

## THE RISE AND FALL OF THE ‘BIERBESCHOOIER’: SUPPLYING AND CONTROLLING AMSTERDAM DRINKING HOUSES (1580-1795)

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### Introduction

*Beer supplier: You know you owe me money?*

*Innkeeper: Yes, I do, but show some patience.*

*Beer supplier: I will arrest you.*

*Innkeeper: Yes, kiss my behind and drag me to Court.*

*Beer supplier: I will get you behind bars.*

*Innkeeper: Take it easy, nobody will hang for beer debts.<sup>1</sup>*

Indeed, no publican would end up at the scaffold for not paying their beer supplier in seventeenth-century Amsterdam, but their relation was unequal and delicate. Wholesalers of beers from other Dutch cities - so-called *bierbeschooiers* - were in a dominant position, they owned many drinking houses and even appurtenant attractions, like waterworks. Innkeepers who were overdue in paying rent could be evicted and their inventories sold. Long before large breweries did it, *bierbeschooiers* practiced a tied-house system and even longer before present days tech companies they profited from the infamous ‘vendor lock-in’. Yet, at the end of the seventeenth century, the power of the Amsterdam beer suppliers rapidly declined in favour of local brewers, distilleries and vintners.

### Drinking in Amsterdam

In the ‘Golden Age’ (1580-1700) of the Dutch Republic economic and cultural prosperity changed the character of the towns in the leading province of Holland. Amsterdam, the port city at the banks of the Amstel river, expanded and transformed into a metropole. Due

to migration its population surged, from an estimated 30,000 in 1560 to around 220,000 inhabitants towards the end of the seventeenth century. The city developed into a maritime and commercial hub, where people would find a safe harbour, plenty of work, great business opportunities and news, books, paintings, sex, drugs, music and all other sorts of entertainment. Amsterdam attracted migrants as well as a growing number of transients, from fortune seeking labourers, seamen, itinerant diplomats, dignitaries and merchants to students, scientists and other curious minds, who came to experience the ‘Miracle of the Dutch Republic’ with their own eyes (Fig. 1).<sup>2</sup>

In line with the booming economy and the growth in population and visitors, the number of public drinking houses in Amsterdam increased. The city was noted for being a *Suyp-stad* (binge town), but the exact quantity of early modern Amsterdam drinking houses is difficult to determine. There are no admission records left of publicans prior to 1742 and other sources are scarce and incomplete. An indication of the number of drinking houses in the earlier period gives a grievance delivered to the States of Holland, dating 1613. That year, local tax collectors calculated 518 public drinking houses in Amsterdam. This gives a ‘drinking house ratio’ of 1:200, considering the number of 105,000 inhabitants. By the next winter no less than 105 of these taverns and inns had to close their doors, because the publicans were accused of tax evasion. In the second half of the seventeenth century, Amsterdam counted an estimated minimum of 1,350 public drinking houses. This number is based on a fee the publicans paid to the Spinhouse, a



Figure 1. Amsterdam around 1682. Map by Joannes de Ram. ACA, KOG-AA-3-02-095.

new house of correction for female delinquents and prostitutes. The amount of this contribution was related to the kind of drinks they sold: serving beer would cost five stivers each quarter (1 guilder per annum). The actual number of drinking houses must have been higher than 1,350, partly because publicans avoided to pay the fee (Fig. 2).<sup>3</sup>

Let's take a closer look at the multitude of drinking houses in metropolitan Amsterdam. The basic definition of the public drinking house by Beat Kümin ('a dwelling whose master regularly sells alcoholic drinks to members of the public for consumption on the premises')<sup>4</sup> serves as an umbrella for an abounding variety in seventeenth-century Amsterdam. Contemporaries could

visit taverns (*taveernen*, *kroegen* or *kuffes*), beer and wine cellars (*bier- and wijnkelders*), lodgements (*logementen* or *slaaphuizen*) and eateries, like ordinaries and cook shops (*ordinarissen* and *gaarkeukens*). The profession of publican (*waard*, *tapper* or *herbergier*) was popular among migrants, because there were no guild restrictions - only Amsterdam citizenship was obligatory - and the initial costs of starting a modest establishment were low. Getting married to a tapper's widow or daughter could make things even easier. Thousands of newcomers tried their luck working behind the bar. A number of French, British, German and Scandinavian migrant-publicans specialized in serving customers from their homeland. They interpreted and mediated between their guests and the local



Figure 2. Tax farmer Hendrik Segersz van der Kamp with his family visiting an inn where the patrons play *la main chaude* (*Pat-a-Cake*). Jan Miense Molenaer, around 1647-48. Private collection, Swiss.

community. A vast majority of the drinking establishments were small enterprises, run by only a husband and wife and one or two employees at most.

