A CORPUS OF
REMBRANDT
PAINTINGS

VI

REMBRANDT'S PAINTINGS REVISITED

A COMPLETE SURVEY

Stichting Foundation
Rembrandt Research Project

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ERNST VAN DE WETERING

REMBRANDT'S PAINTINGS REVISITED

A COMPLETE SURVEY

with collaboration of
CARIN VAN NES

translated and edited by
MURRAY PEARSON

Springer

Frontispiece:

Rembrandt, *Self-portrait with two circles*, *c.* 1665/1669,
canvas 114.3 x 94 cm.
London, Kenwood House

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Stichting Foundation Rembrandt Research Project
A CORPUS OF REMBRANDT PAINTINGS VI

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Foreword

This is the last of a series of books titled *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings* published in the context of the Rembrandt Research Project (RRP). In five earlier Volumes, which appeared in 1982, 1986, 1989, 2005 and 2010, large sections of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre were catalogued. The present volume gives a complete and where necessary revised overview of Rembrandt's entire painted oeuvre. The Rembrandt Research Project (RRP) was an endeavour first set up by a group of Dutch art historians in 1968 with the aim of systematically investigating the nature and extent of Rembrandt's known paintings. As the last member of that group still active, I am now bringing the project to its close with a volume, which contains all the paintings of which, I am convinced, Rembrandt was the author or co-author.

The plates of course constitute the most important part of the book. Thanks to modern printing techniques, they show the treasure-house of the images that determined the greater part of Rembrandt's life as an artist. In that section (pp. 70-477) each painting of Rembrandt's oeuvre is reproduced in the best available quality. Each image is accompanied by an elucidatory Note (see the Notes to the Plates pp. 480-687). These Notes vary markedly in their level of detail and extent of argumentation, mainly depending on the complexity of the problems of attribution in certain cases. The following categories of paintings required special attention in this regard:

1. Paintings not previously dealt with in the earlier Volumes of the Corpus

As owners and users of *A Corpus* will know, the first three consecutive Volumes were organized in a strictly chronological order (from 1624-1642). For various methodological reasons, this chronological approach was exchanged for a thematic approach after Vol. III. In Vol. IV, which appeared in 2005, all Rembrandt's self-portraits and studies in the mirror were dealt with by placing them in a wider context (including drawings and etchings with Rembrandt's effigy). The same approach was used in Vol. V for the so-called small-scale history paintings.

This change in the order of working and related methodology was necessary to gain a deeper insight into essential aspects of Rembrandt as an artist, which in turn enabled us to get to grips with the works from the puzzling decade of the 1640s and from Rembrandt's complex late period up to 1669. The approximately 100 possibly autograph paintings that were not considered in Volumes I-V were almost all painted after 1642. These comprise portraits, group portraits and '*tronies*'; large-scale history pieces; life-size biblical, mythological and allegorical figures; and landscapes. The most problematic paintings from the period after 1642 were investigated afresh in the course of my extensive travels between 2005 and 2012. On the basis of new insights, I became convinced that Gerson and Tümpel, in their surveys of Rembrandt paintings, and various museum curators, in the catalogues of their collections, had unjustifiably disattributed from Rembrandt 26 paintings from the period after 1642. These can be found in the section 191–324 of this book. The relevant Notes to the Plates are marked with an ∗.[1]

2. Reassessments of works that had been disattributed by the RRP in Vols. I-III

A second reason for presenting a revised image of Rembrandt's complete painted oeuvre in the present Volume is that among the paintings strongly doubted or disattributed from Rembrandt in Volumes I-III of *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings* there are 44 works which, as a result of the insights I have arrived at in the meantime, and thanks to new information that has become available, need to be re-introduced into Rembrandt's oeuvre. The reattributed paintings of this category can be found in the section 1–190 in this book and are also marked with an ∗.[2] A number of these reattributions have already been announced in the *Corrigenda* sections of the Volumes IV and V, in Chapter II of *Corpus* V and elsewhere. However, in view of the relative inaccessibility of the *Corpus* volumes up till now, they are again included with the re-attributed paintings in this book.

3. Re- or newly discovered paintings

Another important reason for rounding off the *Corpus* in this Volume with a survey of Rembrandt's

1 List of reattributed paintings from after 1642 that were rejected by various authors: 189, 191a, 193, 195, 203, 206, 212, 216, 221, 230, 235a, 238, 251, 259, 263, 266, 271, 275, 276, 277, 280, 285, 288, 293, 309, 310.

2 List of reattributed paintings from before 1643. These paintings were either rejected or strongly doubted by the majority of members of the Rembrandt Research Project (the C and B numbers in *Corpus* I-III) and by other authors who in certain cases followed their opinions or v.v.: 1, 2, 3, 13, 17, 19, 32, 33, 35, 36, 42, 44, 45, 46, 61, 63a/b, 79, 81, 82, 85, 86, 87a/b, 109, 115, 118b, 126, 130A, 134, 141, 142, 146, 151, 152, 154, 156, 157, 170, 171, 172, 173, 180, 188.

entire painted oeuvre is that, since the discovery of the *Baptism of the eunuch* in 1973 [9], eight paintings that are now widely accepted as authentic have been discovered, or have re-surfaced, having been lost sight of for decades. These paintings need to be incorporated in the chronology of Rembrandt's oeuvre as well. They are marked with an ☆ in the Notes to the Plates.[3]

It may come as a surprise to the reader – if it does not sound altogether shocking – that 70 paintings which had been removed from Rembrandt's oeuvre or were strongly doubted should now be reinstated. Not that the negative judgments of the original Rembrandt Research Project – or for that matter those of other Rembrandt scholars of the previous generation such as Gerson and Tümpel – have all been universally accepted without reservations. However, the conspicuous disparity between the number of paintings accepted as Rembrandts in this book and the markedly smaller number accepted by specialists of that generation – and also by more recent scholars influenced by them – does call for some explanation.

It will be evident from Chapter I in this book, which is devoted to the history of attribution and rejection of paintings in the style of Rembrandt (pp. 1-53), and in the considerable number of Notes to the Plates marked with an asterisk, that the older generation of Rembrandt researchers – including the founding members of the Rembrandt Research Project – worked according to traditional connoisseurship, i.e. their judgments were largely based on intuitively applied criteria concerning style, brushwork and quality. They did, however, apply such criteria within more stringent – in fact overly strict – norms. In retrospect, it is surprising to note how shallow the underpinning of these frequently negative opinions was. In the present book, the arguments put forward by the various scholars for these disattributions are evaluated in a rigorous, often unsparing manner, and confronted with alternative facts and new insights.

I gradually came to realize that a subtler approach with a greater range of arguments of different kinds was called for. Arguments based on technical evidence as well as those of a more art-historical or art-theoretical nature, could lead to a greater degree of certainty than previously thought. Although not all of these arguments were *decisive* when taken alone, when considered together they frequently *converge* towards a more definitive conclusion (see on p. 65: the 'Bayesian approach'). This approach also embraces insights into Rembrandt's painting technique, the operation of his workshop and teaching practice, as well as the study of the possible functions of his paintings. Moreover, it was found rewarding to pay more attention to the fact that paintings age in a variety of different ways (see, for instance, the Notes to [206] and Plates [275a/b].

The Plates and Notes to the Plates

The paintings are presented in the Plates section in chronological order (pp. 70-477). For various – usually obvious – reasons it was decided sometimes to group them in small clusters (even when separated by a year or even two), in order to demonstrate more clearly the connection between certain works or certain trends and changes in the way Rembrandt seems to have been thinking and acting.

In the main, the Notes on re-attributed paintings are for obvious reasons quite extensive: after all, the purpose of these Notes is to justify the re-attribution. But I also wanted and indeed had to comment on the other paintings. The reader will find that these Notes vary quite radically in their structure, length and content. Their terse and often somewhat essayistic tone is due to the fact that as a rule no defence is offered for the inclusion of the painting concerned in Rembrandt's oeuvre, such as was provided in Volumes I-III for each so-called A-number. With works that are documented as autograph it was of course unnecessary, but along with those works there are many others which, although not explicitly documented as such, are so clearly authentic that their attribution may be accepted as self-evident. In the case of a great many paintings, therefore, I saw no reason to provide explicit arguments for their attribution, all the more so since that has already been done convincingly in many cases in the five volumes of *A Corpus*.

Nevertheless, in all cases I have included information in the Notes. Anyone who takes the trouble to read the Notes to the Plates will find that they provide a kaleidoscopic image with a range of very different kinds of data, views, hypotheses and questions relating to Rembrandt's theory of art, painting technique and workshop practice. Sometimes it may be biographical matters, or questions relating to his family and friends; but iconographic, pictorial and aesthetic points of view are also raised. My occasional expressions of surprise or amazement will perhaps invite the reader to look at a painting with different eyes, in which case the analyses of pictorial characteristics of the works concerned that are frequently offered may be of assistance.

In short, there has been no effort to provide a sequence of 324 standard catalogue texts, except in the case of portraits, where as a rule brief attention is given to the identity and biography of the sitter, often on the basis of data taken from *Corpus* Volumes I-III.

A more detailed account of the order of presenting the Plates and associated Notes can be found on pp. 63-65.

3 List of paintings discovered or that have re-surfaced since 1976: 9, 18, 21, 22, 30, 69, 122, 182.

Pendants

Leafing through the Plates in this book the reader will notice that, in the case of those portraits painted by Rembrandt for which a pendant has survived, the relevant pairs are reproduced next to the other under a single number (a and b). This arrangement is maintained, even if one of the two paintings is painted, either wholly or in part, by a hand other than Rembrandt's. This solution was chosen in accordance with 17th century workshop practice. In the accompanying captions and Notes to the Plates the extent of Rembrandt's autograph contribution in the relevant pair is briefly indicated. In making these assessments connoisseurship inevitably played a role.

The chapters

It is clear from the above discussion that the present revision of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre is not the first. Do my efforts come any nearer to the truth? Or can one speak of a wave movement, whereby reduction and expansion of the oeuvre succeed one another like some natural process?

This history is outlined in Chapter I under the title *What is a Rembrandt? A personal account.* The narrative begins around 1870, the period in which art historians began to engage systematically with the problem of the nature and extent of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre. I shall draw frequently from Catherine Scallen's book *Rembrandt, Reputation, and the Practice of Connoisseurship* (2004) devoted to the first sixty years of this history. Attention will then shift to the following episode, when Horst Gerson became increasingly influential. The narrative spotlight will then turn to the 'pre-history' and history of the Rembrandt Research Project, which for many still remains opaque. I have given this part of the narrative a relatively personal touch because only in this way could it be made clear why the canon of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre presented here differs so markedly from those of my predecessors and older colleagues.

The second (small) chapter of this book 'What is a non-Rembrandt?' is devoted to an attempt to discern some structure in the large body of paintings from Rembrandt studio and beyond.

The scholarly apparatus

As indicated above, this book should not be considered as a conventional *catalogue raisonné* with a complete art-historical apparatus. The rationale behind this free approach is that volumes I-V of *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings* will be readily accessible online with comprehensive references and indices by the time that this volume appears (in Springerlink and The Rembrandt Database http://www.rembrandt-database.org). Moreover, many museums with Rembrandts in their collections have devoted extensive catalogue entries to the paintings concerned. The form adopted for this book is rather intended to convey to the reader the essence of my approach and the insights to which this has led during the latter phase of the Rembrandt Research Project.

I myself, of course, do not consider this book to be 'the definitive' catalogue of Rembrandt paintings. The diaspora that Rembrandt's oeuvre has undergone, and in the case of many paintings their relative inaccessibility for systematic investigation, plus the fact that the mystery of Rembrandt's creative mind will never be fully fathomed, mean that this work will never end, even though I believe that demonstrable advances over the past 20 years have been achieved.

To this it should be added that those who try to demarcate the limits of Rembrandt's autograph oeuvre should not be seen as *douaniers* – a kind of 'Rembrandt police' whose judgment is decisive in any way. Unfortunately, the money and prestige of owners play a role in the Rembrandt world; whereas actually everyone should be free to set his or her own label under a particular painting on the basis of their own admiration, love or knowledge of the painting concerned – or indeed to reject such a label. The only really significant reason for compiling critical oeuvre catalogues is that art-lovers and art-historians simply cannot do without surveys of the oeuvres of artists they admire or study that are as thoroughly grounded as possible.

Acknowledgements

The nature of this book, for which many paintings have been investigated *in situ* over the past years, has involved innumerable others, museum directors and collectors, curators and restorers, art dealers, researchers of various kinds, documentalists and many others, who have extended to us their courtesy, hospitality, assistance and expertise. There have been so many that it is impossible to thank them all individually, and we only hope that all those who recall our work contacts will recognize themselves as the recipients of our deep gratitude.

Many people were also involved in the financial support of our work. In lending their assistance they had in mind above all, and without exception, the scholarly significance of this book. Without their support it would not have been possible to undertake the necessary work trips, the research associated with them, or the translation and editing of the book. We want those who count themselves among this group of benefactors also to know that they have our most sincere and deep thanks for their generosity, in the knowledge that they have rendered an important service to art historical scholarship, the museum world and the wider public of art lovers and museum visitors.

The following persons were more immediately involved in the creation of this book:

Alexander Schimmelpenninck van der Oye, the RRP's publisher since 1981, who spurred me on to round off the *Corpus* project with this book;

Rudie Ekkart, director of the RKD and Mariët Westermann, Vice President of The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, who played key roles in the negotiations in advance to first make the *Corpus* as a whole freely available digitally to a wide public;

Yoka Janssen, who, as our publisher (on behalf of Springer), from 2011 on guided the development of the book in a most subtle and inspiring manner;

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We thank the friends and colleagues who were willing to serve as sounding board and/or advisor for the somewhat risky first chapter of the present book.

My deepest feelings of gratitude go to my partner in life, Carin van Nes, not an art historian herself but at home in the world of conservation and a gifted painter. In 1976 she helped me write my first article on Rembrandt's way of working and since then has been my muse in my work on Rembrandt.

We also organized and supervised together the content of the Amsterdam exhibition '*Rembrandt. All his paintings*' (December 2012-April 2014), with life-size reproductions of all the works included in this book.

During the work on this Volume Carin overcame countless obstacles to mastering the digital management of the project. Day in and day out she stood by and advised me, since at my age I am unfortunately incapable of entering the digital age. We have hugely enjoyed this exciting life with the works of Rembrandt, the development of ideas about it, and making new discoveries; and equally the joint work during lecture tours. Without her, this onerous but inspiring project could never have led to the publication of this book within four years.

We often fled the workroom and the house in order to be able to concentrate fully on the work in seclusion. For this purpose, Ad and Marie Jeanne Nuyten, Reinette and Hans Jansens van Gellicum and Sytske and Gilles Stratenus were always ready, with friendship and hospitality, to provide this possibility.

Chapter I

What is a Rembrandt?

A personal account

In 1916 the wealthy, American railway magnate and art collector Henry Clay Frick (1849–1919) bought a Rembrandt titled *Old woman with a book* (**fig.1**). In 1898 the painting had been shown in Amsterdam at the first ever major Rembrandt exhibition. It was hardly surprising therefore that Frick (fig. 2) wanted it for his collection – the same collection which is now a public museum and considered to be one of the treasures of New York City. Today, however, the *Old woman with a book* is nowhere to be found in the display rooms of the Frick Collection; it hangs unseen by visitors in one of the offices of the museum staff.[1]

Abraham Bredius (1855-1946), the famous Rembrandt connoisseur[2] (fig. 3), had initially thought the painting to be by Rembrandt – possibly in collaboration with a pupil. But when Bredius learned of the purchase, he wrote to Frick:

'I am sorry to read that you have bought Mr. Porgès "Rembrandt" Old woman with a book. This is certainly not a Rembrandt, but by Carel van der Pluym one of his minor pupils.... I do not understand why Mr. de Wild did not warn you against buying the picture.'

This led to an exchange of letters between Bredius, Frick and his adviser in America, Carel de Wild (1870–1922) (fig. 4), a Dutch emigré painter and painting restorer who had encouraged Frick to buy the painting. Of this correspondence, only Bredius' letters to Frick have been preserved together with a

Fig. 2. Henry Clay Frick (1898).

Fig. 1. Carel van der Pluym, *Old Woman with a Book*, mid 1650s, canvas 98 x 78 cm. New York, The Frick Collection.

1 For a detailed analysis of the painting and its history, see the entry by Margaret Iacono in *Rembrandt and his School. Masterworks from the Frick and Lugt collections,* exhib. cat. New York (Frick Collection), 2011, pp. 64-72.

2 M. de Boer, J. Leistra en B. Broos, *Bredius, Rembrandt en het Mauritshuis !!!*, The Hague (Mauritshuis) 1992, p. 17.

Fig. 3. Abraham Bredius during archival research (*c.* 1915).

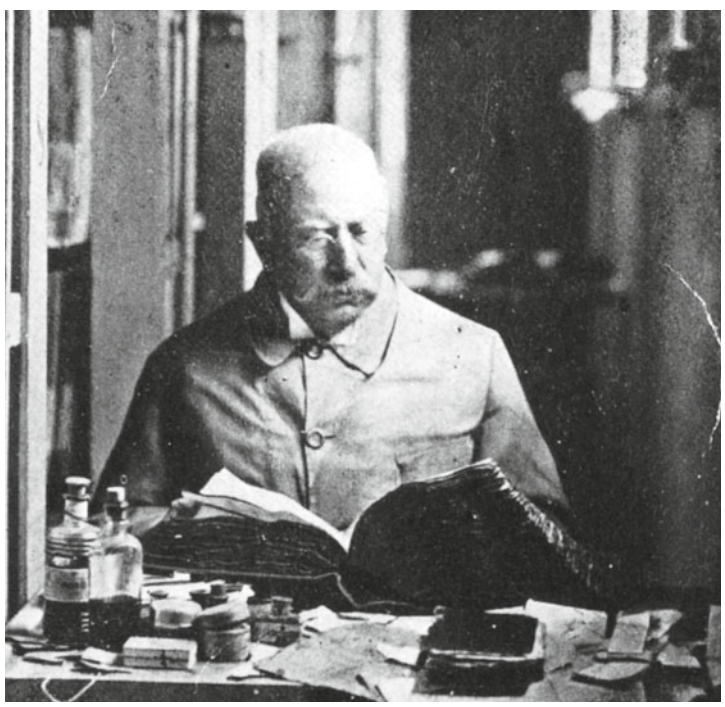

Fig. 4. Carel de Wild as a painter (*c.* 1910).

long and furious letter from De Wild to Bredius.

What mainly incensed De Wild was the fact that so influential an expert as Bredius could alter his opinion – and in such a short time at that. In his letter, preserved in the RKD in the Hague, De Wild asked Bredius:

> *'What would you think of an "expert" on precious stones, through whom you had bought a pearl, who later told you he had made you buy a pebble? Would you not warn everybody against such a man, whose practices verge on criminal ignorance? Or would you offer your excuses and say that the alleged expert was "constantly learning"?'*

For this was indeed what Bredius had written to Frick to explain his change of opinion:

> *'We learn constantly by studying and comparing'….. 'Formerly we all believed the picture to be by Rembrandt, but our knowledge of the master has developed.'*

To which De Wild furiously replied:

> *'I am not the least surprised that collectors become thoroughly disgusted with this "constantly learning", which in plain language means constantly changing your mind.'*

How was it possible that a painting which, to our eyes, appears so remote from a genuine Rembrandt, could nevertheless for a long time have been considered an authentic work by the master? This question introduces the issue to which the present chapter is devoted: the learning process which investigators of Rembrandt's paintings necessarily undergo in their attempts to determine the extent and the limits of his painted oeuvre. This is thus not merely a question of Bredius' developing insight, it concerns a learning process to which all scholars before and since Bredius – and to this day – have had to submit. But because most of them have left no reflection of this learning process in their writings, one can only follow their thinking indirectly from incidental shards of argumentation, usually extremely cursory, buried in their mostly brief notes.

A new beginning

The idea of the Rembrandt Research Project (RRP) was to establish an altogether new beginning. The project was set up in 1968 by a group of Dutch art historians with the object of developing a rational methodology capable of grounding and justifying their judgments of the authenticity of paintings in the style of Rembrandt. The result was to be an oeuvre catalogue of Rembrandt's paintings which would be unique in its thoroughness.

I became involved in this project through a series of accidents, an active involvement that has lasted more than 45 years.

Apart from a brief history of the problems of attribution associated with Rembrandt's paintings, the present chapter is a record of the author's learning experiences over the years of involvement with the Rembrandt Research Project. The Notes to the Plates in this book in particular where re-attributions are concerned, contain numerous examples of what I mean by these 'learning experiences'.[3] Inevitably, my continuing reflections on the methodological implications of this project, and of related work in this area by both my predecessors and contemporaries, have given this account a conspicuously personal tone; but I also believe that this approach allows me to convey more clearly why, over the course of its existence, the RRP has undergone crucial changes of direction.

