

Nadine Orenstein

The Large Panorama of Rome by Hendrik Hondius I after Hendrick van Cleef III

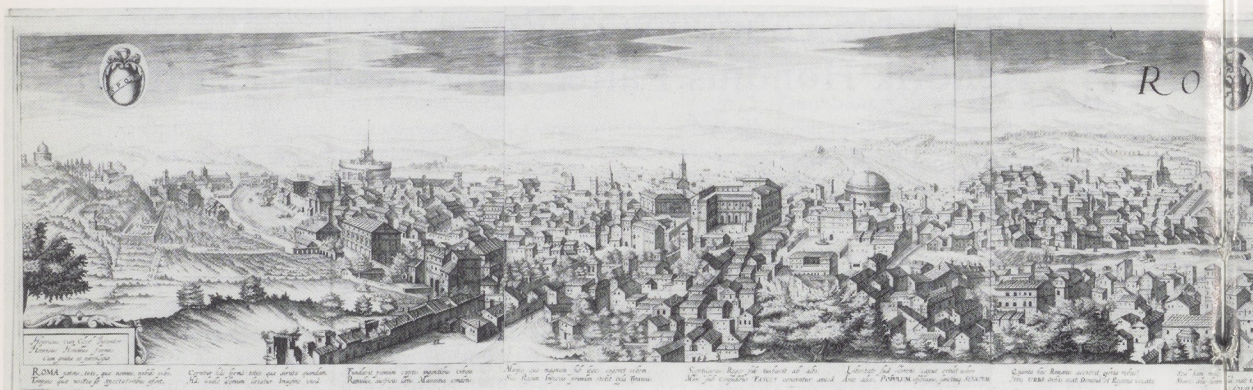
The Rijksprentenkabinet has recently acquired an impression of a large panorama engraving of the city of Rome (Fig. 1), published in the first years of the seventeenth century by the engraver and print publisher Hendrik Hondius I after the sixteenth-century Flemish artist Hendrick van Cleef III (Fig. 2).¹ This rare engraving is an unusual publication by Hondius after an equally unusual earlier design by Van Cleef. The early dating of the panorama makes it one of the earliest of the large seventeenth-century city views to be printed in the Netherlands. The print is composed of five plates attached horizontally which depict Rome as seen from the Gianicolo, one of Rome's seven hills. Among the outstanding monuments visible among the myriad of houses are the Colosseum, to the right; the Piazza del Campidoglio, in the center; the Pantheon, to the left of the center; the Castel S. Angelo, on the left; and the dome of St. Peter's just emerging from behind a hill on the far left (Fig. 3a-e). Above the scene are three coats-of-arms: on the left, the arms of the city of Rome with the initials SPQR, standing for *Senatus Populusque Romanus*; on the right, the arms of Pope Clement VIII of the Florentine Aldobrandini family; and in the center, the arms of the Holy Roman Empire. A cartouche on the lower left is inscribed with the name of the designer of the print and the address of its publisher: *Henricus van Cleef Inventor/Henricus Hondius formis*. Along the lower edge of the print runs a long

inscription in Latin², praising Rome and describing its history.

As far as we know, this is a unique impression of the first state of the *Panorama of Rome* published by Hondius. In the equally rare later states the print bears the publisher's address of the Amsterdam printmaker and publisher Claes Jansz. Visscher.³

Hendrick van Cleef (Antwerp 1524–Antwerp 1589) was a member of an Antwerp family of artists and, according to Van Mander, studied with the painter Frans Floris.⁴ He spent the years around 1551 and 1555 in Rome, but continued to produce Italian city- and landscape paintings and drawings long after his return to Antwerp. To create a panorama of this size, which depicts such a wide vista, Van Cleef must have compiled the design for the print from a number of smaller sketches. Although none of these drawings have survived, we can assume that they depicted not only narrower views of Rome from the Gianicolo, but also buildings in detail, monuments in their surroundings and the city in its surrounding countryside. Anton van den Wyngaerde, Van Cleef's contemporary and a draughtsman who specialized in city panoramas is known to have worked in this manner.⁵ He also made a panorama of Rome viewed from the Gianicolo, and as in Van Cleef's view, the city is shown from a low viewpoint, with trees, houses and monuments overlapping as they might appear to someone actually viewing the scene.⁶