Drinking houses were primarily concentrated in the harbour area of Amsterdam, in the old town between the outer canals and near the city gates. In the course of the century city boundaries were extended and new neighbourhoods arose, such as the Jordaan. Hundreds of new taverns sprouted up in these upcoming areas, mainly serving the local inhabitants. At the top of the catering hierarchy of Amsterdam stood the inn (*herberg*). In most of these drinking houses travellers could dine, sleep and eat, although the word *herberg* also was used to describe a humbler pub. Larger inns were a small part of the total drinking trade. This situation was comparable to a larger metropolis like London: in 1715, this city of 700,000 inhabitants had about 2,500

licensed drinking houses, but only 150 principal inns. Around 1690, Amsterdam counted just over 100 larger inns. This group was headed by a handful of ‘gentlemen’s inns’ (*herenherbergen*), established by the town government for the lodging of esteemed guests (Fig. 3).

Despite growing scholarly attention, the important contribution of public drinking houses to society is generally still ignored by researchers of the Ancien Regime.<sup>5</sup> Besides being a location for consuming alcohol, dining, meeting merry company, fighting, gambling and other activities that still take place, the early modern tavern and inn also provided a stage for more serious matters. Trade was conducted in certain inns, as well as extra services such as offering storage space for merchandise. Members of the guilds and other professional groups used drinking establish-





Figure 3. Gerrit Berckheyde, *View of Amsterdam Grimburgwal with Oudezijds Herenlogement*, around 1670. Amsterdam Museum, SB 329.

ments as meeting point and even as official office room. For instance, the representatives of the Amsterdam brewing industry assembled in public drinking houses for their meetings and meals. At the end of the century, the leaders of this Brewers College had their official congregations in the *Witte Zwaan* (White Swan) at the Nieuwendijk (no. 120). In the next century, the brewers moved their sittings to the *Handboogdoelen*, a gentlemen's inn at the Singel.<sup>6</sup>

### Middlemen

As well as in other Dutch cities, Amsterdam drinking houses were of indispensable economic value to the town government. From the Middle Ages onward, alcoholic beverages were widely consumed and taxed. Consequently, they became a main source of income

for the city and the regional government of the States of Holland. In the year 1555, about 70% of all the expenses of Amsterdam could be covered with the local taxation of beer alone. In 1578, the town government transitioned from a royal stronghold to the rebel forces of stadholder William of Orange. After this 'Alteration', the consumption of alcoholic drinks was partly taxed directly by the States of Holland, who took the lead in the rebellious government. In the second half of the seventeenth century, the share of the beer levy to the town's budget decreased to about 10%, due to the invention of other taxes. Publicans had to pay a higher levy per barrel of beer than particular households, which evoked a perpetual cat and mouse game of tax evasion. Besides fraud with permits for citizens (*burgercedels*) there sprouted numerous 'drinking holes' outside the town gates that could serve cheaper drinks by escaping the consumption taxes (Fig. 4).<sup>7</sup>



Figure 4. Adriaan Brouwer, *Interior of a Tavern*, around 1630. Wikimedia Commons.

The town government tried to prevent fraud by mandating a strict separation between beer production, beer transportation and beer selling. Publicans had to be registered as a citizen and, before they could sell beer, they had to obtain a permit from the excise office. This piece of paper had to be shown to the official carriers who delivered the beer to their premises. In 1581, the town government renewed and invigorated the legislation on beer distribution. The distinction between light-alcoholic ‘sharp beer’ (*scharbier* or *dunbier*) and regular beer was important, because the latter was higher taxed. The 1581 ordinance also presented a new chain in the distribution network of drinks, the ‘*bierbeschooier*’.<sup>8</sup> This wholesaler imported beers from breweries in other Dutch towns and distributed these among their clients. Previously, this import was done by a small group of innkeepers, but the stricter legislation and observance

ended this situation. Also, at the end of the sixteenth century, the market for beer was shifting. Delft remained the major production centre, but Haarlem, Weesp, Dordrecht and especially Rotterdam were rising stars. The 22 breweries that Amsterdam counted around 1600 did not produce enough to supply the beer demanded by the growing population and all the vessels leaving the port. In 1615, more foreign beer - mainly from other Dutch towns - was consumed in Amsterdam than that produced by local breweries. Therefore, greater quantities had to be imported from outside town. This provided a golden opportunity for the *bierbeschooiers* as middlemen.<sup>9</sup>

