



The Dutch Embassy to Isfahan (Persia) in 1651-52 led by Johannes Cunaeus

A New Interpretation of Weenix's Monumental History Painting

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Brightly-coloured oriental costumes, a palm tree, a town dominated by strange buildings: at a glance it is obvious that this monumental painting by Jan Baptist Weenix has to be of a coastal landscape somewhere far from Europe (fig. 1).¹ In the centre of the picture we see a group of horsemen; the two most opulently dressed among them are undoubtedly the principals in the scene. In the foreground a group of women and children in fantasy costumes are making music and dancing. Ships flying Dutch flags lie at anchor in the background.

By the early nineteenth century this Dutch picture had found its way to Austria, where it featured in various private collections. It was known as *The Entry of a Dutch Governor in Ceylon*, but when the Rijksmuseum acquired the work in 1953 it was obvious that this identification did not hold water.² The location, the costumes and the figures cannot be associated with Ceylon (present-day Sri Lanka) in any respect.³ Remmet van Luttervelt, curator of the Dutch History Department, consequently started to look for a better candidate.⁴ He found it in Johan van Twist's mission to the Sultan of Bijapur in India in 1637. This diplomatic mission took place at the time of the blockade of Goa (1636-38) which, Van Luttervelt

Detail of fig 1.

suggested, was shown in the background.⁵ He put forward various arguments for this. He thought he recognized the largest building in the town as the cathedral of Goa and could make out the arms of the city of Utrecht on the stern of the largest ship in the background – *The Utrecht* was one of the ships that had actually been at the blockade. The group of horsemen must therefore represent Van Twist's delegation. The ambassador himself wears the gold cloak given to him by the Sultan as a gift at his leaving audience.⁶

The fact that the scene could be linked to actual historical events made Van Luttervelt's interpretation attractive, and partly for this reason the painting became one of the Dutch History Department's key works. The undeniable artistic quality also underlined its particular importance. It is a typical work by Weenix, characterized by a colourful palette and swift, assured brushstrokes that magnificently express his skill and bravura. Houbraken wrote that the artist preferred to paint fast, for '... to him, painting three half-length life-sized portraits with embellishments on a summer's day was just playing'.⁷

Jan Weenix, who was born in Amsterdam in 1621, had spent the years between 1643 and 1647 in Rome, where, among other things, he had worked for Cardinal



Fig. 1

JAN BAPTIST WEENIX,
*The Dutch Embassy
 to Isfahan (Persia) in
 1651-52 by Johannes
 Cunaeus, c. 1658-59.*
 Oil on canvas,
 101 x 179 cm. Rijks-
 museum, Amsterdam
 (inv. no. SK-A-3879).

Camillo Pamphili and the cardinal's uncle Pope Innocent X.⁸ These connections inspired him to start signing his work *Gio[vanni] Batt[ist]a Weenix*, after the Pope's original forenames. On his return from Italy the artist worked first in Amsterdam, then in Utrecht and lastly in the Huis ter Meij near De Haar. In view of the Italianate signature, the work in question can be dated with certainty to after 1647. Stylistic characteristics, particularly the powerful chiaroscuro and the strong colour contrasts, point to a date in the second half of the 1650s. In any event the picture dates from before 25 April 1659, the day on which the painter's estate was sold.

Not India – Persia

An informal note in the painting's archive folder makes it clear that at least one art historian had previously called the reliability of Van Luttermvelt's interpretation into question, but it has otherwise not been disputed since the 1950s.⁹ This is remarkable, because the unusual combination of two different and barely related events – a mission and a blockade – is without precedent

and at the least gives rise to questions. What's more, the mission took place in 1637, Van Twist died in 1643 and the painting unarguably dates from after 1647, so Van Twist himself can be ruled out as the client. It has been suggested that family members commissioned Weenix to paint a posthumous picture, but that is highly unlikely.¹⁰ Why would relatives want to have a picture painted of a mission to a place of little importance to the Dutch East India Company (the VOC) and not, for example, of the far more important post of governor of Malacca that Van Twist held in 1641-42? The pomp and ceremony in the image is inconsistent with the small scale of the mission to Bijapur. And, lastly, a glance at contemporary scenes of Goa, including that of the siege of 1638, makes it clear that the town in the painting cannot possibly be identified as Goa.¹¹