Fig. 1. Hendrik Hondius after Hendrick van Cleef, *Panorama of Rome*, c. 1600. Engraving, 523 × 2251 mm. Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

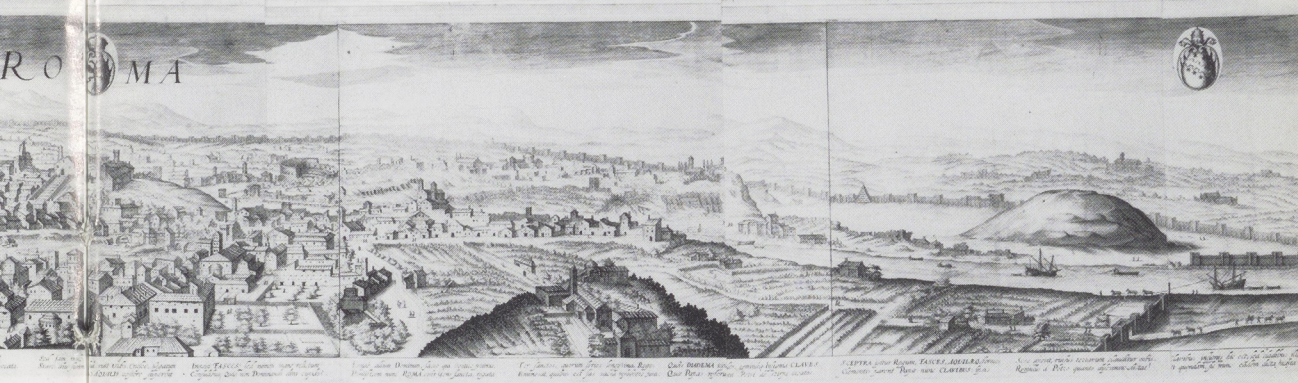


Van Cleef's depiction of the Piazza del Campidoglio in the *Panorama of Rome* allows one to date these lost sketches – and perhaps even the final design for the engraving – to the time of his stay in Italy. In the engraving, the Campidoglio has been represented as it appeared before the reconstruction of the façades of the buildings around the Campidoglio, designed by Michelangelo and begun in 1563, and before the construction of the stair leading to the Piazza which was carried out in the 1580s. The triangular roof of the Palazzo dei Conservatori and the uneven surface of the Piazza itself clearly indicate that the renovations had not yet taken place. Van Cleef's image of Rome can therefore be dated before the year 1563, or more precisely, to the years between 1551 and 1555 when the artist visited Rome. Anachronistically, the dome of St. Peter's, erected about 25 years later, between 1588 and 1591, is also shown in the panorama. While it is possible that Van Cleef himself added the dome to the design, it is more likely that this well-known addition to the Vatican, which was completed two years after Van Cleef's death, was added by Hendrik Hondius in order to update the representation of the city. If the now lost final design for the engraving was made by Van Cleef in the 1550s, it would have been an unusually early example of a city view by the artist whose city views date mainly from the 1580s. In favor of an early dating is the fact that the *Panorama of Rome* is so different in appearance from Van Cleef's later works, such as the drawings in

pen and wash of Naples, Florence and the two versions of a view of Rome (Fig. 5)⁷, or engravings after Van Cleef published by Philips Galle showing sites within Rome and views of other European cities (Fig. 4).⁸ The drawing in Paris shows Rome spread out into the background like a carpet, so that each monument is clearly delineated. The small engravings illustrate more specific sites in Rome and, like the drawings, are shown from a bird's eye view. In contrast, the *Panorama of Rome*, in addition to being physically larger and broader in its view of the city, is depicted from a lower and more realistic viewpoint: that of a person actually standing on a hill who turns about 180 degrees as he surveys the city. Van Cleef did not actually stand on the Gianicolo when he made the design for the engraving, but he probably did so to carry out the sketches for the design. While the works of the 1580s, suggest Van Cleef's use of intermediaries such as maps and prints in illustrating the city⁹, the *Panorama of Rome* suggests rather that it is a depiction derived from an actual experience of the city.

