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Framing the Enemy:
Gaspard Bouttats’s Collage Portraits for Prudencio de Sandoval’s Historia de la vida y hechos del Emperador Carlos V in the Whitworth Collection

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Abstract
This article is about how one approaches images that are both disjunctive and disjointed. It focuses on a set that consists of nineteen images by the Flemish printmaker Gaspard Bouttats, although the focus here is mainly on four specific examples. The nineteen prints are now in the Whitworth Gallery but come without any provenance beyond the signature of their maker. Hitherto, they have not been studied in detail, but they were in fact made for a book, Prudencio de Sandoval’s Historia de la vida y hechos del Emperador Carlos V, published in Antwerp in 1681 by Hieronymus Verdussen III. However, the prints now take the form of a set of loose sheets. Accordingly, the core argument rests on the fact that it is not helpful to study Bouttats’s prints in the context of de Sandoval’s book because this fails to account properly for their composite nature, their current state and their virtually limitless potential for circulation. The main contention is that such prints are best understood as collages. Therefore, they are viewed here through the lens of emerging scholarly literature on medieval and early modern texts and images that also fall into this category.

Keywords: Gaspard Bouttats, Peter Paul Rubens, Martin Luther, Atahualpa, Moctezuma II, early modern collage.
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The Whitworth Art Gallery owns a set of nineteen portraits by the Flemish printmaker Gaspard Bouttats (c. 1640-c. 1695), executed in a combination of etching and engraving (for examples, see figures 1-4). [Insert figs. 1 and 2 on or immediately after first page, please] Or, at least, that is how they are catalogued online.¹ Their design is in fact composite, by several artists working across nearly two centuries. As this suggests, Bouttats’s prints come with an interesting if complicated history of conception, usage and circulation. The present article contends that the best way of understanding them is as collages, as the result of a ‘cut-and-paste’ process, both in terms of making and subsequent usage. For, although designed as book illustrations, the portraits are now loose sheets. At some point in their history they were unmoored from their original context and sent into circulation; they come with a double history of detachment, of being cut away.

Because of this cutting away, Bouttats’s prints present a number of important art-historical challenges. One aim of the present article is to identify and address some of these, although, for reasons of space, the focus is on a few examples only. But even from this somewhat restricted evidential basis it soon becomes clear that Bouttats’s pictures set into play a number of visibly disjunctive relationships, including but not limited to two pictorial modes current in early modern Europe, those of allegory and portraiture. By staging such uncomfortable couplings, Bouttats’s prints openly proclaim that they are collages, evidently made by excising, importing and combining into a new form an already existing set of foreign bodies freighted with temporal and other resonances.

First, to pinpoint the precise art-historical challenges raised by the Whitworth set, it helps to begin simply by exploring the nature of the prints. Not much is known about their maker beyond the fact that he lived and worked in the second half of the seventeenth century in the city of Antwerp in what was then the Spanish Netherlands, that he came from a family of printmakers and that he was generally active in the book trade.² If his work is considered in any detail at all, he is categorised as a copyist.³ Fortunately, a little more can be said about the prints themselves. Bouttats made them to illustrate a book: Prudencio de Sandoval’s *Historia de la vida y hechos del Emperador Carlos V* […]. *Nueva impression, enriquecida con lindas figuras* (‘History of the Life and Deeds of the Emperor Charles V […]. New
edition, enriched with adjoined pictures’), published in Antwerp in 1681 by Hieronymus Verdussen III. The John Rylands Library has a first edition of this; it was published in Valladolid in two folio volumes in 1604 and 1606 (JRL Special Collections 19279). De Sandoval was a relatively high-ranking Spanish clergyman and, like much early modern historiography, his book may seem rather paradoxical to modern eyes. There are passages based on carefully researched and evaluated primary evidence but, simultaneously, it is a panegyric designed to immortalise the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V of Habsburg (1500-1558) – not coincidentally the grandfather of the then reigning King of Spain, Philip III of Habsburg (1578-1621) – as a great warrior and statesman and, crucially for the present argument, as a champion of Roman Catholicism. As evinced by the edition in the Rylands, the book was not originally illustrated. It was, however, something of a bestseller in the early modern Hispanic world, with numerous editions printed across the seventeenth century. That is probably why, in 1681, almost eighty years after its first publication, it was republished in folio with fifty-nine interleaved illustrations by the enterprising Verdussen, in what was most likely an attempt to capitalise on the large reading public residing both in Spain and the Spanish colonies.

From an art-historical point of view, it would seem obvious that Bouttats’s illustrations should be studied in their original context, by analysing how they work with de Sandoval’s text. And that would very likely prove an interesting and worthwhile historical exercise. But the Whitworth prints are no longer part of de Sandoval’s book. Either they were cut out carefully at some point after 1681 or, alternatively, they were printed and sold as individual sheets. This was commonly done in the early modern period, to capitalise further on the original and usually considerable investment in the etching and engraving of the copper-plates. This possibility is supported by the fact that, in Verdussen’s edition of de Sandoval, the portraits are interleaved into the book without any pagination; the pages on either side are simply numbered consecutively. So Bouttats’s prints may well have been made with an eye to this secondary market since pasting printed portraits on interior walls was one way that early modern individuals could choose to articulate political and religious allegiances. A particularly charming example of this may be found in the so-called Nuremberg dolls’ house of 1673, where a tiny print of the reformer Martin Luther (1483-1546) has been pasted between two windows (figures 5 and 6)
Plainly, the present format of Bouttats’s prints has to be taken seriously, unmoored as they are. Studying them as they function in de Sandoval’s book would mean failing to account for one significant part of their history and nature, namely that they are loose sheets. What is needed, instead, is a sense of how Bouttats’s pictures both emerged from and became part of an immense, global system of circulation generated by the very fact of printed imagery, an issue that will be addressed at various points below. As will become apparent, the Whitworth prints belong within an enormously complex and dizzyingly dynamic set of object trajectories and distributive vectors. It is not helpful to fix them in any given specific place or time. Perhaps the nature of these prints is best expressed mathematically: they are functions, not objects.

