The Neapolitan Lives and Careers of Netherlandish Immigrant Painters (1575-1655)

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Introduction

The *Four Elements*, painted by the Fleming Louis Finson in 1611 in Naples (cover illustration and fig. 23, plate 7), shows the virulent battle between fire, earth, water, and air, personified by two men and two women of different ages. Pushing and pulling at each other in order to find a balance, their struggle refers to the equilibrium in the cosmos. Yet, within the context of this book, the dynamic image could also function as an analogy for the endeavours of immigrant painters to find a balance between different factors or indeed elements (e.g. their background, artistic skills and the circumstances and expectations they encountered) in order to negotiate their place in the host society.

Finson was not the only *pittore fiammingo* in Naples. The capital of the Spanish viceroyalty was an alluring destination for Netherlandish artists in the sixteenth and seventeenth century.[1] On his trip in 1591, the Haarlem engraver and painter Hendrick Goltzius studied the local art, natural marvels of the volcanic area of the Campi Flegrei and an antique sculpture of a youthful seated Hercules in the palace of the viceroy.[2] About 20 years later, in 1610, Gerard ter Borch visited the same area and made a set of drawings that illustrate the fascination of visitors with the spectacular volcanic landscape (fig. 1) along with the city of Naples itself. Approaching the city gates from the Via Appia, visitors would see the cupolas of the numerous churches, the

1 From a quick survey, it is clear that several Northern artists made a stopover in Naples during the period covered in this book. Three seventeenth- and eighteenth-century biographers (Van Mander 1604, Sandrart 1675 and Houbraken 1718-1721) mention a visit to Naples of the following Northern artists: Jan Stephan van Calcar (Van Mander, Sandrart), Pieter Vlerick (Van Mander), Gilles Coignet (Van Mander), Hendrick Goltzius (Van Mander, Sandrart), Ter Brugghen (Houbraken), Otto Marseus van Schrieck (Houbraken), Leonart Bramer (Houbraken), Joachim von Sandrart (Sandrart, Houbraken), Johann Wilhelm Baur (Sandrart, Houbraken), Govert van der Leeuw (Houbraken), Willem van Ingen (Houbraken), Jan van Bunnik (Houbraken). For the brief sojourn of Jan van der Straet (Giovanni Stradano) in Naples, see: Goldenberg Stoppato 2005. In addition, the fact that an artist drew Naples or surrounding sights is a strong indication that he visited the city. We can think of artists like Joris Hoefnagel, Guilliam van Nieulandt, Hendrick van Cleve, Jan van Stinemolen and Claude Lorrain.

2 Van Mander 1604, fol. 283v (Life of Hendrick Goltzius): 'Sy hebben voort hun reys tot Napels voleynt, de const aldaer ghesien, als oock te Puzziola de vremdicheden in der Natuere. Te Napels heeft Goltzius, ick meen in 't Paleys van den onder Coningh, gheconterfeyt een uytnemende Antijck, eenen sittenden en jeughdighen Hercules, en is met zijn gheselschap weder gekeert nae Room' (translation Hessel Miedema, in Van Mander 1994-1999: 'After that, they completed their journey to Naples and saw the works of art there, and also the interesting phenomena at Pozzuoli. In Naples, I believe in the palace of the viceroy, Goltzius drew an excellent antique statue, a seated young Hercules; and he and his companions returned to Rome').

Fig. 1: Gerard Ter Borch I, *View of Solfatara near Pozzuoli*, c. 1610, drawing in brown ink on paper (15.7 × 19.8 cm), Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.

towers, the Castel Sant'Elmo and the Certosa di San Martino overseeing the city centre from the Vomero hill (fig. 2). Naples was the second-largest city of Europe, with over a quarter-million inhabitants recorded during the last quarter of the sixteenth century and nearly half-million before the plague struck in 1656. The narrow streets of its old city centre teemed with people from all over the world. This bustling metropolis enchanted visitors with the beauty of its natural and cultural marvels, while at the same time overwhelmed them with its sheer size. Due to its complex social fabric – clashes between the government of the Spanish viceroys, the Neapolitan elite, Church officials and the population were frequent – Naples was characterized as 'a paradise inhabited by devils'.[3] Aert Mytens, Abraham Vinck, Louis Finson, Hendrick De Somer and Matthias Stom (the five painters who are at the heart of this book) were amongst those infernal inhabitants. These artists made Naples their home, temporarily or for the rest of their lives, instead of just visiting the city, like Goltzius and Ter Borch and many others had done.

