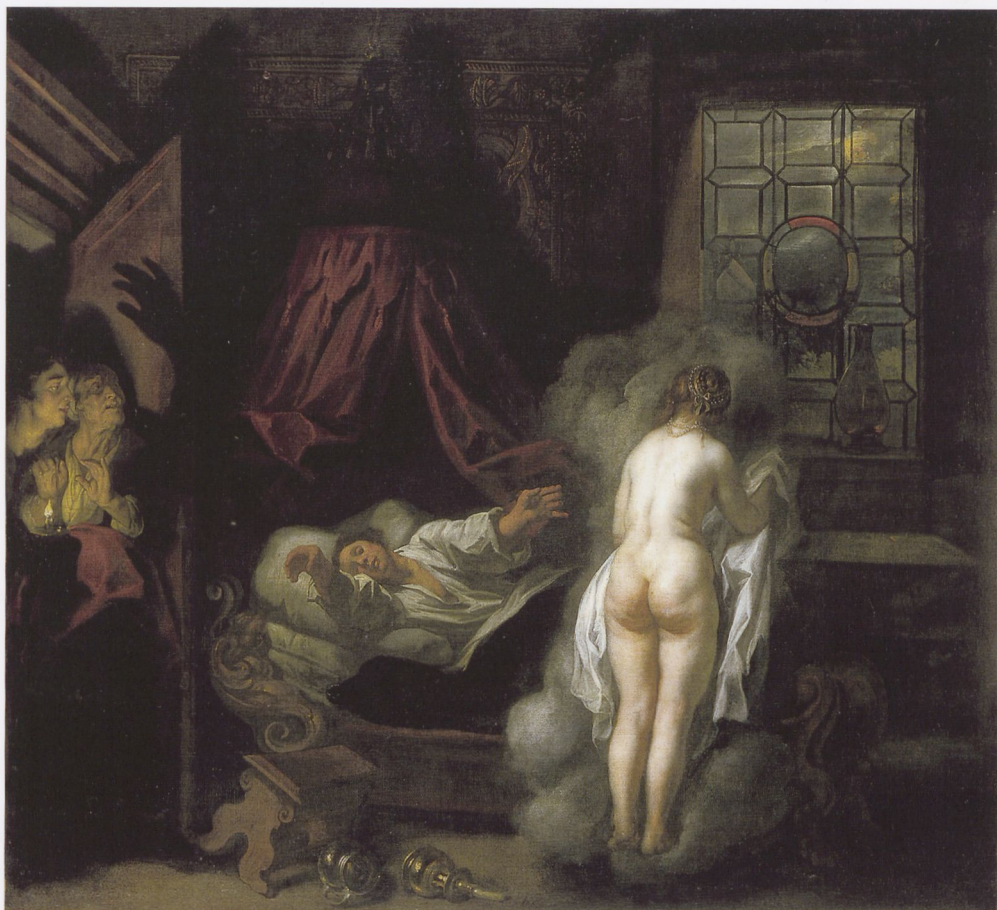


Fig. 5: Jacob Jordaens, *Night Vision*, c. 1650, oil on canvas, 133 × 144 cm, Schwerin, Staatliche Museen

Due to the explicit nature of the scene, it might seem likely to suspect one of the usual literary sources, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* for instance. One might even think of the incident in the story of Eos (Aurora) and Kephalos, in which Eos descends to the sleeping Kephalos to rape him, while he, still half asleep, tries to defend himself against the goddess.⁵⁷ Yet, all known images of the scene show both figures more or less naked, which was common for depictions of the Gods' amorous adventures. In the Antwerp version, however, the sleeping figure is wearing the customary night shift of the

time while the woman is naked. Furthermore, the narrative details of the image and the two figures who try to force their way in are not mentioned in Ovid. In an attempt to explain these details, art historian Erwin Bielefeld used a story by Phlegon of Tralles in his *Book of Marvels*, a freedman of Augustus Caesar. Phlegon tells a story of the dream of Machates who is a guest in the house of Demostrates and is haunted in his sleep by the spirit of Philinion, the daughter of his host Demostrates, who had just died.⁵⁸ The nude would then be a vampire, while the women who rush into the