Hendrik Hondius I (Duffel 1573–The Hague 1650), who is named as the publisher of the *Panorama of Rome*, was active not only as a print publisher but as a reproductive printmaker as well. He republished, for example, plates by sixteenth-century printmakers such as D. V. Coornhert, J. de Gheyn II and H. Cock, and employed a number of printmakers, including his own son, Willem Hon-

Fig. 2 (below). Simon Frisius, Hendrick van Cleef, c. 1610. Etching and engraving (Hollstein (Frisius) 157), 195 × 123 mm. Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.



dius, to etch and engrave his own drawings and those of other artists. Hondius studied with a goldsmith in Brussels and then with the engraver Johannes Wierix in Antwerp before moving to The Hague, where he was living by 1595. It is unlikely that Hondius obtained the design for the panorama directly from Van Cleef in Antwerp, since Hondius was only about 16 years old at the time of the artist's death. It seems probable that Van Cleef made the design for one of the Antwerp print publishers, who never succeeded in getting it engraved. Hondius lived in Amsterdam between 1603 and 1605, and then in Leiden before settling once more in The Hague. He never went to Italy but probably traveled to Cologne, London and Paris in his early years.¹⁰ Throughout his long career Hondius maintained an almost art historical interest in the works of sixteenth-century artists such as Lucas van Leyden, Pieter Bruegel, and Hans Bol, producing prints and drawings after their work until the last years of his life.¹¹ Not only did Hondius produce so-called 'art prints', but his production extended as well to the publication of prints of contemporary events, such as wartime sieges and to architectural books, such as his own book on perspective, *Institutio Artis Perspectivae* (1622). One of Hondius's most famous series of prints is the series of artists' portraits, *Pictorum Aliquot Celebrium Precipuae Germaniae Inferioris Effigies* (1610), depicting his sixteenth-century predecessors and his contemporaries. He published the series and engraved it

along with Robbert de Baudous, Simon Frisius and Andreas Stock. The series includes the portrait of Hendrick van Cleef etched by Frisius (Fig. 2).

Although Hondius is named only as the publisher of the *Panorama of Rome*, it is clear that he must have played an important



HENRICUS CLIVENSIS, ANTVERP.
PICTOR.

Urbes atque Arces, Montes, Terrasque jacentis,
Et Valles, Fontes, Flumina, Ripa, Lacus,
Atque Casas humiles, tum tecta superba domorum
Quae proxit, recreant mirifice hæc oculos.

Fig. 3a. As fig. 1, first sheet.



S. Pietro

Ospedale di S. Spirito

Castel S. Angelo



Fig. 3b (right). As fig. 1, second sheet.

Fig. 4 (below left). Anonymus after Hendrick van Cleef,
 published by Philip Galle, *Burgus Romæ*, c. 1585.
 Engraving (Hollstein (Cleve) 11), 174 × 242 mm. Rijks-
 prentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

role in the engraving of the plates as well, because his own style of engraving dominates the execution of the print. This stylistic continuity with Hondius's work, in combination with certain indications in the print itself, allow us to determine the year in which it must have been made. The inscription, *cum gratia et privilegio* (sic) below the publisher's address on the *Panorama of Rome* indicates that the print must date at the earliest from 1599, the year Hondius acquired the general privilege for his engravings.¹² The papal coat of arms on the engraving dates the print to the period between 1592 and 1605, when Clement VIII ruled as pope. More precisely, however, the style and subject of the print fit in with Hondius's



S. Maria del Popolo

Pantheon

S. Maria
Sopra
Minerva

work dated around 1600. The very detailed but stylized rendering of the houses with their dotted brickwork, and the even gradation from dark to light in the loop-leaved trees is found also in Hondius's engraving of *Tobias and the Angel* after Gillis de Saen, dated 1600 (Fig. 6). The style of the inscription, uneven lettering accentuated by a few words entirely in capital letters, is typical of the engravings printed and published by Hondius in this early period.¹³ Further engravings of around 1600 illustrate Hondius's interest in Italian subjects at this time, e.g. the series after the drawings of Roman ruins by Pieter Stevens, dated 1600 (Fig. 7).¹⁴ Hondius engraved only one other city view, the *View of The Hague* after Gillis de Saen,

dated 1597. The *Panorama of Rome* differs from this view, however, and from every other print published by Hondius during his entire career in its extraordinary size. The early dating of the panorama makes it one of the earliest of these large Dutch seventeenth-century city views. The earliest of the large city views were engraved by Pieter Bast in the 1590s (ca. 80 × 30 cm.).¹⁵ His engravings depicted mainly Dutch cities, but by the mid-seventeenth century most of the major cities of Europe had been depicted in the form of long panorama prints. This genre of topographical prints flourished in the Netherlands particularly in the 1610s and 1620s.¹⁶ The development of its popularity went hand in hand with that of cartography,