Approaching Bouttats’s prints merely as illustrations for de Sandoval’s text would also mean neglecting another salient feature: it is not entirely correct to date them to 1681. For the pictures are composites, made up of images designed at earlier dates. Consider, for example, the portrait of ‘Atabaliua, Reÿ de Peru’, better known as Atahualpa (c. 1502–1533), the last Sapa Inca or Inca ruler (figure 2). The elaborate framing around the portrait is a copy in reverse after a design by Peter Paul Rubens, originally engraved by Lucas Vorsterman in 1623 (figure 7) [Insert fig. 7 as close to here as possible]. Vorsterman’s print first served as the frontispiece for the third part of a book entitled Annales Ducum seu Principum Brabantiae totiusque Belgii (‘Annals of the Dukes or Princes of Brabant and of all the Netherlands’) by one Franciscus Haraeus (or Frans van Haer), published in Antwerp that same year by the Plantin-Moretus press. Bouttats’s central image, however, is based on an anonymous engraving from André Thevet’s Les Vrais Pourtraits et vies des hommes illustres [...] (‘True Portraits and Lives of Illustrious Men [...]’) published in Paris in 1584 (figure 8) [Insert fig. 8 as close to here as possible]. It is clearly meant to show Atahualpa after his capture by Francisco Pizarro and thus it is part of a pictorial tradition dating back to 1534. Judging from the set of prints in the Whitworth, such a combination of images from distinct temporal and geographical sources was standard practice for Bouttats, probably because it was one way of minimising workload and thus keeping costs relatively low.

There was nothing unusual about such economies. Using existing prints as models for new imagery was common practice in the early modern period, both within the Spanish Netherlands, where Bouttats worked, and across the Hispanic Empire. But it was more than just a way of managing costs. In early modern Europe, printed pictures often came with considerable authority, with a claim to conveying reliable knowledge, not least because
pictorial prints played a crucial role in the development of natural history, including the nascent sciences of human anatomy, geography, botany and zoology. As Stephanie Leitch has cogently argued, particular weight was given to the image classified as ‘imago contrafactum’, as ‘counterfeit’ or ‘after life’, a category including but absolutely not limited to portraiture (her core example is Albrecht Dürer’s famously zoologically defective yet persuasive *Rhinoceros*, with its caption asserting that it is ‘abcondertfet’). As this suggests, the word ‘counterfeit’ was not yet invested with negativity; instead, such imagery proclaimed for itself ‘a veracity more substantial than mimesis’. At the same time, this veracity was of a different order to our understanding of empirical truth. It was rooted in a notion of authority based as much on pictorial precedent as on actual witnessing of any particular entity or phenomenon. This is absolutely not to say that early modern viewers were naïve about prints; there is much evidence to suggest that they were careful and discriminating in their judgements of pictorial evidence. Nevertheless, their notion of pictorial authority depended heavily on continuous circulation and, in the process, re-affirmation. In essence, certain printed pictures were considered truthful because they were widely accepted as such and, consequently, the more they circulated, the truer they became.

Bouttats’s prints are an object lesson in this relationship between circulation and veracity. It is not coincidental that his image of Atahualpa is derived from Thevet; in 1555 this author took part in an ill-fated French attempt to establish a Huguenot colony in what is now Brazil. Afterwards Thevet took to styling himself ‘cosmographe’ and, more generally, proclaimed himself to be an authority on the so-called ‘New World’. Thus Bouttats’s version of Atahualpa was already invested with circulatory authority precisely because it derived from another print, which itself came with a claim to veracity. A similar case can be made for Bouttats’s portrait of the Holy Roman Emperor, Maximilian I of Habsburg (figure 1). The intricate frame is again a reverse version of a frontispiece designed by Rubens and engraved by Cornelis Galle in 1632 for a book eventually published by Plantin-Moretus in 1645 (figure 9). But the central portrait ultimately derives from a drawing made by Dürer on 26 June 1518, currently in the Albertina in Vienna (figure 10). The drawing bears an inscription by the artist, describing when and where he drew the Emperor and explicitly classifying this activity as being ‘künterfett’, counterfeited or drawn from life. Still, judging by the markedly sculptural qualities of the facial features, Bouttats did not copy that drawing directly but rather based his portrait on Dürer’s widely circulated and therefore more readily
available woodcut version (figure 11). And it was precisely these kinds of sculptural details that helped to invest an early modern print with the authority of the counterfeit, with veracity.19

So, when Bouttats worked to illustrate Verdussen’s edition of de Sandoval, he tried hard to source portraits with some measure of authority, in a strategy parallel to de Sandoval’s own engagement with primary sources. Bouttats then combined his portrait imagery with already existing and usually quite elaborate framing designs culled from other books. At this moment in time the whole issue of copyright was beginning to emerge, at least in its nascent form of royal or imperial privileges, so it would have helped that the relationship between the Verdussen and the Plantin-Moretus publishing houses was cordial.20

As the above two paragraphs show, Bouttats’s prints are simultaneously his own work and that of many hands. Obviously, he devised their combination and did not hesitate to secure his claim to authorship by signing each plate, adding ‘f’ or ‘fec.’, common abbreviations of the Latin ‘fecit’ (‘made [this]’). At the same time, the prints are self-evidently the cumulative work of several designers and printmakers, working across nearly two centuries. Added to these complexities of authorship there are several pertaining to circulation. Bouttats drew on existing printed imagery which he and Verdussen then set into further circulation by means of de Sandoval’s popular book and, perhaps, by printing additional loose sheets of the illustrations (or these off-prints could have been issued later, there really is no way of knowing).21 Or it was an anonymous cutter who initiated this particular vector of dissemination. To this sequence of distributional nodes might be added the Whitworth Gallery’s online catalogue and, indeed, the present article. That is why limiting the study of these prints to their roles in de Sandoval’s book would be to disavow two of their fundamental characteristics. They are diachronic, made by multiple authors working across space and time. And they come with a high level of currency, with a considerable history of, and potential for, circulation.