Foreign Dutch brewers could also close distribution deals directly with Amsterdam publicans. Yet, without the assistance of the wholesalers, they lacked knowl-





Figure 5. The beer quay, Oudezijds Voorburgwal and the Old Church. Jan van der Heyden, around 1670. Mauritshuis, The Hague, inv.no. 868.

edge of the local market for beer consumption and the ways to collect money of unwilling and unable clients. By contracting a *bierbeschooier* the brewers were assured of a steady clientele and did not had to interfere with deadbeats and complaints. In notarial contracts the brewers agreed to deliver as much beer as the suppliers demanded. The beer had to be of good quality and sometimes the *bierbeschooier* promised exclusivity. In 1618, a Haarlem brewer offered credit up to 2,400 guilders to an Amsterdam *bierbeschooier*. Such deals were quite common. In 1622, the enterprising Amsterdam beer supplier Adriaen Veen even started his own company to exploit a brewery in Rotterdam.<sup>10</sup>

*Bierbeschooiers* stored the imported beer barrels in their basements. If these were full, they left them on the pave-

ment before their houses, as we can see on this picture of Jan van der Heyden (Fig. 5). Their buildings were concentrated around the beer quay (*bierkaai*).<sup>11</sup> The oldest location was the ‘Delftse Bierkaai’ at the Oudezijds Voorburgwal, near the Old Church, which later (1622) was accompanied by a smaller ‘Nieuwe Bierkaai’ at the Brouwersgracht (between Herenmarkt and Binnenbrouwersstraat). *Bierstekers*, suppliers of beer cheaper than six guilders per barrel, resided around the Weesper Bierkade at the Nieuwezijds Kolk. To avoid fraud, local ordinances (1629, 1648) completely prohibited beer tapping in the direct environment of these quays.<sup>12</sup> *Bierbeschooiers* also had to swear an oath not to defraud. To be sure, the town government in 1608 and 1610 also established two guardhouses at the Delftse and Weesper quays. The watchmen issued the



Figure 6. Detail of the Dam square by Jan van der Heyden, 1668. Amsterdam Museum, SA 7332.

required permits and had to prevent nocturnal smuggling and other malpractices.<sup>13</sup> Despite their efforts, *bierbeschooiers* continued to tap beers or sneak barrels out of their basements to avoid taxation. The import of smaller amounts (less than 3,000 litres) of beer was exempt from excises, as long as wholesalers had obtained a special permit at the guardhouses. Again, this gave opportunity for tricks.<sup>14</sup>

The Amsterdam *bierbeschooiers* were organised into a guild headed by four directors. The official date of establishment is 1621, but by that time the guildmembers had already been active for a decade. Their guildhall was at the old beer quay, at the Oudezijds Voorburgwal near the Old Church. New members had to pay admission fees of 30 guilders and later (1684) 40 guilders; a generous donation that benefitted the cities poor house (*Aalmoezeniershuis*).<sup>15</sup> In 1622, more than 60 men and women were active as *bierbeschooier*. Six of them complained about the poor summer that year, after the resumption of the Dutch war with Spain. The public consumed little in drinking houses, they stated, and warfare hampered the import of beers from the city

of Breda in Brabant.<sup>16</sup> The extreme cold winter of 1645-46 was another setback for the wholesalers. Beer imports from Haarlem, Rotterdam, Weesp and other producing towns stagnated, because fresh water was lacking. Also, there was less demand: 'only a few people travelled to Amsterdam, and they [visitors] are the largest beer consumers', the tax farmers explained their revenue shortfalls in a request to the States of Holland.<sup>17</sup> In the same document, the *bierbeschooiers* accounted for their inferior sales figures. One of them sold almost 800 barrels less than in the previous three winter months of 1644-45 (2,014 instead of 2,811).<sup>18</sup> Another wholesaler specifies his sales to publicans and private individuals: in 1644-45 he sold them respectively 896 and 1,340 barrels (in 1645-46 resp. 802 and 1,086 barrels).