chamber would have to be identified as the mother of the Deceased and a servant.⁵⁹ So what is it that Jordaens's painting really shows? It is night, the moon is shining in through the window, a sleeping man has an intense dream of a naked woman. The floating motion and the clouds surrounding her characterize her as a vision or a dream. A young man and a crone carrying a candle throwing the uncanny shadow of a hand onto the door, force their way into the bedchamber. They push over the bedstand, so a chamber pot and a candlestick fall to the floor. The sleeper will awaken, the dream will end. There are several examples of antique dream narratives in which recently deceased return from the Dead, even erotic nightmares are a recurring topic in literature.⁶⁰ Yet none of these narratives really matches the narrative potential of the scene depicted by Jordaens. Even Artemidor's reading of the erotic dream as a good omen and the prospect of sleeping with an unknown woman, does not fit Jordaens's painting, because Artemidor describes his mystery woman as "a beauty, full of grace, dressed in finery, ornated with golden necklaces, offering herself, which is a good omen for the dreamer and promises success in all his future ventures."⁶¹ In an oriental book of dreams a similar good omen is mentioned, that better fits the connotations of Jordaens painting. If you see a naked woman in a dream, and if that woman is white, voluptuous and seductive, great joy and success can be expected in all your affairs.⁶² This book of dreams may have been rather unknown in Antwerp in Jordaens's time although erotic dreams were not unknown by far. In a Catholic environment however, they were not read as good omens but rather as caused by the devil. The Church fathers themselves had trouble with that and wrote about it.⁶³ And their me-

dieval commentators already had developed distinctive rules and regulations for penance, as they are reported in Burchards von Worms's *Corrector*, to name just one source: "Dō you believe that there are women, called the Sylvania, who appear in bodily form and show themselves to their lovers, and when they found pleasure in them and when they want to leave them, they disappear. If you believe this, you have to do penance and fasting for ten days with bread and water."⁶⁴ In the theological discourses of Jordaens's days, these contemplations were present.⁶⁵ Dreams and visions were not just a subject best left to theologians as is revealed by the manuscript *Libro dei sogni* by Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo from 1564 or the erotic dream motives in the poems by Pietro Aretino.⁶⁶ Here, one finds descriptions that are far more drastic than Jordaens's painting. However, it can neither be linked to those literary sources, nor to other popular dream narratives for that matter.⁶⁷ A loose connection to contemporary poetry is far more likely, for instance to Paul Flemings poem *On his dream* from 1635.⁶⁸

What connects Jordaens's painting to the literary dream visions is not only the depiction of an erotic dream, but simultaneously an almost dynamic plot line. To show that the face is a dream, Jordaens uses a wreath of clouds, a stylistic means that reminded Gerard de Lairese of this particular painting, when writing his *Groot Schilderboek*.⁶⁹

He wanted to explain that a thin vapour could be used as a stylistic means to illustrate the difference between a real person and a figment of the imagination, "een onderscheid te maaken tusschen menschen en gewaande menschen". In this context, he thought of Jordaens's painting, which he had seen several years before, "where a man lay in bed and dreamed. In

front of his bed stood a nude woman who would have looked like nothing so much as a woman ready to bed with him if the artist had not added some clouds that gave the impression of her standing in a door of clouds [in een deur van wolken]. This made me think that she was an apparition but the impression was not sufficiently convincing since the spook had too much in common with the rest of the picture. The woman was painted from the back and done very beautifully in colours so that I as well as others considered the picture simply of a painting of a model to which the rest was added in order to complete the canvas.⁷⁰

The fact that Gerard de Lairese, who was 38 years old when Jordaens passed away, could imagine that his elder colleague had painted an image without any literary source should be taken seriously, as such works were not unknown at the time. Jordaens's painting could well be compared to Dürer's *Dream of the Doctor*, (fig. 6) a print that may have been part of many collections in Antwerp.⁷¹ This copper engraving, too, has long puzzled art historians as no literary source could be found.⁷² Just as Jordaens's *Night Vision* the depicted scene cannot be seen as the illustration of a distinct literary motive.⁷³ Yet it blends into the contemporary discourse about the weal and woe of erotic dreams within which Dürer takes a clear position. He shows an academic, distinguished by his style of clothing, sleeping on the stove bench who wastes his time doing nothing. His sloth is not just carelessness, but a true sin, especially so as the sluggard dreams of seductively lewd scenes. Dürer illustrates how this happens with an almost radical clarity by showing the devil with his bellows next to the sleeper's ear.⁷⁴ Jordaens is far less direct in his interpretation of the erotic dream. It remains