I shall begin with a very brief account of my own pre-history, as this may explain why my conceptual outlook and my position within the Rembrandt Research Project gradually but fundamentally diverged from that of my older colleagues – and from what was then usual in the art historical world.

A freshman

I began my studies in Art History in 1963 at the relatively late age of 25 at the University of Amsterdam. Between 1956 and 1961, I had studied at the Art Academy in The Hague, where I was trained as an art teacher in the traditional manner. Between 1961 and 1963 I taught art to high school students, but during those years – a period of rapidly successive –isms in the art world – I was intensely preoccupied with finding my own way as an artist. As a young provincial I was adrift in this confusing world, like so many others

3 See the Notes to the Plates with an asterisk * and an open star ☆.

Fig. 5. Josua Bruyn during the presentation of *Corpus* Vol. III (1989).

Fig. 6. Bob Haak during a research trip in Sweden (1969).

seeking an outlet for my artistic drive and a legitimation of my artist's dream.

I therefore decided to study Art History in Amsterdam, thinking to find there the historical and intellectual stimuli that could liberate me from my impasse. I soon learned, however, that art historians in general paid relatively little attention to the creative process between artist and artwork, which was what I was actually trying to fathom. Greatly disappointed, I had already left the University when something happened that made me return. To my surprise, Professor Bruyn, one of my teachers (fig. 5), invited me to work for a year as a student-assistant with the Rembrandt Research Project which was about to start. I was looking for part-time paid employment and so welcomed the opportunity. My only connection with Rembrandt was my great admiration for his drawings and the fact that I had written two papers on one of his pupils, Aert de Gelder.

My task would be to prepare the working files of the first research trips to be undertaken by the members of the RRP team. The possibility that I would become more deeply involved in this project only arose when Professor J.G. van Gelder (1903-1980) (see figs. 19 and 21), the oldest member of the team, fell ill shortly before the first research trip. This was a three-week period of work in London that Van Gelder was scheduled to undertake with Bob Haak (1926-2005), the founder of the project (fig. 6). At the same time Josua Bruyn, co-founder and chairman of the RRP, was to be present in London with a group of his students, and so it had been arranged that from time to time Bruyn would join Van Gelder and Haak during their work.

But now the plans had to be changed: I was asked to join Haak and Bruyn in London because they thought I could be of some use – for example if Haak, now having to work mostly alone, needed to dictate his observations during investigations. This experience would change my life completely in many respects.

One evening in May 1968 Haak and I took the night boat to Harwich and thence the early morning train to London, arriving at the service entrance of the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square. From that morning on we spent day after day in the conservation and research laboratories of the National Gallery, then the Walhalla for anyone involved in technical research on paintings. Haak wanted to study four paintings a day, which became the basic schedule of future research trips. In those days two or three hours of intense study per painting seemed like an eternity.

Matters had been very different in 1895 when Bredius discovered the *Polish Rider* (Plate 236) in a remote Galician castle. Shortly after his discovery he wrote:

> *'A single glance at the whole, an inspection of the technique that required no more than seconds, were all that was necessary to convince me at once that here, in this remote region (....) hung one of Rembrandt's greatest masterpieces!'*[4]

That was traditional connoisseurship *per second*. Whether the RRP could really aspire to more certainty in their judgment in two or three hours per painting will become evident below.

The authority of the connoisseurs

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the history of Rembrandt attributions in Bredius' time (and later) was the credence given to the authority of the specialist in the art world, the connoisseur. As we just saw even the specialist himself seemed to have subscribed to this faith, although in his heart of hearts he must have known that the foundations of his knowledge were usually rather shaky. And, as we have seen, Bredius had openly admitted as much to Frick with an unusual frankness.

In her book *Rembrandt, Reputation, and the Practice of Connoisseurship*, Catherine B. Scallen presented an analysis of the history of Rembrandt connoisseurship between 1870 and 1930.[5] This period saw an explosive

4 Broos in De Boer et al. op., cit.[2], p. 17.

Fig. 7. From left to right: The restorer Alois Hauser (1857-1919); Max J. Friedländer and Wilhelm von Bode (Berlin *c.* 1900).

growth of Rembrandt's 'oeuvre' from some 300 catalogued by the art dealer John Smith in 1829-1842 to the more than 700 paintings attributed by the Rembrandt specialist Wilhelm Valentiner (1880-1958) (see fig. 8). These new attributions were (and would continue to be) mostly based on connoisseurship. By contrast, there are only relatively few paintings that are conclusively documented as works by Rembrandt (see p. 39).

Connoisseurship has long been an indispensable means of bringing order to the chaos of works of art which, over the course of centuries, had been dispersed throughout the world.[6] The essence of traditional connoisseurship is the ability, based on experience, to recognise the hand of a painter. Max J. Friedländer (1867-1958), the renowned connoisseur of early Netherlandish paintings (fig. 7), wrote in his book *On art and connoisseurship*:

> *'The way in which an intuitive verdict is reached can, from the nature of things, only be described inadequately. A picture is shown to me. I glance at it, and declare it to be a work by Memling, without having proceeded to an examination of its full complexity of artistic form. This inner certainty can only be gained from the impression of the whole; never from an analysis of the visible forms.'*[7]

Yet it has to be said that modern research on panels, underdrawings and painting technique has shown that about half of Friedländer's conclusions were wrong.

And the same - *mutatis mutandis* –applies to Bredius (see the captions in Chapter II), who once had said in an interview:

> *'When I stand before a painting, I instantly see, weigh and evaluate by means of an unconscious comparison. I know: it is him or it is not him.*[8]

There appears to be a striking similarity between Friedländer's and Bredius' immediate attribution and the human ability to recognise another person. This latter ability is truly remarkable. Brain scientists have established that a relatively large part of our cerebral capacity is devoted to the recognition of other people. Nobody who has ever recognised another person from a distance, as Friedländer recognised a Memling, has ever felt the need to continue scrutinising the features, the posture etc. of the recognised person in order to ascertain what exactly led to that moment of recognition.

There is, however, an essential difference between recognising a person and recognising the maker of a painting. Someone who recognises another person has already seen that person and had dealings with him or her in the past. A connoisseur believes he can recognise in a particular painting the characteristics of the presumed author's work that he has previously seen in *other* paintings by that painter. The mental impulse seems just as strong as in the recognition of a person. Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann used the term 'Gestalt' to refer to that totality of characteristics, only semi-consciously observed in a work of art, that can lead one to an attribution of that work.

Connoisseurship is thus not an exclusively art-historical 'method'. It is rather akin to an attribute that can be seen as part of our natural cognitive repertory. In the animal kingdom in general, the need to be able to recognise an individual immediately is of vital importance – corresponding to what Friedländer referred to as an 'intuitive' process. During our first research trip, after spending hours studying a painting with growing confusion, to my surprise Bob Haak would sometimes say:

> *'I'll have a look in my Bredius*[9] *to see what I noted on my first confrontation with this painting'*,

thus implying that *that* had perhaps been the moment of truth.

In other words, with paintings, connoisseurship is based on a belief in the recognisability of the handling of the visible paint surface by a specific artist. However, connoisseurs such as Max Friedländer, mentioned above and Bernard Berenson (1865-1959), the famous connoisseur of early Italian paintings, pointed out the fallibility of connoisseurship, particularly with major artists.

5 Catherine Scallen, *Rembrandt, Reputation and the Practice of Connoisseurship*, Amsterdam 2004.

6 The following is a passage from my article 'Connoisseurship and Rembrandt's paintings: new directions in the Rembrandt Research Project, part II', *The Burlington Magazine*, 150 (2008), pp. 83-90.

7 M.J. Friedländer, *On art and connoisseurship*; the first German edition was published in Zürich in 1939; the edition used here is a translation by T. Borenius, Oxford 1946 (4th ed.), p. 173.

8 Op. cit.[2], p. 16.

9 A. Bredius, *Rembrandt: Schilderijen*, Utrecht 1935.

In the course of this chapter and in the Notes to the Plates in this book, I shall return repeatedly to the problem of the fallibility of connoisseurship – specifically with Rembrandt as the major artist concerned.

Rembrandt connoisseurship and its history.

For potential buyers of a work by Rembrandt, it is absolutely essential to be certain before purchasing so costly a painting. In his letter to Bredius cited above, De Wild had stated the collector's demands in this respect in no uncertain terms. In this situation, buyer and dealer could only appeal to the authority of connoisseurs. Meanwhile, in the face of the increasing demand for paintings by Rembrandt, particularly in the United States, the art trade made feverish attempts to raise supply to match this demand – with often questionable consequences for the authentication of these works, as was demonstrated by the case of Frick's *Old woman with a book* (see fig. 1).

The preeminent authority in the field of Rembrandt paintings toward the end of the 19th century was the previously mentioned William Bode (later Von Bode) (fig. 7), the influential director of the Berlin museums. He was originally trained as a lawyer, but as a young man he had developed a great interest in art and particularly in the paintings of Rembrandt. He travelled restlessly throughout Europe to see with his own eyes as many works as possible in museums, private collections and held by art dealers and in salerooms.

In 1878, on one of his travels, Bode met Abraham Bredius, ten years his junior, and encouraged the well-to-do young man to devote his life to the study of 17th century Dutch art. Bredius was to become a protégé and pupil, and later a friend of Bode. Yet another Dutchman would be patronized by Bode, the art historian Cornelis Hofstede de Groot (1863-1930) (fig. 8). Like Bode, and entirely in his spirit, both Bredius and Hofstede de Groot would devote their immense energy to the study of 17th century Dutch art, and especially to the study of Rembrandt.

A striking aspect of the collaboration between these three men, who were joined in 1905 by the young German art historian, Wilhelm Valentiner (see fig. 8), was the fact that while they each made their mark in the art historical world as independent figures, they showed great solidarity in their support for each other's authority over a long period of time. They thus formed an unassailable bloc which could concertedly ward off any outside criticism – and there was occasional criticism – by referring to each other's consentient judgements on paintings, whether or not by Rembrandt, lending their opinions the appearance of having been 'proven'. The interaction between the art trade and the activities of connoisseurs, so indispensable in this trade, became ever more difficult to disentangle, all the more so since these four connoisseurs

Fig. 8. Cornelis Hofstede de Groot with his assistants in front of his house, no. 84 on the Lange Voorhout in The Hague. Collection Hofstede de Groot, Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, The Hague. The photograph was taken in 1929 after the completion of Hofstede de Groot's *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des XVII Jahrhunderts*, Esslingen en Parijs 1907-1928, whose ten volumes are seen stacked on the table. Standing, from left to right: Hans Kaufmann, Wilhelm Valentiner, Karl Lilienfeld, Wolfgang Stechow, Kurt Erasmus, Kurt Bauch, Siegfried Wichmann, Otto Hirschmann, Eduard Plietzsch. Sitting: Hofstede de Groot en Elisabeth Neurdenburg. (Information quoted from *Rembrandt in perspectief*, Zwolle 2014).

were themselves also collecting works by Rembrandt, either for the museums they worked for or for their own personal collections. One cannot avoid the impression that a kind of cartel, an unfortunate concentration of power seemed to have arisen. In a certain sense this was indeed the case, and yet at the same time ethical and – in so far as they existed – scholarly standards were nevertheless maintained. However vague their arguments for or against an attribution to Rembrandt might be, in the beginning these four experts believed in their own and each other's connoisseurial infallibility.

Early connoisseur's handicaps

It is all too easy today to overlook the difficulties that confronted any attempt to reconstruct Rembrandt's painted oeuvre in the 19th century. First of all, Dutch art of the 17th century had been scattered in an extraordinarily wide diaspora. A large part of Rembrandt's oeuvre had ended up in remote country houses and other places all over Europe where they were practically untraceable. Apart from some English country houses, the inventorizing of the vast number of other private collections, great and small, had scarcely begun.[10] Innumerable paintings that served

10 Gustav Waagen, *Kunstwerke und Künstler in England und Paris*, Berlin 1837-39.

as wall decoration were only gradually being recognized as works of art of potential historical significance and only then did they appear on the art market.

The difficulties of studying Rembrandt's oeuvre in this dispersion of his works were immense. For example, before 1870 photography, which has since routinely been used as a means of collecting images of paintings, had not developed to the stage where it could be used on a large scale to assist in comparative research on paintings.

Another handicap was that relatively little was known about Rembrandt himself: the first biographies to be taken serious were those by Kolloff (1854), Vosmaer (1877), Michel (1889). 'Knowledge' about Rembrandt was to a large extent determined by personal projections and by *a priori* assumptions, which only gradually shifted over time. An early example of such stubborn assumptions is a remark made by Heinrich Füssli (1741-1825), the Swiss painter (known in English as Henry Fuseli) who later succeeded Joshua Reynolds as the president of the British Royal Academy of Art. In 1801 Füssli wrote of Rembrandt:

> *'Shakespeare alone excepted, no one combined with so much transcendent excellence so many, in all other men unpardonable faults – and reconciled us to them.*'[11]

This assumption of Rembrandt's capricious genius has long served as an explanation for the enormous differences of quality observed in his presumed oeuvre. Another persistent idea was that of Rembrandt as a solitary genius. To quote Füssli again:

> '*If ever he* [Rembrandt] *had a master, he had no followers; Holland was not made to comprehend his powers*.'

The assumption of Füssli and so many of his successors, that Rembrandt was misunderstood in his own time and was for that reason hardly ever imitated by any of his contemporaries, led to the inference that every Rembrandtesque painting that appeared to have originated in the 17th century must have been painted by Rembrandt himself. This of course implied a far greater range of style and quality in what was considered Rembrandt's own work than was accepted at the beginning of the RRP when, as we shall see, the prevailing belief was that the quality of Rembrandt's works was stable and that his style had only gradually evolved.

During the time when Bode and the group of allied Rembrandt experts were active, another *a priori* assumption began to play an important role, that of the close correlation between Rembrandt's life and work. The young Bode, in his attempts to set Rembrandt research on a professional scholarly basis, tried to identify as many links as possible between Rembrandt's life and work. Scallen noted:

> 'While Bode was by no means the first writer to make connections between Rembrandt's life and his art, he carried this exercise further than anyone had before, and in doing so drew some rather dubious conclusions. In addition to his identification of Saskia in many pictures, Bode characterized paintings of a specific young blond woman made around 1632 to 1634 (fig. 9) as revealing the countenance of Rembrandt's sister Liesbeth. His 'identification' of Liesbeth in Rembrandt's art led Bode to surmise that this sister had moved to Amsterdam to keep house for Rembrandt while he was still a bachelor. Bode seemed untroubled by the total lack of archival evidence to support this hypothesis, believing that the paintings themselves were evidence which should be considered just as trustworthy as written documents.'[12]

An assumed knowledge of several figures– either actual or assumed – in Rembrandt's intimate circle gradually developed. In his doctoral thesis titled *Rembrandts Umgebung* [Rembrandt's social circle](1905), Valentiner would further extend this group of potential models. The preoccupation with Rembrandt's family became and remains still a favourite pursuit, not only for the writers of historical novels about Rembrandt or for film-makers who portray his life, but also for the public at large to whom this welcome 'knowledge' of Rembrandt's private life always appeals. Above all, Rembrandt's self-portraits, thought to be created as a form of self-contemplation before

Fig. 9. Rembrandt, *Bust of a young woman* (possibly with Maria Uylenburgh as model), see Plate 78.

11 See Susanne Heiland and Heinz Lüdeck, *Rembrandt und die Nachwelt*, Leipzig 1960, p. 73.
12 Scallen, op. cit.[5], p. 62.

Fig. 10. Rembrandt, *Bust of an old man wearing a fur cap* (detail), 1629. Innsbruck, Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum, see Plate 43.

Fig. 11. Jan Lievens (1607-1674), *Oriental 'Sultan Soliman'* (detail), *c.* 1628, canvas 135 x 100.5 cm. Potsdam-Sanssouci, Gemäldegalerie.

Fig. 12. Gerard Dou (1613-1675) *Bust of an old man* (detail), *c.* 1630, panel 24.3 x 19 cm. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie.

Fig. 13. Jacques des Rousseau (1600-1638), *Bust of a man with baret, gorget and chain* (detail), 1635, panel 76 x 57 cm. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen.

the mirror, came to represent Rembrandt as an artist who flourished in the intimate circle of his quotidian environment.

In a process of circular reasoning this presumption of the primacy of his private life led to an identification of Rembrandt's 'portraits' of his relatives – which were in turn seen as evidence of this primacy. These works were consequently the ones least subjected to any critical appraisal with regard to their attribution. The influence of Bode's and Valentiner's use – or rather misuse – of these painted 'documents' was such that wherever a 'family member' appeared in a painting that fact alone was considered as evidence for the authenticity of the painting. The fallacious use of presumed family members, worked into the paintings as hallmarks of authenticity, led to the situation in which very large differences in style and quality within Rembrandt's oeuvre became acceptable to the group of connoisseurs associated with Bode.

This is not to deny categorically that Rembrandt, like other 17th-century painters, (for instance, Jan Steen and Gerard Terborch), used members of his family as models. In the present book it is also assumed that in particular Henrickje Stoffels (b. 1626), Rembrandt's common law wife from *c.* 1650 until her death in 1663, and his son Titus (1641-1667) from time to time served as Rembrandt's models (see the Notes to 223 and 242). The young blonde woman identified by Bode, Valentiner and Bredius as Rembrandt's sister Liesbeth (fig. 9) was most probably Maria van Uylenburgh (d. 1638), wife of the art 'entrepreneur' Hendrick Uylenburgh with whom Rembrandt, as head of the portrait studio, is thought to have been a business associate during his first Amsterdam years. In the 1639 inventory of Lambert Jacobsz, a Friesian painter and business relation of Hendrick Uylenburgh and Rembrandt, a painting is cited and described as '*a small tronie of an Oriental woman, the likeness of Uylenburgh's wife*, [painted] *after* [a work by] *Rembrandt*'.[13] It was probably the face of this woman that was used by Rembrandt and other members of the workshop around 1632 in the production of the '*tronietjes*' of Oriental women (see also 78 fig. 1, 79, 80 and, for instance, Bredius 88).

But Bode and especially Valentiner went much too far in this respect. At the time, it was not yet realized that figures who were designated as Rembrandt's father, his mother, his brother etc. must in fact have been more or less professional models who were also used by other painters in Rembrandt's circles, such as (in his Leiden period) Jan Lievens, Gerard Dou, Jacques des Rousseaux and others. This can be demonstrated by a number of paintings by these artists, including Rembrandt, of an old man who can be identified as one and the same model (figs. 10-13). This same figure was long alleged to be Rembrandt's father.

The idea of Rembrandt – outlined by Füssli in 1801, quoted above – that '*no one combined with so much transcendent excellence so many, in all other men unpardonable faults*', became elevated by the Bode circle to a norm. Hofstede de Groot warned the young art historian, Willem Martin (1876-1954) (fig. 15), that if he could not see and accept the weaknesses in Rembrandt's work he could not possibly know the true Rembrandt in the way that the previous (i.e. Hofstede de Groot's own) generation of scholars had.[14]

This line of thinking could not help but lead to the consequence that the breadth of the stylistic and qualitative range within which an autograph Rembrandt could be 'recognized' was simply enormous. This is

13 H.L. Straat, 'Lambert Jacobsz', *De Vrije Fries* 28 (1925), p. 76, no. 51.

14 Cornelius Hofstede de Groot, 'Zur Rembrandt-forschung', *Der Kunstwanderer* 5 (1923), p. 32 (cited form Scallen op.cit.[5] , p. 274).

what accounted for the explosive expansion of Rembrandts 'oeuvre' around 1900.

The gradual reduction of Rembrandt's oeuvre

After the period of 'expansionism' – in which Bode, Hofstede de Groot and Valentiner all persisted – Bredius set about reducing that overly expanded oeuvre, a change of course which inevitably meant that he had to summon the courage to rescind some of his earlier opinions and thereby acknowledge the fallibility of his judgement. This is what we witnessed at the outset of this chapter. In 1912, in a letter to an art dealer Bredius admitted this in even more explicit terms than he had in his letter to Frick:

> *'You knew beforehand that I am not infallible … I am not ashamed of this. Our metier is so difficult that even the best connoisseur can blunder.'*[15]

When Bredius eventually published his survey of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre in 1935 and 1937, it included 624 paintings. Horst Gerson (1907-1978) (fig. 14), was one of the young art historians who had assisted Bredius in the production of his book. Gerson would later write that two different tendencies emerged around the same time, a Valentiner-Rosenberg party which favoured a large Rembrandt oeuvre and a Martin-Bauch group which tended to reduce the number of autograph works still further.[16] Jakob Rosenberg (1893-1980) (fig. 19) was a German art historian who, like Valentiner, had emigrated to the United States. Willem Martin, director of the Mauritshuis (fig. 15), took a lively and critical role in the debate. Kurt Bauch (1897-1975) (see figs. 8 and 19) was another German art historian who would devote part of his life to Rembrandt. In 1966 he published his handlist of 562 paintings which, in his view, were authentic Rembrandts.