There is little doubt that the supply to private households was of greater extent than that to the professional catering businesses. According to the account above, the ratio was about one third for drinking houses and two thirds for civilians. Yet, we should consider the practise of large-scale fraud: great quantities of beer were purchased with citizen permits but actually sold to the pub-



Figure 7. Herenmarkt 26, corner Brouwersgracht, the former house of Jan Claesz Doot in 2010. Photo: Ton Engwirda. Wikimedia Commons.

lic in inns and taverns. Yet, a list with debtors (from *bierbeschooier* Jan Jansz de Vos, in 1629) also indicates that his core business was supplying private individuals. Between them are artisans, seamen and even a brewer, who ordered additional beers from outside the city.<sup>19</sup>

### No bums

In spite of their names - 'schooier' also means bum in Dutch - most *bierbeschooiers* were well-to-do citizens. Perhaps it is better to state that they became well-to-do

citizens; some of them went from rags to riches. Take for example the *bierbeschooiers*-family Roest. The founding father of their enterprise was Hendrick Fredericksz Roest (?-1657), a migrant cobbler from Apen, which is a small village in Oldenburg (Niedersachsen, Germany). In Amsterdam, Roest lived and worked at Delftse beer quay (Oudezijds Voorburgwal), where his company was named the Crowned Anchor (*Gekroonde Anker*). By 1618 he was one of the main wholesalers of imported beers and a director of the guild. In 1631, Hendrick Fredericksz invested part of his profits in a house at the new beer





Figure 8. Portrait of David or Daniel Lingelbach I, of the Nieuwe Doolhof (New Labyrinth), Amsterdam, Arnoud van Halen, 1700-1732. Rijksmuseum, SK-A-4613.

quay (Herenmarkt no. 18) - which he bought for the large sum of 6,000 guilders. He and his family continued living at the old quay at the Oudezijds Voorburgwal (no. 126). By the time of his second marriage (1639) with a widow from Leiden, the supply of tuns in his basement contained more than 15,000 litres beer and mum.<sup>20</sup>

Hendrick Fredericksz Roest initially imported his beers from brewers in Delft, Dordrecht and the West-Frisian town of Edam. Later in the 1650s, the Two Climbing Lions from Rotterdam became his main supplier. Roest named his business after this brewery-malthouse in the

Leuvehaven, the largest brewery of Rotterdam. The complex and inventory were acquired by Vincent Bouwensz for 85,000 guilders and after his death, in 1653, the company was directed and expanded by his widow Aeltje Otten.<sup>21</sup> Roest owed a large sum (5,205 guilders) to the Lions-brewery, so indicates his inventory in 1660.<sup>22</sup> The same source tells us more about his *bierbeschooiers*-business. For transportation he owned two horses, several sleds and other, unnamed equipment (Figs. 6 & 13). The amount of cash in his house was astonishing: hidden in a case Roest saved 26,808 guilders in all sorts of currencies. Even more impressive were his



Figure 9. *The New Maze*, by Hessel Gerritsz, around 1633. ACA, 010097011866.

credit figures on paper. Tenants from drinking houses, basements and other storage facilities owed him around 2,000 guilders and other credit posts in administration exceeded 33,000 guilders. His widow was entitled to half of the profit of his business and received 26,200 guilders, indicating a total gain of more than 52,000 guilders.

Besides the assets and profits of Roest's business, the inventory of his richly furnished house was worth almost 5,000 guilders. This included textiles, porcelain and gold and silver items. The main room, where Roest and his wife would receive visitors, was decorated with several paintings: biblical displays, peasants, landscapes

and two lions, referring to the Rotterdam brewery. Most valuable was a portrait of the deceased himself. The total value of Roest's possessions exceeded 70,000 guilders. Including his real estate property - his own house, country house in Nigtevegt (Utrecht) and several inns - his capital would have been a minimum of 100,000 guilders. By present day standards, this would mean that Roest was a millionaire. His rich legacy contrasts sharply with that of the beer porter, who's belongings were registered by the same notary only a few days later. These were worth no more than 300 guilders, including 1 guilder and 4 stivers cash money found in a sack.<sup>23</sup>





Figure 10. View of the Bierkade and Groentemarkt, Oudezijds Voorburgwal, and the Oudekerksplein with the Old Church. Abraham Rademaker/Jan Schenk, around 1720. ACA, 010094008183.

Hendrick Fredericksz Roest's brother Frederick Fredericksz Roest (?-1652), a former baker, also became active in the beer trade. He lived at the Brouwersgracht, near the new beer quay, where he bought a house together with his brother. His son, Egbert, and daughter, Marritje Fredericks Roest, continued in the trade, the latter together with her husband, a former spear maker. Their joint wholesale company also sold beers from the Rotterdam's Two Climbing Lions. In 1644, Egbert Roest was sporadically active in the international trade with the recent conquered Dutch colonies on the coast of Brazil. He sold beers and mum for which he received cases of sugar in return. In Amsterdam, between 1655 and 1674, Egbert Roest also was a tax farmer of the beers. In that function he had to collect the excises from publicans and citizens. This side job probably did not make him very popular, but it gave him an even stronger grip in the catering business.<sup>24</sup>