If Van Luttermvelt's identification is not tenable, though, what did Weenix actually depict? An initial clue to the correct interpretation of the scene can be found in older records. The painting is mentioned for the first time at

the sale of the collection of Joan de Vries (Amsterdam, 1633-1708), who was twice burgomaster of Amsterdam, in 1686 and 1690, and was a director of the Amsterdam chamber of the VOC between 1681 and 1708.¹² We do not know whether De Vries bought the painting or inherited it. In the sale, which took place in 1738, it was described as the welcoming of a VOC envoy in Persia.¹³ A short time later the painting came into the possession of the Leiden collector Johan van der Marck (Leiden, 1707-72). It was also linked to Persia at the sale of his collection in 1773: 'A splendid composition with many figures. In it one sees a gentleman portrayed on the right, seemingly a Dutch Ambassador, accompanied by his private secretary and retinue, all on horseback, being led to the court, and being welcomed by several Persian (sic) women, for the most part playing music: there is also a girl who holds two dogs on a leash; and on the left a harbour, with some ships and a boat.'¹⁴ We then lose sight of the picture for some years until it resurfaces in 1808 in an anonymous sale.¹⁵ It was then owned by the artist and dealer Louis Bernard Coclers (Liège, 1741-1817), who tried to sell it without success. Knowledge of the event and where it took place appears to have been lost in the meantime.

The townscape in the background provides a further clue that this is a mission to Persia. The many towers look more like sandcastles than real buildings, but Weenix actually did use an existing model for it. The town, with slight modifications, was copied from a view of the island of Hormuz off the coast of Persia in Isaak Commelin's *Begin ende Voortgangh der Vereenigde Nederlantsche Geoctroyeerde Oost-Indische Compagnie*, published in 1646 (figs. 2, 3).¹⁶ In this famous compilation, the scene was used to illustrate Pieter van den Broecke's account of his travels to Persia in 1629.¹⁷ Other elements of Weenix's composition also appear to be taken

from this same travel journal. It is noticeable, for example, that the ship in the background bears the arms of Utrecht on its stern. Van Luttervelt associated this detail with the blockade of Goa, but it is more likely that Weenix saw it in Commelin's book; Van den Broecke sailed to Persia on board *The Utrecht*, which is depicted in Commelin's compilation.¹⁸ The group of women dancing and making music may also derive from Van den Broecke, who mentions in his report the beautiful courtesans who entertained the company during an audience with a local ruler.¹⁹ The painter dressed them in fantasy costumes. In the seventeenth century costumes like these were associated with gypsies, who were to be seen more and more often in the Netherlands.²⁰ As a rule they were called 'heydenen' (heathens), and were thought to have descended from the original inhabitants of ancient Egypt and Babylon. Weenix was undoubtedly trying to evoke an exotic atmosphere with this group of gypsies, but he may also have wanted to suggest a link with Babylon and in so doing with the Middle East and Persia.

The Embassy of 1651-52

Everything seems to indicate that Weenix wanted this picture to depict a Dutch embassy in Persia. It is not hard to guess which journey it referred to, as there is only one good candidate.²¹ On 15 September 1651 two ships carrying a Dutch delegation led by Johannes Cunaeus (Leiden, 1617-73) left Batavia for the Persian capital, Isfahan.²² The aim of the mission was to restore relations with Persia, which had cooled in the 1640s.²³ Persia was important to the VOC because of its silk, for which the company wanted to negotiate lower tolls, and its horses, whose import had to be safeguarded. They were, as a contemporary rhyme by Everard Meyster reveals, proverbially in great demand, 'One quiet



Persian horse / Is (as the old saying goes) / Worth more than a stable of donkeys / Which make much noise for little return'.²⁴