It is probably not by mere chance that the Valentiner-Rosenberg party was active in the United States. Given the complex web of interests and affiliations involving powerful museums and collectors, the unrestrained import of suspect Rembrandts during the inflation of the painter's oeuvre made the field of Rembrandt studies in the US both confused and tricky. This explains why, in his Rembrandt monograph which appeared in 1948, Rosenberg adopted a remarkably reticent position with regard to Rembrandt attributions and disattributions. He accepted 664 paintings and appended only a brief list of those paintings that Bredius had included in his 1935 survey but which he himself did not believe in; and when it came to the paintings that he apparently still accepted, but which Bredius had *not* included and therefore by implication disattributed, Rosenberg remained silent.

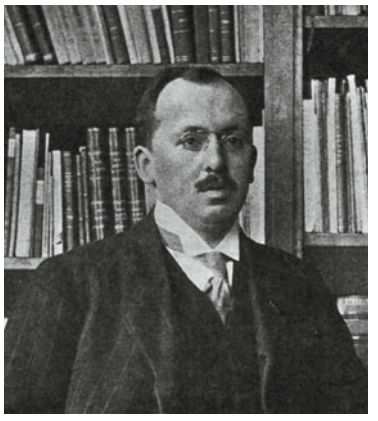

Fig. 15. Willem Martin *c.* 1920.

Willem Martin and Kurt Bauch, on the other hand, were both active in Europe and therefore were able to operate more independently of the art market and critically. Martin, for instance, wrote a devastating critique of Valentiner's *Rembrandt. Wiedergefundene Gemälde* [Rediscovered paintings].[17]

Two years after Bauch's survey of 1966 Horst Gerson's own survey appeared. As Bredius' former assistant, he had accepted a request from Phaidon, Bredius' publisher, to compile a new edition of the latter's much used book, an edition which appeared in the Rembrandt Year 1969, the 300th anniversary of Rembrandt's death. Gerson's own monumental Rembrandt book from 1968 was a coffee-table version of his revised edition of Bredius. In both versions, Gerson removed a further 110 works, still attributed to Rembrandt by Bauch. Only 420 now remained – of which he considered 72 to be doubtful. The lasting influence of Gerson's judgments on the confused state of opinion concerning the present nature and extent of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre is an issue that is frequently raised in the Notes to the Plates in this book.

Fig. 14. Horst Gerson in the RKD (1965).

Horst Gerson

Horst Gerson (1907-1978) (fig. 14 and see fig. 19) was born in Berlin and studied art history in Berlin, Vienna and Göttingen. In 1928, he moved to the Netherlands and in 1940 took Dutch nationality. He began his ca-

15 Scallen op. cit.[5], p. 233.
16 Bredius/Gerson 1969, p. IX.
17 Willem Martin, 'Zur Rembrandtforschung', *Der Kunstwanderer* 5 (1923), pp. 407-411.

reer in art history as a young assistant to Hofstede de Groot (see fig. 8), who had completed his oeuvre catalogue of Rembrandt's paintings in 1915.[18] In that catalogue he dealt with both existing paintings by Rembrandt and Rembrandts for which documents of various kinds attested to their one-time existence. Hofstede de Groot had charged fees for his expert opinions, on the basis of the claim that his work involved the same level of professional expertise as other scientifically schooled specialists such as doctors or lawyers. In a manner as imperious as it was short-sighted, he remained dogmatically loyal to any standpoint once taken: he was, for instance, never to alter his belief in the authenticity of Frick's *Old woman with a book* (see fig. 1). The fact that Carel de Wild had been Hofstede de Groot's protégé may explain De Wild's position and his outrage at Bredius' behaviour in this affair.

Horst Gerson became an expert over a broad range thanks to his work in the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie (Netherlands Institute for Art History) (RKD) between 1932 and 1965. This institute was built on the extensive documentation of 17th century painting assembled by Hofstede de Groot and a group of assistants, among whom were also Kurt Bauch and Valentiner (see fig. 8). Gerson's expertise not only covered the 16th and 17th century painting of the Northern and Southern Netherlands, but also extended to the painters of other countries up to the 19th century. He was able to draw on this expertise when it came to writing his *Ausbreitung und Nachwirkung der holländischen Malerei des 17. Jahrhunderts* [Dispersion and impact of Dutch painting of the 17th century], which appeared in 1942.

It is clear that Gerson's studies must have frequently been concerned with Rembrandt, if only because of the great many Rembrandt pupils and followers who fell within his field of scholarship: his own doctoral thesis was on Rembrandt's pupil and friend Philips Koninck. A high point of this involvement with Rembrandt's paintings was his discovery in 1962 of Rembrandt's earliest dated painting in the depot of the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Lyon, the *Stoning of St Stephen* from 1625 Plate 5. This discovery secured for Gerson the reputation in the art historical world as the most important Rembrandt specialist. The fact that Gerson had also assisted Bredius naturally contributed to this reputation, but being a modest and scrupulously honest scholar he never drew attention to this since, in his own words, his contributions to Bredius' book had been limited.

It is clear from Edward Grasman's biography of Gerson, published in 2007[19], that Gerson's critical – or even, as will become apparent below, overcritical – approach to Rembrandt's painted oeuvre was in some sense a reaction to Kurt Bauch's *Rembrandt Gemälde* published in 1966, the first survey of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre since that of Bredius. It is evident from Gerson's 1968 review of Bauch's book in the *Gazette des Beaux Arts* [20] that he found Bauch still too generous in his purging Rembrandt's oeuvre of non-Rembrandts. Moreover, Bauch provided no argumentation for his disattribution of certain paintings; he simply left his reasons unstated and did not include reproductions of the rejected paintings in his book. Gerson, on the other hand, in his revised edition of Bredius' book did give reasons for his decisions, albeit rather lapidary ones, as we shall see, and reproduced the paintings he had removed from Bredius' canon as is only natural in a revised edition.

Anyone who takes the trouble to read Gerson's *Notes* accompanying all paintings in his revised Bredius will be struck by the one-sidedness of his argumentation. His opinions are on the whole remarkably simple judgments of quality, always related to the execution of the painting concerned or of the lead white-containing passages that he thought he could identify as Rembrandt's underpainting in the few available X-radiographs. The following are representative examples of his succinct verdicts: 'a vigorously painted work of high quality' 146; '*the X-ray photograph reveals a weak underlaying structure*' (Br. 45); '*the X-ray shows very powerful underpainting*' 322; '*powerful execution*' (Br. 64); '*weak in construction and insensitive in handling, the painting does not convey that sense of inner conviction and certainty that is to be found in authentic works*' 277; '*not strong enough*' (Br. 133); '*Very poor*' 45; '*One of the most powerful and at the same time most delicately painted study[ies] of the Leyden period*' (Br. 141); '*the execution is less vigorous than in other portraits of this period*' (Br. 203); '*The execution is too tame for Rembrandt himself*' 156.

Grasman found a revealing exchange of letters between Gerson and William Suhr (1896-1984), the New York restorer who had treated more Rembrandts in his workshop than anyone else before him (see fig. 19). This correspondence gives us a good idea of the nature of the Rembrandt expertise anno 1967; as quoted from Grasman:[21]

> 'To Gerson's question as to his opinion on the *'Self-portrait'* in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston 178 [now in the Thyssen collection] Suhr replied with a definite '*Surely not.*' Gerson's marginal annotation on this letter – '*O.K. You are probably right*' – suggests that while he agreed with this view, he nevertheless harboured some resistance to it: Gerson's note in his

18 Cornelius Hofstede de Groot et al., *Beschreibendes und kritisches Verzeichnis der Werke der hervorragendsten holländischen Maler des 17. Jahrhunderts*, 10 Vols, 1907-28.

19 Edward Grasman, *Gerson in Groningen. Een portret van Horst Gerson, Kunstkenner, Hoogleraar Kunstgeschiedenis (1907-1978)*, Hilversum 2007.

20 Horst Gerson, Book review of Kurt Bauch, *Rembrandt Gemälde* (Berlin 1966), *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, (1968), pp. 207-208.

21 Grasman (op. cit.[19]), pp. 88-89.

Fig. 16. Pupil of Rembrandt, *Old Woman reading*, *c.* 1629/1630, canvas 74.4 x 62.7 cm. Wilton Estate, Salisbury.

> Bredius-edition makes clear the nature of that reluctance: […] *there are many strange features about the self-portrait which make the attribution to artist and period doubtful.*
>
> On the other hand Gerson rejected Suhr's favourable judgment of the self-portrait from New York 32. Whereas Suhr noted: '*Rather Rembrandt*', Gerson wrote without further explanation: '*I am not convinced that the attribution to the young Rembrandt is correct*'.

Grasman continues his commentary on this exchange of letters:

> 'Gerson similarly wanted to know Suhr's opinion of the canvas in the possession of the Earl of Pembroke (fig. 16). The latter replied that he increasingly had doubts about it as Gerson could well imagine. Four words sufficed to deal with the matter: '*Increasing doubts*' '*Can understand*'.

Grasman continues:

> 'Compared with the terseness of these notes, even Gerson's short text on this painting in the revised Bredius catalogue is verbose: "There are certainly weak areas in the picture – the washed out pages of the book, for example, and the empty body of the woman – but on the other hand the figure itself is strongly constructed and the brushwork of the face is of superior quality; so a collaboration with Rembrandt must still be considered a possibility." …'About our Plate 167 Suhr notes; *there was a time when I doubted it because I saw with my ears. Bachstitz had told me that he had seen it cleaned by De Wild* [i.e. Carel's son Louis (see fig. 19)]) *and the restorer made it into a Rembrandt. My doubts at the time prevented some important people from bidding at the Erickson sale. After Mr. Middendorf had bought the picture, following his own good sense, I cleaned it. All the stories about it being fixed are nonsense. It is beautifully preserved in its main parts. Just too good for any pupil. I am certain Rembrandt. These eyes. The force. The impact*'. [Grasman adds:] 'Despite this, Gerson would omit the painting without comment.'

The ambition of the RRP founders radically to improve the quality of research with respect to the authenticity of Rembrandtesque paintings is thus fully understandable. It would also involve an attack on traditional connoisseurship, of which Gerson was a typical representative. It was on the basis of connoisseurship that Gerson had implemented his drastic reduction of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre – a reduction which became world news. His most notorious disattribution concerned the famous *Saul and David* in the Mauritshuis 212.

During the well-attended International Rembrandt Conference in Berlin in 1970, one year after the publication of Gerson's controversial revision of Bredius' book, the atmosphere could be cut with a knife – mainly because of Gerson's sweeping purge of Rembrandt's oeuvre.[22] Another source of irritation among the assembled international host of Rembrandt specialists was the news, which had filtered abroad during the previous year, of a revolutionary, but from the outset controversial, initiative: the founding of the RRP.

The founding of the Rembrandt Research Project

The announcement that the RRP would make the greatest possible use of technical investigations had been enthusiastically received in the international press. It was even suggested that, thanks to the application of these methods, the RRP would once and for all eliminate all doubts regarding the authenticity of paintings attributed to Rembrandt. As a result, the art historical world was under the impression that the members of the RRP were claiming to write the definitive Rembrandt catalogue, which quite understandably elicited mixed feelings. During the Berlin conference, which I attended as a shy observer, I found myself during the intervals being interrogated by participants of that conference who knew that I was in some way connected with the project.

It must be admitted that the rumours were indeed alarming. Was it true that the RRP would only accept some 250 paintings as genuine? Were the rumours correct that the *Supper at Emmaus* in the Louvre 218, even the *Polish Rider* 236 had been put in question by the team? Did the participants of that project really believe that employing the research methods of the

22 Werner Sumowski, 'Kritische Bemerkungen zur neuesten Gemälde Kritik' in *Neue Beiträge zur Rembrandt-Forschung* (ed. Otto von Simson und Jan Kelch, Berlin 1973, pp. 91-110).

natural sciences could establish the truth? How can connoisseurship be practiced by a committee when the development of the connoisseur's expert eye requires a personal development and individual intuition?

Such questions were fired at me by sceptical Dutch art historians who attended the Conference and by such formidable figures as Julius Held and Werner Sumowski. What could I say? I was merely an assistant in the RRP.

Bob Haak's initiative

The decision to initiate the Rembrandt Research Project was indirectly linked to the notorious affair surrounding a false Vermeer, the *Supper at Emmaus* (fig. 17) which eventually turned out to have been produced by Han van Meegeren (1889-1947), a painter from The Hague who felt his talents as a painter had been ignored. Between 1937 and 1946 almost everyone – including Gerson – had taken the forged painting to be an original masterwork. Shortly after Van Meegeren's revelation that he had painted it – as well as a number of other forgeries – Vitale Bloch, the art historian, collector, dealer and publicist (1900-1975) wrote:

> 'In the long term, the most serious aspect of the Van Meegeren affair is not that the Dutch State and many other wealthy collectors have been deceived, but that a number of critics and experts, whose judgment was always considered irreproachable, were so completely off-target, and appear to have so little insight into the spirit in which seventeenth-century masters painted, that they were incapable of distinguishing between forgeries and genuine paintings.'[23]

Fig. 17. Han van Meegeren (1889-1947), *The Supper of Emmaus*, 1937, canvas, 118 x 130.5 cm. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen.

The Van Meegeren affair did indeed traumatize the Dutch art world and gave rise to a widely felt paranoia regarding questions of authenticity which would also affect the early years of the RRP. In this context it should be pointed out that Van Meegeren's Emmaus painting was actually 'discovered' by Bredius, who began the article in which he published his find with the words:

> 'It is a wonderful moment in the life of a lover of art when he finds himself suddenly confronted with a hitherto unknown painting by a great master (….) we have here a – I am inclined to say – the masterpiece of Johannes Vermeer (…..) quite different from all his other paintings and yet every inch a Vermeer.' [24]

As mentioned earlier, the initiative for the Rembrandt Research Project came from Bob Haak (see fig. 6). Because of the radical impact of the Second World War on his early life Haak had been unable to take up an academic study and was therefore, as an art historian, an autodidact. [25] In 1950, only three years after the court case that followed Van Meegeren's confession, Haak had become an assistant to the art dealer D.A. Hoogendijk. It was Hoogendijk who in 1937 had in good faith been the intermediary in the sale of the *Supper at Emmaus* to the Boijmans Museum (since 1958 the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen) in Rotterdam. Nowhere, perhaps, was the impact of the scandal so keenly felt as in Hoogendijk's shop. When the dealer gave the young Haak access to his file on the case soon after he became his assistant, the highly impressionable young man must have felt his career mapped out for him: he wanted to become a specialist in 17th-century Dutch art, open to the possibilities of the modern scientific investigation of paintings – which had, after all, proved that Van Meegeren's confession was not the boasting of a fantasist, as some thought, but the truth. [26]

Haak worked for four years with Hoogendijk, who from an early stage regularly sent him alone to London auctions to acquire paintings. During that time Haak laid the foundation for his profound knowledge of 17th-century Dutch painting which would eventually result in his monumental book *The Golden Age. Dutch painters of the seventeenth century*. [27] It is significant in this context that Haak was a gifted amateur draughtman and etcher.

In his years with Hoogendijk, Haak befriended a

23 Unidentified newspaper, 15 November 1945. In M. van den Brandhof, *Een vroege Vermeer uit 1937*, Utrecht 1979, p. 9.

24 A. Bredius, 'A new Vermeer', *The Burlington Magazine* 71 (1937), p. 211. See also Jim van der Meer Mohr, 'Eerherstel voor Abraham Bredius?', *Tableau* April 1996, pp. 39-45.

25 In 1991 his outstanding contributions to this field was recognized by the award of an honorary doctorate from the University of Amsterdam.

26 P.B. Coremans, *Van Meegerens faked Vermeers and De Hooghs. A scientific examination*, Amsterdam 1949.

27 B. Haak, *Hollandse schilders in de Gouden Eeuw*, Amsterdam 1984. The English translation appeared in the same year.

Fig. 18. Daan Cevat with 20.

young Dutch art dealer living in London, Daan Cevat (fig. 18), with whom he came to share a deep interest in Rembrandt and his school. This interest received a tremendous boost in 1954 when Haak was appointed assistant curator in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam and became involved in the preparation of the major Rembrandt exhibition held in that museum in 1956. He later loved to relate what he had felt when, during the setting up of the exhibition, he saw the (exactly) one hundred assembled Rembrandts leaning against the museum walls waiting to be hung and noted the bewildering differences in style and quality among many of these paintings. He became convinced that it was impossible for all these to have been painted by one and the same artist. That conviction assumed a dominant role in Haak's many conversations with Cevat, who in the meantime had begun to build up a collection of works from the Rembrandt school, including some works by Rembrandt himself 1 and 20. During these discussions the seed was sown of a research project – the subsequent Rembrandt Research Project – which, Haak hoped, would bring order to the chaos that in his opinion still reigned. For this purpose Haak contacted Josua Bruyn (1923-2011) (see figs. 5 and 21), who in 1961 had been appointed Professor of Art History at the University of Amsterdam. Financial support for what was now officially baptized the 'Rembrandt Research Project' was forthcoming from the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (ZWO, later NWO).

Assumed imitations and forgeries

To understand the history of the RRP, it is important to realize that Haak and his dealer friend Cevat believed that many of the alleged Rembrandt paintings that they questioned were later imitations or even fakes. For instance, they seriously doubted the seventeenth-century origin of *Christ and the woman taken in adultery* in the National Gallery in London 196. They also doubted the authenticity of the Kassel *Winterlandscape* 207. I remember that Haak even thought it likely that the six surviving paintings from Rembrandt's Passion Series for Frederik Hendrik (see p. 178) in Munich were copies after lost originals. In the course of this chapter it will become apparent that, just as in the case of Gerson's judgments, behind such suspicions lay strongly held preconceptions as to Rembrandt's style and its development.

Haak's conviction that there were a considerable number of imitations, forgeries and later copies among the works commonly attributed to Rembrandt was shared by the other members of the team assembled round Haak and Bruyn. This was articulated by Bruyn when he presented the RRP to an international assembly of Rembrandt specialists at the in Chicago Symposium '*Rembrandt after 300 years*' in 1969 (fig. 19):

> *I should like to emphasize, [...], that the majority of rejected pictures, which till now tended to be relegated more or less automatically to his [Rembrandt's] school, do not belong there. Even Dr. Gerson, in his recent edition of Bredius' catalogue, resorts too often, in my opinion, to attributions to [Rembrandt pupils such as] Flinck, Van den Eeckhout and Jan Victors, even though, in other cases, he considers rejected Rembrandt pictures as later copies or imitations. I think that in these latter cases he is generally right. I also think that these later imitations, whether they are innocent pastiches or conscious fakes, are responsible for many more mistaken attributions than the school-pieces. These imitations [...] present a formidable problem that has hardly been tackled at all. For the greater part, they have not yet been recognized, let alone grouped according to date and place. Some of them can boast fabulous pedigrees, going back to famous eighteenth-century collections, or were reproduced in eighteenth-century prints.*[28]

Viewed in this light Rembrandts oeuvre had, as it were, to be reconstructed from the ground up.

Teamwork

The original RRP team consisted of six members: three of them, Bob Haak (see fig. 6), Josua Bruyn (see fig. 5) and Jan G. van Gelder (see fig. 21) have already been introduced above, where I gave a brief account of Haak's background and of my first working visit together with him.

In his professional life Haak was at that time chief curator of the Amsterdam Historical Museum (since 2012 the Amsterdam Museum). Haak's book *'Rembrandt, his life, his work, his time'* would appear in 1969. Josua Bruyn was Professor of Art History at the University of Amsterdam. As one of my teachers at that University, it was he who had invited me to act as his

28 *Rembrandt after three hundered years: A symposium – Rembrandt and his followers, October 22-24, 1969*, The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago 1973, pp. 33-40, esp. p. 36.