Another *bierbeschooier* who had a humble career start was Jan Claesz Doot (1575-1653/54). He was a sailor from Hoorn, one of the major harbours of West-Friesland. Around 1600 Doot moved to Amsterdam,

where he lived in the less salubrious outskirts of town. After marrying a local girl, Doot began a drinking house at a better location, near the Haarlemmersluis. Their inn (Wapen of Amsterdam) was a house of ill repute, though, and the publicans were accused of facilitating prostitution.<sup>25</sup> After he lost his wife, Doot began working as a wholesaler of beers. He earned enough to build a brand-new house at the corner of the Brouwersgracht and the Herenmarkt, (present day no. 26) (Fig. 7). In 1631, his capital was estimated at 4,000 guilders and his income grew considerably. Doot invested his money in real estate. He bought a number of drinking houses including the *Rode Doolhof* (Red Maze), located in a former cloister. The inn featured a beautiful garden, several play houses and, of course, a maze.

Notarial records inform us about Doot's *modus operandi* as *bierbeschooier*. In 1628 he was guarantor for a publican in the meat district in the Nes, provided that he would sell his imported beers and pay for these in cash. A year later, Doot had purchased the drinking house, which gave him a stronger grip on the publican. Late payments usually resulted in the forced sale of the inventory and a swift eviction. This happened to the





Figure 11. The golf course behind the Stadlander inn outside the city. Nicolaas Aartman, 1755. ACA, 010097000035.

publican of the *Trock*, a tavern just outside one of the town gates (Haarlemmerpoort). He refused to sell beers from Delft, as was ordered in the supply contract, and secretly served another brand to his patrons. Furthermore, the publican was behind in his payments for both beer and rent. Doot offered him two options; pay off his debts and sell his beers according the contract, or leave the house within two weeks. The last possibility also implied that a family would lose their home, because publicans, spouses and offspring always lived on the premises of their drinking house.<sup>26</sup>

### Bad beers

The quality of the beers supplied by the *bierbeschooiers* could cause friction. Wise publicans added a clause to their contracts in which the wholesaler promised to supply decent drinks for a reasonable price. If the quality deteriorated, they were free to choose another

supplier.<sup>27</sup> The contract of David Lingelbach, an innkeeper from Frankfurt am Main, lacked such a clause (Figs. 8, 9 & 10). For his *Nieuwe Doolhof* (New Maze), a popular drinking house with a labyrinth, water works and leisure garden in the Jordaan-neighbourhood, he was completely dependent on his *bierbeschooier*, a man named Dirck van der Kerck. Selling other beers would invalidate his contract instantly. In 1644, his patrons started complaining about ‘undrinkable’ beer and some even departed to another venue.<sup>28</sup>

Besides Lingelbach, other publicans complained about the poor quality of the beers from brewery the Dutch Garden (*Hollandse Tuin*), from the Rotterdam brewer Adriaen Fransz Pieck. A few years later, in 1647, Lingelbach escaped the ‘vendor lock-in’, by buying his own drinking house, at the Rozengracht - across the street to Rembrandt’s last address. His new inn and labyrinth and sculpture garden with dazzling attractions, like moving mechanical figures, fountains, music and



Figure 12. Medal of the bierbeschooiers guild of Willem Losser. Rijksmuseum.

livestock, prospered well into the eighteenth century.<sup>29</sup> Another brewery from Rotterdam, the Posthoorn, was accused of producing inferior beer. In 1647 two bierbeschooiers collected complaints about this, probably as the first stage in a future lawsuit. Several innkeepers testified about the ‘unsoundness’ of Posthoorn-beer, a watery substance which their guests refused to drink. Because patrons moved to other taverns, their businesses went downhill. According to a publican at the corner of the Wieringerstraat, near the IJ, they lost most of their customers: ‘the word goes that [...] there is no place with filthier beer than theirs’.<sup>30</sup>

In late eighteenth-century England, the rise of the ‘tied trade’ was a direct result of increased competition between brewers, as a cause of restricted licenses. Tied houses were quite rare in the earlier period, although some seventeenth-century London alehouses were

owned by brewers.<sup>31</sup> In Amsterdam, the *bierbeschooiers* owned dozens of drinking houses, although it is hard to estimate the exact amount. The members of the Roestdynasty acquired at least 20 houses - or large shares in them - within the gates and several others just outside the town. In the summertime these latter establishments drew large crowds of patrons, looking for company, fresh air, cheap beer and some outdoor entertainment like golf and dog fighting. Ownership of drinking houses was not limited to the wealthy wholesalers. Even a more mediocre *bierbeschooier* like Pieter Lemmig owned four or five public houses, including the *Hertog van Kleef* (Duke of Cleves, Rokin) and *Huis van Nassau* (House of Nassau, Tweede Leliedwarsstraat).<sup>32</sup>