The surviving account of the journey gives a good idea of the impressions it made on the delegates, of the luxurious receptions, the lavish gifts and the many trips to ancient and modern sites of interest, including the ruins of Persepolis.²⁵ It was kept by the secretary Cornelis Speelman (Rotterdam 1628-Batavia 1684), the future governor-general of the Dutch East Indies. Aside from this account, the embassy left only faint traces in Dutch history. The painter Philips Angel (Leiden, c. 1618-Batavia after 1664), famous for the speech about painting he made in Leiden on St Luke's Day in 1641, was one of the party in his capacity as a senior merchant. He made countless drawings on the way but none have survived.²⁶ When the mission came to an end he became a painter in the service of the Shah and worked at the Persian court for many years.²⁷

In the end the journey from Batavia and back took more than a year. The ships arrived at Gamron, present-day Bandar Abbas, on 24 December.²⁸ The company spent more than two weeks in the Persian seaport before setting out on the overland journey to the court of Shah Abbas II (1624-66) in Isfahan, where they arrived at the end of February. The negotiations dragged on, and the return journey did not begin until months later, in June. Cunaeus and his party returned to Batavia in December 1652.

Weenix's painting probably depicts the reception of the Dutch embassy in Bandar Abbas. As we have seen, the town in the background was copied from a picture of the island of Hormuz. In Van den Broecke's time Hormuz was still owned by the Portuguese and was of great importance to European trade with Persia, but in 1622 the island was conquered by Shah Abbas the Great and trading shifted to the nearby coastal town of Gamron (Bandar Abbas). Cunaeus's ships did

Fig. 2
View of Gamron
(Bandar Abbas),
from: I. Commelin
(ed.), *Begin ende
Voortgangh der
Vereenigde
Nederlantsche
Geoctroyeerde Oost-
Indische Compagnie*,
Amsterdam 1646, 11,
between pp. 106-07.



Fig. 3
Detail of figure 1,
showing the town
of Bandar Abbas
reversed.

not call at the island. Weenix must have conflated the two places – which is hardly surprising, given their histories.²⁹ The most prominent figure is Cunaeus, flanked by an Oriental who must represent either the governor of Bandar Abbas or the *Sjah-bender* (harbour-master), who accompanied the group.³⁰ There is a second Dutchman half hidden behind Cunaeus. In the Van der Marck catalogue of 1773 the man is described as his private secretary ('zynen Geheim-Schryver'). This identification may well be based on an older tradition and we should recognize the man in the red coat as Cornelis Speelman, who was indeed responsible for the account of the journey.

It is tempting to see in the scene a kind of reconstruction of the reception in Bandar Abbas. In Speelman's account we read that the ambassador went to the palace of the 'sultan', the governor of the town, on 26 December.³¹ Then the mixed company, including the *Sjah-bender* and more than fifty of

their followers ('en wel ruym vijftigh hunner volgers'), rode to a temple outside the town. Gifts were ceremonially exchanged there and a letter from the Shah to the visitors was read aloud. The governor presented Cunaeus with a horse and a *khilat*, the ceremonial robe that Oriental monarchs gave to distinguished guests.³² Afterwards the company made its way to the Dutch commercial offices in the town and the Dutch ships fired a number of salutes. Finally there was a celebratory feast and the governor of Bandar Abbas was presented with a large dog as a gift in return, a gesture to which the dogs in Weenix's painting may refer.³³

In any event it is clear from Weenix's painting that Cunaeus is partly portrayed in Oriental dress; he wears with considerable assurance a *khilat* that he received in Persia. It would seem obvious that this is not the *khilat* he was given by the governor, but rather one of the gifts that he was said to have received in Isfahan from the Shah himself. In Cornelis Speelman's



account we read that among the gifts the envoy received there were '1 saddled dapple-grey horse with a gold bridle and the buckles of the saddle also of gold', '1 cloth of silver chemise' and '1 jerkin or doublet of gold-woven velvet'.³⁴ When he got back to Batavia he had to surrender the dapple-grey horse and the fifteen other horses he had been given by various local leaders, but he was allowed to keep the *khilat*.³⁵ Although Weenix's depiction of the clothes is not detailed enough for us to be sure, it seems that for the occasion Cunaeus had himself portrayed in the *khilat* that the Shah had given him – a gold velvet coat over a silver shirt (fig. 4).