3 Benedetto Croce traced the origin of this characterization back to the early sixteenth and possibly fourteenth century (Croce 1927).

Fig. 2: Gerard Ter Borch I, *View of Naples*, 1610, signed and dated 'G.T.B. fecit tot Napeles Anno 1610', drawing in brown ink on paper (13.7 × 20.2 cm), Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.

Early modern artists were remarkably mobile. Travel was an important element in the lives and artistic development of many early modern artists. Apart from travelling within their region of origin, many left their home country for months or years on end to visit faraway places. Italy was by far the most popular destination for artists from the Netherlands, although they also travelled to England, France, Spain, Scandinavia, Central and Eastern Europe and distant lands such as India.[4] The objective of the Italian journey was to study antique sculpture and architecture, the works of the great Italian masters of the past and present and for some, the unfamiliar landscape on the way. Such treasures were not available in the North and studying them was considered an important – even necessary – enrichment of the painter's visual repertoire. In the *Grondt der Edel-vry Schilderconst*, the artist and biographer Carel van Mander urged young artists to undertake this journey, while warning them of the many perils they would encounter on the road.[5] In the biographies of Netherlandish artists throughout the *Schilder-boeck*, Van Mander refers to the travel experiences of various artists. He mentions the

4 Cfr. notes 34, 38, 41.

5 'Den Grondt der Edel vry Schilder-const: Waer in haer ghestalt, aerdt ende wesen, de leerlustighe Jeught in verscheyden Deelen in Rijm-dicht wort voor ghedraghen' forms the introduction to the *Schilder-boeck* (Van Mander 1604, fol. 1r-57v).

people they met along the way, the artworks they studied and sometimes tells entertaining anecdotes to give the reader a taste of the life of the travelling artist. Over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, more than 600 Netherlandish artists are known to have undertaken the journey to Italy, and their experiences played an important role in the development of painting in the Northern Netherlands.[6]

Most journeys to Italy consisted of a round trip: after a certain period of time the artists returned to their home country. Only a few of them stayed to settle in a new city; these are the artists to which this study is dedicated. The difference between an itinerant and immigrant artist is in part related to the duration of the artist's stay. The five artists whose Neapolitan stay constitutes the case studies in this book lived in Naples for seven years or longer. Their social, professional and artistic perspectives changed once they decided to settle, although their initial encounter with Italy was likely quite similar to that of their colleagues who returned home. In fact, it is often impossible to determine whether they went to Italy with the intention to settle or if they made the decision later on. The choice to quit travelling and settle down is often a temporary decision. An immigrant would have to more mindfully negotiate between his native background and the culture and conditions of the new environment, whereas itinerant artists are moving on without truly considering the local circumstances. An adjustment in behaviour is implied, even though some artists lingered in their itinerant status without ever fully turning into an immigrant. In the essay 'Exkurs über den Fremden' (1908), the Jewish-Austrian sociologist Georg Simmel pointedly described the ambiguous condition of the immigrant and the status of the stranger in society. He defined the stranger, in this case in the guise of a travelling merchant, as someone 'who comes today and stays tomorrow – so to speak the potential wanderer, who, although he did not move on, did not quite outgrow the freedom of coming and going'.[7] As such, he makes an important point about the inherent flexibility and freedom of strangers. Yet, despite this continual state of movement, immigrant artists had to position themselves as inhabitants and artists within their new environment. In fact, a complex

6 This number is based on the ECARTICO database (http://www.vondel.humanities.uva.nl/ecartico/, date accessed: 6 January 2012). The number was probably much higher, as the emphasis of the database is on the seventeenth century and on artists from the Northern Netherlands.