The Amsterdam beer suppliers also invested in the attractions of the drinking houses which they would lease to publicans. Because of the growing competition



Figure 13. Beer porter with his horse. Excerpt print by H.P. Schouten, 1787. ACA, 010001000537.

in the seventeenth century, drinking establishments started offering more entertainment like mazes, games, waterworks, mechanical dolls and live animals. Sometimes innkeepers were forced to sell their attractions in order to pay their beer debts. This is how, in 1626, the female *bierbeschooier* Grietje Hendricks got her hands on the famous fountains of the maze at the Looiersgracht. She placed another fountain in the garden of the *Rode Pannenhuis* (Red Roof Tiles House), an inn outside the town gates. Here the proprietor was reluctant to do the necessary and obligatory maintenance to the mechanical waterworks, which led to an argument with Grietje Hendricks.<sup>33</sup>

At the end of the seventeenth century, the fountains and labyrinths became outdated. They were replaced with new forms of entertainment, such as golf courses and menageries. The wholesalers Egbert Roest and Hendrick de Weer together invested in a new inn to be build next to the ‘palmagiebaan’ in the Diemermeer, a polder outside the city. This golf course (*kolfbaan*) of extreme length, about 640 meters, would surely draw public attention. According to his contract, the innkeeper had to sell their beers and pay in cash, otherwise he would pay a fee of six guilders per tun, ‘for the poor’. He was not very successful, but under subsequent publicans and proprietors the golf course remained, although at the end of the eighteenth century it was used for horse races.<sup>34</sup>

### Downhill

Considering their grip on the market and their possession of real estate, the *bierbeschooiers* must have been quite wealthy. Yet in 1674, the capital of Egbert Roest was only estimated at 12,000 guilders and his brother-in-law and business companion De Weer at a mere 9,400 guilders. Such estimations in tax registers are always too low, but these disappointing numbers could also be an indication that the heyday of the beer suppliers was over. From the mid-seventeenth century on, breweries were forced to produce for the local markets and imported beers were more heavily taxed by the governments. The sale of beers from other cities decreased, while the production of municipal breweries grew; Amsterdam even became the major brewing centre of Holland. In the same period, beer consumption per capita declined, in favour of new drinks like tea, chocolate, coffee, wine and gin (*jenever*). Last but not least, the economic boom of the Dutch had passed its zenith. Mainly small entrepreneurs, like those active in the catering industry, took severe blows or even went broke, causing severe hitches in the ‘great chain of credit’.<sup>35</sup>

The *bierbeschooiers* suffered from all of these developments and hard times called for harsh and creative measures. They started to lure away clients from their competitors by offering them cash or even golden and silver valuables. The guild tried to come up with a solu-



tion against this: in 1672 30 beer suppliers agreed to a penalty system to end this sort of malpractices. Another sign of decay followed in 1687, when the guildmembers had to protest against the moving of their guildhall near the Old Church.<sup>36</sup> The beer suppliers took a hard blow by the numerous bankruptcies of clients, private individuals as well as professional publicans. In 1700 they asked the town government to prohibit the supply to innkeepers who were already in debt with other wholesalers.<sup>37</sup>

Despite of their efforts, the golden days of the *bierbeschooiers* were clearly in the past. In the first half of the eighteenth century, the heirs of Roest and others had to sell most of their real estate. One of the buyers of the inns and taverns was Paulus Poursoy (1678-1728). He was also involved in the drinking business, as a distiller and later as tax farmer of the beers. Poursoy bought at least nine drinking houses, including *Stadlander*, a large inn outside the gates and renowned for its golf course (Fig. 11). There are some clues that vintners took over the businesses. Some *bierbeschooiers* also got active in the more profitable wine business. For instance, Willem Losser (1671-1724), from Vianen, who lived at the Brouwersgracht, combined both professions (Fig. 12).<sup>38</sup>

In the course of the century, the number of Amsterdam *bierbeschooiers* gradually decreased. In a wealth tax register of 1742 still nine of them were mentioned. Two of them had large incomes (3,500 guilders per annum), one only because he doubled as a broker and had inherited a fortune. According to the cash books of the guild, in 1743 only eleven men and later (1748) nine were still members. In 1750 a sad figure of four brothers and one sister remained. A year later the remaining wholesalers had to leave their guildhall and to fire the maid, because of financial deficits. Future meetings were held in the private house of the presiding director, Jacobus Bodisco.<sup>39</sup>