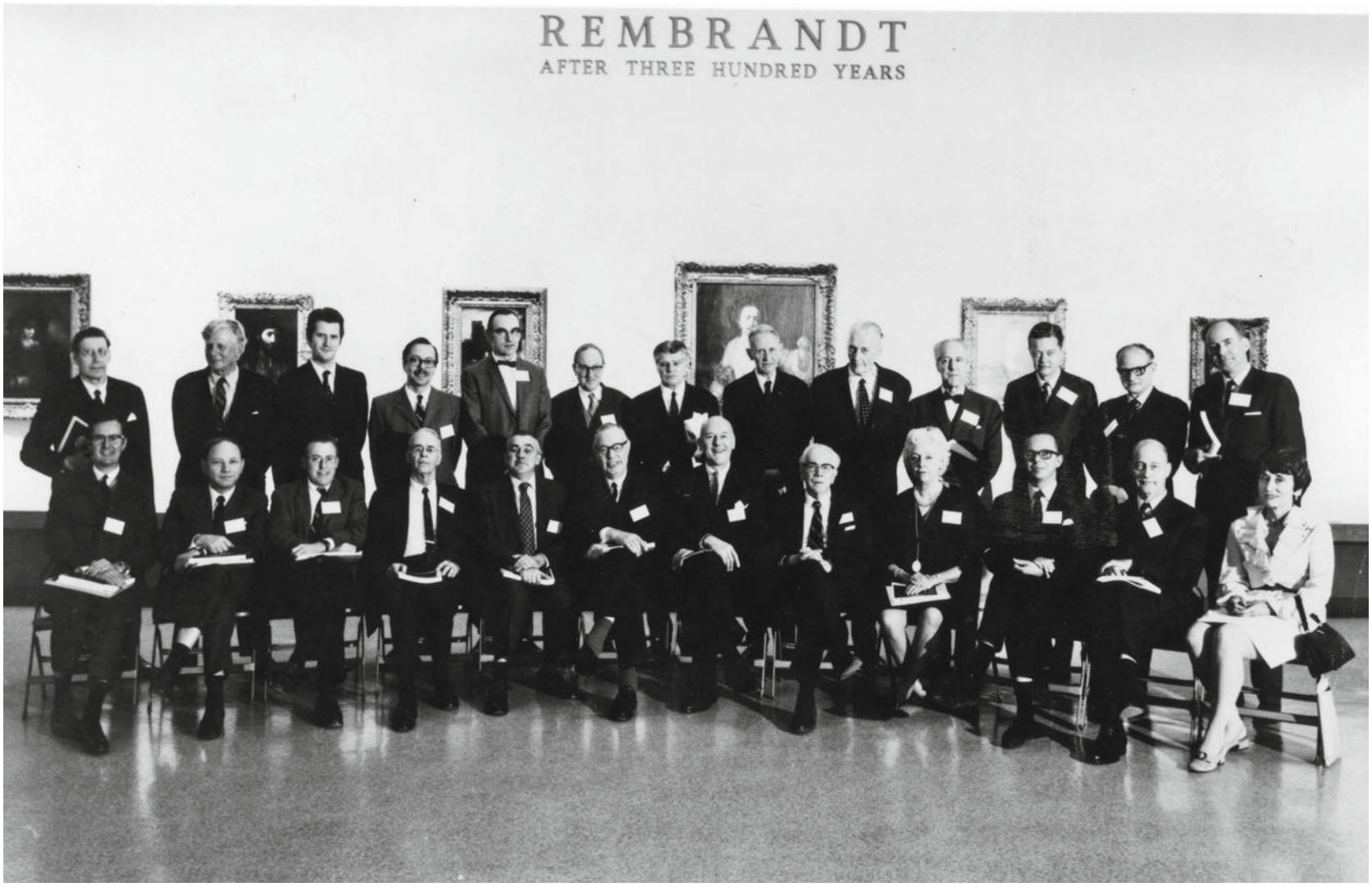

Fig. 19. The participants of the Symposium '*Rembrandt after threehundred years*', The Art Institute of Chigago, October 1969, pp. 22-24.

STANDING (BACK ROW), Left to Right:

1 C.F. Louis de Wild, New York
2 William Suhr, New York
3 Hubert von Sonnenburg, Conservator, Metropolitan Museum of Art
4 Nathan Stolow, National Conservation Research Laboratory, Canada
5 Alfred Jakstas, Conservator, Art institute of Chicago
6 Wolfgang Wegner, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Munich
7 Kurt Bauch, Professor, University of Freiburg
8 I.Q. van Regteren Altena, formerly Professor, Art History Institute, University of Amsterdam
9 Cornelis Müller-Hofstede, Professor, Berlin
10 A.B. de Vries, Director, Mauritshuis, The Hague
11 Josua Bruyn, Professor, Art History Institute, University of Amsterdam
12 Harold Joachim, Curator of Prints and Drawings, Art Institute of Chicago
13 E. Haverkamp-Begemann, Professor, Yale University

SITTING (FRONT ROW), Left to Right:

14 David G. Carter, Director, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts
15 Jan Bialostocki, National Museum, Warsaw, and Professor, University of Warsaw
16 J. Richard Judson, Professor, Smith College
17 Wolfgang Stechow, Professor, Oberlin College
18 Seymour Slive, Harvard University
19 J.G. van Gelder, Art History Institute, University of Utrecht
20 C.C. Cunningham, Director, Art Institute of Chicago
21 Jakob Rosenberg, Harvard University
22 Agnes Mongan, Director, Fogg Art Museum
23 Christopher White, P&D Colnaghi, London
24 Horst Gerson, Professor, University of Groningen
25 Madlyn Kahr, New York

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one-year-assistant in his work for the RRP. Bruyn had previously specialised mainly in 15th and 16th century Netherlandish art but had also worked on stylistic issues related to Rembrandt.[29] Because of his academic position he was chosen to be chairman and operational leader of the RRP. Jan G. van Gelder, (emeritus) professor at the University of Utrecht, the Nestor

29 Josua Bruyn, 'Rembrandt and the Italian Baroque', *Simiolus* 4 (1970), pp. 28-48.

Fig. 20. Lideke Peese Binkhorst (left) and the present author (right) (1989).

of the group, was widely known in the international art-historical community. He had been one of Bruyn's teachers, and had published several articles dealing with Rembrandt's early paintings.[30] Because he had become seriously ill, at the last moment I was asked to replace him and assist in the first working trip to London. His state of health subsequently remained delicate and he was therefore to remain with the project solely as an observer and advisor. In 1979 he decided to end his involvement with the project once Volume I had appeared, but in fact he did not live to see its publication in 1982; he died in 1980.

The other art historians who were asked to participate in the Project were Jan A. Emmens, Pieter J. J. van Thiel and Simon H. Levie. Emmens (1924-1971), Professor of Art theory and Iconology at the University of Utrecht and author of the book *Rembrandt en de regels van de kunst* [Rembrandt and the rules of art] (1964) would be especially concerned with iconographic and iconological issues related to Rembrandt. After his untimely death in 1971 attempts to fill his position in the RRP were unsuccessful. Pieter van Thiel (1928-2012) (see fig. 21), from 1964 Head of the Department of Paintings at the Rijksmuseum had been involved in the purchase for the Rijksmuseum of the *Holy Family by night*, attributed to Rembrandt.[31] Van Thiel was invited to participate in the RRP as a representative of the Rijksmuseum. Simon H. Levie (b. 1925) (see fig. 21), director of the Amsterdam Historical Museum, the sixth original member of the RRP, had no previous experience in the field of Rembrandt research. Lideke Peese Binkhorst-Hoffscholte (b. 1940) (fig. 20), an art historian who had been working as a research editor for the Encyclopaedia of World Art, and who assisted Engelbert Kirschbaum with his *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie* in Rome, was to head the secretariat of the RRP. She eventually became more involved in the scholarly aspects of the project: pursuing the provenance of the paintings to be investigated and collating information on reproductive prints after paintings that were attributed to Rembrandt or had once been considered to be Rembrandts. Over the years, she was closely involved in the editorial work involved in the preparation for publication of Volumes I-V of the *Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*.

Looking at this list of team members, two obvious questions arise. Firstly, if the RRP was to be an interdisciplinary project and, given the methodological approach that was intended, why did the team consist solely of art historians? And secondly, given that choice, why was Gerson, the Dutch art historian with by far the most experience in the field of Rembrandt's paintings, not part of this team?

The answer to the first question is to be found in the Foreword to *Corpus* I:

> 'Bearing in mind the many and differing problems that could be expected in connection with scientific investigations into the physical structure of the paintings, as well as with tracking down information in the archives, the question arose of whether experts in these fields ought not to be included in the team. This question was seriously considered but answered in the negative. Given the possibility of maintaining contact with experts in other fields whenever necessary, we decided that the homogeneity of method and results would be served best by forming a team consisting of art historians only.'

Only later did I realize that Bruyn and Haak had made an intelligent decision in this regard. When in 1993 I resolved to continue the project with an interdisciplinary team[32], I found that in the daily operation of the project interdisciplinarity was not the sensible option. The art historians who worked on the texts for the relevant parts of the *Corpus* were at the same time those who were best equipped, because of the overview of the field that they commanded, to decide what were the relevant questions to put to the representatives of other disciplines and how the data generated by external specialists could be interpreted in the ultimately art historical context of the RRP. Moreover, the specialists from other disciplines concerned usu-

30 Jan G. van Gelder, 'Nieuwe werken van Rembrandt', *Oud Holland* 62 (1947), pp. 177-182; id., *Rembrandts vroegste ontwikkeling*, Amsterdam 1953 (*mededelingen van de KNAW*, Afd. Letterkunde, vol. 16, no. 5) [*28 pp.*]; id., *Rembrandt als leermeester*, exhib. cat. Leiden (Lakenhal) 1956. [*71 pp.*]; id., 'Een Rembrandt van 1633', *Oud Holland* 75 (1960), pp. 73-78; id., 'Frühe Rembrandt-Sammlungen', in: Otto von Simson, Jan Kelch (eds.), *Neue Beitrage zur Rembrandt-Forschung*, Berlin 1973, pp. 189-206.

31 P.J.J. van Thiel, 'Rembrandts Heilige Familie bij avond', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 13 (1965), pp. 145-161.

32 E. van de Wetering, 'Letter to the Editor', *The Burlington Magazine* 135 (1993), pp. 764-765.

Fig. 21. 'Rembrandt lunch' the members of the Rembrandt Research Project around 1979
From left tot right: J.G. van Gelder, S.H. Levie, B. Haak, E. van de Wetering, J. Bruijn, P.J.J. van Thiel.

ally divided their attention with so many other projects in their own fields that one could not expect them to possess such a grasp of all aspects of this project – specifically of those aspects related to questions of attribution – that they would be capable of deciding themselves when and where their contribution was likely to be significant.

The second question regarding the composition of the team is: why was Gerson not involved with the RRP? As Grasman discovered whilst researching archival material for his biography of Horst Gerson, in 1967 the latter had on his own initiative expressed his concern to the funding organization, the *Netherlands Organisation for Pure Scientific Research* (ZWO, later NWO), over their intention to subsidize the 'Bruyn committee', as he called the future RRP. The main reason for his concern was that, in his opinion, apart from Van Gelder, the members of the committee had too little experience of research in the field of Rembrandt paintings. At the time, it should be said, Gerson was unfamiliar with Haak's book on Rembrandt, mentioned above, which would be published two years later (see above). Moreover, Gerson thought the projected travel programme was far too expensive. Grasman ends this account with the comment that:

> 'Unaware of Gerson's advice to the ZWO, the Rembrandt-team, and Bruyn in particular, kept their distance from Gerson, wanting above all to begin with a clean slate.'

In effect, it meant that the RRP had initially set itself, as it were, the aim of 're-inventing' Rembrandt as a painter. This ambition, as will be seen, had far-reaching consequences for my role within the RRP.

From temporary replacement to member of the team

In the event, Van Gelder's illness lasted much longer than had been anticipated. His planned research trips to Paris and Berlin in 1968 (together with Levie), and to the Scandinavian countries, and to Poland, (with Haak) had already been arranged. But he was still unable to participate. During the London campaign Haak and Bruyn had apparently found that I could be of some use to the RRP, so it was decided that for the time being I should continue to replace Van Gelder. I could record the observations dictated by my senior colleagues while at the same time I might also be of some use in studying and discussing the paintings with them. As I remarked above, given my earlier training as an artist, paintings were familiar objects to me and scrutinizing them had become second nature. In my capacity as (temporary) assistant I thus remained a participant in the project. Gradually I became so deeply involved in the work that in 1970 I was formally appointed a member of the RRP team (fig. 21).

My participation in the project, however, carried with it no salaried position. Except for Lideke Binkhorst, whose salary was funded by ZWO, the official

members of the team derived their financial security from their positions at universities and in museums. Consequently, in September 1969 a post was created for me as a staff member of the Central Research Laboratory for Objects of Art and Science, with which an unspecified cooperation had been agreed at the foundation of the RRP. I seized the opportunity with both hands, for it meant that beside my obligations in the Central Lab I could continue to work with the Rembrandt Research Project – a golden learning opportunity for a questing young painter!

As a result of an extensive travel-cum-research programme all the *c.* 624 paintings attributed to Rembrandt by Bredius – in so far as they could be found – would be examined by members of the RRP. We travelled in pairs of varying composition. None of our predecessors had been able to form such a detailed image of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre based on examination of the paintings themselves, and in the relatively short time-span of five years. How often one finds in the notes in Bredius/Gerson the comment: 'neither Bauch nor I have seen this painting'. But actually, given the procedure of travelling in couples, none of the team members would in the end have seen all the paintings either.[33]

The RRP team had set itself an enormous task. The focus of their investigation was the painting as an artefact, but no-one in this team apart from Bob Haak had any experience in the field of examining old master paintings in depth. During his time at the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum and the Amsterdam Historical Museum he had usually supervised the restoration of paintings from those museums. Similar experience with the paintings as historical artefacts therefore had to be developed by the other team members and as quickly as possible.

When Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann, the Dutch/American Professor of Art History, then at Yale and a specialist in the Dutch art of the 17th century with extensive art-historical knowledge of Rembrandt's art, suggested that he might profitably participate in the project, Bruyn replied that the geographical distance between the Netherlands and the US made such cooperation virtually impossible, since, as he emphasized, it was essentially important for the team members to have regular and frequent contact to discuss the planning and results of the project. As a rule, the participants came together each Friday lunch time – which between 1968 and the end of the initial project in 1993 must have been around 1000 times (see fig. 21).

The problematic role of science

Moving on from the resolution that technical and scientific research would play an important role in the project, it had been decided, as mentioned above, that the project should be carried out in some form of collaboration with the Central Laboratory for Objects of Art and Science. This national laboratory was founded in 1963 with the main purpose of establishing a scientific basis for the conservation and study of the nation's diverse cultural heritage.

At the time, however, in this institution there was no experience of the investigation and authentication of 17th-century Dutch paintings. Nor was there full clarity within the RRP team as to the specific role of scientific research for their project.

It was a lucky coincidence that around the time the RRP was founded the Central Laboratory was planning to organize a major international conference in Amsterdam under the aegis of the Conservation Committee of the ICOM (the International Council of Museums). The conference was planned for September 1969. A plan was conceived between the RRP and the Central Lab to organize their own subsidiary symposium as an adjunct to this conference with particular focus on the limits and possibilities of the scientific research of paintings by or attributed to Rembrandt. All international specialists with any such experience were invited to attend this symposium and give papers on such matters as the use of X-ray and other radiographic techniques, on microscopic and chemical analysis of ground- and paint samples, on the analysis of wood supports and canvas etc.[34] In his opening speech, Bruyn characterised the situation as follows:

> '*The art-historian's problems fall into two categories: a) those caused by paintings which date from Rembrandt's life-time, work by pupils or old copies. It seems doubtful whether scientific investigation may help to distinguish these from the master's own works. b) those caused by later copies, pastiches or forgeries which, because of possible differences in their physical structure, may be identified by technical investigation. This would require large-scale application of standardized methods in order to reach significant results that may be considered valid criteria.*'

During the symposium it became clear that, indeed, the results of any research methods applied to Rembrandtesque paintings so far had yielded nothing of direct significance for the attribution of any such works to Rembrandt. Whilst it may be possible to prove by technical investigation that a painting is not from the 17th century, and consequently *not* by Rembrandt, the converse – using these methods to prove *conclusively* that a painting *is* by Rembrandt – was at

33 Eventually I would see all the paintings except three 30, 120a/b.

34 *Symposium on technical aspects of Rembrandt paintings*, organised by the RRP and the Central Research Laboratory for Objects of Art and Science, Amsterdam, pp. 22-24 September 1969. A summary of this symposium was written by Renate Keller, but not published.

that time impossible. Bruyn's scepticism on this point during his opening speech for the 1969 Amsterdam symposium seemed for the time being to be confirmed, although much later he was proved to have been too pessimistic on how strong the evidence from the use of such methods could be.

It may be worth stating the point here that, on the one hand, historical works of art are complex man-made objects whose materials, manufacture, style and quality can in principle vary even when made by the same person. And on the other hand, works that are closely related in these respects could have been done by different painters, e.g. in Rembrandt's immediate circle. If only for this reason, it seemed useless to search for some material or technical idiosyncrasy specific to Rembrandt that would provide an infallible key to problems of authenticity. Earlier investigation of the grounds on Rembrandt's canvases and panels, for example, had led to the conclusion – mistaken as it turned out – that 'each painting by Rembrandt may have been a technical creation as well as a pictorial one'. [35]

Moreover, as we soon discovered, there were insurmountable practical obstacles to the search for clues that might identify Rembrandt's autograph works: Rembrandt's oeuvre is accessible for this kind of research only to a limited and varying degree. In their diaspora, his paintings and those attributed to him have often found their way into small museums, or private collections, where at that time it was simply not feasible to conduct thorough technical and scientific investigations. For this reason alone, what Bruyn in his introduction to the symposium had referred to as the

> *'… large-scale application of standardized methods in order to reach significant results that may be considered valid criteria'*

appeared to be impossible. Other restrictions also apply to the systematic collection of representative samples of paint and other materials from such unique and valuable paintings, depending on the permission of the museums or owner's concerned.

It was fortunate that at this time X-radiographs of more and more paintings were becoming available. They seemed to be a useful tool for looking into and through the paint, the grounds and the support. But it took years before we were able to read and interpret these images such that we were able to obtain data of relevance to the authentification of Rembrandtesque paintings. It eventually turned out that the interpretation of these observations and data was only possible once we had sufficient insight into 17th-century workshop practice. But at the time, that insight was in many respects missing. In 1969 material research on paintings was still in its infancy.

Nevertheless, during the symposium there was revealed to us one wholly unexpected and promising possibility for obtaining an answer to the question of whether a painting was or was not a later imitation: by a stroke of good fortune, we met the dendrochronologists from the Institute for Wood-biology of Hamburg University. They had accompanied the Hamburg medical radiologist Martin Meier Siem, who had made X–radiographs of many paintings – including works by Rembrandt – without removing the paintings from the wall. In this way, purely as a hobby, he had assembled a large collection of X-radiographs of old paintings, from which it was now necessary to find and interpret possibly relevant 'symptoms' and 'micro-symptoms'. It was known that there were phenomena whereby, by means of X-radiation, certain kinds of paint loss or radical changes in specific areas of the image could be recognized, as well as indications of the re-use of some painting-supports. But this was not enough.

A breakthrough came when Meier Siem, aware that in paintings on panels the 'shadow' of the grain of the wood was visible on the X-radiograph, realized that these traces might be able to yield significant information. Knowing of the possibilities of dendrochronology – the dating of wood on the basis of measuring the growth rings – he contacted the Institute for Wood biology attached to the university of his home city of Hamburg, whose dendrochonologists, Bauch and Eckstein, saw the promising possibility of applying their dating method to art historical problems of dating, by measuring the annual growth rings in the end grain on the top ends of the oak panels that were widely used by 17th-century Dutch painters. [36] Their technique is so little invasive that owners were usually willing to allow this investigation with their paintings.

Since the initiators of the RRP had assumed at the outset that among the many paintings attributed to Rembrandt there would be many later copies and forgeries (see p. 12), the potential of this dating method for resolving that issue was obvious. Thus arose the cooperation between the RRP and the Hamburg wood biologists – latterly in the person of Peter Klein – which has continued to this day. The gradual accumulation of dendrochronological data on Rembrandtesque paintings on oak panels (the majority, in fact) would eventually confront the members of the RRP with a surprising realization. But before we arrived at that point, we had scrutinized hundreds of paintings on our study trips, describing and provisionally attributing or dis-attributing them according to our own working procedures.

35 See *Corpus* I, p. 17.

36 Bauch J, Eckstein D, 'Dendrochronological dating of oak panels of Dutch 17th century paintings', *Studies in Conservation*, 1970 15 pp. 45-50.

The first five years with research trips

In retrospect, this work over the years during which we made our research trips now appears remarkably straightforward. The only extraordinary aspect of it was that hardly anyone before us had ever worked on the oeuvre catalogue of an artist in this way – or rather, had previously been *able* to work in this way. Until then the compilers of such catalogues had amassed specific documentation and visual material, usually over many years, arranging it in various ways and commenting on that material for publication. Where possible, the relevant works were seen in museums, in auction houses on viewing days or in the living rooms of private collectors – but rarely were these works investigated further as artefacts with their own facture and material history. Black and white photographs had been the most important means of developing an image of an oeuvre as a whole.