Cutting and Pasting

There is one further preliminary point to be made, hinging on Bouttats’s working methods. Each print is a combination of two distinct parts: the central portrait medallion and the surrounding frame. Bouttats deployed a number of distinct frames, all, it seems, copied from already existing book frontispieces. Each frame, however, is used for several portraits. For
example, in the Whitworth set, the same framing motif is deployed for figures as diverse as Atahualpa (figure 2), ‘Barbaroja Admiral’ – better known as Barbaros Kheireddin Pasha, the great Ottoman naval commander (c. 1478-1546) – and Martin Luther (figure 3). It is difficult to be absolutely precise about how Bouttats achieved this technically even if there are some indications on the prints themselves. To cite but the two most obvious examples: there are the fuzzy lines around the name cartouche below the portrait of Atahualpa and there is the flared outline of white around the oval with Luther, which partially erases the hand of the figure immediately to the right of his portrait oval. Judging from such details, Bouttats probably began by making a deeply engraved and etched framework plate with a blank centre, worked with some care to withstand the wear and tear of multiple impressions. Then he painstakingly but lightly etched the required portrait into the blank at the centre and then, once enough impressions had been printed, burnished or polished that portrait away to make space for the next (this would have had the economic advantage of reusing the expensive copperplate many times). However Bouttats did it, it must have been a rather fiddly and laborious process, even if it were meant to cut costs. This, together with his explicit claim to have made these prints, indicates that it was the overall combination of elements – the somewhat uneasy conjunction of portrait and framing – that mattered to him and his publisher and this is why the present essay posits that Bouttats’s prints are best understood as collages.

At face value, to posit that Bouttats’s prints are best understood as collages may seem an anachronistic claim. Nevertheless, there is an emerging body of academic literature that both documents and explores certain medieval and early modern habits of reading and art-making, habits that entailed cutting up existing textual and pictorial materials to make new forms. Much of this body has come from scholars of literature, perhaps because they are unusually attuned to how medieval and early modern texts were constructed, which is often on the collage principle, be it that of the scholarly disquisition full of learned references, the compendium, the emblem collection or the commonplace book. Because of such textual phenomena, literary scholars have had to let go of the notion of the book as a finished or closed work. Instead, as collages, texts become open-ended:

One important trait of cutting and pasting is its resistance to a complete integration of parts into a whole. As a consequence, cutting and pasting lends to (or retains for) its pieces the effect of a history, of animation or life. Cutting and pasting produces a sense of units of language (qua printed letters) falling temporarily into an alignment
from which they might soon break: of words as the momentary configuration of mobile letter parts.  

So collage, in itself, is a lively embodiment of the diachronic. It faces backwards in time, towards what it was, as well as forwards, towards what it might become. It also carries with it a sense of circulatory potential. What has been made can easily be unmade. Any given assemblage is never so coherent that it cannot be disassembled and each fragment can then be sent back into circulation, to be reworked into something else.

To this line of reasoning should be added the insight that ‘cut images toggle between presence and absence’. In Bouttats’s prints, this is at its most evident in the burnishing flare around several of the portrait ovals, although there are also other disjunctures of scale, style and the fall of light and shade. Or, to rephrase all of these points: Bouttats’s prints are not just themselves. They are deliberately disjunctive, openly proclaiming their nature as assemblages.

Here it is worth underscoring that pictorial collaging should be understood as nestling within broader artistic habits of composition found in early modern Europe. Absolute creativity, the dreaming up of a new design *ex nihilo*, did of course exist. But it was an exception rather than the norm (as it still is), one extreme point on a continuum which had absolute plagiarism at the other end. Only, both of these practices share the fact that neither involves acknowledging indebtedness to anyone or anything else. In fact, it was and is well known that early modern artists, designers and printmakers habitually copied from or quoted each other and their predecessors, and this was driven by market forces as well as sanctioned in art theory. The practice even came with its own classical precedent, Pliny the Elder’s narrative of Zeuxis and the maidens of Croton, where an artist copied and combined the ‘best’ features of five distinct bodies to make an image of one ‘perfect’ woman. Yet this particular tale - rankly redolent of misogyny and reiterated by art theoreticians such as Giovanni Pietro Bellori (1613-1696) in 1672, so less than a decade before Bouttats made his prints – is only tangential to collaging practices. This is because such practices do not involve a seamless if knowing combination of distinct parts into an implausibly beautiful whole. Quite the contrary: what distinguishes collage is its messiness, its visible, even palpable joints. In this, it is opposed to originality, to absolute plagiarism, and to seamless
incorporation. Admittedly, these are not absolute polarities but rather matters of degrees and nuances.