In the cold month of December 1795 only one lonesome *bierbeschooier* remained, Johannes van Oosterhout. A former medical doctor, he was the last director and only member of the guild. He wrote a short history of the guild and closed the account. Two years later Van Oosterhout passed away. His corpse was carried to the Old Church, only a few steps away from his home at the beer quay. The once so powerful middleman had

vanished into thin air. The future would lay in the hands of modernized breweries who started producing Bavarian beers, but this was well into the nineteenth century.<sup>40</sup>

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5. *ibid.*; Kümin, B. and Tlusty, B.A. (eds.) (2002) *The world of the tavern: public houses in early modern Europe*. Farnham: Ashgate; Hailwood, M. (2014) *Alehouses and Good Fellowship in Early Modern England*. Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer; Tlusty, B.A. (2001) *Bacchus and Civic Order: The Culture of Drink in Early Modern Germany*. Charlottesville,

VA: University of Virginia Press; and older key studies by Clark, P. (1983) *The English alehouse. a social history, 1200-1830*. Harlow: Longman; and Brennan, T. (1988) *Public drinking and popular culture in eighteenth-century Paris*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

6. Amsterdam City Archives (ACA), Notarial Archives (NA) inv.no. 5284, notary S. van Sevenhoven, d.d. 14-10-1699; Wagenaar, J. (1760-1768) *Amsterdam in zijne opkomst, aanwas, geschiedenissen, voorregten, koophandel, gebouwen, kerkenstaat, scholen, schutterije, gilden en regeringe*, Vol. 2. Amsterdam, reprint Alphen a/d Rijn 1971-1972, p.479.

7. 't Hart, M. and Limberger, M. (2006) 'Staatsmacht en stedelijke autonomie. Het geld van Antwerpen en Amsterdam (1500-1700)', *Tijdschrift voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis*. Vol. 3, No. 3, pp.3, 36-72; Hell, M. (2017) op. cit., p.27.

8. The Dutch word stems from the verb 'beschooien' which means 'to deliver', see: *Woordenboek der Nederlandsche Taal*, entry 'beschooien'.

9. Yntema, R.J. (1992) *The brewing industry of Holland, 1300-1800. A study in industrial development*. Dissertation University of Chicago, pp.130-132; van Dillen, J.G. (1933) *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis van het bedrijfsleven en het gildewezen van Amsterdam*, Vol. II. Den Haag, p.110.

10. van Dillen, J.G. (1933) op. cit., Vol. 2, No. 306, p.166; No. 333, p.186; No. 512, p.313; No. 813, p.466; Yntema, R.J. (1994a & b) 'Een kapitale nering. De brouwindustrie in Holland tussen 1500 en 1800' en 'Allerhande bieren. Over biersoorten en hun distributie tussen de 14de en de 19de eeuw', in Kistemaker, R.E. and van Vilsteren, V.T. (eds.) *Bier! Geschiedenis van een volksdrank*. Amsterdam: Bataafsche Leeuw, pp.72-95, 92-93.

11. The Dutch expression 'fighting against the bierkaai' (*tegen de bierkaai vechten*) means trying to reach for the impossible. Most likely, this was no reference to the physical strength and fighting spirit of the inhabitants around the beer quay, but more to the financial power of the *bierbeschooiers*. Cf. Stoett, F.A. (1923-1925) *Nederlandsche spreekwoorden, spreekwijzen, uitdrukkingen en gezegden*. Zutphen: Thieme, p.88.

12. Schama, S. (1988) *The Embarrassment of Riches*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, p.192 wrongly relates the prohibition of 1629 to maintaining the public order in the area. In the same passage, he invents a non-existent 'St. Jans Kerk' and dates the ordinance incorrectly. Wagenaar, J. (1760-1768) op. cit., Vol. 2, p.424; Yntema, R.J. (1994b) op. cit., p.91; Hell, M. (2017) op. cit., pp.283-284; van Dillen, J.G. (1933) op. cit., Vol. 2, No. 84, p.48.

13. ACA, Archive 5023, inv.no. 2, fol. 227, 29-3-1608; idem, fol. 234v, 15-3-1610.

14. ACA, NA 455/157, notary P. Mathijsz, 28-5-1613; van Dillen, J.G. (1970) op. cit., Vol 2., No 86, p.49.

15. Wagenaar, J. (1760-1768) op. cit., Vol. 2, pp.298, 447 dates the establishment of the guild too late (1621). ACA, NA 455/157, notary P. Mathijsz, 28-5-1613; NA 154/174, notary J.F. Bruijningh, 7-11-1618.