Johannes Cunaeus's Finest Hour: The Dutch Embassy to Isfahan in 1651-52

The prominent place the ambassador occupies in the scene – his is the only figure that actually appears to be a portrait – suggests that he commissioned the painting. But who was this man Cunaeus and what led him to have himself immortalized in such a monumental work?

Johannes Cunaeus was the oldest son of an illustrious Leiden family.³⁶ His father was the famous scholar Petrus Cunaeus (Vlissingen 1586-Leiden 1638), who was vice-chancellor of Leiden University on several occasions in the 1620s and 1630s. In 1644 Johannes went to Batavia in the service of the VOC, where bit by bit he worked his way up through the ranks. In 1648 he married Susanna Calendrini (Amsterdam 1626-Leiden 1696) there. Apart from the embassy to Isfahan, he did little that was memorable during his years in the East Indies. He was present at all kinds of ceremonies, but did not perform any great acts. Albert Hotz, who published Speelman's account, wrote scathingly about Cunaeus's career: 'There is nothing ... in his short career in the Indies to indicate that he rendered services

which might entitle him to special recognition, either before or after his Persian journey.'³⁷ He also asserted that Johannes owed both his position and his mission to Persia simply and solely to his prominent family. In December 1657 Cunaeus left Batavia for good. He was given command of that season's return fleet and instructions to visit the Cape of Good Hope in his capacity as director.³⁸ On his return he settled in Leiden, where he again slowly worked his way up in all sorts of official bodies. In 1671 he was elected to the city council.³⁹ He also resumed his interrupted study of the law – which would not result in a doctorate until 1667. On the basis of the scant knowledge at our disposal it is probably not fair to portray him, as Hotz does, as a rather mediocre personality with a lack of 'strength of mind'.⁴⁰ What is certain is that, as far as Cunaeus was concerned, the embassy to Persia, although not regarded by the VOC as particularly successful, had been the absolute peak of his career in the East Indies.⁴¹ For a whole year he had been treated like a prince everywhere he went, he had been showered with expensive gifts and honours, and he had been feted at banquets with lavish entertainments – music and dancing, sports and games. It is therefore no wonder that after his return to the Netherlands he had a monumental picture painted of the most prestigious moment of his career. What is remarkable is that he did not approach a local painter for it, but turned to the pricey Weenix. We can only speculate about the reason for this choice. Weenix had previously painted a number of exotic scenes as well as family portraits and in so doing may have built up a reputation, but for the time being the relationship between client and painter remains shrouded in mystery. Given that Cunaeus returned to the Netherlands in 1658 and Weenix died in 1659, the painting can be dated 1658 or 1659 with certainty. At that time

Fig. 4
Detail of figure 1,
showing Ambassador
Cunaeus.

Fig. 5
 JAN MIJTENS,
*Portrait of Johannes
 Cunaeus with his
 son Philippus*, 1663.
 Canvas, 107 x 85 cm.
 Cologne, Wallraf-
 Richartz-Museum/
 Fondation Corbond
 Köln/© Rheinisches
 Bildarchiv Köln.



the artist was leading a fairly retired life on a country estate near Utrecht – which again raises the question as to how the client could have come into contact with him.

We know little about Cunaeus's character. All we can say for certain is that he was not without vanity and had a certain feeling for art – he also went to an eminent non-local artist when he had two portraits of himself and his wife and two children painted in 1662-63. The two portraits, now in the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum in Cologne, are by the Hague court painter Jan Mijtens (figs. 5, 6).⁴² In the male portrait, Cunaeus's son Philippus holds

up a manuscript map of the Cape of Good Hope, an indication that his father was proud of his VOC past. The fact that Cunaeus looks younger and more sprightly there than he does in the work by Weenix, which must have been created some four years earlier, probably says more about the artist than the sitter. There is also a later portrait of Cunaeus. He is portrayed as one of the regents in a work by Abraham van den Tempel of 1668, *The Regents of the Heilige Geestweeshuis or Poor Orphanage in Leiden*.⁴³ However we cannot be certain which of the three central figures he is. Above right in the painting there is