What was done in the context of the RRP seemed like a revolution that had been made possible by affordable air travel and by the funding of these trips by an organisation persuaded that all the travel expenses and the costs of photographs, X-radiographic and other documentation would be repaid by the anticipated results. The relevant department of the state-funded ZWO took the view that the interdisciplinary collaboration involving scholars and specialist scientists as planned by the RRP fitted exactly with their policy.

It was also important that Arthur van Schendel, Director of the Rijksmuseum, whole-heartedly supported the plans of the RRP. Van Schendel (1910-1979) was at that time president of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and specifically active in the Conservation Committee of that organisation – a global community of art historians, restorers and scientists who wanted to raise the level of management, conservation and restoration together with the associated scientific research on objects of cultural heritage. Each request made by the RRP for access to one or more paintings attributed to Rembrandt for investigation made mention of Van Schendel's support of the RRP (**fig. 22**). This recommendation was all the more significant because in Amsterdam's Rijksmuseum Van Schendel was responsible for one of the most important collections of paintings by Rembrandt in the world.

When the two investigators from the RRP appeared on the agreed day at the institution concerned, their accommodation had always been prepared. The first paintings to be scrutinized were usually already taken from the museum walls, removed from their frames and ready for investigation, usually in the conservation workshop. In scrutinizing the paintings and the relevant X-radiographs etc. we followed a checklist procedure which made little distinction between objective record and subjective impression. The art-historian Frans Grijzenhout, in his analysis of the RRP and aspects of its history published in 2007, characterized that checklist as 'astonishingly simple judged by today's state of knowledge'.[37]

The checklist comprised the following:
– Title of the work and Bredius no.; owner/museum; date of investigation; the investigating team members; conditions during the examination of the painting;
– support; measurements; ground; paint surface (visibility of canvas or pattern of grain, relief, any characteristics of paint substance and/or application); the painting's condition; craquelure;
– signature; observations based on indications in X-radiographs and under ultraviolet radiation, preparatory studies, [reproduction] prints etc.; pentimenti;
– general impression; argumentation [regarding possible attribution or disattribution]; provisional conclusion;
– desired photographs, cross-sections, etc. (indicated where necessary on a photocopy of a reproduction of the painting)

The dangers of a provisional conclusion

By including in our checklist the penultimate requirement to enter a 'provisional conclusion', however, we had created a potential conflict between on the one hand registering our observations as neutrally as possible, and on the other hand the natural urge to record a provisional opinion regarding the painting's authenticity. We had long hesitated before adding this requirement, but once it was there the temptation to express a provisional opinion as to the painting's authenticity proved to be irresistible.

Although we all knew that they were intended to be only provisional, voicing these opinions on certain paintings, albeit within a restricted circle, did at times unwittingly contribute to the very confusion that the RRP had set out to eliminate. Inevitably, these 'opinions' gave rise to rumours that in turn gained wider circulation – as was already evident at the Berlin Conference of 1970 (see above p. 10/11). It would have been procedurally much sounder if we had omitted this demand for a provisional conclusion from our checklist and postponed the development of an opinion about the authenticity of a painting until all *c.* 600 works included in the Bredius canon had been investigated by us in the same way and chronologically or otherwise ordered according to their various properties.

The content of the present book is a testimony to the danger of expressing such premature verdicts.

37 Frans Grijzenhout, 'De zaak Rembrandt: Van project naar research', in *Over de volle breedte: Amsterdams universitair onderzoek na 1970* (ed. M. Polak, J. Sevink, S. Noorda), Amsterdam 2007, p. 34.

Amsterdam, March 15th, 1968

Martin Davies Esq.,
Director,
The National Gallery,
Trafalgar Square,
London.

Dear Mr. Davies,

The Financial support given by the Netherlands Organization for the Advancement of Pure Research has enabled us to undertake a research project regarding Rembrandt's paintings. We feel that a thorough and critical investigation is necessary. We intend to base our conclusions not only on stylistic evidence but also, as much as possible, on the results of technical examination. Moreover, we hope to include iconological interpretation in our views. We plan to gather as much material as possible regarding all pictures by or attributed to Rembrandt and regarding a representative selection of works by his pupils and followers. We hope that in course of time these investigations will result in a publication.

We have secured the collaboration of the most prominent Dutch museums and of the Central Laboratory of Art and Science in Amsterdam. The Director-General of the Rijksmuseum, Dr. A. van Schendel, has allowed us to inform you that he recommends this project wholeheartedly.

Professor van Gelder and Mr. Haak will be in London for three weeks from May 6th. We should be very grateful if you would make it possible for them to study a number of pictures of which we shall send you a list in due course. It is essential for our purpose that these pictures are studied under the most favourable conditions, which unfortunatedly means without glass and under adequate light. We hesitate to cause you so much trouble, but we hope you will understand that the results of our investigation depend on the facilities you will, we hope, grant us.
We would also like to order all photographs available, including details, X-ray photographs (preferably copy-films, otherwise prints) and infra-red photographs.
Your kind permission and assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

(J. Bruyn)

Fig. 22. Letter of March 15th 1968 written by J. Bruyn to Martin Davies, director of The National Gallery, London.

Fig. 23. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait*, *c.* 1640. Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza (before restoration) see also Plate 178 (after restoration).

I recall, for instance, how in 1971, after our joint investigation of the *Self-portrait*, now in the Thyssen Collection in Madrid 178 to which Gerson and Suhr had referred so extensively in their correspondence (quoted above; see p. 9/10)), Haak noted under 'provisional conclusion': '*zeker niet goed*' (certainly not authentic) (figs. 23 and 24). I was convinced by his connoisseurial arguments. Later on I would have several chances to investigate the painting and its history by different methods, but it was not until 2005 when Vol. IV (the *Corpus* Volume devoted to Rembrandt's self-portraits) was nearly ready for printing that a range of arguments could be seen to converge on the conclusion, with a probability approaching certainty, that this painting actually was an authentic Rembrandt, albeit seriously damaged and overpainted. This conclusion was mostly based on scientific examination (see *Corpus* IV 2 and in the same Volume, pp. 245-249). It had taken nearly 24 years to reach that conclusion!

I have alluded above to the proliferation of rumour and uncertainty engendered by the leaking of the 'provisional' conclusions entered on our checklists. There were sometimes other consequences, for such opinions, once communicated within the team, tended to influence our own assessment of other paintings. Furthermore, when 'provisional' opinions reached the

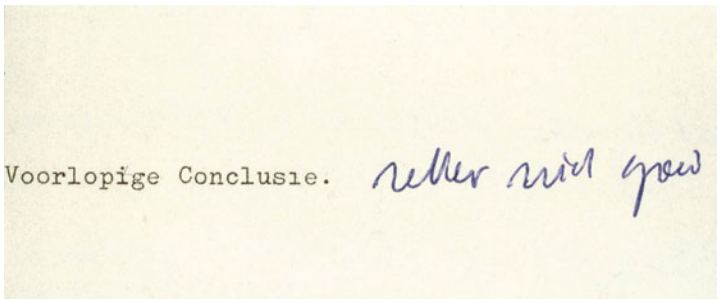


Fig. 24. Provisional conclusion regarding fig. 23 noted by Bob Haak in 1971 'zeker niet goed' [certainly not autograph]

ears of colleagues outside the project – and eventually, of course, the paintings' curators or owners (see for instance *Corpus* IV p. 357) – the consequences were serious indeed. Grasman, in his biography of Horst Gerson, in this context commented that

> 'the remarkable success of the RRP was that without having published anything, Gerson's opinion was degraded to the status of a superseded standpoint. Thus in 1979 Sidney van den Bergh [an important Dutch industrialist] auctioned the painting of the *Old Man with a cap* (fig. 25), which had been accepted by Gerson, for a mere fraction of the original price to Alfred Bader from Milwaukee, because Bruyn had informed him [Van den Bergh] – by telephone – that it was not by Rembrandt.'

Today no-one harbours any doubt at all that this painting is a conclusively documented, autograph work by Rembrandt (see the discussion on pp. 40-47). As will become apparent in the further course of this chapter, the impact of such premature disattributions on the widely held image of Rembrandt's work exerted a determining influence on the work of the RRP and others for a long time. Provisional opinions tended to consolidate and become accepted as authoritative verdicts, for at that time no-one had sufficient objective knowledge to question the validity of such an assessment, or effectively oppose such a verdict. To be in a position to do so would have meant setting up an alternative RRP, which, in a sense, is what had to happen. Later in this chapter it will be shown how the case of the *Old study of an old man* (see fig. 25) (cited above) played a significant role in re-shaping the RRP on a different basis.

This temptation to pronounce a verdict on a painting's authenticity on the basis of a visual description and a connoisseurial assessment had to give way to a more objective, more rigorous, evidence-based methodology. As many kinds of evidence as possible had to be considered, with differential weighing determined by objective criteria, and with transparency of argumentation. It was the introduction of this more methodologically aware approach of a re-organized RRP which eventually led to numerous revisions of similarly unjustified earlier disattributions (during work on volumes I-III) and is reflected in the different approach of Volumes IV and V. More importantly in the present context, it is the *raison d'être* of the present book.

Fig. 25. Rembrandt, *Oil study of an old man*, *c.* 1630, panel 24.3 x 20.3 cm. Kingston, Queen's University Agnes Etherington Art Centre (see 44).

But that is to anticipate subsequent developments within the RRP. During those early years of travel, there was never any inclination to change or adjust our simple checklist. More questions might have been added, but at that time they could not yet be formulated, nor did we manage to learn much from the restorers with whom we frequently shared working space for days or even weeks. At that time restorers still followed the traditional methods of their profession, which changed only gradually. It is now difficult to imagine what an enormous leap of progress has been made by the professionalization of the investigation, conservation and restoration of paintings since the 1960s. The existence of the RRP has in its own way contributed to that development – but that could only happen once the course of the RRP had been re-directed at a later stage.

Yet in retrospect one can see that the repeated working through our checklist while scrutinizing hundreds of paintings was not without its usefulness, even though it can now seem tedious, if not downright embarrassing, to read those reports of the hours we usually spent with the paintings. During those research trips we gradually developed a degree of familiarity with the variable characteristics of Rembrandtesque paintings: the way they seemed to have been made, how they had been altered by time and the way their appearance was partly determined by later human interventions. Thanks to X-radiographs – either made on request or already available in many museums – we occasionally saw changes that had been introduced by the painter during his work, and indications that parts, sometimes large parts, of the original paint layer had been damaged, or lost and replaced. In these X-radiographs the brushwork in lead white-containing passages was sometimes more distinct than at the paint surface, and that sometimes had a significant impact on the connoisseurial assessment of the 'peinture'.

It is remarkable that in those years of travel it very rarely happened that the *in situ* 'autopsy' led to objective certainty over an attribution or disattribution (see for instance 23).[38] In formulating our many 'provisional conclusions', it was in the end traditional connoisseurship that was relied upon – albeit a connoisseurship influenced by certain *a priori* ideas such as those expressed by Bruyn (on behalf of the RRP) at the 1969 Chicago symposium (p. 13).

These connoisseurial judgments increasingly troubled me, especially the frequency with which paintings were labelled as later imitations, even before any objective data provided by scientific investigations had become available. However, as will become apparent below, it was a long time before the potential of such investigations bore their fruit, and in the meantime my unease only grew stronger

Writing Corpus I-III

By 1973 our period of travels, of scrutinizing and describing paintings *in situ* was past and the writing of the entries could begin. This was undertaken according to the chronology of the paintings to be dealt with.

It turned out to be a gigantic task. Whereas our predecessors had restricted themselves to brief comments, if any, on the paintings they dealt with in their surveys, the participants in the RRP had from the outset resolved to ground their attributions and disattributions as thoroughly as possible. That meant writing approximately 600 entries, one for each Bredius number, as thorough and as long as the average scholarly article. During the work on the first volume it soon became apparent that it would be impossible to complete this task within the originally agreed time. It had been assumed in the application for funding that 10 years would be sufficient for the whole project, but already a five-year grant had been used before writing the volumes had even begun. One of the consequences of this time-shortage was the decision, after the publication of Volume I, to restrict the paintings to be dealt with in the remaining volumes of *A Corpus* to the list of 420 works whose attribution to Rembrandt by Bredius had been approved by Horst Gerson. As for *Corpus* II and III, this decision only affected the *Portrait of Eleazar Swalmius* 156 and also *The Mill* 206. Had the old RRP team continued its work in the same way,

38 Bob Haak, 'Nieuw licht op Judas en de zilverlingen van Rembrandt', in *Album Amicorum J.G. van Gelder*, Den Haag 1973, pp. 155-158.

however, it might have had more serious consequences when it came to dealing with the post-1642 paintings, as Gerson had rejected 16 paintings from after 1642 which are accepted in the present volume.

Only Bruyn and myself were in a position to devote the necessary time to the writing of entries. It was, after all, one of our responsibilities to the institutions that employed us (the University of Amsterdam and the Central Laboratory respectively) to publish the results of our research. The other members, given the onerous responsibilities of their administrative posts, had neither the time nor the energy of mind to apply themselves to the writing of the definitive texts, let alone to pursue the necessary supplementary research. Their further involvement in the project was henceforth limited to attending as faithfully as possible the Friday 'Rembrandt lunches' where, in addition to other RRP matters, the work-in-progress of the texts was subjected to comment and criticism.

Only Haak initially tried to undertake a share of the entry-writing. Over several evenings each week he would write the draft of one or more complete texts, which would then be expanded with characteristic erudition by Bruyn, producing the kind of comprehensive texts to which he, as the operational leader of the RRP, aspired for the '*Corpus*'.

The more plain-spoken and efficient Haak had envisaged the written end-result of our work very differently. His position was that, however much energy the RRP devoted to producing elaborate descriptions and arguing our evaluations in depth, the conclusions we arrived at could always be contested by others anyway. Haak's point was that our work could never be definitive. Therefore, he argued, it was sufficient to summarize the RRP's conclusions as briefly as possible and to underpin them as concisely as possible. After a while Haak gave up writing for the *Corpus* and restricted himself, like the others, to commenting on the content of the texts produced by Bruyn, together with Lideke Binkhorst and myself.

Two or three days every week, with Binkhorst trying to concentrate on the secretarial work in the background, Bruyn and I would sit writing and discussing across a large table covered with reports, books and photographs, with the relevant X-ray films mounted on a light box. It was a new situation: we were forced to give longer and more focused attention to each painting under consideration than when we had studied it *in situ*.

In the main, I was responsible for the descriptive parts of the texts, while Bruyn wrote most of the comments and dealt with contextual art historical material relating to the painting, including the interpretation of the relevant documents and sources. He also formulated the conclusions concerning the authenticity of the work. Together with Binkhorst he compiled the sections concerning copies, graphic reproductions and the provenances of the paintings, based on the many hundreds of filing cards that Hofstede de Groot had indexed, copies of which the Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD) had provided. Lideke Binkhorst also sought out information from the auction catalogues up to 1800 from all over Europe, extracting from them the relevant entries. During those journeys she also looked through collections of reproductive prints after paintings by or attributed to Rembrandt, inventorizing and ordering reproductions of these prints.

The highly articulate Bruyn wrote considerably more than I did. But there was a further reason for this: I soon became convinced that, contrary to Haak's thinking, our conclusions needed to be more thoroughly grounded by fundamental research, even though at first I had no clear idea of what form that research should take. In the course of events, its direction was to become clear of its own accord, and in the process my own background as a practising artist played an increasing role in my work for the RRP.

My own route to the investigation of paintings

In the preceding pages I have occasionally taken the liberty of referring to the fact that I had qualified as a traditionally trained artist at a school for fine arts. I rarely referred to this during my years as an art history student, nor did I talk about it in my first years with the RRP. I was convinced that anyone who had studied art history academically for a few years would know infinitely more about art than I did – and given the many specialised areas in the academic study of art history that was certainly the case.

With the RRP, however, when it came to assessing the art work as an artefact, the heart of the matter lay elsewhere. Of course, the artistic illusion of some segment of the visible world or of a painter's imagination rendered on a flat surface can be considered as a multifaceted source of information on what is presented in paintings. One can analyze and judge these images according to what they represent and in terms of style and quality, but the evocation and technical realization of such an image by the artist concerned pertains to a world in which only the artist is at home. Albrecht Dürer in the 1520's expressed his opinion on this aspect as follows:

> *The art of painting can only be properly judged by those who are themselves well trained painters. For others it is a foreign language.*[39] ("… dy Kunst des molens kan nit woll geurteilt werden dan allein durch dy dye do selbs gut moler sind aber vürwar den anderen ist es verporgen wy dir ein fremde sprach …")

What he meant by this is that only a strictly trained painter can command the knowledge and experience needed to create an illusion of reality on a flat surface, whereas a layman can barely, if at all, understand the

39 From a Manuscript in the British Museum; see William Martin Conway, *Literary Remains of Albrecht Dürer*, Cambridge 1889, p. 197.

necessary means and the skills. One finds statements of similar thrust from painters up well into the 17th century.[40] Writing two and a half century after Dürer, the German poet, dramaturgist and aesthetic philosopher Ephraim Lessing (1729-1783) expressed a completely opposite view of the matter:

'If I find my soup too salty, am I only allowed to say so if I myself can cook?'[41]

What he seems to have meant by this is that the illusion of reality on a flat surface was self-evident and that everyone was capable of judging or interpreting that illusionistic image for himself.

Most art historians of our own time implicitly still hold Lessing's view and for a long time I thought rightly so: whether or not one is a painter, surely when we open our eyes and look at the same object (be it in the world around us or in a painting) we see the same. At that time I was unaware of Emanuel Kant's revolutionary and influential insight that it is the perception of the perceiving subject that determines *how* the object is seen, an insight confirmed by recent neurophysiological research.[42] I only fully realized that a painter looks and sees differently than a non-painter when I learned of the reactions to a passage in an essay I had written for the catalogue *Rembrandt. The Master and his Workshop* under the title: 'Rembrandt's Manner: Technique in the Service of Illusion' written some 20 years after I began to work with the RRP.[43] To my surprise, this passage turned out to be something of an eye-opener for some non-painting art historians and art lovers among my friends and I therefore take the liberty of repeating it here in full (see pp. 23-25).

> 'By definition, illusionism in painting conceals the means used to create the illusion. For a successful illusion focuses one's attention first and foremost on the objects or materials depicted and on the suggested spatial or atmospheric setting. It is only after close and painstaking study of the paint surface that one gains an understanding of the pictorial means used to achieve this form of visual deception: the painting.
>
> To date there has been no really searching study of such pictorial elements, apart from the investigation of perspective methods. One has to agree with Gombrich, and say that the historiography of art has barely made a start on this essential question – perhaps the most important one as regards workshop practice of the period. In part this may be due to the fact that illusionism is now out of favour with both artists and critics (This was written in 1990). Today one would only hear an innocent child say that a picture looks 'absolutely real', whereas that was precisely the sort of compliment the seventeenth-century connoisseur was advised to pay an artist.
>
> The primacy of the success of the illusion in judging a work of art in Rembrandt's time is corroborated by the way one of his painter-contemporaries wrote about one of his self-portraits, that it '*was so artfully and powerfully worked out that the strongest brushwork of Van Dyck or Rubens could not have surpassed it, yes, the head seemed to stick out of the painting and speak to the beholders*' (Houbraken Vol. 1 p. 269).
>
> Another possible reason why the historiography of illusionism is only in its infancy is that it is implicitly assumed that each convincing representation of reality is a newly minted, autonomous effort by the artist, or as Gombrich put it: 'Perhaps art historians have overrated the explanatory force of a phrase such as 'the meticulous observation of nature.'[44] Nor does the adage 'with the patience of a saint and the industry of an ant', referring to the meticulous work involved in creating a convincing illusion, tell us anything about how it was actually done.
>
> Artists sought over hundreds of years for the specific elements that most contribute to a convincingly painted illusion of reality. In relating the history of that progress one describes a series of discoveries, not just about our perception of reality, but in the practice of painting itself. Gombrich has given a valuable impetus to this form of historiography, not only in *Art and Illusion* but especially in his essay 'Light, Form and Texture in fifteenth-century Painting'.[44] The news of every such innovation in the representation of reality would have rapidly spread and become part of the standard repertoire of techniques that every artist needed to have at his fingertips. This would apply to every aspect of reality, even in what might at first sight seem the unique task of faithfully painting the face in a portrait. This too had first to be reduced to those elements that are essential to the creation of an illusion of reality. Only then could the features specific to an individual be 'projected' into the artist's programme. 'Making comes before matching' is Gombrich's formulaic description of this process.[45]

40 Willem Goeree (1635-1711) described the acute eye of a well-trained artist as follows: '*In the best paintings their qualities are sometimes so deeply hidden and so artfully assimilated that the most discerning master is capable of grasping them only after long analysis*'. Rembrandt's former student Samuel van Hoogstraten wrote in 1656: '*It [the art of painting] is highly regarded all over the world and in order to be able to talk about it well, princes and nobles are often obliged to listen to us [the painters].*'

41 See Udo Kultermann, *Geschichte der Kunstgeschichte*, Wien/Düsseldorf 1966, p. 76.

42 See for instance Jean-Pierre Changeux, 'Art and Neuroscience, *Leonardo* 27 No. 3, pp. 189-201, with further literature especially the work by S. Zéki.