16. ACA, Archive 5020, inv.no. 12, 293v-296; NA 691/1v, notary J. Warnaerts, 9-12-1622.

17. National Archives, The Hague, States of Holland, archive 3.01.04.01, inv.no. 1370\*, request d.d. 26-10-1646, disposal d.d. 10-12-1646.

18. One barrel=155.4 litres of beer.

19. ACA, NA 723/365 notary P. Carels, inventory J.J. de Vos 3-3-1629.

20. ACA, NA 599/631-632, notary L. Lamberti, inventory, 09-04-1639; NA 455/157, notary P. Mathijsz, testimony 28-5-1613; NA 154/174, notary J.F. Bruijningh, 1618; Nieuwenhuis, W.H.M. (1986) *Dossier Herenmarkt. Bewoners en eigenaren van de huizen aan de Herenmarkt in de XVII-de eeuw*. Amstelveen: Luyten, pp.127-128.

21. Bijlsma, R. (1911) 'De brouwerij "De twee witte klimmende leeuwen"', *Rotterdams Jaarboekje*. pp.127-138.

22. ACA, NA 1915-1254 not. F. Uijtenbogaert, inventory Hendrick Fredericksz Roest, former bierbeschooier, at the request of his widow Jannetje Wecksteen and other heirs, 25-3-1660.

23. ACA, NA 1915/1333, notary F. Uijtenbogaert, inventory widow of Leendert Hendricksz, beer porter, 20-5-1660.

24. ACA, NA 602/370-371, notary L. Lamberti, testimony 18-08-1644; Hell, M. (2017) op. cit., pp.364-365.

25. ACA, Archive no. 5065, inv.no. 283, p.76-77, 04-08-1605; DTB 411/2, marriage registration 16-08-1603; Nieuwenhuis, W.H.M. (1986) op. cit., p.140.

26. ACA, NA 758/380, notary N.G. Rooleeu, protest d.d. 14-4-1631 [Trock].

27. For instance: ACA, NA 2124-217 (105), notary J. Weer, 19-6-1649; NA 1840, notary N. Kruijs, 3-1-1657.

28. Hell, M. (2017) op. cit., pp.224-225.

29. ACA, NA 1026A, notary S. v.d. Piet, 23-9-1644; NA 1026, 7-12-1644; Hell, M. (2017) op. cit., pp.214-216.

30. ACA, NA 1748/123/124/126/127/128/132/134/136 and 138 notary J.Q. Spithoff, 14-3-1647; NA 1749/210-212 same notary, 16-4-1648.

31. Clark, P. (1983) op. cit., pp.108, 263-266.

32. ACA, NA 3043/76, notary H. Venkel, rental contract 2-1-1670; transport acts 8-7-1683; 7-11-1713; 8-10-1688; 21-9-1668; 18-11-1713.

33. ACA, NA 401/127, notary J. Jacobs, 5-8-1630.

34. ACA, NA 3042/64, notary H. Venkel, contract 20-4-

1669; idem NA 3043/67, contract 26-5-1669.

35. Term from Kaplan, S.L. (1976) *The Bakers of Paris and the Bread Question, 1700-1775*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, p.377; Yntema, R.J. (1992) op. cit., pp.66-70, 90, 105, 131-132.

36. ACA, NA 3645B/198, notary J. de Vlieger, protest 28-10-1687.

37. ACA, Archive 5061, requests inv.no. 686, fol. 88.

38. ACA, burial record W. Losser 10-03-1724, DTB 1081/169; Hell, M. (2017) op. cit., p.339.

39. ACA, Archive no. 366, inv.nos. 28, 29 and 30; Oldewelt, W.F.H. (1945) *Kohier van de personeele quotisatie te Amsterdam over het jaar 1742, Vol. 2*. Amsterdam: Genootschap Amstelodamum, pp.26-27, 198-199, 281, 352; Wagenaar, J. (1760-1768) op. cit., Vol. 2, p.447.

40. ACA, Archive no. 366 (Guilds), inv.nos. 29 and 30; marriage J. van Oosterhout 15-7-1756, DTB 600/48; burial record 27-02-1797, Oude Kerk, DTB 1051/74v; Unger, R.W. (2001) *A History of Brewing in Holland, 900-1900: Economy, Technology, and the State*. Leiden: Brill, pp.366-369.