Fig. 6
 JAN MIJTENS,
*Portrait of Susanna
 Calandrini and her
 daughter Maria*, 1662.
 Canvas, 107 x 85 cm.
 Cologne, Wallraf-
 Richartz-Museum/
 Fondation Corbond
 Köln/© Rheinisches
 Bildarchiv Köln.

an escutcheon with the names of the regents.⁴⁴ Cunaeus is listed second, which seems to indicate that he is the second from left – if so, he had put on a good deal of weight over the years. On the other hand, in a copy drawn by the Leiden painter Jacob van der Sluis (1660-1722) the man in the middle is identified as Cunaeus (fig. 7).⁴⁵ To make the confusion complete we should even consider the second figure from the right: it seems to me that his likeness to Weenix's portrait of Cunaeus is quite striking.

In conclusion

An embassy to largely unimportant

Bijapur or to Isfahan: that makes quite a difference! From a historical point of view the new interpretation of Weenix's painting is particularly interesting: it is the most important visual documentation of Dutch relations with mighty Persia – the land of thoroughbred horses and costly fabrics. It is, moreover, a superb example of the seventeenth-century interest in exotic themes. The painter himself had never been to Persia, but by drawing on a variety of sources he was able to create an image that undoubtedly gave an authentic impression – even if only because it reflected the existing stereotypes of 'the East'.

Fig. 7
 JACOB VAN DER
 SLUIS, COPY OF
 ABRAHAM VAN
 DEN TEMPEL'S
*The Regents of the
 Heilige Geestweeshuis
 or Poor Orphanage
 in Leiden* (1668).
 Red chalk on paper,
 33 x 44 cm.
 Regionaal Archief,
 Leiden.



NOTES

- 1 SK-A-3879. Jan Baptist Weenix, *The Dutch Embassy to Isfahan (Persia) in 1651-52* by Johannes Cunaeus, 1658-59. Oil on canvas, 101 x 179cm. Signed, bottom right, on the piece of paper held by the two women: Gio Batt Weenix. Formerly known as: Johan van Twist (d. 1643). *The Ambassador of the Dutch Fleet on his Way to the Sultan of Visiapur, with the Blockade of Goa, January-February 1637, in the Background.*
- 2 The Rijksmuseum acquired the painting in 1953 for 67,500 Austrian Schillings from the collection of the Viennese doctor Gustav Kurz. The earliest Austrian reference to the painting is Sale Adamovics, Vienna (Leyrer), s.d. 1856, no. 21 ('Leinwand monogr. Hoch 39", br. 67" [102 x 175cm]. Einzug eines holländischen Gouverneurs auf Ceylon. Aus der Sammlung des weiland Fürsten Kaunitz'). The suggestion that the painting came from the collection of the Austrian statesman Ernst Wenzel Anton Graf Kaunitz (1711-94) is expressed for the first time here. Although it lacked the usual Kaunitz stamp and was not mentioned in any of the Kaunitz catalogues it was thought to have been bought by Kaunitz in Paris for 14,000 francs. According to Frimmel this information was found in Adamovics's manuscript notes; see T. Frimmel, *Geschichte der Wiener Gemäldesammlungen*, 1, Berlin and Leipzig 1899, pp. 92, 115. However, since the painting was in the Netherlands until at least 1808 it cannot have been part of the Kaunitz collection. Our painting was recorded later in the collection of Andreas Ritter von Reisinger; he apparently inherited it from his father, who had family ties with Adamovics. See Frimmel op. cit.; H. Tietze, *Die Denkmale der Stadt Wien*, Vienna 1908 (M. Dvorák (ed.), *Österreichische Kunsttopographie*, Volume 11), pp. 240, 245.
- 3 For illustrations of places, costumes and figures in Sri Lanka, see R.K. de Silva and W.G.M. Beumer, *Illustrations and Views of Dutch Ceylon 1602-1796: A Comprehensive Work of Pictorial Reference with Selected Eye-Witness Accounts*, Leiden 1988.
- 4 R. van Luttervelt, 'Een nieuwe aanwinst voor de Historische Afdeling van het Rijksmuseum: een schilderij van J.B. Weenix', *Bulletin Rijksmuseum* 3 (1955), pp. 9-16.
- 5 For an account of this mission see J. Van Twist, *Generale Beschrijvinghe van Indien*, Batavia 1638, reprinted in: 1. Commelin, *Begin ende Voortgang vande Vereenigde Neederlandsche Geocroyeerde Oost-Indische Compagnie*, 4 vols., Amsterdam 1646, iv, pp. 1-83.
- 6 Van Luttervelt, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 12-13.
- 7 '... drie pourtretten levensgroot half lyf met bywerk te schilderen op een Somersen dag, was voor hem maar spelen gaan', A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen*, vol. 11, Amsterdam 1719, p. 82.
- 8 The most important works on Weenix are