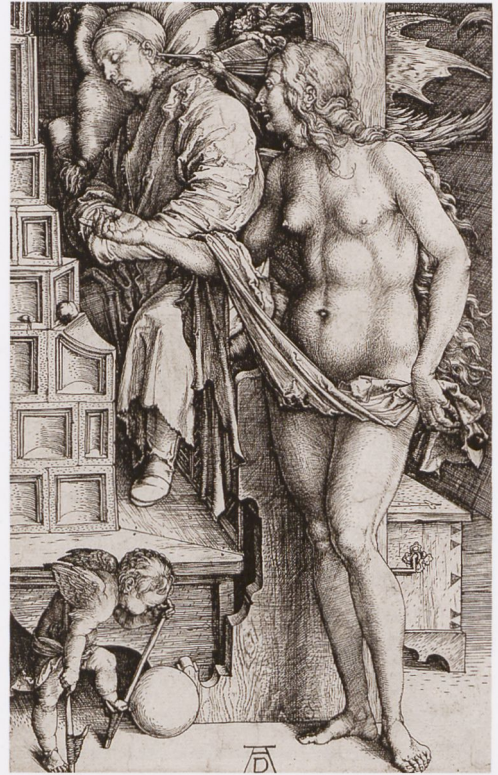


Fig. 6: Albrecht Dürer, *The Dream of the Doctor*, 1498, engraving, 186 × 117 mm, London, British Museum

open if the sleeper, who is rudely awakened through the noise of the falling chamber pot, is torn away from sweet dreams or rescued from fiendish temptations. The painting offered the contemporary viewer several possibilities of judging the events. With the medium of painting Jordaens reflects the contemporary discourse on erotic dreams.

At the same time, the painting could be regarded as a painted reflection on the mediaspecific prerequisites of narrative in painting. This painting unfolds his full narrative potential for the viewer and is on equal terms with literature, just as *Pictura* and *Poesia* in the work for the Antwerp academy.⁷⁵

Against the background of a discourse that placed painting and poetry on the same level those paintings in which the precise illustration of a literary source was not the main point are an important contribution. Without an active participation in the contemporary intellectual and literary life this is hardly imaginable. Obviously, Jordaens had pondered the narrative possibilities of images and distinctly accentuated his own variations of traditional literary topics. Furthermore, he also created paintings that did not draw on any literary source. His versions of *Gyges and Candaules* and the *Night Vision* are early examples for the late seventeenth-century endeavour to widen traditional history painting. Painting was no longer only understood as a means to visualise literary material and traditional stories, but as a narrative medium in its own right. The audience of the time probably knew how to deal with that as can be seen by Gerbrandt Adriaensz Bredero's drama *Meulenaer*, published in 1619. Two characters, Trijn Jans and Piet, are talking about pictures: "Yea, what a nice picture," Trijn says, "Don't you know whether it shows any story or a work of poetry?" "What do I know if that is from scripture or from the devil. The painters paint all sorts of things," is Piet's answer.⁷⁶ Thus an image could be imagined that showed "any story" and was not directly related to "poetry". However, this is probably as close a glimpse of a contemporary view on pictures as possible, of course leaving aside the aspect of caricature and assuming more willingness on the part of an educated viewer to engage with the "all sorts of things" that painters paint. An audience that was familiar with both, antique literature and the rules of iconography and allegories, probably rather enjoyed the more open visualisations and the resulting interpretive possibilities, as

offered by the paintings like Jordaens's *Night Vision*.⁷⁷ His versions of *Gyges and Candaules* and the *Night Vision* show an intellectual merit within the medium of painting and thus characterize Jordaens as a *pictor doctus* in his own right, regardless of whether he was a bookish intellectual or not. In his images, Jordaens contemplated the limits and possibilities of storytelling and put his own, distinctive stamp on literary topics, as well as creating images which had no literary source. The questions on Jordaens's reading, however, remain open.