Fig. 3c (below). As fig 1, third sheet.

and many of the same engravers and publishers responsible for maps also created large city panoramas, for example, Jodocus Hondius, Claes Jansz. Visscher (Fig. 8–9) and Pieter van der Keere. Typically, the city profiles were composed of 3 or 4 plates, each averaging about 39 × 53 cm., composing when assembled a print of about 214 cm. in width.¹⁷ The *Panorama of Rome* is, as far as we can tell, the largest of these prints, composed of 5 plates and totaling 225 cm in width. Unfortunately, because of their size and the fact that they were often hung on walls, few impressions survive. It is likely that the Amsterdam impression of the *Panorama of Rome* was kept in a book or an album at one time.¹⁸

As the large city panorama gained in popularity, a standard presentation of the genre

Fig. 3d (below right). As fig. 1, fourth sheet.

Fig. 5 (right). Hendrick van Cleef, *View of Rome*, 1585. Pen and brown ink and light blue wash, 249 × 391 mm. Fondation Custodia (coll. F. Lugt), Institut Néerlandais, Paris.

evolved, consisting of a woodcut title of white lettering on a black background above the image, and a letterpress text below with a description of the history of the city. It is clear that by 1626, when Claes Jansz. Visscher republished the plates of Hondius's *Panorama of Rome*, the layout of the print with its two-line inscription underneath the image seemed old-fashioned. In order to update the print, Visscher added a woodcut title above and a long typescript text below Hondius's original image. These large prints were obviously meant for an international audience since, as with many other panoramas of this period, the text appears in French and Latin as well as Dutch. Visscher published at least two other panoramas of Italian cities: Florence (Fig. 8), dated on one impression 1643 and engraved by himself





*Le. nōi. aūm. Dominum. sacro. qui. vestire. volumus.
Pontificem. nunc. ROMA. colit. Gens. sancta. togata.*

*Ter. sanctos. quorum. series. longissima. Reges. Quis. DIADEMA. toties. gemināq. insignita. CLAVES.
Enumerat. quibus. est. fas. sacra. resolvere. iura. Quae. Pyrae. referunt. Petri. de. sterno. vicatos.*

Fig. 3e (above left). As fig. 1, fifth sheet.
 Fig. 6 (above right). Hendrik Hondius after Gillis de Saen, Tobias and the Angel, 1600. Engraving (Hollstein (Hondius I) 5), 206 x 284 mm. Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.

Fig. 7 (right middle). Hendrik Hondius after Pieter Stevens, Romae Thermae Antonianae, 1600. Engraving (Hollstein (Hondius I) 48), 210 x 269 mm. Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague.