As a principle of making, collage also bridges the usual art-historical distinction between artists and audiences. Bouttats was part of the audience for images such as Dürer’s portrait of the Emperor Maximilian but he was also an active user of that woodcut, redeploying it in a new context. As already suggested, this was a commonplace way of engaging with printed imagery. For example, in 1674 the Englishwoman Hannah Wooley, who wrote popular books on household management, recommended that cut-out prints could be pasted to the wainscot ‘to adorn a room’ (as had indeed been done inside the Nuremberg dolls’ house only the previous year) and also ‘white plates and flower-pots’.27 Printed imagery enabled any aspiring householder to work creatively, cutting and pasting pictures, either singly or in combination, to walls and household objects. In effect, printmakers like Bouttats simply lent more skill, and with it a wider range of options, to a process of making open to anyone able to buy pictorial prints.

By now, it should be clear that it would be misguided to study Bouttats’s prints only by reference to original audiences or even to defined forms of early modern viewership. They simply refuse to be anchored in this way. Instead, they are insistently about circulation across space and time. Nevertheless, as a pictorial practice, it is safe to say that collage invites further cutting, whether mentally or actually, and this may then prompt a careful evaluation of the temporal and semantic baggage visibly carried by each cut fragment as it is incorporated into a new composition.28

Finally, there is some evidence to suggest that, in the early modern world, collaging held a particular appeal for Protestants. For example, there are Huguenot prints designed explicitly on collage principles and there is also the famous cutting and recombining of printed imagery and texts into Biblical ‘harmonies’ practiced by the Ferrar family at Little Gidding in Cambridgeshire in the 1620s and 1630s.29 That is hardly surprising. Moderate Protestants like the Ferrars did not want to dispense fully with imagery because of its didactic and devotional potential yet were deeply conscious of the injunction to avoid idolatry. Whilst they actively sought out and purchased religious prints produced in Roman Catholic Antwerp, they conscientiously excised representations of God in the form of an old man and, where necessary, replaced it with a Tetragrammaton.30 The Ferrars may well have found comfort in the certain knowledge that their ‘harmonies’ were visibly and palpably homemade.
and could thus be unmade, that they came with no obvious charge or spark of divine creatorship.

To the best of my knowledge, there has been no exploration of how early modern Catholics engaged with the collage principle and, in some ways, the present article is an initial exploration of this issue. But, despite the fact that Bouttats lived and worked in Antwerp, which by the end of the seventeenth century was a Catholic stronghold, it would be wrong to pigeonhole his prints by his religion. In a slight reworking of the words of another scholar of collage: ‘Histories that see cultural objects as symbols of national or denominational identity cannot begin to account for’ prints like this, which are, ‘like other print works, multiple, moveable, non-site-specific, and often nonlocalizable.’31 As will become evident, Bouttats’s prints in the Whitworth certainly have their roots in a Roman Catholic outlook. But their circulation and usage were not necessarily restricted to the Roman Catholic or Hispanic world, so they should not be studied simply as if belonging there.

**Principles of Combination**

Bouttats’s prints may have arisen from financial expediency but they cannot and should not be reduced to this explanatory model. For example, there is always a certain pictorial and conceptual logic to the combination of portrait and frame. To illustrate this, what follows now is a detailed exploration of the portrait of Emperor Maximilian (figure 1). First it should be noted that the frame around the portrait is not simply decorative. It comes with a highly sophisticated iconography originally designed to preface the complete works of the artist, scholar, antiquarian and printer Hubert Goltzius.32 This is a large and rather untidy publication in five volumes, and, as such, it is in itself a kind of collage, combining learned disquisition with a collation of texts and numismatic and other imagery drawn from classical antiquity (figure 9). To fit with this Rubens devised a pictorial scheme which may also be understood as an assemblage, replete with literary and pictorial references to the past.

The frontispiece to Goltzius’s *Opera Omnia* is explicated in the anonymous general introduction to the book, possibly written in 1645 by Jan Caspar Gevartius, a secretary of the city of Antwerp who had worked closely with the now-deceased Rubens on projects such as the *Pompa Introitus Ferdinandi*.33 This account is probably best understood as an early response, one intelligent and exceptionally learned early modern person’s interpretation of Rubens’s original design. This is evident simply from the fact that, in the account, the left and
right sides of the print are consistently reversed as if the writer is looking at the preparatory drawing, not the resulting print. Therefore, fortuitously, it fits perfectly with Bouttats’s version, another result of his copying, of his collaging approach.34

Despite these caveats, the account from 1645 gives an unusually coherent description of the iconography. It interprets Rubens’s design as showing, on the right, the collapse of the ancient polities of Rome, Macedonia, Persia and Media into the chasm of oblivion beneath the twin forces of time and death. On the left is depicted the revival of knowledge about those polities beneath the watchful oversight of Minerva, the ancient goddess of artifice, wisdom and strategic warfare. Mercury, god of communication and commerce, has also been enlisted; he is shown extricating ancient statuary from the chasm of oblivion in the lower right-hand corner, rescuing it for reusage. The largest of these statues is loosely based on the Apollo Belvedere, which can certainly be construed as a counterfeit in the early modern sense, a widely circulated yet authoritative sign for the whole tradition of antique sculpture.35 Finally, according to Gevartius, the sculpted herm immediately above the title plate is a female personification of classical antiquity, adorned with a laurel wreath and a chain of coins and with a phoenix perched on her head to symbolise rebirth.36