7 Simmel 1908: 'der heute kommt und morgen bleibt – sozusagen der potentiell Wandernde, der, obgleich er nicht weitergezogen ist, die Gelöstheit des Kommens und Gehens nicht ganz überwunden hat'.

process of integration – or inclusion, when viewed from the perspective of the host society – began the moment painters instigated the transition from itinerant to immigrant artists.[8] This process will form the focal point of this book.

Through an analysis of the Neapolitan lives and careers of five *pittori fiamminghi*, in this book I will investigate how such individuals integrated artistically as well socially in Naples. I will do so by examining their artistic production and the way in which they positioned themselves in the Neapolitan art scene, as well as by defining their social and professional interaction with both compatriots and Neapolitans, whilst taking the role of local institutions in their integration into account. As we will see, the process of integration includes explicit decisions made by the artists, for example, to seek contact with certain people or to work in a specific manner. I am, however, reluctant to use the term 'strategy' as it implies rigorous planning and the subsequent execution of these plans. Although we should not completely dismiss the possibility that the five artists designed and implemented strategies to speed their integration, such assumptions cannot be proven on the basis of the available sources.[9]

The selection of Aert Mytens, Abraham Vinck, Louis Finson, Hendrick De Somer and Matthias Stom was based on two criteria. First, a certain amount of visual and documentary source material was available with which to answer the questions that are central to this research. For a thorough analysis, sporadic occurrences in archival sources do not suffice – and, indeed, this is all that is available for most *Fiamminghi* in Naples. Second, these five painters represent a variety of immigrant artist typologies, ranging from young first-generation immigrants (Mytens) to highly skilled cosmopolitans (Finson and Stom).[10] The period that will be explored extends from around 1574, when Aert Mytens settled in Naples, until the last documented

8 Sociologists prefer the term inclusion, because 'integration' has a negative political connotation today, since it places the responsibility solely on the immigrants, rather than on the host society. Since we are dealing with the early modern era and I am expressly examining the side of the immigrant painters, I believe the use of the term 'integration' does not have this problematic connotation.

9 In her dissertation 'Culturele ondernemers in de Gouden Eeuw: De artistieke en sociaal-economische strategieën van Jacob Backer, Govert Flinck, Ferdinand Bol en Joachim von Sandrart', Erna Kok explicitly uses the term 'strategy' to analyse the careers of four painters in Amsterdam. Although she admits that we can usually only recognize a strategy, in the sense of a coherent pattern of behaviour, in retrospect, the concept takes in a central role in her research (Kok 2013, esp. 16).

10 See the discussion of the typologies of immigrants in the last chapter.

presence of Hendrick De Somer in 1655. In other words, it begins with the first generation of Netherlandish painters in Naples and ends at right around the time when fewer *Fiamminghi* settled and the Neapolitan school of painting reached its greatest height. The temporal framework is important, because it was during this period that the position of foreign artists in Naples underwent a dramatic change.

Naples and *Napoletanità*

The geographical focus of this study is on the capital of the viceroyalty of the Spanish Habsburg, a reign which comprised all of Southern Italy. Early modern Neapolitan culture and society were exceptionally protean, constantly adapting to the presence of foreigners. Naples was ruled by many foreign sovereigns: the French Anjou (1266-1442), the Spanish Aragon (1442-1501) and the Spanish Habsburg (1504-1713) – and before that, Greeks, Romans, Normans and Hohenstaufen. All these different rulers and the influx of people from those regions left their mark on the city's culture and appearance. Moreover, Naples was an important hub for merchants from across the Mediterranean due its busy harbour; many of these resided in the city's national communities (*nazioni*).[11] This foreign presence not only affected the economic, political and social sphere: it deeply and constantly transformed the cultural fabric of the city. The history of early modern Naples is marked by a constant search for balance between the political, religious, economic and social elements both within and outside the city and the viceroyalty, leading to a multifaceted identity, or '*Napoletanità*'.[12] Because of its dynamic history, Neapolitan society provides a particularly fruitful context for an in-depth analysis of the integration process of foreign artists and in turn contributes to our understanding of early modern Neapolitan art, culture, and society.

11 For an analysis of Naples as a port city, see Colletta 2006.

12 The first comprehensive critical overview in English of different aspects of early modern Neapolitan history was published in 2013: Astarita 2013. Neapolitan identity, especially in relation to the court of the Spanish viceroys, have been addressed with some frequency by scholars in recent years, see: Pisani & Siebenmorgen 2009, Marino 2010, and Guarino 2011.