- A. Bredius, 'Een testament van Jan Baptist Weenix', *Oud Holland* XLV (1928), pp. 177-78; W. Stechow, 'Jan Baptist Weenix', *The Art Quarterly*, XI (1948), pp. 181-99; R. Ginnings, *The Art of Jan Baptist Weenix and Jan Weenix*, (Diss.) University of Delaware, 1970; C. Skeeles Schloss, 'A note on Jan Baptist Weenix's patronage in Rome', in: *Essays in Northern European art presented to Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann on his sixtieth birthday*, Doornspijk 1983, pp. 237-38; A.C. Steland, 'Jan Baptist Weenix in Rom, 1643-1647. Zur Datierung des zeichnerischen Frühwerks anhand von Signaturveränderungen', *Niederdeutsche Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte* 33 (1994), pp. 87-112. It has only recently been discovered that Weenix must have died in 1659. His estate was sold in Huis ter Meij on 25 April 1659.
- 9 Josua Bruyn to Wouter Kloek, archive folder SK-A-3879. Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.
- 10 Van Luttervelt op. cit. (note 4), p. 16. [A. Van Schendel], *Catalogue of paintings Rijksmuseum Amsterdam*, Amsterdam 1960, pp. 338-39: 'if the identification is correct, the picture was probably commissioned by the descendants of Johan van Twist'. Norbert Middelkoop also gives the same explanation in N. Middelkoop, *The Golden Age of Dutch Art: Seventeenth Century Paintings from the Rijksmuseum and Australian Collections*, Perth 1997, p. 107.
- 11 For example P. van der Krogt and E. de Groot, *The Atlas Blaeu-Van der Hem of the Austrian National Library*, vol. v, 't-Goy Houten 2005, pp. 266-67, no. 38:29.
- 12 On De Vries: J.E. Elias, *De vroedschap van Amsterdam. 1585-1795*, Amsterdam 1963 (reissue Haarlem 1903-05), pp. 509-10; S.A.C. Dudok van Heel, *Van Amsterdamse burgers tot Europese aristocraten: hun geschiedenis en hun portretten: de Heijnenmaagschap 1400-1800*, 2. vols., The Hague 2008, II, pp. 971-72.
- 13 Sale, Joan de Vries (Amsterdam, 1633-1708), The Hague (N. van Wouw), 13 October 1738, no. 25 ('Een inhaling van een gezant van de O.I.Comp. in Persien, met veel beeldwerk, van Wenikz, hoog ruym 3v. breed 6v. [more than 94 x 188cm]'), 155 florins. The sale is recorded in G. Hoet, *Catalogus of Naamlyst van Schilderyen, met derzelver Pryzen Zedert een langen reeks van Jaaren zoo in Holland als op andere Plaatzen in het openbaar verkogt. Benevens een Verzameling van Lysten van Verscheyden nog in wezen zynde Cabinetten*, vol. I, The Hague 1752, p. 561.
- 14 'Een Kapitaale Ordinantie met veel Beelden. Hier in ziet men ter regter zyde verbeeld, een Heer, schynende een Hollands Afgesand, die verzeld van zynen Geheim-Schryver en verder Gevolg, alle te Paard zittende, naar 't Hof gevoerd, en door verscheiden Perziaansche Vrouwen, voor het grootste gedeelte Muziseerende, ingehaald word: vertonende zich daar by een Meisje, die twee Honden aan een lyst houd; en ter linker zyde een Zee-haven, met eenige Scheepen en een Boot.' Sale, Johan van der Marck Aegidiusz (Leiden, 1707-72), Amsterdam (H. de Winter et al.), 25 August 1773, no. 358.
- 15 Anonymous sale [L.B. Coelers, Rijfsnijder, Willem Gruyter Sr, and M.I. van Iperen], Amsterdam (P. van der Schley et al.), 23 August 1808 ('In een Bergachtig Landschap vertoont zig ter regterzijde den optogt van een Ambassadeur, waar bij eenige Heeren te Paard, in onderscheiden rijke Kleeding, op de voorgrond eene meenigte Vrouwen en Kinderen, ter linkerzijde een woelende Zee met zeilende Scheepen, en in 't verschiet een rijk gestrofferd Strand Op doek, hoog 38, breed 68 duim [99 x 178cm]' ('In a mountainous landscape there appears on the right the procession of an Ambassador, with several gentlemen on horseback, in diverse elaborate costumes, in the foreground a crowd of women and children, on the left a rough sea with sailing ships and in the distance a densely populated beach On canvas, 38 inches high, 68 inches wide [99 x 178cm]'). The names of the buyers and sellers have been noted on the copy of the sale catalogue in the Bibliothèque National, Paris. The work by Weenix was withdrawn.
- 16 Commelin, op. cit. (note 5), II, between pp. 106-07. For earlier scenes of Hormuz see Peter B. Rowland, *Essays on Hormuz*, 2009 (www.dataxinfo.com/hormuz/illustrations.htm).
- 17 W. P. Coolhaas, *Pieter van den Broecke in Azië*, 2 vols., The Hague 1962-63, vol. II, pp. 352-53.
- 18 Coolhaas, op. cit. (note 17), p. 353; Commelin op. cit. (note 5), II, between pp. 108-09.
- 19 'schoone Dans-hoeren', Commelin, op. cit. (note 5), II, p. 107.
- 20 J.G.M. Moormann, *De geheimtalen*, (ed. N. van der Sijs), Amsterdam / Antwerp 2002, pp. 252-62. With thanks to Bianca du Mortier for the identification of the clothes and the association with gypsies.
- 21 The journey of the merchant Leonard Winninx from Bandar Abbas to Isfahan in 1645 could have been a possible, yet extremely unlikely candidate, because of the remarkable similarity of the names. However the importance and success of this small