That Rubens’s design and Galle’s ensuing print function on the collage principle is perhaps clearest in the four incoherently entangled figures meant to embody the four ancient polities, at least as identified in the introduction to Goltzius’s Opera Omnia (figure 9). They are piled on top of one another. According to this account, at the bottom is the most ancient, Media, a nameless male figure with a turban and a quiver facing into the chasm of oblivion. Behind him, back-to-back, we glimpse the upper torso and profile of the ancient Persian Emperor Darius. On the back of these two figures, metaphorically crushed beneath the weight of subsequent history, there straddles Alexander the Great of Macedonia, barely visible but for his helmet and thunderbolts. Topmost, but upside-down and tumbling downwards so as to almost obscure Alexander, is a female embodiment of the Roman Empire with a lance of honour and a statuette of winged Victory.37 This pictorial passage is therefore a disjunctive combination of two historical persons, who are also embodiments, and two allegories, their disparate bodies puzzled together into an intangible knot with a downwards momentum meant to convey the inexorable passage of time and, with it, the waxing and waning of imperium. A number of already existing distinct pictorial elements have patently been drawn together into a new design that clearly invokes temporality and, perhaps, archaeological stratification.
Bouttats made one telling change to Rubens’s and Galle’s work (figure 1). He removed the book displayed prominently in front of the herm embodying classical antiquity. This has several consequences. First, the timbre of the whole design becomes less literary, less textually anchored, more open-ended. Second, it avoids any unhelpful competition with the cartouche below the portrait. Third, it allows the herm to be linked closely to the Emperor Maximilian, as a kind of secondary headgear. This is further underscored by the resemblance between her heavily sculpted features and those of the Emperor himself. The implication is that Maximilian of Habsburg may have succumbed to the forces of time but that his renown will endure like that of the ancient world. Equally, the coins that adorn the herm above the Emperor resonate across Bouttats’s image, both with those held aloft in a basket on the right side - alluding to the crucial role of numismatics in the study of classical antiquity - and also with the oval shape of Maximilian’s portrait. These details together suggest that Bouttats’s image of the Emperor after Dürer’s woodcut based on the latter’s own original drawing could be understood as a kind of ancient coinage that has been lost, recovered and re-circulated with the claim that it gives authoritative access to the distant past. Bouttats’s print therefore plays deftly on the relationship between historical imagery, circulation and temporality and, in the process, reinforces the collage principles already to be detected in Rubens’s and Galle’s work.

More broadly, Bouttats’s reworking of the original print is a fairly conventional statement in the ‘vita brevis, ars longa’ mould, positing the power of art to transcend time and thus to keep reputations current. First, there is Mercury the archaeologist, recovering for recirculation ancient portrait busts and statues, some with the laurel-wreaths of victorious poets, athletes and generals. Mercury’s gaze and that of the ironically sightless sculpture that he clasps are firmly directed towards the laurel-crowned herm above. In this, they echo Maximilian’s equally firmly held gaze, directed towards the falling embodiment of the Roman Empire. Again, there is a sense that, even if Maximilian’s Holy Roman Empire might collapse, his reputation will be kept alive through art. That point is equally driven home by the references to numismatics because, as is well known, ancient coins often bear portraits of rulers. The makers of those coins - Bouttats’s fellow metalworkers - therefore come with the capacity to overcome time, death and oblivion, a compliment implicitly extended to the printmaker himself.

In sum, in this collage print there is a sophisticated play between the portrait and its frame, in part facilitated by a gentle prising open of Rubens’s design by the removal of the
book beneath the herm. Instead of being anchored to a text, the framework has become a vehicle for meditating on the relationship between the exalted nature of the sitter, the passage of time and the capacity of coinage and art to transcend temporality. Naturally, not every viewer of Bouttats’s print would have been as learned as the writer of the introduction to Goltzius’s complete works. On the other hand, we should be careful not to underestimate how deft people are at dealing with allegorical imagery, whether in the early modern or in the present world. So, even if not everybody gets every detail of the richly allusive idiom, most viewers will recognise that they are meant to approach Bouttats’s print as more than a portrait and, in response, bring to bear upon it whatever skills they may have in interpreting allegory. Obviously, this must perforce lead to various results. Somebody living in a firmly Christian situation may understand the combination of coinage and imperial imagery in the print as invoking the Biblical injunction to ‘Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s’ (Mark 12:17). That may not fit perfectly with the account from 1645 but it remains one possible way into Bouttats’s work. Equally, someone with anti-Habsburg or broadly anti-colonial sympathies might choose to hone in on the collapse of imperium rather than on the restoration of knowledge thereof, on the chasm of oblivion rather than the phoenix of rebirth. And that, again, points towards a collage principle: separate and sometimes disparate types of imagery are combined in Bouttats’s print to generate new meanings and, simultaneously, to indicate the arbitrariness and contingency pertaining to pictorial meaning. Making sense of a print like this is therefore as much, if not more, based on circumstances of circulation and currency as it is on original context or artistic intention. In Bouttats’s case that may well have been a matter of business expediency but that does not undermine the point – quite the opposite.

Serial Framing of the Enemy

As already implied, Bouttats’s prints come with political valences. Some of these are subtle, others much less so. For example, there is a group of images in the Whitworth set where the framework points in one particularly negative direction although, again, that is not unambiguously the case; it is in the nature of collages that they are rarely straightforward. This group includes the portraits of Atahualpa (figure 2), Luther (figure 3), Kheireddin Pasha and ‘Motezuma, Rey de Mexico’, better known as Moctezuma II, the last Aztec ruler (c. 1466-1520) (figure 4). As noted, this frame derives from another Rubens design, meant to preface Haraeus’s history of the conflict usually called the Dutch Revolt, the uprising in the
Habsburg Netherlands which ultimately split that already internally fissured polity into two nascent states now known as Belgium and the Kingdom of the Netherlands (figure 7).