Painting in Naples

The presence of foreigners greatly impacted art in Naples.[13] In terms of painting, many artists from other regions of Italy and, indeed, from all of Europe came to work in Naples through the centuries, including Giotto, Polidoro da Caravaggio, Giorgio Vasari and Cavaliere d'Arpino, followed by Caravaggio, Domenichino, Ribera, Artemisia Gentileschi and Lanfranco in the seventeenth century. Brief Neapolitan sojourns by Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio (1571-1610) in 1606-1607 and 1609-1610 had an enormous artistic impact (fig. 3). It is telling that the arrival of the Lombard painter in 1606 is the end or starting point for many art historical surveys.[14] The narrative that Caravaggio took Naples by surprise and profoundly and irreversibly changed it, can be found throughout the historiography. In a way, the Spaniard Jusepe de Ribera (1591-1652), who settled in Naples in 1616, continued along the lines of Caravaggio. He arrived from Rome, where he had closely observed Caravaggesque and naturalist developments. Whereas the actual presence of Caravaggio and his works in Naples was quite limited, Ribera enjoyed a very successful career in the city for more than 30 years. The difference between the two masters is significant: Caravaggio instantly ignited a revolution, whereas Ribera immersed himself in the city and its art and changed the tissue of Neapolitan painting 'from the inside'. This shift in the character of the foreign presence in Neapolitan painting is connected to the steady development of a strong local interest in painting. A larger number of local men became painters and in turn this led to a more competitive and vital art scene.[15] The increased incentive to become a painter was related to a growing demand for painting from the 1570s onward.[16] Until the middle of the sixteenth century, there were few opportunities for painters in Naples.

13 See, for example: Waterhouse 1982; Leone de Castris 1991; Zezza 2010b; Conte 2012.

14 Martineau & Whitfield 1982; Leone de Castris 1991; Spinosa 2009; Spinosa 2010.

15 With the exceptions of Battistello Caracciolo (Bologna 1991, Causa 2000), Massimo Stanzione (Schütze & Willette 1992) and Domenico Gargiulo (Daprà & Sestieri 1994), comprehensive monographs on some of the most important Neapolitan painters have only been published during the last decade or so. On Pacecco de Rosa: Pacelli 2008; Girolamo Imparato: De Mieri 2009; Andrea Vaccaro: Tuck-Scala 2012; Bernardo Cavallino: Spinosa 2013.

16 Francis Haskell was the first to describe the Neapolitan art market, although his study was very preliminary (Haskell 1982). The historian Gérard Labrot has contributed the most to our understanding of the art market in Naples due to his incredible knowledge of the Neapolitan archives (see in particular: Labrot 1992; Labrot 2010). Whereas Labrot focused on the general movements, Christopher Marshall examined the position and behaviour of some individual artists within the Neapolitan art market: Marshall 2000, Marshall 2003, Marshall 2004, Marshall 2005, Marshall 2006, Marshall 2010, and Marshall 2016.

Fig. 3: Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio, *Seven Acts of Mercy*, 1606-1607, oil on canvas (387 × 256 cm), Naples, Chapel of the Pio Monte della Misericordia.

In 1568, Vasari complained that the city lacked sophisticated patrons who appreciated good art. Vasari, who had worked in Naples in 1544, mockingly stated that the Neapolitan elite were more interested in the dressage of horses than in the high art of painting.[17] However, the Neapolitan art market evolved rapidly in the years that followed. At first, it suffered from a lack of local painters. Moreover, generations of Neapolitan patrons focused on non-Neapolitan art, dismissing local production. The most striking examples of this 'artistic xenophilia' are the two most important commissions in the early seventeenth century: the decoration of the Cappella del Tesoro in the Cathedral of Naples and the project of the Certosa di San Martino.[18] In both cases, the patrons explicitly sought out foreign artists, especially from Bologna and Rome, causing intense anger and jealousy amongst local painters.[19] Neapolitan artists even went so far as threatening the Bolognese painters Guido Reni and Domenichino when they began work on the frescoes of the Cappella del Tesoro.[20] By the 1630s, Neapolitan painters had caught up with their foreign colleagues in terms of the quality of their output and their work was finally in high demand with patrons and collectors in Naples as well as abroad.[21]