Porta
 S. Paolo

Sepulchre
 of Caius
 Cestius

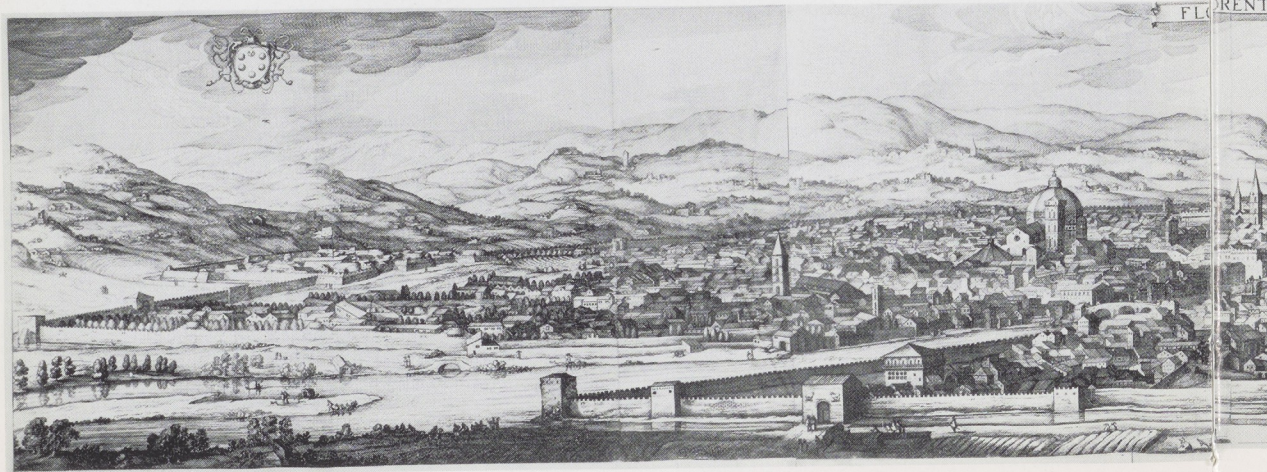
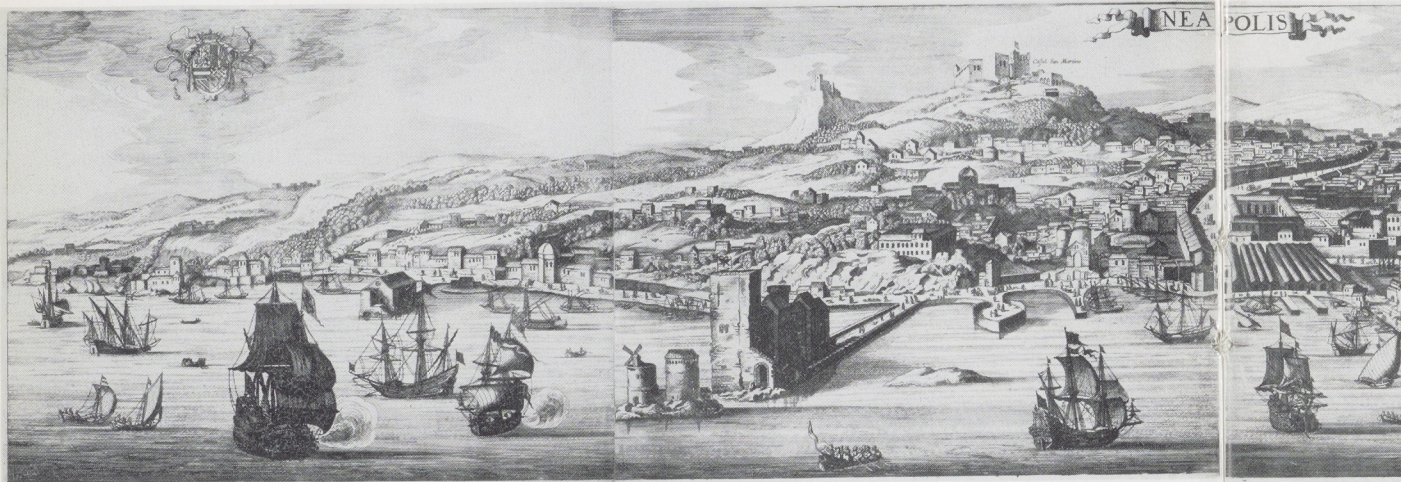


Fig. 9. Jan van de Velde, *View of Naples*, 1618.
Engraving (Hollstein 170), c. 414 × 2140 mm. Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam.