NOTES

- 1 Jacob Jordaens, *Self-Portrait as a Bagpipe Player*, 1644, oil on canvas, 80 × 61 cm, Antwerp, Museum Rubens House (as a permanent loan from Fonds Courtin-Bouché). For the press echo see for example *Gazet van Antwerpen*, 01.25.2010. – Some ideas of this essay where also referred and discussed on a conference in Kyoto, organized by Toshiharu Nakamura and Kayo Hirakawa: *New Forms of Pictorial Narratives in Dutch Seventeenth-century Painting*, cf. Büttner 2014.
- 2 Jacob Jordaens, *Self-portrait*, 1648–1650, oil on canvas, 97 × 68 cm, Angers, Musée des Beaux-Arts. Cf. *Brussels/Kassel 2012* (a), no. 17.
- 3 "Die aenvanght d'edel Const, sal alles wel doorgronden| Wanneer natuer en lust t'gheluck hebben ghevonden| Van neerstich onderwijs, verstandich, cloeck en vast| Daer meest de jonghe jeught seer jeverich op past| Ghelijck het aen Iordaens ooghschijnlijck compt te blijcken| Die niemant in des' eeuw en sal in Consten wijcken,| Soo crachtich, eel, en cloeck is alle sijn schildry| Besonder inde Const van d'eel Poëtery." De *Bie* 1662, p. 238.
- 4 Von Sandrart 1675, vol. II, book 3 (Netherlandish and German artists), p. 336 (<http://ta.sandrart.net/text-564>. Access: 11/02/2014).
- 5 Cf. *Brussels/Kassel 2012* (a), p. 25.
- 6 SAA, Par.-Reg. 11, Doopen Lievevrouwenkerk 1592–1606, sub dato; D'Hulst 1982, p. 329, note 1.
- 7 Cf. Rombouts/van Lerijs, vol. 1, p. 443; Van den Branden 1883, p. 814 f.
- 8 Van den Branden 1883, p. 814: "Onze Jacob leerde ter school zeer vlijtig; doch hij telde nog geene veertien jaar, toen hij reeds verklaarde schilder te willen worden."