- mission was insignificant. See for this A. Hotz (ed.), *Journal der Reis van den gezant der O.I. Compagnie Joan Cunaeus naar Perzië in 1651-1652 door Cornelis Speelman* (Works published by the Historisch Genootschap, third series, no. 26), Amsterdam 1908, pp. xv-xvii. I have not discovered any family link between Winninx the merchant and Weenix the painter.
- 22 For Cunaeus, see A.J. van der Aa et al., *Biographisch woordenboek der Nederlanden, bevattende levensbeschrijvingen van zoodanige personen, die zich op eenigerlei wijze in ons vaderland hebben vermaard gemaakt*, 21 vols., Haarlem 1852-78, II, pp. 71-72; Hotz, op.cit. (note 21), pp. xxxi-xxxiv; A.N. Bauer, *Jan Mijntens (1613/14-1670): Leben und Werk*, Petersberg 2006, pp. 226-27.
- 23 Hotz, op. cit. (note 21), esp. xxiv.
- 24 'Een rustigh Persiaensche Paert / Is dan (alst ouwde spreekwoort luyt) / Meer dan een Stal met ezels waert / Daer meer geschreeuw als wol komt uyt', Everard Meyster, *Der Goden Lantspel*, 1655, quoted in: A.W. Weissman, 'Daniel Stalpaert', *Oud Holland* xxix (1911), p. 75.
- 25 The account is published in full in Hotz, op. cit. (note 21).
- 26 The fact that Angel drew places of interest en route is revealed by passages in Speelman's account of the trip, e.g. Hotz op. cit. (note 21), pp. 78, 121. According to Hotz the engraving of the ruins of Persepolis, illustrated in François Valentijn's *Oud en Nieuw Oost Indiën*, v, 1, 1726, pp. 221-24, is based on a drawing by Angel. See Hotz, op. cit. (note 21), pp. xc-xciv. Since Hotz the attribution of this (lost) preliminary drawing to Angel has no longer been disputed. See: H. Sancisi-Weerdenburg (ed.), *Persepolis en Pasargadae. Iraanse oudheden beschreven en getekend door Europese reizigers*, Groningen / Leiden 1989, p. 99, no. 23.
- 27 On Angel in Persia see W. van Bennekom, 'Philips Angel in Isfahan', in: J.E. Abrahamse et al., *De verbeelde wereld. Liber Amicorum voor Boudewijn Bakker*, Bussum 2008, pp. 193-98, 235-36.
- 28 Hotz, op. cit. (note 21), p. 16.
- 29 This confusion could easily have arisen because the print in Van den Broecke's account of the journey appears to show a town that was joined to the mainland, not an island.
- 30 Weenix painted a similar Oriental, also on a horse draped in leopard skin, in the painting *The Pirates' Raid*; Paris, Louvre (Photo Netherlands Institute for Art History, RKD).
- 31 Hotz, op. cit. (note 21), p. 19.