² *Latin inscriptions:*

ROMA potens, toto, quæ nomine, nobilis orbe,
Tempore quæ nostro se spectatoribus offert,
Cernitur hâc formâ: toties quæ diruta quon-
dam,
Hâc hodie demum lætatur Imagine vivâ.
Fundavit primûm cæptis ingentibus urbem/
Romulus, auspiciis lætis Mavortia condens//
Mænia, quæ magnum sub leges cogeret
orbem.
Sub Regum Imperio primum stetit ipsa Tyran-
nis//
Sceptringeros Reges solio turbavit ab alto.
Mox sub consulibus FASCES veneratur: amicâ//
Libertate suâ slorens (sic) caput extulit urbes/
Ante alias, POPULUM observans, sanctûmq.
SENATUM.
Qnanta (sic) hoc Romanis accrevit gloria
rebus!
Hinc URBS Orbis erat, Domina et Regina
vocata.
Sed iam mole suâ ruit Urbs. (nosce, Negatum/
Stare diu summis.) AQUILIS cæbere superbis//
Imperii FASCES: sed nomen inane relictum/
Consulibus. Quid non Dominandi dira
cupido?//
Longé alium Dóminum, sacro qui vertice
primus,
Pontificem nunc ROMA colit Gens sancta,
togata//
Ter sanctos, quorum series longiſsima, Reges/
Enumerat, quibus est fas sacra resolvere iura://
Queis DIADEMA triplex, geminaéq. Insignia
CLAVES,
Quæ Papas referunt Petri de stirpe creatos//

SCEPTRA igitur Regum, FASCES, AQUIL ÆQ.
feroces/
Clementis parent Papæ nunc CLAVIBUS: ipsis//
Sese aperit, rursus terrarum clauditur orbis.
Romulus à Petro quanto discrimine distat!//
Clavibus insignis hic est, sed cladibus ille.
Ut quondam, sic nunc eadem dicta Inclyta
ROMA.

Translation:

'Powerful Rome, known all over the world by its name, is seen in this illustration as it now presents itself to the spectator: so often destroyed in the past, it now at last rejoices in this print from life. Originally the city was established by an enormous exertion of strength by Romulus who under joyous omens raised the Martian walls, so that the city could force the great world under her laws. First the city was ruled by kings. Tyranny chased away the scepter carrying kings from their lofty throne. Then followed, under the consuls, reverence for the fasces. Blooming in her beloved freedom, she raised her head above the other cities in her respectful treatment of the people and the venerable senate. How greatly this increased the fame of the Roman empire! That is why the city was given the title of mistress and queen of the world. But soon the city succumbed under her weight (you must know: it is the lofty who are not allowed long to stand). Before the proud eagles, the fasces yielded their power and what was left to the consuls was an empty name. How far the cruel desire to dominate will not go. An entirely different lord, the first on the pyramid of holiness, graces Rome now as pon-



tiffs. The holy people in togas count kings three times holy in a very long series, to whom the power was given to interpret the holy laws. They have a triple crown and bear the sign of the double keys which characterize the popes descended from Peter's stock. Thus the scepter of the kings, the fasces and the defiant eagles, obey now the keys of the clement pope: the keys for whom the earth opens, or closes again. What a distance between Romulus and Peter! The latter distinguishes himself by keys, the former by battles. Just as in times of old, so is Rome now called the Famous one.' (Translated by C. L. Heesakkers).

³ The only two later states of this print that I have located are the impressions of the five plates in Leyden, University Library, coll. Bodel Nijenhuis (K33/13/*0400/110/2a-e), each preserved on its original size sheet (c. 46.5 × 59.4 cm) and the assembled plates in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale (Vb. 132z. Bte 3 ft. 6) mentioned in A. Bartoli, *Cento Vedute di Roma Antica*, Florence 1911, p. 21 (incorrectly cited as having been published in Antwerp in 1626) and C. Huelsen, *Saggio di Bibliografia Ragionata delle Piante Iconografiche e Prospettiche di Roma dal 1551 al 1748*, Florence 1933, p. 9, note 2 (incorrectly described as printed on 3 large sheets) and kindly examined for me by Alan Chong. Huelsen also mentions an even later state printed by Visscher in 1628, 'chez Nicolas Jean Pesscheur, demeurant à la Rue des Veaux', which I have not found. The impressions in Leyden are second states of the print with the address on the cartouche changed to *Nicolas J. Visscher formis suis*, a period added after the

title *Roma* and the letters of that word retraced, the plates numbered in arabic numerals, on the first plate, in the lower right corner of the image and on the other four plates, just below this corner, and in the 7th stanza of the inscription the spelling of the word *nosce* changed to *cgnosce*. In the lower left corner of the impressions of plates 2 to 5, the number of the plate in roman numerals has been added in brown ink. The impressions in Leyden may have been working copies for Visscher since in the later state in Paris, the roman numerals have now been engraved on the plate. The Paris impression has also been extended by a woodcut border above the image and a text in 15 columns in Latin, French and Dutch on the history of Rome with the address in the last column. 'AMSTERDAM Gedruckt by Claes Jansz. Visscher/woonende inde Calverstraet inde Visschery Anno 1626. Bartoli mentions a later state of the print with the name of Van Cleef removed and *Venetia 1665* put in its place, however Huelsen cites it as a separate print after Van Cleef by Stefano Scolari.