- 9 Cf. D'Hulst 1982, p. 23.
- 10 Ibid., p. 23.
- 11 Cf. *ibid.*, p. 838 f.
- 12 Bruxelles, Archives générales du Royaume (Belgium), Chambre des Comptes, Registre N° 12.909: "Ordinaris Reeckeninghe heer Nicolaes van Varick, Erffborchgrave van Brussel, heere van Olmen, Bauwel, Boondael etca. dat hij is doende als Schouteth van Antwerpen ende Marcgrave des Lants van Rhijen met alle syne toebehoorten, waer-toe hy is gestelt ende gecommiteert by opene bezegelde brieven ons Genaedighe heere de Coninck als hertoch van Brabant etca. van der date den twee en twintichsten Meert XVIc acht en twintich daeroff cotype geinsereert staet in prohemio van de Jerste Reeckeninghe van desen Schouteth van allen tghene hy ontfanghen ende vuytgegeven heeft ter saecken van de exploicten vervallen ende opcoeminghe des voorschreven Schouteths offitie beginnende den jersten Januari XVIc een en vyftigh tot ultima junii XVIc acht en vyftich welcke Reeckeninghe gemaect is in ponden schellinghen artois gelyck hier nae volght." Cf. Van den Branden 1883, p. 838; D'Hulst 1982, p. 330, note 86.
- 13 Van den Branden 1883, p. 838.
- 14 Ibid., p. 838.
- 15 Bierma et al. 2005, p. 115 f.
- 16 Bujanda 1996, p. 127.
- 17 De Bie 1662, p. 238.
- 18 Ulrich Heinen, in: Brussels/Kassel 2012 (a), pp. 133–140.
- 19 Cf. D'Hulst 1982, p. 17.
- 20 Cf. Rooses 1906, p. 6.
- 21 For Rubens's acquisitions at the 'Officina Plantiniana' see Arents/Thijs 2001.
- 22 Cf. Damm/Thimann/Zittel 2012, with further literature.
- 23 Cf. Bialostocki 1988, pp. 150–165, 267–270.
- 24 Cf. Golahny 2003, pp. 230–237.
- 25 De Lairese 1701, p. 70.
- 26 "Voor eerst, hoedanig het voorval, 't geen men van zin is te verbeelden, door den Schryver beschreeven is; en of wy met zyne meening in alle deelen overeen komen: ten tweeden, de uitleggingen van den besten Schryver over het geval na te leezen, om niet tegens den rechten zin aan te gaan." De Lairese 1712, p. 122 f.
- 27 Cf. Arents/Thijs 2001.
- 28 Cf. Seifert 2011, pp. 69–84, 97–127; Seifert 2012.
- 29 Cf. Briels 1976, pp. 231–232, 234; Bredius 1915–1922, vol. 1, pp. 171–176, 175–176. For prices see Selm 1987, pp. 344–349.
- 30 Montias 1993, p. 183.
- 31 Cf. Duverger 1984–2009, vol. 4, pp. 200–211, no. 1025, esp. 205, 209–211.
- 32 Jacob Jordaens, *Diana and Actaeon*, c. 1640, oil on wood, 53,5 × 75,7 cm, Dresden, Gemäldegalerie; Cf. Brussels/Kassel 2012 (a), no. 86, pp. 235–236.
- 33 Cf. Van Mander 1604 (c), fol. 22v.
- 34 Von Sandrart 1675, vol. 3, 2. Haupt-Theils 3. Teil, pp. 1–5. For Jordaens's use of literary sources cf. Jakumeit-Pietschmann 2010, esp. pp. 118 f.; Van Eldere 1988, p. 33.
- 35 Aegidius Sadeler II after Joseph Heintz the Elder, *Diana and Actaeon*, engraving, 379 × 513 mm; Jonas Umbach, *Diana and Actaeon*, etching, 77 × 122 mm. Cf. also Irene Schaudies, in: Brussels/Kassel 2012 (a), no. 86.
- 36 Cf. Joost Vander Auwera, in: Brussels/Kassel 2012, pp. 165–175.
- 37 Antwerp, Stadsarchief, Notaris G. Le Rousseau 2436 (1647), fol. 184: "verclaerden ende attesteerden op hunne manne waarheydt eedt presenterende des versocht zynde dat sy wel weten ende warachtich is, dat alhier dagelycx vercocht ende verhandelt worden de boecxkens van printen van Carats, van Rouse ende van De Jode inhoudende boeleringen van de goden ende diergelijcke, ende dat deselve printboecxkens onder de liefhebbers gemeyn syn, jae dat oick vercocht ende verhandelt worden diergelycke printboecxkens van Rafaël Urbino ende Marco de Ferrare ende de nieuwe gemaect tot Parys by Peter van Mol dewelcke veel schandaleuser syn als de voors. Van Carats, Rous ende De Jode." See Duverger 1984–2009, vol. 5, no. 1478, p. 399.
- 38 For the debate on nudity in Painting see Freedberg 1971, pp. 229–245; De Clippel 2011; Ursula Härtling: Mehr Sex auf dem Land? Über Dekorationsprogramme und die Erweiterung der Bildthemen in flämischer Malerei im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert (lecture in Wolfenbüttel, to be printed).
- 39 Jacob Jordaens, *Candaules and Gyges*, oil on canvas, 193 × 157 cm, Stockholm, Nationalmuseum. Cf. Nora de Poorter, in: Antwerp 1993, no. A76, pp. 236–239, with further reading.
- 40 For Lastman's knowledge of Herodotus see Seifert 2012, p. 161. For Rubens see Arents/Thijs 2001, pp. 143, 163, no. E27, E77.
- 41 Cf. Geerebaert 1924, p. 38, lists an edition of 1665 as the first Dutch translation.
- 42 Rühl 1871. For the Dutch translation see Geerebaert 1924, p. 127.
- 43 Golahny 2001, p. 234.
- 44 "Fuere Lydis multi ante Croesum reges variis casibus memorabiles, nullus tamen fortunae Can-