Haraeus’s history of the Dutch Revolt is profoundly partial, narrated from the point of view of a faithful subject of the Habsburg dynasty who was also a devout Roman Catholic. There is also a certain partiality to the frontispiece. Rubens’s design hinges on the topos of the ancient Roman Temple of Janus, a topos already well established in Antwerp by 1623. A bust of the two-faced god of gateways, boundaries, transitions, duality and time is visible in a niche in the Doric architectural framework set around the fringed curtain with the title of Haraeus’s book. Within the logic of the present argument, it is tempting to designate Janus the titular deity of the collage principle, facing, as he does, towards the past and the future and embodying the dynamism, instability and the semantic and temporal disjunctures characteristic of collages.

To this should be added that, in Bouttats’s version, Rubens’s and Vorsterman’s curtain has been dispensed with to make space for the portrait ovals (figures 2, 3 and 4). In ancient Rome, the doors of the Temple of Janus were open during warfare and closed in times of peace. So, on an allegorical level, what the print shows is precisely a transition, the beginning of warfare when malign forces conspire to open the Temple gates. One does not have to be an expert iconographer to perceive that this deed is done by an unsavoury-looking crew. The muscular figure on the right with the torch and the bandaged eyes is usually identified as blind Fury and, on the left, stands androgynous Discord with snakes for hair. In Bouttats’s version, this figure comes with even greater urgency since it is more haggard and the snakes knottier. The two bearded figures behind Fury and Discord may be vaguer, but their brandishing of a torch and an axe respectively evoke the destructions of war with clarity.

The causes and consequences of war are presented in further detail in the lower section of the image, in the liminal space in front of the Temple threshold. This is what comes forth when the gates are opened: the seven-headed beast of the Apocalypse (Revelation 13:1-10 and 17:7-18). In this manner, the Revelation of St John is set into play with a visual vocabulary drawn from classical antiquity. The monstrous creature writhes around a number of objects evoking the pursuits of peace. From left to right, these include tools and materials for carpentry, a broken sculpture, musical instruments, an altar with a flame (a common symbol of piety in the early modern period), a fallen column and a crucifix lying on the ground. On the frontispiece of Haraeus’s book the broken sculpture and fallen crucifix would have alluded clearly to the fact that the Dutch Revolt had begun with a wave
of Calvinist-led iconoclastic riots across the southern and western Netherlands in August 1566 (figure 7).

Yet, although it is anti-Protestant, Rubens and Vorsterman’s print is not a straightforward opposition between the destructive forces of war and the benefits of peace. Both the carpentry tools and the flaming altar in the foreground echo the axe and the torch brandished above by the two secondary figures, and the point is driven home by the proximity of the carpentry tools to the broken sculpture on the one side, and of the altar fire to the fallen column and crucifix on the other. Iron and fire may be agents of peace as well as of war; on a metaphorical level, they, too, are two-faced, or at least contingent. This ambiguity is partially resolved in the bugles, drum and crested Corinthian helmet grouped together in the centre foreground. The musical instruments evoke the sounds of military discipline while the helmet may (or may not) be that of goddess Minerva, amongst other things associated with just and wisely waged war. At the front of part three of Haraeus’s book, this would have suggested that the Habsburgs were justified in waging of war against their ‘rebellious’ Netherlandish subjects.

In keeping with such sentiments, in Bouttats’s hands, the Temple of Janus framework is used with some consistency to mark out enemies of the Habsburg dynasty (see figures 2, 3 and 4). This is further underscored by the contrast with other framings, like the much less conflicted affair around Maximilian I. In this manner, the persons set within the Temple of Janus are all grouped together as warmongers, as that which emerges when Fury, Discord and their companions take charge. But, because of the ambiguities to be found in the frame, and, more broadly, because of the intrinsic ambiguities of collage, the effect is not straightforward and is slightly different in each print. In such a context, any interpretative attempts aiming for iconographic or semantic stability will always be trumped by usage.

To explore this issue further, it is helpful to examine three of the prints in slightly more detail, beginning with the least ambiguous, the portly and mild-visaged person with the caption ‘Martin Luther, Hereje’ (‘Martin Luther, Heretic’) (figure 3). Luther’s portrait is based on a format devised by Lucas Cranach the Elder sometime in the later 1520s to show the Reformer in middle age, of which there are numerous painted and printed versions, including that on the Nuremberg dolls’ house. From an early modern point of view, it was most certainly an authoritative image, a counterfeit. But in Bouttats’s print there is a secondary figure within the oval frame, the only place where this occurs in the Whitworth set. A little devil sits on Luther’s shoulder and blows into his ears. This motif comes from an
explicitly anti-Lutheran print, a kind of anti-Annunciation from the earlier sixteenth century.44 Again, Bouttats’s print is a collage, now drawn from three distinct sources.

Why was the little fiend considered necessary? One possibility is that, without it, Luther’s calm face and steady gaze would generate too much of a contrast with the grimacing embodiments on either side and the writhing beast below. Without a clear link to these aspects of the frame, Luther’s visage might seem steadily calm in the eye of a storm. However, the small devil mediates this by connecting Luther directly with the forces of Satan, emphatically positing the diabolical source of his heretical thinking. In keeping with this, the little fiend is both visually and a conceptually associated with the Apocalyptic beast below. The little figure is the pictorial equivalent of the uncompromising epithet ‘Heretic’, two freighted passages within the whole that together prevent the print from becoming too ambivalent, not sufficiently supportive of Habsburg religious politics.