Art historians have finally begun to give Neapolitan painting the attention it deserves, exploring it from new and compelling angles.[22] Groundwork in the form of solid surveys, monographs and comprehensive archival research has been carried out.[23] As of 45 years ago, the only comprehensive study on

17 Vasari describes the hardship experienced by Marco Pino da Siena: 'Avvenne che stando egli in Napoli, e veggendo poco stimata la sua virtù, deliberò partire da coloro che più conto tenevano d'un cavallo che saltasse che di chi facesse con le mani le figure dipinte parer vive.' Vasari 1568, vol. 2, 202 (Life of Polidoro da Caravaggio. For an analysis of Vasari's stay in Naples, see: Loconte 2008 and Willette 2017.

18 Schütze & Willette 1992, 109; Marshall 2016, 36.

19 Cavaliere d'Arpino, Guido Reni and Domenichino were approached by the masters of the Chapel to paint the frescoes. For the documents on the commission of the Cappella del Tesoro, see: Strazzullo 1978 and Strazzullo 1994. Although many Neapolitan artists worked in the Certosa from the 1630s onwards, initial fresco commissions went to Cavaliere d'Arpino. The architect and sculptor Cosimo Fanzago from Lombardy oversaw the whole construction and decoration of the Certosa. In his analysis of this large project, John Nicholas Napoli also mentions the rivalry between the foreign and local artists, see: Napoli 2003, esp. 102-103 and Napoli 2015.

20 For an account of this famous story, narrated by De Dominici, see: Wittkower & Wittkower 2007, 251-252.

21 We could think of Andrea del Rosso in Florence (Longhi 1956) and Lucas van Uffel and Andrea Lumaga in Venice (see Chapters 3 and 4).

22 Calaresu & Hills 2013, in addition to the other studies that are mentioned here.

23 Overviews: Martineau & Whitfield 1982; Bellucci 1984; Leone de Castris 1991; Abbate 2001; Abbate 2002; Spinosa 2010; Marshall 2016. The website of Fondazione Memofonte has

Neapolitan painting remained Wilhelm Rolf's *Geschichte der Malerei Neapels* of 1910.[24] Two important exhibitions in 1982 and 1984 again addressed the subject and paved the way for new research.[25] Although large gaps in our knowledge of Naples and Neapolitan painting still exist, this and other similar studies, which unavoidably has to build on the work of others, would not have been possible a decade ago.

Netherlandish Painters in Naples

From the 1570s onwards, Netherlandish art had a strong presence in the Neapolitan scene, with roughly 40 Netherlandish painters active for at least a year in the period of 1570 to 1656.[26] As will be discussed in the first two chapters, the number of Netherlandish painters in Naples reached its peak between 1570 and 1610. A community or 'colony' of Netherlandish artisans existed in that first period, but seems to have dissolved in the 1610s, by which point many artists had died or left the city.[27] Netherlandish painters were a conspicuous presence in the city and consequently almost every handbook on Neapolitan painting devotes at least a large paragraph and in most cases an entire chapter to the subject.[28] When the handbooks reach the 1620s, the *Fiamminghi* generally begin to play a less significant role in the narrative. This is partially due to the decreased number of artists from the North, but also to the aforementioned increased importance of local and Roman-Bolognese art.

We have very little knowledge about most of these Netherlandish painters, since their presence is often only testified by a sporadic mentioning

digitalized several early modern city guides of Naples: http://www.memofonte.it/. Fiorella Sricchia Santoro and Andrea Zezza (eds.) published a new edition of the *Vite de' pittori, scultori ed architetti napoletani* by Bernardo De Dominici (De Dominici 2003-2014). Many archival resources will be cited throughout this book.