- 32 See for the tradition of honorific robing: S. Gordon (ed.), *Robes of Honour: Khilat in Pre-Colonial and Colonial India*, Oxford 2003.
- 33 Hotz, op. cit. (note 21), p. 30.
- 34 'I gesadelt appelgrauw paert met een goude thoom en de gespen der zadel mede van gout', 'I silveren laekense cabay' and 'I ballenpous ofte opperrock van goutgeweven felp', Hotz, op. cit. (note 21), pp. xxx, 257-58.
- 35 Hotz, op. cit. (note 21), p. xxx, note 2.
- 36 Genealogical information about the Cunaeus family in H.H. Roëll, 'Het geslacht Cunaeus', *De Nederlandsche Leeuw* xxi (1903).
- 37 Hotz, op. cit. (note 21), p. xxxii.
- 38 For this see H.B. Thom (ed.), *Journal of Jan van Riebeeck*, II, 1656-1658, Cape Town and Amsterdam 1954, pp. 239 ff.
- 39 T.H. Lunsingh Scheurleer et al. (eds.), *Het Rapenburg: geschiedenis van een Leidse gracht*, 6 vols., Leiden 1986-92, vol. III, 1988, p. 27.
- 40 Hotz, op. cit. (note 21), p. xxxiv.
- 41 For the voc's assessment of the embassy: Hotz, op. cit. (note 21), pp. xxxi-xxxii.
- 42 Jan Mijntens, *Portrait of Johannes Cunaeus with his son Philippus*, 1663, with pendant *Portrait of Susanna Calendrini (Amsterdam 1626-Leiden 1696), his wife, and their daughter Maria*, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum (on long-term loan); illustrated in Bauer op. cit. (note 22), pp. 47-48, 400, nos. A 103-04.
- 43 Abraham van den Tempel, *The Regents of the Heilige Geestweeshuis or Poor Orphanage in Leiden*; illustrated in D. de Witt, 'Abraham van den Tempel (1622/3-1672) as a draughtsman', *Oud Holland* cxix (2006), p. 168. All known portraits of Cunaeus are listed in E.W. Moes, *Iconographia Batava: beredeneerde lijst van geschilderde en gebeeldhouwde portretten van Noord-Nederlanders in vorige eeuwen*, 2 vols., Amsterdam 1897-1905, vol. I, nos. 1856 a-c. A portrait by Karel de Moor, Centraal Museum, Utrecht, was done posthumously, probably on the basis of Mijntens's work; see Bauer, op. cit. (note 22), p. 227.
- 44 In 1778 an engraving after the painting was made by A. Delfos. In it the escutcheon can be read easily: 'J Van Kerckesant // Mr J. Cunaeus // P D Buijtevast // Mr J Dieninga // Mr D Vruijt'.
- 45 Jacob van der Sluis, Copy of Abraham van den Tempel's *The Regents of the Heilige Geestweeshuis or Poor Orphanage in Leiden* (1668), red chalk on paper, 33 x 44 cm, Regionaal Archief, Leiden (Beeldbank Regionaal Archief Leiden, pv 25882).