The print of Moctezuma II is much less direct, much more ambivalent (figure 4). Again, the portrait is derived from Thevet’s book so, again, it comes with a certain authority. For example, the feather crown and the shield are somewhat fanciful but they have some connection with actual Aztec regalia.45 At the same time, Moctezuma’s feather crown links him to snake-haired Discord on the left, implying that he bore responsibility for the warfare between the Aztec and the Spanish conquistadors. Likewise, there is a parallel between his sceptre (which could be construed as a garbled version of the snake-sceptre of the Aztec god Huītzilōpōchtli) and the writhing Apocalyptic beast below. Unlike Luther, who is openly proclaimed a diabolical agent, Moctezuma may be beholden to false idols – at least as defined from a Christian point of view – and prone to sowing discord. Even so, he is not receiving direct instructions from the devil. Besides, the portrait of Moctezuma comes with a certain level of dignity. First, he points towards his sceptre and shield on his proper left with a gesture which probably suggested princely authority to early modern viewers.46 That, in turn, implies something which runs counter to iconoclasm, as alluded to in the right foreground: a certain respect for objects considered to have symbolic powers, however problematic. Second, there is both a correspondence and a contrast between Moctezuma’s face and that of the embodiment of Discord: both have large open eyes but Moctezuma’s mouth is closed and his face calm, not distorted. In effect, the print inserts the Aztec ruler into the Temple of Janus but, at the same time, invites us to wonder at how he came to be there. Was his war, in fact, just and waged with all due princely authority? Or was it diabolically inspired, like Luther’s heresy?
The print of Atahualpa is even more ambiguous (figure 2). The *Sapa Inca* is shown in chains, his arms crossed across his chest and with an upward gaze approximating that of Christian martyrdom.\(^{47}\) That said, Bouttats has slightly lowered Atahualpa’s gaze in comparison with his source image, so the effect is not quite so marked (figure 8). Still, there is a sense of someone bravely bearing up under the indignity of being chained and trapped within the Temple of Janus, in contrast with the agitated persons forcing open the doors. In many ways, Atahualpa - clapped in iron, which has its own ambiguity within the visual logic of the framework - comes across as a victim rather than a perpetrator of warfare. Perhaps he is best classified within the ‘noble savage’ tradition. It is a telling temporal coincidence that this particular English phrase was coined in 1672 by John Dryden, in a heroic play called *The Conquest of Granada*.\(^{48}\)

Evidently, the framework with the Temple of Janus functions slightly differently in each print but, because the prints currently form a set, there is also a cumulative effect. For example, despite his apparent victimhood, Atahualpa must still be a problematic person because of his link to Luther. Conversely, the print of Luther, with its obvious emphasis on satanic agency, suggests that figures such as Atahualpa and Moctezuma do not knowingly co-operate with the Antichrist but, instead, that they are open to his powers because they are not Roman Catholics. Luther’s sin is one of commission, the American rulers are only guilty of omission. It must, however, beunderscoreed that none of this is set in stone: in all the images discussed here, the combination of portrait and frame generates a wide range of hermeneutic possibilities, allowing for anti-Habsburg as well as pro-Habsburg interpretations.

**By Way of a Conclusion**

I offer the above account as an initial exploration of how to take seriously the fact that many, perhaps most, historical artefacts are unmoored, that the most important thing about them is not their origins but their circulatory potential. This does not mean that conventional art-historical concerns such as authorship, iconography or original contexts are unimportant. Clearly, Bouttats tried hard to make his prints fit in a satisfying way with the general concerns of de Sandoval’s book. But this has to remain a subordinate rather than a central explanatory principle. Once the prints were detached from the book, the many latent ambiguities inherent in Bouttats’s collages would have come to the fore even more strongly. It cannot be known when or where this took place; certainly, it is a practice that can be traced
back across the early modern period, right back to the coming of print and before. So it may have happened at any time between 1681 and the moment when the prints became part of the Whitworth collection. Across this period, images were cut out for many purposes: to be reassembled into commonplace books or, at Little Gidding, into biblical ‘harmonies’; to be pasted or otherwise affixed to walls, either singly or collectively; to be inserted into other books, in the process technically called extra-illustration but better known by the term grangerisation, where readers interleave prints into unillustrated books; and, finally, as a way of maximising profit because print-dealers often found and still find it easier to shift single sheets than whole books.

What can be said for certain is that the unknown cutter – which could of course be Bouttats or Verdussen or any other person in possession of these prints before they entered into the Whitworth collection – behaved towards them just as Bouttats had behaved towards his sources. Both considered prints from the past as a resource to be recycled and reworked to fit present needs. Both are crucial agents within the processes of assembling and disassembling imagery that subtends pictorial collage. Nothing is or can be known of whoever did the detaching and there is precious little research on Bouttats himself. As already noted above, he is usually categorised as a mere copyist. That, at least, begins to explain why there relatively little art-historical work on medieval and early modern collage prints. They simply do not fit with standard art-historical criteria pertaining to authorship, agency, iconographic stability, contextual specificity and so on. Like the god Janus, they are transitional rather than specific; they point backwards and forwards in time, towards their antecedents and their future usages. They have currency, both in themselves and in their specific components, passing from hand to hand and deployed for numerous, sometimes unforetold purposes; in this, at least, they are like modern banknotes, perhaps the most widely circulated form of print collage that we at present know. At the same time, they are surprisingly intricate works of art that reward close scrutiny.
This essay was read in draft form by Samuel Bibby, Simon Dell and Anne Dunlop and in a slightly more advanced form by the editors of the present periodical and their anonymous peer-reviewer. All generously offered insights and suggestions that have greatly enriched the original argument and for this I am profoundly grateful. Any mistakes or misconceptions are of course my own.