43 'Rembrandt's Manner: Technique in the Service of Illusion' in *Rembrandt. The Master and his Workshop,* Part I Christopher Brown, Jan Kelch & Pieter van Thiel eds. exhib. cat. Berlin/Amsterdam/London 1991-1992, pp. 12-39

44 E.H. Gombrich, 'Light, Form and Texture in Fifteenth-Century Painting North and South of the Alps, in: Ernst Gombrich, *The Heritage of Apelles*, London 1976, pp. 19-35, esp. p. 32.

45 Ernst Gombrich, *Art and Illusion*, Oxford 1960, Chapter III.

Fig. 26. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Haesje Jacobsdr van Cleyburg* (companion piece to 117a), 1634, panel 71 x 53 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum (see 117b).

Fig. 27. Nicolaes Eliasz called Pickenoy, *Portrait of a Woman, possibly Margriet Benningh, c.* 1635, panel 56 x 46 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.

Fig. 28. Detail of fig. 26.

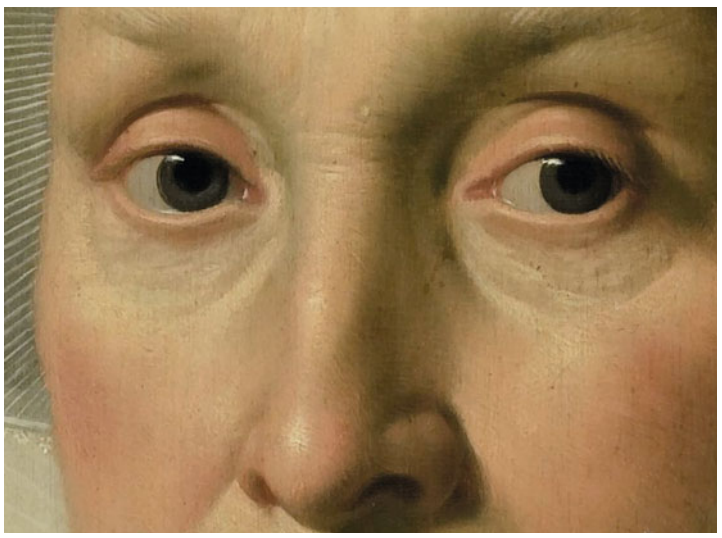


Fig. 29. Detail of fig. 27.

When he painted his portraits Rembrandt had at his disposal this stock-in-trade of codified discoveries made by his predecessors, as did every other artist, in Amsterdam or anywhere in Europe. One only begins to understand just how rich this repertoire was when a particular formula is detected in a series of comparable paintings and is then analysed as to its function in contributing to the illusion. This can be demonstrated by confronting a portrait taken at random from Rembrandt's early period (figs. 26, 28, 30 and 32) with another attributed to a contemporary, Nicolaes Eliasz Pickenoy (1565-1640) (figs. 27, 29, 31 and 33).

Comparing the two pictures detail by detail one realises, for example, how important it must have been to discover that a lit form can throw reflected

Fig. 30. Detail of fig. 26.

Fig. 31. Detail of fig. 27.

light into the shaded zone of another form (figs. 26 and 27). In these two paintings a white ruff casts its light onto the shadowed cheek and the underside of the nose, and that reflection in turn makes the colour of the skin in the lower half of the face cooler in tone than that in the upper half. It is also clear that both artists knew that an illuminated eyelid reflects light into the dark part of the eye socket beside the root of the nose (figs. 28 and 29), and that it is not only the eyeball that has a catch-light but the fluid rimming the lower eyelid and the moist, pink inner corner of the eye as well (figs. 30 and 31). Other effects which both artists had in their armoury include the appearance of a diffuse shadow cast by the eyeball, overlain by the upper eyelid with its barely discernible lashes, onto the skin beside it; from the pictures after intensive comparison; they are rarely found in the written sources.

The confrontation of the two paintings illustrated here also, of course, offers the opportunity of identifying the specific features that characterise Rembrandt's style. Where Pickenoy pays close attention to each detail, modelling clearly and sharply (and at first sight far more convincingly), Rembrandt uses the brush more loosely and fleetingly, and avoids sharpness in his contours and inner drawing. One only has to look at the catch-lights in the eye and the errant gleams on the slightly greasy skin under the eye and on the lower lip to see how, notwithstanding the formulaic use of illusionistic devices, the emphasis in his work is on the casualness, the almost chance nature of such effects. Alongside the monu-

Fig. 32. Detail of fig. 26.

Fig. 33. Detail of fig. 27.

the cast shadow beneath the nose beginning with a sharp outline and ending blurred; the use of a little red dish at the nostril on the side of the nose turned to the light, so as to suggest the translucency of the nostril; and light paint on the upper lip brushed in the direction of the incident light (figs. 32 and 33). Such formulae can usually only be extrapolated mentally moulded, frozen forms of Pickenoy, Rembrandt's figure appears to live. It is as if she is on the very point of changing her expression or blinking. Conveying such a lifelike image, however, could only be done on the basis of that extremely detailed programme of illusionistic tricks – but then executed with a compelling spontaneity.'

My experience in representing three-dimensional reality on a flat surface may well have been my most important qualification for the RRP, given that the team's main objective was to reconstruct the painted oeuvre of an artist, with attention focused not only on the images that Rembrandt produced but more especially on the way these images had been created.

During my art school training I had practised endlessly to master the means developed over the course of the long Western tradition of painting: the perspective-biased ordering of the image, the associated use of foreshortening in the pictorial space, and related to this the division of light and shadow and the insight needed for this into the differentiation and breaking of tone and colour. 'Reading' the way painters of the past (including Rembrandt) had applied these and many other means had therefore become second nature to me.

There was something else that I brought into the RRP from my past. In 1967, the year after I had decided to take my leave of academic art-historical study and return to the artist's studio, I applied myself to learn the way the early Italian painters worked. I thought the play with the interrelation between the – as it were – hovering, shiny gold ground and the matt-painted plastic forms situated in it could lead to a kind of painterly abstraction that at the time I wanted to achieve in my own art. I followed Cennino Cennini's *Il Libro dell' Arte*: having prepared panels and primed them with multi-layered gesso grounds I applied red bole on certain parts and laid gold leaf on these parts according to the old recipes. I learned how to grind pigments with the paint media, and applied underpaintings and glazes. As a result of this experience I tended to see a painting not only as 'a picture' but also as the result of an orderly process or *genesis*.

Having already learned to 'read' the means by which a pictorial illusion is created on a flat surface, I was now introduced by this experience into the mysterious no-man's land between craft and art, a field which had been much neglected ever since the founding of art history as an academic discipline.

Rembrandt's systems

This was the way I began to look at Rembrandt's early paintings, the works dealt with in our first texts for *Corpus* I. I was first made aware of the significance of this way of seeing Rembrandt's paintings by a discovery, at first sight trivial, that I made whilst studying the photographs and X-radiographs of *Balaam and the Ass* in the Musée Cognac Jay in Paris (figs. 35-38), the first painting for which I wrote my part of the relevant entry. (It should be realized that at that stage of the project there were few, if any, colour reproductions available of the paintings we had gone to see. Moreover, there was a certain mistrust among art historians with regard to colour photography. Only by the beginning of the work on *Corpus* IV and V did we begin systematically to collect colour transparancies.)

The museum had sent us a number of magnificent black and white photographs of details of the painting, including one with the head and neck of the ass being flogged by Balaam (fig. 37).

Along the contours of this detail of the painting tiny places of wear showed up, revealing glimpses of light underlaying paint. On these spots it could be seen that the paint of that part of the image immediately behind the ass's head and neck – the white drapery of the angel – extended for a variable distance of a few millimetres within those contours. When the X-radiograph, on which this lead white-containing paint shows clearly, was compared with the relevant photograph, it could be seen that this was in fact the case for many places of varying width near the contours of the ass's head and neck (compare fig. 37 to fig. 38).

The conclusion to be drawn from these observations was obvious: Rembrandt had left a reserve in the paint of the drapery and the adjacent cloud, in which he had painted the ass's head such that the paint just overlapped the edges of this reserve. One could infer from this, first of all, that Rembrandt had rather carefully sketched the ass on his panel, had then reserved this sketch in the paint of the passages lying behind in the picture space with the landscape, the cloud and the angel. Only when he had finished those parts did he then execute the ass, Balaam and the two boys to the right in their definitive appearance (compare figs. 34 and 35).

Another observation in this context was of the coherence in the presumptive mixes of colours and the execution of the ass. It meant that Rembrandt had eventually painted – and completed – the visible parts of the ass in a single coherent stage during the process of working on the painting (fig. 39 and Plate 10). What one could follow here was thus a way of working that was fundamentally different from that which, for example, Cézanne explained to his watching friend Joachim Gasquet: *'You see, I work on my painting as a whole, all at once'* – an approach to the art of painting that only became common from the mid 19th century onward.

Further comparison of the X-ray image with the photograph of the surface image revealed that Rembrandt had completed his *Balaam and the Ass* systematically from background to foreground (apart from the terrain in the very foreground, which he probably executed together with the far background). One could extrapolate from these observations that the elements of the image were painted on the basis of a sketch that had been made directly on the primed panel, each element successively painted and completed in its entirety – unless Rembrandt changed his original plan during the course of the work. In fact, this was the case with the tip of the angel's left wing, as demonstrated by the X-radiograph and the remarkable mix

of colours in the mountain behind, where Rembrandt filled a reserve for the wings which he must have judged to be too large (compare figs. 34 and 38).

The full consequences of the discovery of this working procedure, which at first sight appeared of little artistic significance, only gradually dawned on me. I subsequently noted that this procedure had been followed in all Rembrandt's early works up to the *Night Watch* and, albeit less consistently, in later works too (see 243). Only when painting portraits could it have been the case that he worked in a different order, where the availability of the model and the priority of achieving the verisimilitude of the sitter's features would have been determining factors.

The most salient conclusion of course was that the young Rembrandt had worked according to a fixed system that *mutatis mutandis* was related to the system I was familiar with from having carried out in practice the prescriptions in the manuscript of Cennino Cennini. But for a painter using the oil paint of Rembrandt's time, which was much more easily worked than Cennini's tempera, and in the light of our late 19th and 20th century conception of how a painter worked, this was a totally unexpected discovery. Nevertheless, it was readily confirmed by texts in 17th-century treatises on painting technique (see *Corpus* I pp. 25-31; *Painter at Work* pp. 32-43; and by my investigation (together with students) of many other paintings, not only by Rembrandt.

I gradually came to see that the discovery of this standard way of working had major consequences for our (often preconceived) ideas on the use of the palette, and further on the possible division of labour in the studio. This newly acquired insight also demanded revision of our thinking about those aspects of painting which we usually call 'style'.[46] I also realized with some embarrassment that during all our research trips we had never systematically recorded the overlappings, or the homogeneity in the colours for each separate part of the image, or the restriction in the use of pigments to only a few pigments per constituent part within the separate passages of the paintings we had described. These, of course, were aspects that ought to have been on our checklist; yet after hundreds of paintings had been scrutinized as closely as possible *in situ*, this order of working was only discovered on a black and white photograph and a related X-radiograph and subsequently confirmed by researching contemporary sources.

My hypothesis concerning Rembrandt's way of working naturally needed to be tested by other means. Together with Karin Groen (1941–2013) (fig. 34),

Fig. 34. Karin Groen working with our portable microscope.

and later also with Jaap Mosk, both chemists at the Central Laboratory, we closely investigated the *Leiden History piece* 7 and other early Rembrandts in Dutch collections, and later on the *Night Watch* 190[47]; see also the Note to Plate 243.

One consequence of the development of this hypothesis concerning Rembrandt's way of working was that any need for taking paint samples was drastically reduced: investigation with a surgical microscope, or even a strong magnifying glass, in combination with an X-radiograph was often sufficient to understand the early Rembrandt's working method as it gradually evolved.

The apparently trivial discovery that paintings were worked out from back to front on a coloured ground provided new leads for how to read X-ray images. Merely by comparing X-radiographs with the visible surface images of paintings by the early Rembrandt we could now see that the investigation of dark reserves in radio-absorbent background passages gives an impression of the variable accuracy of Rembrandt's first lay-in of a painting, in so far as lead white had been (locally) used. For instance, whereas in the *Balaam* the ass's head must have been accurately designed during this first sketch of the painting, we were now able to see that other parts of the image, such as the angel's wing, had initially been intended to be larger and the shaded boys in the middle ground possibly smaller.

In a copy, the contours of such preliminary forms as a rule agree with the corresponding, definitively worked out forms in the final painting (compare, for instance, 19 figs. 2 and 4; 251 figs. 3 and 5). The phenom-

46 Ernst van de Wetering, 'The Palette; on the Relationship between Style and Painting Technique' in id., *Rembrandt. The Painter at Work*, Amsterdam 1997/2009 pp. 132-152.

47 K. Groen, 'Schildertechnische aspecten van Rembrandts vroegste schilderijen, microscopische observaties en de analyse van verfmonsters', *Oud Holland* 91 (1977), pp. 66-74; E. van de Wetering, 'De jonge Rembrandt aan het werk', *Oud Holland* 91 (1977), pp. 27-65; E. van de Wetering, K. Groen and J.A. Mosk, 'Summary report on the results of the technical examination of Rembrandt's Night Watch', *Bulletin van het Rijskmuseum* 24 (1976), pp. 69-98.

Fig. 35. Rembrandt, *Balaam and the ass*, 1626, panel 63.2 x 46.5 cm. Paris, Musée Cognacq-Jay (see 10).

Fig. 36. X-radiography of fig. 34.

Fig. 37. Detail of fig. 34.

Fig. 38. Detail of fig. 35.

Fig. 39. Rembrandt, *Balaam and the ass* see 10.

Fig. 40. Detail of an X-radiograph of a painting on canvas 269.

enon of reserves in an X-radio-absorbent background therefore turned out to be extremely useful; it enabled us to distinguish between the copies that were frequently produced in Rembrandt's workshop (or in later studios) and Rembrandt's prototypes.

The discovery of Rembrandt's systematic working procedure would lead to a wider search for patterns in Rembrandt's use of materials and painting technique in his paintings. The knowledge we accumulated concerning the standard formats of panels and canvases could sometimes be useful for gaining an idea of the original format of a painting, and from that the original composition and certain aspects of the style of a painting. Insight into the use of coloured grounds (and their gradual discolouration) led to further insight into the economy of painting and the optical changes of certain paintings 275a/b; the choice of pigments and the layering of paint layers to get certain effects in the painter's pursuit of the desired illusion of reality etc.

Of course, this was all knowledge that any 17th century painter could have had, including contemporaries who painted works in the style of Rembrandt. Nevertheless, this approach of amassing and developing a multidisciplinary archive of knowledge became extremely valuable. Thanks to such insights the paintings became more transparent, not only literally but in a figurative sense as well: with this knowledge, one could now see more than we had seen during our research trips. And by combining these different kinds of knowledge one achieved a greater intimacy with a particular painting; when one looked long and often enough at the paintings in this more variously informed manner, one even developed a certain intimate familiarity with the painter.

The most important result of these efforts, however, was that it became possible to read the genesis of many of Rembrandt's paintings. This understanding, together with other insights, which will be discussed below, would occasionally turn out to be of considerable importance in resolving questions of attribution (see for instance the Note to Plate 9.

A double life in the Central Laboratory and the Rembrandt Research Project

The Institute of Art History of the University of Amsterdam, where the RRP was based, was a short distance from the Central Laboratory, of which I had become a staff member. That laboratory was exactly what at that time a centre for research ought (and perhaps still ought) to be, a kind of playground in which researchers were given – or were allowed to take – room to follow their own inclinations and interests, and in this context were free to form working collaborations on their own initiative.

Strictly speaking, much of my research fell neither within the official remit of the RRP nor that of the Central Laboratory. The vagueness of the description of my responsibilities and research programmes provided by both institutions was such that I was able to decide for myself what aspects of Rembrandt's technique and use of materials I would investigate with my colleagues and collaborators. At the RRP it was thought that what I was doing fell under the auspices of the Central Laboratory, while at the Central Lab the converse was assumed.

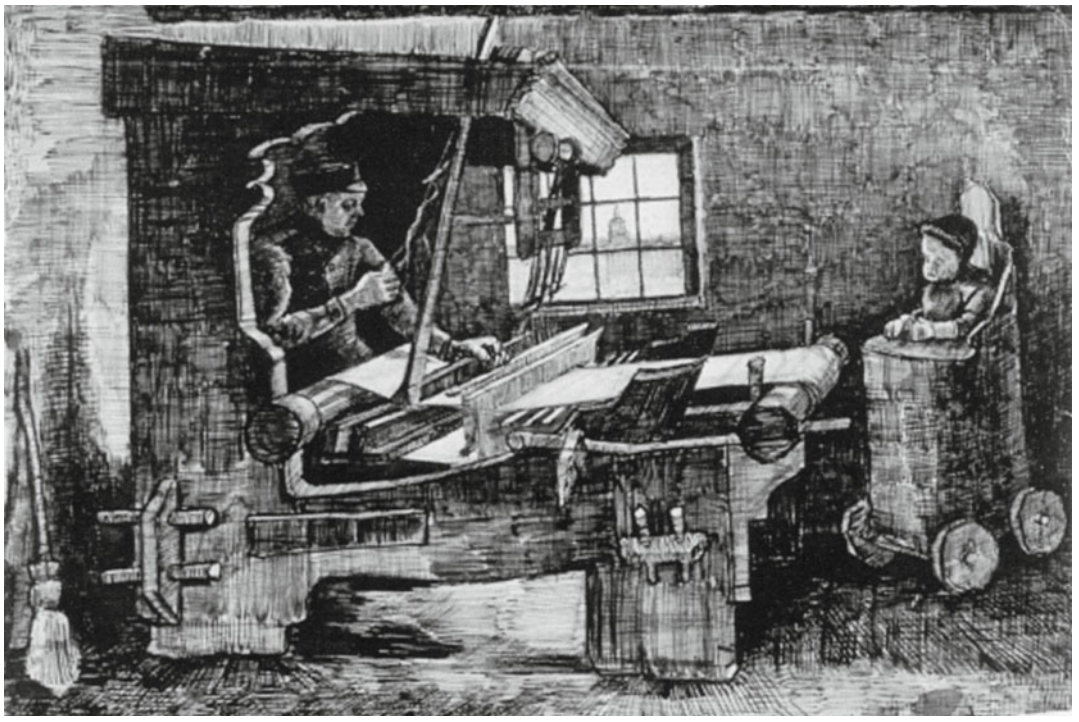


Fig. 41. Weaver at his loom (drawing by Vincent van Gogh (detail), 1884, 32 x 40 cm. Amsterdam, Van Gogh Museum.

I remember the confused reaction of members of the RRP team when I announced that I wanted to count and analyze the thread density in the linen of paintings that had been – correctly or incorrectly – attributed to Rembrandt. The imprint in the ground of the linen threads is usually visible on X-radiographs (fig. 40).

The above-mentioned Hamburg medical X-radiologist, Martin Meier Siem, had already conducted a statistical analysis of his counts of threads in a large number of paintings, of which he had usually made no more than a single 30 x 40 cm radiograph.[48] His research on the canvas support, however, had produced no useful results, mainly because he usually looked with X-irradiation at only a limited number of works by any specific painter. Moreover, he did not relate these results to the 17th- century workshop practice. In the case of Rembrandt, we had meanwhile assembled an increasingly large number of complete X-radiograph mosaics of paintings on canvas, so that renewed and extended research in this area could now be considered.

It was evident that such research alone could not establish whether or not a painting was by Rembrandt. Moreover, the first question that needed to be answered was how to distinguish between warp (the long threads stretched on the loom) and weft (the threads woven to and fro across the warp) (fig. 41). In canvases visible on X-radiographs, there mostly was no trace of a selvedge or seam that would allow one to determine the direction of the warp.

If one could not distinguish between the direction of warp and weft, the counts of threads per cm were virtually worthless. But if this distinction were possible the counts would be useful in determining whether a particular piece of linen originally came from one and the same bolt of linen as other canvas supports; that could contribute to our knowledge of whether two or more canvases had come from the same studio or possibly originally belonged to the same painting. But how was it possible to distinguish between warp and weft?