24 Rolfs 1910.

25 Martineau & Whitfield 1982; Bellucci 1984.

26 Appendix 164.

27 Previtali 1975; Previtali 1980; Vargas 1991; Leone de Castris 1999; Leone de Castris 2007; Leone de Castris 2010.

28 One of the first studies on Neapolitan painting of the early modern era, a long article by the renowned scholar Giovanni Previtali (Previtali 1975), pays a lot of attention to the presence on Netherlandish painters in Naples at the end of the sixteenth century. Leone de Castris gives the *Fiamminghi* a prominent place in his overview of Neapolitan painting during the last quarter of the sixteenth century as well (Leone de Castris 1991). Also see: Leone de Castris 1999, Causa 1999.

of their name – or an Italian interpretation of their name – in documents. In most cases, few or no artworks survive, which makes it hard to reach solid conclusions about their artistic integration. Whereas the scarce information about those unidentified painters provides an indication of the popularity of Naples as an artistic centre, it does not offer much details concerning the circumstances under which they settled or their ties to the local community. Therefore, these artists will only be mentioned here in passing. In the case of the five selected artists, sufficient written source material is available to characterize their integration process, although the type of material varies from case to case. Such diversity of visual and written source material offers the opportunity to explore how we can reconstruct the life and career of an artist via different routes. Depending on the source material available, the focus of each chapter will shift to different aspects of the process of integration. The widest selection of extant source material was available for the first chapter, which focuses on the Neapolitan career of Aert Mytens. These include a biography written by Carel van Mander only three years after Mytens' death, as well as ample archival material and a small (but securely identified) oeuvre of extant works. By contrast, no paintings by Abraham Vinck survive, but we do have a long list of bank payments, his *processetto prematrimoniale* and other documents concerning his social life. Louis Finson signed and dated a small number of paintings, which can be juxtaposed with bank payments and correspondence about him by Nicolas Fabri de Peiresc, as well as other written sources. For a long time, no archival sources were available regarding the Neapolitan careers of Matthias Stom and Hendrick De Somer, but recent discoveries of archival documents by myself and others now offer the possibility of reconstructing their social integration in the city. The two artists are exceptional in that they are mentioned in early modern Neapolitan publications such as De Dominici's artist biographies and various city guides. With regard to the artistic production of these two artists, we have comparatively comprehensive oeuvres at our disposal as well as information in published inventories of Neapolitan collections.[29]

29 The careers of Dirck Hendricksz Centen, François de Nommé, Didier Barra and Loise Croys, other members of the Northern painters in Naples, are well documented and have been studied (Vargas 1988; Nappi (M.R.) 1991).

Mobility of Artists

Confrontation between different cultures – and the subsequent interaction between cultures – is a central concept in the research tradition of cultural exchange, which pervades many disciplines of the humanities.[30] The exchange of culture takes place in the form of the exchange of objects, ideas and practices. In the past, the active role of artists in the process that is implied by the term 'artistic exchange' was often ignored by art historians. They spoke of seemingly untethered 'influence' to convey the way in which one artwork shaped another in terms of specific motifs, style or technique. Although Michael Baxandall firmly dismissed the concept of 'influence' as early as 1985, emphasizing that similarities between artworks always indicate intention and an active choice by the artist, this terminology is still pervasive in much of the research on artistic exchange (and in art historical research in general).[31] Scholars often recount how an (itinerant) artist encountered an artwork and was subsequently 'influenced' by it, without acknowledging the process by which an artist actively chose to use certain elements of the artwork while disregarding others.

As a concept, influence is closely related to the concept of transfer. The distinction between two central concepts, cultural transfer and cultural exchange, is of notable importance in the context of this study.[32] Transfer suggests that an idea or a thing is moved and placed into an alien environment without further consequences. In other words, 'transfer' does not concern an active process, with choices by individuals and specific circumstances, but the objective movement of objects (of culture) and ideas. As such, transfer is a problematic concept, since a person – the newcomer as well as the host – is

30 The series Cultural Exchange in Early Modern Europe 1400-1700, with the four volumes: I: Religion and Cultural Exchange in Europe, II: Cities and Cultural Exchange in Europe, III: Correspondence and Cultural Exchange in Europe, IV: Forging European Identities, is a great overview of how the different disciplines in the humanities are working on cultural exchange at the moment. The series is a result of a large ERC project (Muchembled 2007).