⁴ C. van Mander, *Het Schilder-boeck*, Haarlem 1604, fol. 230 r. and v.

⁵ E. Haverkamp Begemann in *Spanish Cities of the Golden Age*, Berkeley 1989 and 'The Spanish Views of Anton van den Wyngaerde', *Master Drawings* 7 (1969), pp. 375-399.

⁶ *Rome Seen from the Gianicolo*, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (52.124.1) and illustrated in Hermann Egger, *Römische Veduten*, 2 vols., Vienna 1931, pl. 112-113.

⁷ *View of Naples*, Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung (Inv. 1034), 251 × 417 mm. *View of Florence*, Rome, Gabinetto Nazionale delle Stampe (Inv. F.N. 166), 265 × 428 mm. *View of Rome*, Rome, Gabinetto Nazionale delle Stampe (Inv. F.N. 495) 256 × 414 mm., *View of Rome*, Paris, Institut Néerlandais, Fondation Custodia, Coll. F. Lugt (6006), 249 × 391 mm.

⁸ The series is entitled *Ruinarum Varii Prospectus, Ruriumq. Aliquot Delineationes* (Hollstein IV, p. 170. (Cleve), nos. 1–38). Its date is probably close to that of the other series of prints published by Galle after Hendrick van Cleef and engraved by Adriaen Collaert, *Regionum Rurium, Fundorumq. Varii At Ove Amoeni Prospectus* (Hollstein IV, p. 206 (Collaert), nos. 535–546), dated 1587.

⁹ Carlos van Hasselt and Albert Blankert, Exh. cat. *Artisti Olandesi e Fiamminghi in Italia*, Florence 1966, cat.no. 24. In their discussion of the Lugt collection's *View of Rome*, reference is made to the influence of the maps of Duperac.

¹⁰ The biographies of Hendrik Hondius I often confuse the engraver with his son, Hendrik Hondius II and the Amsterdam mapmaker, Hendrik Hondius. The most accurate biographies of Hondius I are W. Stechow, 'Hendrik Hondius I (d. Ä)' in *Thieme-Becker*, volume XVII, pp. 435–436, E. F. Kossmann, 'Haagsche uitgevers van de zeventiende en achttiende eeuw', *Het Boek* 22 (1933–34), pp. 275–288 and G. L. Hondius, 'Het Haagse Uitgeversgeslacht Hondius', *Fundatio Hondius-Jaarverslag* 22 (1973), pp. 3–16.

¹¹ For example, *The Eulenspiegel* (Hollstein IX, p. 88, (Hondius I), no. 46), after Lucas van Leyden, dated 1644 *The Pilgrimage of the Epileptics to the Church at Molenbeeck* (Hollstein IX, p. 87, (Hondius I), nos. 34–35), after Pieter Bruegel, dated 1642, and *Peasants' Feast at Schellebelle* (Hollstein IX, p. 8, (Hondius I), no. 25), after Hans Bol, dated 1648 and proudly signed. *Hondius fecit Aetat: 75: 1648*.

¹² Resolutiën der Staten-Generaal, 25 juni 1599, A.R.A., S.G. 4710. Hondius acquired privileges on June 24, 1597 and July 16, 1598 for particular prints.

¹³ Such as *The Concert of the Muses* after Taddeo Zuccaro, dated 1596 (Hollstein IX, p. 86 (Hondius I), no. 12).

¹⁴ The rare undescribed engraving of *St. Cecilia* after Jacopo Bassano (Impression in Coburg) which is not dated but by the rough and spiky

style of the engraving lines and the stiff treatment of the figures can be dated to this period.

¹⁵ See George Keyes, *Pieter Bast*, Alphen aan den Rijn 1981.

¹⁶ B. van 't Hoff, 'Grote Stadspanorama's gegraveerd in Amsterdam sedert 1609', *Jaarboek van het Genootschap Amstelodamum* 47 (1955), pp. 81–131.