- dauli comparandus. Hic uxorem, quam propter formae pulchritudinem deperibat, praedicare omnibus solebat, non contentus voluptatum suarum tacita conscientia, nisi etiam matrimonii reticenda publicaret, prorsus quasi silentium damnum pulchritudinis esset. Ad postremum, ut adfirmationi suae fidem faceret, nudam sodali suo Gygi ostendit. Quo facto et amicum in adulterium uxoris sollicitatum hostem sibi fecit et uxorem, veluti tradito alii amore, a se alienavit. Namque brevi tempore caedes Candauli nuptiarum praemium fuit et uxor mariti sanguine dotata regnum viri et se pariter adultero tradidit.” The English translation quoted after: Justin, Cornelius Nepos, and Eutropius, literally translated with notes and an index by John Selby Watson, London 1853, p. 11.
- 45 Cf. Henkel/Schöne 1967, col. 1603 f. For tradition and interpretation of this story see also Morel 1997, pp. 105–120, and Nora de Poorter, in: Antwerp 1993, p. 236, note 3.
- 46 Cf. Guevara 1589.
- 47 Cf. Cats 1623, pp. 16–18; see Nora de Poorter, in: Antwerp 1993, p. 236, note 3, pp. 236 f., note 4–6.
- 48 Cf. Büttner 2006, pp. 119–121; Antwerp, Stad-sarchief, N 3399 (Notariaatsarchief: Hendrick van Cantelbeck Jr.: Protocollen, en staten van rekeningen 1647–1648), sub dato: “Compareerde in pro-pren persooene Sr Jacques Jordaens constschilder alhier my notaris bekennt, Ende heeft hij comparant voor de gerechte waerheyt, geseyt, verclaert ende geaffirmeert, waerachtig te sijne dat de vyff stucken schilderye die Sr Martinus van Langenhoven van hem comparant heeft gecocht bat dan twee jaeren geleden geheelycken van zyn eygen hant geschildert herschildert ende verandert zyn in dier voeghen dat niettegenstaende van hem comparant den selven zinne noch voor dato geschildert is geweest, naer welckers concept de selve huer be-ginsel ontfangen hebben, door het welcke hy comparant gemooveert zynde, heeft de selve laeten copieren, ende omme te verbeteren ende te amplieren tgene hem comparant int voorgaende mis-noegde.”
- 49 Cf. Büttner 2006, p. 120: “te weten het stuck zoo doude zongen ende candaul...[last letters unclear, N. B.], den argus ende den vulcanus heeft hij comparant van eerst aen begonst, sonder argelist. Aldus gedaen tell woonhuysse mijns notaris ter presentien van Guilliamb van Craesbeck meester van Zyne Majesteys munte ende Gaspar van Cantelbeck coop-man, inwoonderen deser stadt als getuygen hiertoe geroepen ende versocht.” See also Nora de Poorter, in: Antwerp 1993, p. 239, note 15.
- 50 Cf. Van Mander 1604 (c), fol. 62–63; De Bie 1662, p. 11; Von Sandrart 1675, vol. II, p. 12; Filipczak 1987, p. 155, p. 232, note 10; Nora de Poorter, in: Antwerp 1993, p. 239.
- 51 William Schubert von Ehrenburg/Charles Biset/Jacob Jordaens/Theodoor Boyermans/Cornelis de Heem/Pieter Boel/Jan Cossiers/Philips Augustyn Immenraet/Robert van der Hoecke, *Kunst-kammer*, 1666, oil on canvas, 141 × 263 cm, München, Alte Pinakothek, Inv. 896. Cf. Kurt Wettengl, in: Munich/Cologne 2002, no. 170, p. 387; cf. Nora de Poorter, in: Antwerp 1993, p. 239.
- 52 Cf. Ganz 2003, pp. 214–216, pointed to this connection (http://www.uni-augsburg.de/institute/iek/scripts/IEK_Mitteilungen_Sonderheft_2003.pdf f. Access: 30/05/2017).
- 53 Cf. Winner 1957, p. 88 f.
- 54 Cf. Winner 1957, p. 88 f.
- 55 Junius 1637, p. 23 (I, 3, 12); Van Hoogstraeten 1678, p. 70. For further examples cf. Schöne 1993, p. 205. Groundbreaking and still up to date: Lee 1940, especially p. 3. See also Heinen 2013, pp. 349–398, 468 f.
- 56 Jacob Jordaens, *Night Vision*, c. 1650, oil on canvas, 133 × 144 cm, Schwerin, Staatliche Museen. Cf. Gero Seelig, in: Schwerin 2003, no. 31. I am grateful to the author who called this painting to my attention and shared his thoughts about it with me.
- 57 Ov. met. 7, 700–722; cf. also Ov. met. 13, 576–622. For the hint to these passages I am indebted to Rainer Nickel. The scene with Myrrha, the incestual motive in Ov. met. 10, 472, does also not fit Jordaens’s painting.
- 58 Cf. *Fragmenta historicum graecorum*, ed. Karl Otfried Müller, Vol. 3, Paris 1883, No. 20, pp. 611–618. Cf. Bielefeld 1960, pp. 177–178.
- 59 Cf. Held 1962, p. 132, has rightly pointed out that in contrast to Phlegon’s story, a young man and a young woman are intruding on the sleeper.
- 60 The antique literature on dreams and apparitions is large. Held 1962, p. 133, quotes Plutarch. To this reference the erotic nightmare in Iamblichos *Dramat.* I, p. 221 ed. Hercher has to be added (the alp demon appears as τράγος); additionally the nightmares in Philostr. v. Apollon. *Tyan.* 6, 27 (the alp demon in shape of a satyre); Horat. *epod.* 5, 91–92 (the alp in shape of an evil ghost); Apuleius *Met.* 1, 11–12. (the nightmare is caused by Thessalian witches); Herodot 6, 65–66. (a deceased [φάσμα] appears to a woman in a nightmare and begets a son); the nightmare of Jacob (Genesis 32, 23–27.); the dream of Hygeinos after an epigram in