The Swiss paintings restorer Emil Bosshard – who had worked temporarily at the Rijksmuseum between 1971 and 1973 and was by now head of the laboratory for research on paintings and the restoration workshops at the *Schweizerisches Institut für Kunstwissenschaft* in Zürich – wanted to spend some time abroad in order to avoid the approaching regular call-up for military exercises by the Swiss army. Could he come and work with me for a while in the Central Lab? With pleasure! We at once tackled the warp/weft problem and found the solution (fig. 42) (but he still had to do his military service).[49]

This sub-project would eventually lead to our acquisition of extensive knowledge, supported by archival research, of the nature and use of canvas in the 17th century, and in particular by Rembrandt and his studio. Subsequently, 17th century stretching methods and the deformations in the linen that were caused by these methods (the so-called cusping) would also be studied (fig. 43).

As already stated, such knowledge seemed to provide no *direct* answers to the RRP's main questions concerning authenticity. Subsequently, however, this knowledge

48 M. Meier-Siem in: *Röntgenonderzoek van de oude schilderijen in het Centraal Museum te Utrecht*, Utrecht 1967, esp. pp. 61-63.

49 *Corpus* II pp. 15-43; E. van de Wetering, op. cit.[46] , pp. 90-130; E. van de Wetering, 'Canvas Research with Emil Bosshard: Remarks on method', Peverelli, Grassi, Von Imhoff (eds.), *Emil Bosshard. Painting Conservator (1945-2006)*, Florence 2009, pp. 257-270.

			canvases presumably from one bolt / companion pieces with canvases presumably from one bolt	THREADCOUNT upper: *vertical threads* lower: *horizontal threads* *(min.–max. found)*	upper symbol: *vertical threads* lower symbol: *horizontal threads* • ○ + *average number of threads/cm* • *presumed warp threads* — *spread of threadcounts* ○ *presumed weft threads* + *warp/weft direction undetermined*
					NUMBER OF THREADS 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19
1634	Br. 200	*Portrait of Johannes Elison*, Boston		*lefthand strip* 14.9 (14.7-15) 13 (12-14)	
				righthand strip 15 (14.5-16) 13.5 (12.5-14)	
1634	Br. 347	*Portrait of Maria Bockenolle*, Boston		*lefthand strip* 14 (13.5-14.5) 12 (11.5-13)	
				righthand strip 14 (13.5-15) 12 (11.5-12.5)	
1635	Br. 469	*Minerva*, Japan, private collection		*righthand strip* 11.2 (10.5-11.7) 15.9 (14.5-17.2)	
				narrow 10.5 (10.2-11) *lefthand strip* 15.5 (13-17.5)	
[1635]	Br. 497	*Belshazzar's Feast*, London		*lefthand strip* 10.8 (10-12) 14.4 (13-15.5)	
				righthand strip 11.1 (10.5-12.5) 14.4 (13-16)	
1636	Br. 498	*Abraham's Sacrifice*, Copy, Munich		*upper strip* 10.8 (10.5-11.5) 13.9 (12-15.5)	
				lower strip 11.1 (10.5-12) 14.7 (14-16)	
[*c.* 1635]	Br. 522	*Haman before Esther and Ahasverus*, Bucharest		17.5 (17-18) 12.5 (11.5-14)	
[*c.* 1635]	Br. 496	*The Finding of Moses*, Philadelphia		*upper strip* 11.6 (11-12) 12 (11.5-12.5)	
				narrow 11.7 (11.5-12) *lower strip* 11.5	

Fig. 42. Table with a partial list of threadcounts (see *Painter at Work* p. 105).

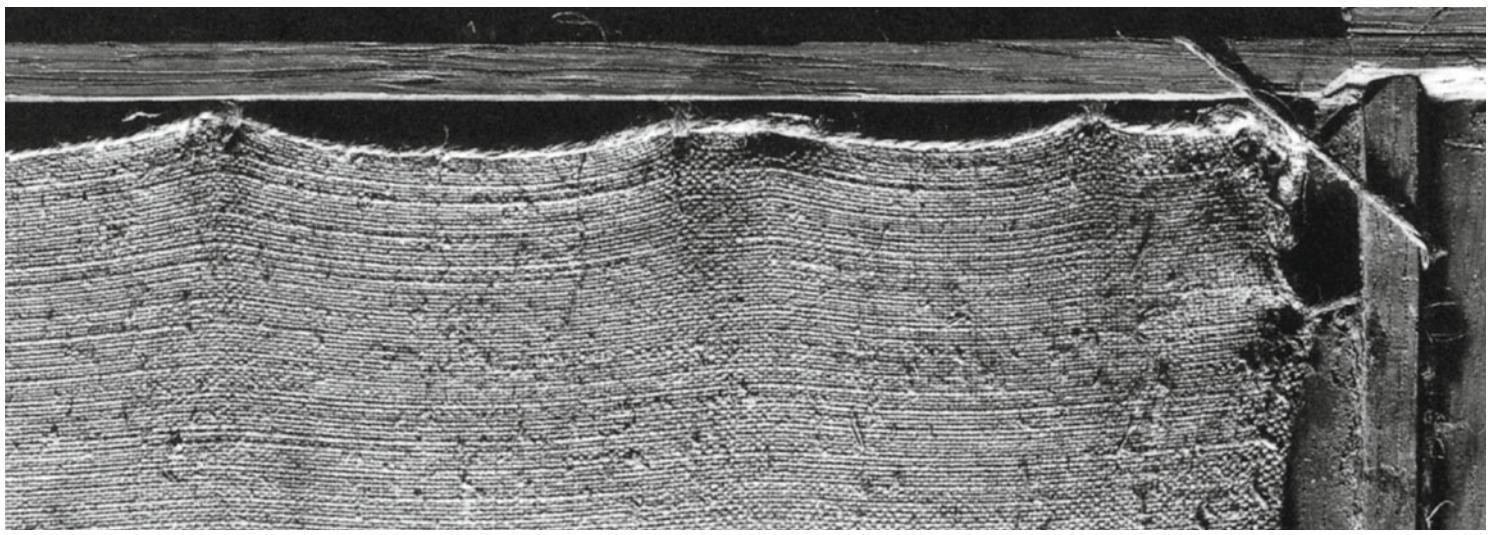


Fig. 43. 17th-century canvas stretched in its original frame (detail).

did prove useful, for instance, in the case of the reconstruction of the *Danae* [149] and *The Mill* [206] and the consequent re-attribution of the latter to Rembrandt. The research on canvases also contributed, for example, to the discovery that other painters in Rembrandt's studio participated in the production of his 'self-portraits' (see *Corpus* IV pp. 117-132 and *Corpus* IV entries 21 and 22).

Such research of a more fundamental nature was going to be of the utmost importance if the project was not to end in failure. As it would turn out, the RRP was certainly heading in that direction during work on the first three volumes of *A Corpus*: traditional connoisseurship was threatening to pre-empt all other research methods and subvert the innovative methodological approach of the RRP.

Remarkably, this was indirectly the result of our introducing one of the most successful of research methods employed in the project: dendrochronology.

Surprise

Following our meeting at the 1969 Symposium in Amsterdam, the Hamburg dendrochronologists had measured dozens of panels of Rembrandtesque paintings, among which were many that the members of the original RRP team had been convinced were later fakes or imitations.

What turned out to be the case? No single oak panel was found to have come from any tree felled later than the year to which the painting in question had already been dated on the basis of style, or the date it bore. Moreover, the fact that it was possible to demonstrate that, in relatively many instances, two or more panels came from the same trunk indicated that there was a high degree of probability that the works concerned were painted in the same workshop.[50] For instance, the initial team members had long considered The Hague *Bust of an old man in a cap* [46] to be a later imitation. Its panel, however, turned out to have come even from the same plank as the panels of the Hamburg *Simeon in the Temple* [16] and the Berlin *Minerva* [54]. The Braunschweig portraits [87a/b] were also initially considered as later imitations, but the panel of the woman proved to have come from the same tree as the centre plank of the unquestionable Chicago *Man in a gorget and black cap* [58].

Something similar occurred in the research on the early grounds. For example, when, at our request, the chemist Hermann Kühn from the Munich Doerner Institute took and analysed paint samples from Rembrandts in the collections of Kassel and Dresden, he often found a certain type of double ground in Rembrandt's early paintings on canvas. The same type of ground was also detected in paintings that the RRP had at first thought suspect.[51]

Such new information could not prove that a painting was by Rembrandt: after all, it could have been executed by a pupil or assistant in Rembrandt's workshop. But we were forced by these data to conclude that among the paintings accepted by Bredius as works by Rembrandt, i.e. the body of painting that the founders of the RRP had decided to investigate, there seemed to be not one from a later period!

Who then were the authors of these paintings which, on the basis of the connoisseurial judgments of the original participants of the RRP, had not been accepted as works by Rembrandt himself? As set out in the Notes to the Plates in this book, some of them were later shown to have been painted by Rembrandt himself. But what of the others? It was likely, and often on grounds of dendrochronological evidence, demonstrable that they had been painted in Rembrandt's workshop and, therefore, in all probability by Rembrandt's pupil/assistants.

That, of course, had already been thought much earlier. The reader may recall that Bredius, when he disattributed from Rembrandt the *Old woman with a book* which Frick had bought (see fig. 1), suggested that Rembrandt's pupil Carel van der Pluym (1625-1672) could have been its author. That attribution is now generally accepted because the painting shows striking similarities to a work in Chicago that bears this painter's signature.[52] But one could not be so sure about Gerson's attributions of certain 'Rembrandts' to Govaert Flinck, Gerbrand van den Eeckhout and Jan Victors, which Bruyn had discussed in his presentation of the RRP at the Chigago symposium in 1969 (see p. 12), because those paintings cannot be so readily paired with undisputed, signed works by these painters, as was the case with Frick's Carel van der Pluym.

That was why Bruyn in Chicago was able to conjecture that many more non-Rembrandts were later imitations and fakes than had hitherto been suspected. Now, however, thanks to the dendrochronologists, it became clear that this was a false trail. We had to return to the only other available option: that such non-Rembrandts were indeed painted by his pupil/assistants.

Imitations by pupils?

It was known that Rembrandt's pupils worked in his style. That was normal in the 17th – century training

50 See *Corpus* I, pp. 683-685; *Corpus* II, pp. 865-66; *Corpus* III, pp. 783-787 (see for a synthesis of all in *Corpus* IV, Table of dendrochronological data, pp. 648-659).

51 H. Kühn, 'Untersuchungen zu den Pigmenten und Malgründen Rembrandts, durchgeführt an den Gemälden der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Kassel', *Maltechnik/Restauro* 82 (1976), pp. 25-33; H. Kühn, 'Untersuchungen zu den Pigmenten und den Malgründen Rembrandts durchgeführt an den Gemälden der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Dresden', *Maltechnik/Restauro* 83 (1977), pp. 223-233. For our criticism of Kühn's initial working method and results, see *Corpus* I, pp. 17-20.

52 Op. cit.[1], pp. 67-69.

practice. In the case of Rembrandt there are surviving testimonies, specifically concerning Govaert Flinck and Aert de Gelder, that when they were apprenticed to Rembrandt it had not or hardly been possible to distinguish their paintings from those of the master.[53] Nonetheless, this had remained a matter of contention. The catalogue of Cevat's collection with an introduction by Bob Haak, for instance, had conjured up an image of the School of Rembrandt which seemed to preclude any confusion between the work of the master and that of his pupils.[54] The same would also apply to the first volumes of Sumowski's publication, the monumental series *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler* (1983-1994). In his *Introduction* to this series, Sumowski explicitly defended the idea that

> '*Rembrandt, with a teacher's unmistakable idealism, tried to bring out the individuality of his pupils.*'

According to Sumowski, the fact that despite their training in history painting some of his pupils later worked as genre or landscape painters

> '*agrees completely with Rembrandt's ideal of the individual. The Rembrandt imitators did not work in his spirit.*'[55]

Thus, at the project's outset in 1968 it was possible for hundreds of paintings that were in the style of, but possibly not by Rembrandt himself, to be largely considered as either *mala fide* fakes or *bona fide* imitations or pastiches. But now, thanks to dendrochronology and the investigation of grounds on canvas, it had become conceivable that many of these works (if not all) were painted by Rembrandt's pupil/assistants.

All in all, during his whole career Rembrandt had 50 or more pupils of whom we can be sure that hardly any had entered Rembrandt's studio as a beginner. In general they had received their first training with another painter. They had then come to Rembrandt to adopt his style and technique, and with that aim must have produced paintings that were difficult to distinguish from Rembrandt's own works.

I undertook to examine that problem in a wider context in what issued as a study titled 'Problems of apprenticeship and studio collaboration', a chapter in my dissertation *Studies in the workshop practice of the early Rembrandt* and included in Vol. II of the *Corpus* (pp. 45-90). The theme of Rembrandt's teaching and correlated workshop practice was subsequently also tackled by Bruyn for the relevant essays in *Corpus* III and in the catalogue for the exhibition *Rembrandt. The Master and his Workshop.*[56]

There were, however considerable differences between Bruyn's approach to this aspect of Rembrandt's workshop practice and my own. Bruyn's main aim was to attribute paintings that had been disattributed from Rembrandt to one or other of the Rembrandt's pupils known by name. In doing so, Bruyn (like other art historians, such as Gerson and Liedtke) had to lean on the same traditional connoisseurship that had been relied on in the earlier disattribution from Rembrandt of the paintings concerned. I, on the other hand, felt that it was far too early to create pigeon-holes to accommodate each non-Rembrandt produced in the workshop – should that ever become a possibility. I was convinced that the problem posed by Rembrandt's workshop practice and by works in his style made by his pupils was a more basic one.

The missing contextual key to the puzzle turned out to be an investigation into the nature of the 17th – century painter's education, both the theory and the practice, and its integration into workshop production.[57] The work on this insight led to several articles on what I refer to as 'satellites' – paintings by pupils that are variants based on works by Rembrandt– and their relation to the 'principals' on which they were based (see also Chapter 2 in the present book).

I explored this problematic area in Chapter II and III of *Corpus* V; my main point there is that a comparative analysis of Rembrandt's 'principals' and his pupils' 'satellites' teaches one more about Rembrandt himself than about the individual pupils, who as a rule remain anonymous and who may or may not have developed into one of those painters known as 'former pupils of Rembrandt' (see *Corpus* V Chapter IV). The one pupil whom I had investigated as thoroughly as possible at the beginning of my involvement with Rembrandt's teaching/workshop practice was Isack Jouderville (1612-1645).[58] In many ways, he is the best documented of all Rembrandt's early pupils. My choice to mainly concentrate on Jouderville would later play a role in the methodological break between Bruyn and myself (see the Note to 63b).

The break in the team

In April 1993, the four senior members of the RRP announced in a letter to the editor of *The Burlington Magazine* that they had withdrawn from the project. The following is the complete text of the letter:

> Madam,
>
> Since its foundation in 1968, the Amsterdam-based Rembrandt Research Project has become known

53 Houbraken Vol. II p. 21; Vol. III p. 206.

54 Exhib. cat. *Rondom Rembrandt. De verzameling Daan Cevat*, Stedelijk Museum 'De Lakenhal', Leiden 1968, with an *Introduction* by Bob Haak.

55 W. Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler,* Vols. I-VI, Landau/Pfalz 1983-1994, see esp. Vol. I, p. 14.

56 J. Bruyn, 'Studio practice and studio production', in *Corpus* III (1989), pp. 12-50; J. Bruyn, 'Rembrandt's Workshop. Function and Production', in op. cit.[42], pp. 68-89.

57 See in this context also Michiel Franken, '"Aen stoelen en bancken leren gaen". Leerzame vormen van navolging in Rembrandts werkplaats', in P. van den Brink, L. Helmus (eds.), *Album Discipulorum J.R.J. van Asperen de Boer*, Zwolle 1997, pp. 66-73.

58 E. van de Wetering, 'Isack Jouderville, a pupil of Rembrandt, in A. Blankert et al. *The Impact of a Genius, Rembrandt, his Pupils and Followers in the Seventeenth Century*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (Worterman Gallery) – Groningen (Groningen Mueseum) 1983.

internationally for its work and publications. The original team consisted of six members, later reduced to five following the deaths of J.A. Emmens in 1971 and J.G. van Gelder in 1980 and the appointment of E. van de Wetering in 1970. These changes were not announced at the time, since they had no effect on the aim and methodology of the programme. The Rembrandt Research Project would now like to inform colleagues and other interested parties of far more sweeping changes that have taken place.

The long duration of the project, which is directly related to the ambitious objective, the dynamic working method, which is subject to constant review, and the limited time that the team members have been able to devote to Rembrandt research alongside their full-time appointments at universities or museums, have all taken their toll. A critical point was reached in 1989 with the publication of the third of the planned five volumes of *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, which closed with the *Night Watch* of 1642. The passage of time made itself felt not only in changes in the personal circumstances of the team members, all of whom had retired from their posts or were on the point of doing so (sole exception being Van de Wetering, who had succeeded to Joos Bruyn's chair at the University of Amsterdam), but also the conviction of Ernst van de Wetering – the team member who had the longest future with the project – that there was a need for change of approach. His argument that the over-rigorous classification of the paintings into categories A (accepted as being by Rembrandt), B (uncertain) and C (not accepted as Rembrandt) should be abandoned, and that there should be room for consultation with a broader range of specialists (including the curators of those paintings in public collections) before publication of the research findings, received a sympathetic hearing from the other team members but failed to generate the enthusiasm necessary for a concerted change of course.

Aware of the need to adapt to altered circumstances, and secure in the knowledge that their younger colleague has a clear idea of the way ahead, J. Bruyn, B. Haak, S.H. Levie and P.J.J. van Thiel have decided to bring their participation in the project to an end. It will continue under Ernst van de Wetering, assisted by a small staff. And with the collaboration of specialists from various disciplines.

J. Bruyn, B. Haak, S.H. Levie and P.J.J. van Thiel

The departure of my senior colleagues was scheduled to take place at the closing of the Rembrandt exhibition, *Rembrandt. The Master and his Workshop*, held in Berlin, Amsterdam and London in 1991-1992, in which several members of the RRP were involved.

In addition to the explanation offered in the letter it should also be added that the departing members had begun to realise that the working method adopted for the first three volumes of *A Corpus* could not be employed for that part of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre from after 1642. The chosen method of working up till then had been primarily based on a comparison and testing against works with related subjects with a view to an attribution or disattribution. Rembrandt's putative oeuvre from after 1642, however, shows too little consistency of style, execution and subject matter for this approach to be credibly sustained. For this reason, it had already been suggested earlier that the project should be wound up after the appearance of Volume III.

It was with commendable honesty that the separating members alluded to the fact that tensions over the RRP's content had also played a part in their decision to withdraw. These tensions, as recounted above, were very real and mainly arose from differences of insight between Bruyn and myself over methodological problems.

In the account below, I shall outline how and why my view of Rembrandt's oeuvre and the possibilities of obtaining a clear image of that oeuvre had begun to diverge from that of the other team members. If this book can be considered as a report of a continuing learning process, as I suggested on p. 2, then that process might be best followed in the next section of this chapter.

After completion of the work on volume III in 1988, there were initial explorations of what form volume IV of the *Corpus* should take. Bruyn worked mainly with a temporary assistant, Jacques Vis, and with Lideke Binkhorst.

In 1987 I had succeeded Bruyn as professor at the University of Amsterdam. My contribution to the continuing of the project was to organize a series of working trips to European museums with different groups of five to seven students in order to study *in situ* any Rembrandts from after 1642 held in the collections of the museums concerned on days when the museums were closed to the general public. The students had prepared for this by analysing one or two of our working reports from 1968-'73 and conducting the necessary research of the literature. For me personally, these trips afforded the opportunity to study these paintings (often for the second time). In the course of supervising the students' research I could familiarize myself with the problems associated with each of these works. In the autumn of 1989, during a period as Visiting Fellow at the Centre of Advanced Studies of the Visual Arts in Washington (CASVA) I investigated paintings from various American museums that had been previously studied by the older RRP team members in the 1968-'73 period.

Bruyn knew that I was unhappy with Vol. III. I had told him so. Although I was credited as co-author on the title page, in fact I hardly considered myself such:

▲ *Fig. 45.* Rembrandt, *Bust of a young woman*, *c.*1640, poplar panel 60.5 x 49 cm. Washington, National Gallery, Widener Collection (see 171).

◀ *Fig. 44.* Rembrandt, *Saskia as Flora*, 1641, panel 98.5 x 82.5 cm. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie (see 181).

during the discussions preparatory to writing that book I had kept aloof as far as possible from the decision-making when it came to attributions and disattributions. These decisions were based on a majority vote and there was usually a connoisseurial unanimity between Bruyn and the other team members, whereas I was far more reserved in my opinions. During the work on Vol. III, I had mainly concentrated on genuine paintings with a complicated genesis, such as e.g. 110, 113, 149, 153. I was convinced that in these cases one could, as it were, witness Rembrandt thinking about artistic problems, and that what was needed at that time was more such insights rather than routinely attributing or disattributing paintings on the basis of shared connoisseurial intuition, however sound the arguments in the resulting entry appeared to be (in this context see, for instance, the Note to 173).