¹⁷ B. van 't Hoff, *Een Panorama van Konstantinopel uit het Begin van de Gouden Eeuw*, Rotterdam 1956, p. 5.

¹⁸ One seventeenth-century collection of panoramas conserved in books is that of Magnus Gabriël de la Gardie in Stockholm, Isak Collijn, *Magnus Gabriël de la Gardie's samling of äldre stadsvyer och historiska planscher i Kungl. Biblioteket.*, Stockholm 1915.

¹⁹ I would like to thank C. Schuckman for pointing these prints out to me.

²⁰ Panoramas of Rome and Venice in five sheets and of Florence and Naples in four are still mentioned in Nicolaes Visscher's stocklist of 1682. *Catalogus van groote en kleene landkaerten, steden, print-kunst en boecken*, Amsterdam, p. 15.

Charlotte van Rappard-Boon

De vriendschap tussen prentmaker, dichter en acteur: Gakutei's 'Drie krabben aan de waterkant'

Drie krabben langs een vloedlijn (afb. 1).¹ Een kleine impressie uit de natuur, zoals wij die gemakkelijk associëren met oosterse kunst. Dit soort directe observatie van dieren en planten is immers iets dat ons in de Chinese en Japanse kunst aanspreekt: kraanvogels vliegend voor een ondergaande zon, een tijger bij een bamboebosje, mussen hangend aan een cameliatak, dus waarom niet drie krabben bij de waterkant? Maar er is hier meer aan de hand. De drie krabben in hun waterige wereldje weerspiegelen de cultuur van een wereldstad.

Edo omstreeks 1820. In de tijd waarin deze prent gemaakt werd was Edo, het huidige Tokyo, een van de grootste steden ter wereld. Een metropool van meer dan een miljoen inwoners, met een stedelijke maatschappij te vergelijken met die van Holland in de zeventiende eeuw. Een welvarende burgerbevolking van kooplieden en handwerkslieden had daar zijn eigen beschaving ontwikkeld. Een cultuur die zich ook op geheel nieuwe wijze uitte, omdat de kooplieden en handwerkslieden – als laagste klasse in de streng feodaal geordende Japanse maatschappij – geen deel konden nemen aan de cultuur der heersende aristocratische klasse. Zo ontstond tegenover het gestileerde Nō toneelspel van de edellieden het volkse Kabuki theater, levendig toneel dat gebaseerd is op volksverhalen en legendes, vol bedekte verwijzingen naar de actualiteit en gespeeld door acteurs, die destijds evenzeer aanbeden werden als heden ten dage popsterren.

Tegenover de schilderkunst, verward in academische tradities, ontstond de goedkope, gemakkelijk te vermenigvuldigen prentkunst in houtblokdruk, die het 'vlietende leven' (ukiyo) afbeeldde. Tegenover de hofpoëzie met haar stereotiepe beeldspraak ontstond het snelle, vaak schertsende vers, geschreven door amateurs. Deze drie belangrijkste facetten van de stadscultuur van Edo, de prentkunst, de poëzie en het theater, zijn verenigd op de kleine prent met de drie krabben langs de vloedlijn.

De prent

Daar is allereerst de prent: geen commerciële oplage zoals de meeste der ukiyo-e prenten, maar een gelegenheidsprent, een privé-uitgave gemaakt in opdracht van een dichter. Dit soort prenten noemen wij surimono, een term die weinig zegt daar hij letterlijk 'iets gedruks' betekent. Aanvankelijk werden deze prenten gedrukt ter gelegenheid van het Nieuwe Jaar, vaak met de ingewikkelde, variabele oosterse telling van lange en korte maanden, als een rebus verstopt in de voorstelling. Wij noemen dit soort kalenderprenten egoyomi (letterlijk 'beeld-kalenders'). Zij werden het eerst gemaakt door de kunstenaar Suzuki Harunobu (1725–1770) en diens school (afb. 2). Deze beeldkalenders hebben een buitengewoon gecompliceerde iconografie waarbij in de eenvoudige voorstelling een grote hoeveelheid verwijzingen naar de klassieke literatuur verwerkt kunnen zijn.