- Kaibel, epigr. gr. no. 802 (Pan–Ephialtes appears to the sick sleeper during his siesta and heals him). For these and more examples cf. Roscher 1900.
- 61 Art. somn. B. 1, 78; Artemidor 1991, p. 93. For this hint I thank Marion Giebel.
- 62 Cf. Lydis 2004, p. 102. For this hint I thank Marion Giebel.
- 63 Cf. Augustinus 1997, 15, 23, pp. 264 f.; Cochlaeus 1534, 1, 23.
- 64 Quoted after: <http://www.kakanien.ac.at/beitr/vamp/CTuczay1.pdf>. (Access: 30/05/2017).
- 65 Cf. for example Le Petit 1641, pp. 206–209.
- 66 Cf. Lomazzo 1973; Aretino 1997. I am indebted to Paula Simion for this reference.
- 67 The dream sequences in Dante only mention clothed women, for instance. I am grateful to the Professor for Romance Languages and Literatures Sabine Schmitz for her support in the search through the vernacular literatures.
- 68 “Ists möglich, dass sie mich auch kan im Schläfe höhnen?| Wars noch nicht gnung, dass ich mich wachend nach ihr sehnen| und so bekümmern muss, im Fall’ sie nicht ist hier?| Doch sie ist ausser Schuld. Du Morphen, machtest dir| aus mir ein leichtes Spiel! Der alte Schalk, der liebe| indem ich, gleich wie sie, frei aller Sorgen schliefte.| Er drückt’ ihr schönes Bild in einen Schatten ab| und bracht es mir so vor [...]” Also quoted in Held 1962, p. 134.
- 69 “Ik heb gezegt, dat ik die Schimmen als op een waassem wilde doen gaan; daar mede verstaande een dunne damp, om hun tot grond te dienen, een heel flaauwe slagschaduwe over dezelve grond slaande: welke damp en slagschaduwe my geen ander voordeel toebrengt, dan om een bovenaturlykheid uit te drukken, en een onderscheid te maaken tusschen menschen en gewaande menschen. Ik heb van Jordaans een diergelyke gedachte geschilderd gezien, alwaar een Man lag en droomde; en voor zyn bed stond een naakte Vrouw, welke zich niet anders vertoonde dan als een vrouw die by hem te bed wilde, t’en ware hy daar niet eenige wolken by gemaakt hadde, even of zy in een deur van wolken stond. Dit deed my gelooven, dat het een [156] Spook was geweest: maar het gaf ter waereld geen naare indruk genoeg, om dat het Spook, docht my, te veel gemeenschap met de rest had. De Vrouw was vlak van achteren verbeeld, en uittermaten schoon gekoloreerd: hebbende ik, en meer anderen, het zelve beeld nergens anders voor aangezien, dan een Model alwaar de rest tot vullinge van de doek bygelapt was. Maar keeren wy weder tot ons Tafereel.” De Lairese 1712, p. 155 f.
- 70 Held 1962, p. 131.
- 71 For Dürer and his collectors cf. Büttner 1997, pp. 27–36.
- 72 Cf. Schoch/Mende/Scherbaum 2001, no. 18; Schauerte 2012, pp. 119–121.
- 73 The research to this painting has indebted me to many persons whom I have asked for assessment and literary sources. At this point I would like to sincerely thank Gitta Bertram, Peter Csajkas, Thomas Erlach, Marion Giebel, Maria Koettnitz, David Marsh, Karl August Neuhausen, Rainer Nickel, Sabine Schmitz und Paula Simion.
- 74 Cf. Schauerte 2012, p. 121.
- 75 Cf. *ibid.*, note 22.
- 76 Daan 1971, p. 173.
- 77 For further examples see Büttner 2014.

PHOTO CREDITS

Fig. 1: RKD, img.no.0000017597; Fig. 2: Brussels/Kassel 2012 (a), no. 86; Fig. 3: Antwerp 1993, no. A76; Fig. 4: Cologne 2002, no. 170; Fig. 5: Schwerin 2003, no. 31; Fig. 6: Trustees of the British Museum