31 Baxandall 1985, esp. 58-62. The discussion about 'influence' is still ongoing today: Stephen Campbell felt it was still necessary in 2004, 20 years after Baxandall dismissed 'influence', to state: 'In place of a notion of influence based on passive absorption of an exemplary model, I propose a model of selective and deliberate cultural appropriation for which the term "translation" seems most suitable.' (Campbell 2004, 147). Also see: Sluijter 2006, 18-19 and Kim 2014, 11-37 (Chapter 1: Mobility and the Problem of 'Influence').

32 Roeck 2007, 3-4: 'The former [transfer] simply means that something has been "transferred" from one culture to another – a process with an active giver and a completely passive receiver, something which almost never occurred in historical reality. Cultural exchange, by contrast, describes a much more dynamic process involving an interaction between "giver" and "receiver".'

always actively dealing with the unknown object or idea and interpreting it from his or her own perspective. The concept of exchange, which implies a certain dynamic between different sides or an active negotiation or translation, is more viable.[33] The current study works from the assertion that the ways these Netherlandish painters reacted to the society and art of Naples was based on specific and individual choices or opportunities.

For the early modern period, art historians have examined artistic exchange between many regions and cities within Europe and with faraway regions in South America and the East.[34] The study of the exchange between the Netherlands and Italy is especially accentuated in the historiography due to the fact that Italian and Netherlandish regions and cities were exceptionally vital centres for the economy as well as the arts.[35] In the early twentieth century, G.J. Hoogewerff published several seminal studies on early modern Netherlandish painters in Rome.[36] Other important contributions have been made by Bert Meijer, Nicole Dacos and Bernard Aikema on Rome, Florence and Venice.[37] These and other studies illustrate the myriad ways in which Netherlandish and Italian art interacted, for example, through prints, collecting and through artists themselves. This book constitutes the first extensive study on Netherlandish painters in Naples, one of the most important yet understudied centres of migration, and as such broadens our understanding of Netherlandish painters in Italy.

Historians and art historians have only recently started to distinguish explicitly between different vehicles of exchange for artistic ideas and practices (i.e. written texts, objects and people), thereby underlining the significance of each of them within the broader processes of artistic exchange.[38]

33 See Peter Burke's essay on cultural hybridity for a discussion of the terminology for and ways of conceptualizing the interaction between different cultures: Burke 2009. In their assessment of the field of artistic exchange, Stephen Campbell and Stephen Milner propagate the concept of translation, involving active choice, as a way to describe the interaction between cultures (Campbell & Milner 2004b, esp. 5-9).

34 To give just three examples: Campbell & Milner 2004a (artistic exchange within Italy), Vandenbroeck 1991 (artistic exchange between Europe and Latin America), DaCosta Kaufmann & North 2014 (artistic exchange with Asia). The 'Gerson Digital' project of the Rijksdienst voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie/Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD) in The Hague maps the activity of early modern Dutch and Flemish artists abroad. This project is based on and named after the influential publication by Horst Gerson of 1942 (Gerson 1942 and Gerson 1983).

35 Scholten and Woodall 2014, 9-10.

36 Hoogewerff 1912; Hoogewerff 1942; Hoogewerff 1952.

37 Aikema & Brown 1999; Dacos & Meijer 1995; Meijer 2008.

38 For example, the project 'Cultural Transmission and Artistic Exchanges in the Low Countries, 1572-1672: Mobility of Artists, Works of Art and Artistic Knowledge' (NWO, 2009-2013),

A new avenue of inquiry concerning artistic exchange has emerged (albeit gradually), in the field of art history, namely the mobility of artists. Some of this scholarship has taken the form of quantitative research.[39] This can lead to interesting insights, such as the push-and-pull factors of certain regions over time and notions about the development of style, regional identity and artistic practice through artistic exchange. However, quantitative studies do not generally account for the importance of mobility on the careers and production of individual artists, something that until very recently received little attention.[40] In considering artist mobility, questions about the nature and purpose of their travels and, in the case of immigrant artists, the integration process, are foregrounded.[41] This study contributes to this relatively new approach by concentrating on the process of integration of five immigrant artists at different moments in time. The issue of artistic innovation will be given special attention, as it was of importance for the artistic integration of some of the artists discussed here. It has recently been argued that in the period around 1600 'innovation' became a recognized criterion for evaluating artworks.[42] Artists, including some of the painters discussed here, started actively pursuing and marketing their innovations. For this reason, it is necessary to assess to what degree they adhered to established artistic traditions and new developments in Naples.