3 See, for example, J. Richard Judson and Carl van de Velde, Book Illustrations and Title-pages (Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard), part 21, 2 vols (London and Philadelphia: Harvey Miller, 1978), vol. 1, p. 232.

4 A helpful context for this work is provided by María del Carmen Saen de Casas, La imagen literaria de Carlos V en sus crónicas castellanas (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2009).

5 A full digital scan of this edition from the Boston Public Library may be consulted here: https://archive.org/details/historiadelavida01sand/page/n781/mode/2up (vol. 1) and https://archive.org/details/historiadelavida02sand/page/n6/mode/2up (vol. 2) (both accessed 27 February 2020). Including the two frontispieces, the first volume has thirty illustrations and the second twenty-nine but, given the vagaries of early modern book printing, please beware that this may not be the case for all copies in this particular edition. For an introduction to the Verdussen publishing house, see Stijn van Rossem, ‘The Bookshop of the Counter-Reformation Revisited. The Verdussen Company and the Trade in Catholic Publications, Antwerp, 1585-1648’, Querendo, 38:4 (2008), 306-21. For a discussion of the business strategies adapted by the Verdussen company in the later seventeenth century, see Gerrit Verhoeven, ‘Grondslagen van verandering. Assimilatie en differentiatie van het Antwerpse boekbedrijf in de tweede helft van de zeventiende eeuw’, BMGN - Low Countries
That Verdussen, with Bouttats’s help, was deliberately trying to develop a niche for illustrated books within the Hispanic market is quite clear. See Pilar Capelastegui Perez-Espana, ‘Iconografía de don Quijote en la pintura española y su deuda con los ilustradores’, Cuadernos de arte e iconografía, 12:6 (1993), 326-32.


7 On the widespread early modern practice of pasting prints to walls, see Griffiths, The Print Before Photography, pp. 415-17.


9 For full details of this volume, see Judson and van de Velde, Book Illustrations and Title-pages, pp. 232-3.


15 See Griffiths, The Print Before Photography, pp. 427-45. The passage on the collection of portraiture is particularly instructive (pp. 437-438). For an insightful account of who the
Ferrars family were – one might define them as cautiously iconophilic, firmly Arminian and yet fundamentally ecumenical English Calvinists – and just how thoughtfully they used print, see Adam Smyth, ‘Little Clippings: Cutting and Pasting Bibles in the 1630s’, *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 45:3 (2015), 595-613.


17 For full details of this, see Judson and Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages*, pp. 336-9.

18 The full text runs: ’Das ist keiser Maximilian den hab ich / Albrecht Dürer zw Awgspurg hoch oben awff / der pfaltz in seinem kleinen stüble künterfett / do man czahlt 1518 am mandag noch / Johannis tawffer.’ (‘This is emperor Maximilian, whom I, Albrecht Dürer portrayed at Augsburg up in the high palace, in his small chamber, when the year was counted as 1518, on Monday after [the day of] John the Baptist.’)


20 See Verhoeven, ‘Gronslagen van verandering’. For a broader account of just how frequently plates were reprinted and otherwise copied in the early modern world, see Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography*, pp. 132-43.

21 On this practice, see *ibid.*, pp. 189-90.

22 For example, in 1623, Vorsterman was paid 75 guilders for the copperplate and his engraving for the third part of Haraeus’s book. In comparison, Rubens was paid only 20 guilders for his design for Goltzius’s *Opera Omnia*. Judson and Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages*, pp. 233 and 340. On the partial re-polishing and reusage of already printed plates, see Griffiths, *The Print Before Photography*, pp. 136-67.


33 This is reprinted in *ibid.*, p. 339, note 2.


38 For more on why this is so, see Margit Thøfner, *A Common Art: Urban Ceremonial in Brussels and Antwerp during and after the Dutch Revolt* (Zwolle: Waanders, 2007), pp. 94-6.


41 On the importance of this trope within the civic culture of early modern Antwerp, see Thøfner, *A Common Art*, pp. 247 and 329-31.

42 This, and the iconography of the whole scene is discussed in detail in Judson and Van de Velde, *Book Illustrations and Title-pages*, pp. 232-3. Much of the present paragraph is indebted to that discussion.

A version of this print is held at the New York Public Library, and may be inspected via their Digital Collections: The Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs: Print Collection, The New York Public Library. ‘Caricature of Martin Luther as a wolf in monk's habit, with a small devil blowing evil thoughts into his ear. Dead sheep left and right on the ground’: http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/b57effa0-2f27-0133-03b2-58d385a7b928 (last accessed 7 May 2020). For a discussion of the polemical sides of Luther’s iconography, see Robert W. Scribner, For the Sake of Simple Folk: Popular Propaganda for the German Reformation (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2nd edn, 1994), pp. 14-36 and 229-39.


See, for example, the print by Caterino Doino after Pirro Ligorio, dated to 1641 and showing two former rulers of Ferrara; a copy is held in the British Museum, museum number 1866,1208.804.


This was first noted in Earl Miner, ‘The Wild Man Through the Looking Glass’, in Edward Dudley and Maximillian E. Novak (eds), The Wild Man Within: An Image in Western Thought from the Renaissance to Romanticism, (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1972), pp. 87-114, p. 106.

See, for example, Morgan Ng, ‘Collage, Architectural Inscription, and the Aesthetics of Iconoclasm’; Smyth, ‘Little Clippings’; and Brown, ‘Cutting, Sticking, and Material Meaning’. See also the various sources given in footnote 22.

For an overview of these practices, see Fleming ‘The Renaissance Collage’, and also Lucy Peltz, Facing the Text: Extra-illustration, Print Culture and Society in Britain, 1769-1840 (San Marino: Huntington Library Press, 2017).