Closely connected to cultural exchange is the notion of the (cultural or artistic) 'identity', the idea of belonging to a certain group, of the parties involved in the exchange, since the presence of the other necessarily

conducted by Filip Vermeylen of the Erasmus University Rotterdam and Karolien de Clippel of Utrecht University. The proceedings of the conference 'Art on the Move: Artistic Exchange and Innovation in the Low Countries, 1572-1700' that took place on 10-11 April 2014, were published in *De Zeventiende Eeuw* 31.1 (2015).

39 For example: De Koomen 2014 and the ECARTICO database (http://www.vondel.humanities.uva.nl/ecartico/).

40 David Young Kim re-evaluated the significance of the biography for our understanding of the mobility of Italian artists by investigating how Giorgio Vasari, Lodovico Dolce, Armenini and Federico Zuccaro address movement in their writings (Kim 2014).

41 The *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 63: *Art and Migration* (2014) focuses on the mobility of artists, including several case studies as well as articles with more general approaches, e.g.: Newman 2014, Noorman 2014. Several young scholars have recently finished dissertations on Netherlandish migrant artists: Erin Downey on a number of Dutch artists in late-seventeenth-century Rome (Temple University, 2016), Sander Karst on Dutch painters in late-seventeenth-century London (Utrecht University, 2018), Stephanie Levert on Dutch artists in seventeenth-century Paris (Utrecht University, 2017), Abigail Newman on Flemish painters in seventeenth-century Madrid (Princeton University, 2016) and Frederica Van Dam (Ghent University) on Netherlandish painters in England (1560-1620). Also see: Curd 2010.

42 Pfisterer & Wimböck 2010; Corsato & Aikema 2013.

stimulates the defining of the self. As mentioned above, society and culture in Naples were protean and complex. Consequently, one must keep its dynamic and heterogeneous character in mind when considering the interaction of Netherlandish painters with the city and its inhabitants. The recognition of Netherlandish painters as different, and more specifically as Netherlandish, is relevant here.[43] In the last chapter, we will return to the question whether Neapolitans attributed a specific artistic identity to Netherlandish artists and, furthermore, whether the *Fiamminghi* constructed one for themselves in order to position themselves as artists.

Outline of the Book

In each chapter, the life and career of a different *pittore fiammingo* in Naples will be considered, with the exception of Chapter 2, which examines the careers of two artists whose lives were intricately connected. Case studies are placed in chronological order. Chapter 1 focuses on Aert Mytens, an artist from Brussels who lived in Naples between circa 1575 and 1598. Many ideas that will re-appear in the other chapters are introduced here for the first time. As such, this chapter also serves as an extension of the introduction. In Chapter 2, I discuss the Neapolitan careers of Abraham Vinck and Louis Finson, who are documented in Naples between 1598 and 1609 and between 1604 and 1612, respectively. Hendrick De Somer, who arrived in Naples in 1622 and remained until at least 1655, is the subject of Chapter 3. The relatively short Neapolitan sojourn of Matthias Stom, who was in Naples during the 1630s (c. 1632-c. 1639), is the focus of the fourth chapter. Although the chronological order and the time span of 80 years (1575-1655) covered by this book suggest a complete and continuous narrative about the Netherlandish painters in Naples, this is not my aim. Rather, I seek to better understand the individual choices of these five artists. By studying their specific responses to the distinctive cultural environment of Naples, which was undergoing rapid social and artistic changes during this period, we can obtain a deeper insight into the possibilities and subsequent choices available to these artists, and thereby into the process of artistic and social integration. In the last chapter, all five narratives come together to address a number of issues that were relevant to all five artists – and to migrant artists in general.

43 For a discussion of the issue of the identity of Netherlandish art, see: Scholten & Woodall 2014, 25-26.