In Vols. I-III I had occasionally added minority standpoints – as a way of allowing a protesting voice to be heard – over what I believed to be the mistaken disattribution of certain paintings. In Vol. III I especially found myself out of sympathy with the disattribution of the so-called *Saskia* from the National Gallery in Washington (fig. 44) (for my argument in favour of an attribution of that painting to Rembrandt, see the Note to 171). The painting was tested by Bruyn and Levie against the Dresden *Saskia as Flora* 181 and on the basis of essential differences in style between them, it was disattributed from Rembrandt, with the style and execution of the Dresden painting taken as normative (compare figs. 44 and 45).

The gradual increase of tensions over this way of working and over the view of Rembrandt as an artist that it fostered finally reached a breaking point.

In 1992, Bruyn had presented to the RRP his vision of Rembrandt's stylistic development, and based on it a well thought-out argument which led to his conclusion that the *Supper at Emmaus* in the Louvre 218 (fig. 46) was not painted by Rembrandt. A deep silence followed this exposition which I finally broke by stating: 'I am not convinced'.

Bruyn only expressed his anger later that evening over the telephone, and with it our cooperation came to an end. The last meeting of all the RRP teammembers was held not long afterwards, announced in advance as a farewell meeting. As chairman, Bruyn had the first word and began: '*What has now happened already announced itself during our first working trip* (to London, in 1968).' That had been 25 years earlier.

What had happened in London? In my own recollection I saw myself on that trip as a timid assistant to Haak, and sometimes to Haak and Bruyn working to-

Fig. 46. Rembrandt, *The supper at Emmaus*, 1648, mahogany panel 68 x 65 cm. Paris, Louvre before cleaning (see Plate **218** after cleaning).

gether, or walking with them though the streets of London or sitting in a train *en route* to see some of the paintings outside London, such as 184a and 134. During these hours spent together I put to them many questions on methodological aspects of the RRP, listening attentively to their answers. I was, after all, for the first time together, for several weeks, with the founding fathers of an awe- inspiring project in which I had the privilege of being involved.

Looking back on those conversations, I can see that my main question was whether the truth could actually be determined through this research project. During our train journey to join the ferry in Hoek van Holland, Haak had told me that 17th- century Dutch painters used oak panels, which as a rule were no thicker than 8 to 10 mm. The panel of the first painting we saw out of its frame was *c.* 25 mm thick 132a, which threw me into considerable confusion: the very first rule of thumb that I had in good faith taken on board almost immediately turned out to need revising.

In my naïveté, I thought that scholarship, and that included the work of the RRP, was concerned above all with discovering the *truth*; but how certain could the members of the team be that the conclusions that were mostly reached during the autopsy of a painting were in fact correct? I no longer remember their answer. Haak later confided to me that in his view we could never be able to get further than an informed opinion, and it was only much later that I would fully grasp the import of Bruyn's idea of '*the circular nature of the argument (of the RRP)*' (see below) and his later statement regarding '*the inevitability of subjectivity in the quest for authenticity*' (see below). But that was not the objective truth which I presumed the RRP was aiming at and which I am still aiming at.

On that first journey visiting museums and collections we had not always been able to investigate the panels out of the frame, so once back from London I designed and constructed a cardboard 'thickness-indicator' with which one could also measure the panel thickness, by-passing the frame. This 'thickness-indicator' subsequently always accompanied us on working trips until it became clear that, as a criterion, no real significance could be attached to the thickness of panels – all the more since radially sawn panels are often slightly wedge-shaped (see *Painter at Work* pp. 11-12).

From the very beginning, therefore, I was nagged by questions arising from my assumption that we should be concerned with discovering the objective truth. Perhaps that was what Bruyn meant at that farewell gathering when he indicated that our break, which was now actual, had already been announced at the very beginning. It was in our respective positions regarding methodology (and correspondingly in regard to the team's conclusions) that we steadily grew apart.

It was only while I was working on this Chapter that I came across texts which contain the key to the essence of Bruyn's thinking about the RRP. In his opening introduction to the *Symposium on Technical Aspects of Rembrandt Paintings i*n 1969, Bruyn expressed the kernel of his views as follows:

> '*As the definition of Rembrandt's oeuvre has not been a matter of expanding a nucleus of documented paintings but of reducing a vast number of paintings attributed to the artist over the centuries the circular nature of the argument is only too real.*'

It should be emphasized in this connection that in the case of Rembrandt, apart from a limited number of portraits, group portraits and designs for etched portraits, the nucleus of securely documented paintings with other subjects adds up to no more than some 15 paintings, of widely divergent datings, styles, sizes and subjects. That is wholly inadequate as a basis for reconstructing an entire oeuvre of hundreds of paintings created by a searching artist like Rembrandt who, moreover, had many pupils who imitated his various styles in countless workshop products. The determining stylistic criteria we would select and then apply could only refer back to an initially defined selection; consequently they could only reproduce the connoisseurial bias of the original selection. That was the core of the circular nature of the argument as indicated by Bruyn and which would characterize our future working method.

If the full implications of Bruyn's statement had dawned on me then I would have realized that in its intended methodology the RRP resembled the famous adventures of Baron von Münchhausen, and specifically the story in which the baron, when finding himself sucked into a bog, manages to save himself (and his horse) by pulling on his own hair.

When I look back with hindsight to the many hours that Bruyn and I spent a few years later, writing the introductory chapters for the first three volumes of the *Corpus*, all concerned with Rembrandt's stylistic development, I realize that what we were doing was preparing '*the circular argument*'. One sees more clearly now that the intention behind the work on these chapters was to develop stylistic criteria of authenticity, with a view to the assessments that lay ahead. Indeed, Bruyn explicitly said so in the very first sentence that he wrote for our essay in Vol. I on Rembrandt's early development of style:

> '*The style characteristics one assigns to a work of art comprise a selection of observations and interpretations which is made with a particular purpose in mind.*'

The circular nature of his intended working procedure is here explicit: from the '*vast number of paintings attributed to Rembrandt over the centuries*', a selection of paintings was to be made with a connoisseur's eye, from which certain stylistic criteria would be taken and subsequently employed in a comparative exercise to bring order into that mass of paintings previously attributed to Rembrandt.

In the art historical world during the first half of the 20th century there was an overriding emphasis on what was considered to be *the style* of an artist or of a particular period. Heinrich Wölfflin (1864-1945), the Swiss art historian and author of the highly influential *Kunsthistorische Grundbegriffe* [Principles of Art History] (1915), was the leading exponent of this stylistic approach. Wölfflin, whose influence was also strong in the Netherlands, had developed these methodological principles through a penetrating comparative analysis of the art of the Renaissance and the Baroque, as a result of which he believed he had developed generally valid criteria for analysing works of art from other periods. According to Wölfflin,

> '*die Erkenntnis und Deutung des Wandels der Stile* [ist] *die Hauptaufgabe der Kunstgeschichte*'[59] (the perception and interpretation of the evolution of styles is the main aim of art-history as a discipline).

It was therefore understandable that the thinking, not only of my older colleagues in the RRP but also my own, should be imbued with this conception. It was not by chance that Bruyn from the very beginning of his involvement with the Rembrandt Research Project had been mainly concerned with stylistic aspects of Rembrandt's art (see Note 29).

Beginning with Rembrandt's Leiden period, from the approximately 93 highly diverse paintings attributed by Bredius to Rembrandt, we extrapolated those characteristics of style which we considered to be hallmarks of Rembrandt's early development and applied these when selecting those paintings judged to be autograph. In this manner, 93 Bredius numbers were eventually reduced – in many cases rightly, but as will become evident by no means all – to 42 A-numbers in *Corpus* Vol. I. (In the present book, this number is increased to 58, including 4 newly discovered paintings from Rembrandt's Leiden period).

At first I had no problem with Bruyn's basic statement (quoted above) regarding style. The chosen scholarly approach simply consisted of '*observations and interpretations with a particular purpose in mind*' – in our case, that '*purpose*' being to bring order into Rembrandt's painted oeuvre. But I did not at the time fully understand the risk of the implications in Bruyn's declaration of principle in this matter. Only later did it become clear to me that the conclusions based on '*the circular argument*' had been elevated to the status of a law.

In one of our many conversations during the work on the first introductory essay on Rembrandt's 'stylistic development' I evoked an image of the young Rembrandt as an independently thinking and searching young man who had once actually lived. There then occurred something rather surprising; Bruyn forbade me to talk in such terms, saying that we were engaged in this work as *historians* and had no remit to go further than we could (and should) on the basis of the analysis of Rembrandt's works. According to Bruyn, it was a matter of reconstructing an oeuvre, something which could only be done according to strict rules of scholarship. I, on the contrary, could not help envisaging the young Rembrandt as one of the many gifted, intelligent, motivated and searching young artists such as I had known during my five years at Art School and as I had experienced my often young teachers from that time.

Had I fallen into the trap of anachronism? I think not. The nature of Rembrandt's Leiden oeuvre – insofar as that is documented by undoubtedly autograph works, like the *Judas* 23 and the *Two old man disputing* 27 – together with the frequently lively genesis of such works, as read from the X-radiographs, does reveal to us an intelligent, motivated and searching young artist and *not* a producer of predictable paintings which display those stylistic characteristics that have already been preselected by the investigator.

In the course of the work on *Corpus* Vol. I it became clear that the interpretation of art by strict rules of scholarship was not so simple as Bruyn had evidently imagined. This became apparent in a disturbing way once our writing of *Corpus* I had reached *c.* 1628/30. A tense situation then arose over two paintings that had been disattributed by the senior members of the team. One of these works was the small painting that had played a major role in the episode (related by Grasman, as quoted on p. 20) of the *Oil-study of an old man* (fig. 47), which Gerson had accepted as authentic, but which Bruyn had '(over the telephone)' disattributed from Rembrandt.

59 Kultermann op. cit.[41], p. 315; see also E. v. d. Wetering, 'Fighting a Tiger: stability and flexibility in the style of Pabuji Pars', *South Asian Studies* 8, 1992, pp. 33-52 and *Corpus* V, Introduction, p. XII.

I was in a difficult position. I was convinced that the objective evidence supporting the authenticity of the work was so compelling that I felt I had to insist on the inclusion of a minority standpoint in the relevant text (*Corpus* I C 22). This was the first time such a situation had arisen (although subsequently it occurred more often) in which I felt compelled to express dissent, for up till then no other member of the team had felt the need to do so: indeed, it was not an easy decision to break the consensus that Bruyn and the others had always striven for. In the event, my dissenting opinion was added at the end of the commentary accompanying *Corpus* I C 22 p. 580. I formulated my concerns extremely carefully since I was, after all, the youngest and latest recruit in the RRP team. Minimizing the conflict that lay behind it, this modest note of dissent reads as follows:

> 'Note, December 1979: one of the authors (E.v.d.W.) does not rule out the possibility of no. C 22 being an autograph work by Rembrandt. One reason he hesitates to reject the painting is the importance he attaches to the documentary value of the van Vliet print (see fig. 48). Another is the painting's stylistic character: the coarseness of its execution should not be entirely excluded from our conception of Rembrandt's [early] manner of painting, as it was part of the image quite a few of his [early] followers had of this.'

My reference to the documentary value of the Van Vliet print concerned an etched copy after the painting with the inscriptions 'JG v[an] Vliet fec[it] 1634' and beside it 'RH(L?) [in monogram] inventor (see fig. 47)'. The inscriptions on this etching were very similar to those on ten other etched copies executed by Van Vliet after early paintings by Rembrandt, etchings that were evidently intended '*to disseminate one's* [Rembrandt's] *art*', as Samuel van Hoogstraten later put it (SvH p. 195). Rembrandt's inventory of 1656 lists '*A box of prints by Van Vliet after paintings by Rembrant*' (*Doc.* 1656/12 no. 277), and one should point out that there is much evidence to suggest that Rembrandt himself dictated the items in this inventory to the notary clerk. Van Vliet's indication on the print after fig. 47, that Rembrandt was the 'inventor' of the image concerned, should in my view be accepted as sound evidence that this painting (and the other paintings copied by Van Vliet) must have been from Rembrandt's hand. And the genesis of this painting, which can be read from the X-radiograph, virtually ruled out any possibility that the painting reproduced in the *Corpus* could have been a copy after a lost original that might have served as the basis for Van Vliet's etching (see *Corpus* I C 22 fig. 2). Yet stylistic criteria extrapolated from other works had been given such weight by my colleagues that they overruled the documentary evidence of Van Vliet's print. I found this astonishing.

A comparable situation occurred with the *Bust of a laughing soldier in a gorget* (fig. 49). Using similar arguments that work was also disattributed by the other team members, despite the fact that in this case too J.G van Vliet had made a print after it with an inscription stating that Rembrandt was its 'inventor' (fig. 50). Following the disattribution of this painting by the other team members, I would make a stand roughly once a year between 1976 and 1981 at our Friday lunches by stating that 'moreover, I am of the opinion that the *Laughing soldier* is a work by Rembrandt', each time setting out my arguments in favour of the authenticity of the painting. Despite the fact that in this case there was even more objective evidence in favour of an attribution to Rembrandt than in the case of the *Old man in a cap* (see fig. 47), my repeated arguments cut little ice. Here too, documentary evidence was being overruled by the team's commitment to the application of self-postulated stylistic criteria that in my view were too rigid.

However, in the case of the *Laughing soldier* the constantly recurring debate did lead to a compromise: to appease me it was decided that the painting should be included in the B category (*Paintings Rembrandt's authorship of which cannot be positively either accepted or rejected*), a decision that only left me more dissatisfied. What we were confronted with was not so much a conflict of opinions, but more fundamentally the casual manner of overruling factual evidence, which threatened to undermine the credibility of the project itself. The only legitimate conclusion from the facts was that Rembrandt's early style was not so consistent as had been assumed by Bruyn and the other team members. It became obvious that 'my' Rembrandt was becoming a different artist from the one they had in mind.

This was also the time when I was becoming increasingly gripped by the idea that the members of the RRP team, as well as other connoisseurs, such as Horst Gerson, were retroactively dictating the way that Rembrandt should paint.

What mostly provoked my concern in these cases was that, by unjustly rejecting the authenticity of two paintings, the team missed a chance to learn something both interesting and highly significant: here was the moment when we could have consciously adjusted our vision of Rembrandt the artist. Moreover, an open-minded evaluation of the evidence in these two cases could have brought home to them the danger of 'the circular nature of the argument', instead of which the majority of the team elected for an image of the young Rembrandt that was to set the model for the RRP's future verdicts. (see in this context 19, 22, 30, 32, 42, 45, 46). Even more disappointing to me was the way the overruling of the evidence of Van Vliet's reproduction prints was justified.

Between 1631 and 1634 Jan Gillis van Vliet produced six etchings with the same format after paintings of variously differing formats (figs. 51a-f). I now suspect that those six prints were a series of models with exemplary images for students of painting. They

Fig. 47. Rembrandt, *Oil study of an old man*, *c.* 1630, panel 24.3 x 20.3 cm. Kingston, Queen's University, Agnes Etherington Art Centre, (see Note to 44).

offer examples of different affects (b and e); two marked ways of lighting a figure (a and d), and various costumes (c and f): that is, three of the basic aspects (the *gronden*) of the art of painting (see p. 68/69). The two etchings after the two small paintings referred to above (figs. 47 and 49) belong to this series of six prints.

In a chapter in *Corpus* I entitled 'The documentary value of early graphic reproductions [after Rembrandt]' Bruyn defended the decision to overrule the evidence of the two etchings in the following manner:

Fig. 48. J.G. van Vliet, etched copy after fig. 46, 21.3 x 17.8 cm.

'One gets the impression that Van Vliet used quite different kinds of model (thus giving quite different meanings to the inscription <*RHL.jnventor*> in order to arrive at what, looked at superficially, is a homogeneous series of etchings).'

Bruyn implies here that in this series Van Vliet partly worked on the basis of paintings by artists other than Rembrandt. Van Vliet was then supposed to have justified the [alleged] stylistic homogeneity of the series which, according to Bruyn, the etcher was striving for,

Fig. 49. Rembrandt, *Laughing soldier ('stilus humilis')*, *c.* 1630, gilded copper 15.3 x 12.2 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis (see Plate 35).

by falsely indicating in the inscriptions on the prints that Rembrandt was the maker of all the six prototypes. One can only judge this reasoning as an egregiously forced logical construction, based on an 'impression' but on no evidence at all.

To make the argument more plausible Bruyn assumed that Van Vliet would have had no further contact with Rembrandt after the latter's move to Amsterdam in 1631. However, it has subsequently been realized that the contact between Rembrandt and Van

Fig. 50. J.G. van Vliet, etched copy after fig. 48, 22.6 x 19 cm.

Vliet must have continued after 1631 even until 1635 in connection with the collaboration between them on two highly ambitious etchings after works by Rembrandt (107 fig. 3, 112 fig. 1). As Hinterding has demonstrated, there was a lively exchange of designs, proof prints and etching plates.[60] It would therefore be very difficult to maintain that there was no communication

60 E. Hinterding in C. Schuckman e.a. *Rembrandt & Van Vliet, a collaboration on copper.* Amsterdam 1996, pp. 24-36, esp. 26.

Fig. 51. J.G. van Vliet, Series of six etched copies after prototypes by Rembrandt (see Note 43).

between Rembrandt and Van Vliet over the series of six prints discussed above and in *Corpus* I. The fact that the box with prints made by Van Vliet after paintings by Rembrandt (referred to above) is recorded in Rembrandt's inventory of 1656 can further be seen as an indication that Rembrandt himself had commissioned Van Vliet's prints after his early paintings.

In the case of the *Laughing soldier* (fig. 49), in addition to the inscription on Van Vliet's reproduction produced after the painting, there is another significant indication that ought to have given the other members of the team pause for thought before disattributing the painting from Rembrandt. The *Laughing soldier*, like two other small paintings of exactly the same format 33, 34, is painted on copper plate covered with gold leaf, a support which at that time was extremely rare. This may be taken as an indication that the three works in some way belong together. These three small paintings, however, are executed in three very different styles. For the reasons to accept all three paintings are certainly from Rembrandt's hand, see *Corpus* IV pp. 166-171 and the Notes to the Plates 33–34.

Much later, when Bruyn read the relevant, in part art-theoretical arguments for the attribution of the *Laughing soldier* to Rembrandt in *Corpus* IV (pp. 166-171), which appeared some 30 years after my reiterated call for an attribution, he acknowledged that:

'in retrospect, I have to say that the thinking accepted within our team at the beginning about the stylistic coherence within Rembrandt's developments was, one might say, highly simplistic' (for the context in which he made that remark, see p. 53).

'Some reflections on method'

The case of the disattribution of two paintings – discussed above – had become for me not only a critical problem of methodology, it was also a moral problem, which was why I had sought a means of informing the reader of *Corpus* I, scheduled to appear in 1982, that the results of the RRP were less unambiguous than the book, in its monumental, almost biblical aspect, might lead them to expect. I was convinced that the foreword Bruyn had already written for this first volume of the *Corpus* (and in fact for the series as a whole) gave a rather simplified impression of the degree of complexity of the task that the original members of the RRP had set themselves. I actually wanted to convince the reader (but more pressingly) my older colleagues of the need for far more fundamental reflection within our own circle over the way we were conducting the project. I therefore decided to try to get an additional text included in the foreword to *Corpus* I under the heading 'Some Reflections on Method'.

If one recalls the reticent tone of my first dissenting opinion regarding 44 (see p. 41), one may well understand the weight of the responsibility that I now felt, for my personal loyalty to the group that had so hospitably accepted me into their team was at stake. Shortly before the manuscript of Vol. I went to press I presented my supplementary text to the other members of the RRP with the request that it be included in the foreword.

At that point we had already been working on the project for 14 years. One of the most significant results of the investigation was that the working hypothesis of the initiators Haak and Bruyn had turned out to be unfounded, thanks to the dendrochronological research. That alone had to be a sufficiently important reason to rethink the original approach. This embarrassing development was formulated by Bruyn in his foreword to Vol. I as follows:

> 'Honesty demands that we should confess that in a number of cases the results [of dendrochronology] considerably modified our provisional conclusions as to the dating of rejected paintings',

an admission that stands in painful contrast to Bruyn's assertion in Chicago in 1969, quoted on p. 12.

What concerned me was that the results of the dendrochronological analysis had never led us to reconsider our position as a team. At the very least the value of the individual connoisseurship of individual members should have been put in question and discussed. As related above, the provisional judgments based on that questionable expertise had in the meantime been repeatedly employed in the formation (and eventual premature statement) of other 'provisional opinions' which, in most cases, subsequently hardened into definitive published opinions. My text thus touched on the risks of believing in one's own expertise, observing that:

> 'Connoisseurship depends heavily on discernment of eye and sensitivity of taste, not to mention the knowledge and wisdom necessary to understand the artist's ways'.

Another of my concerns that I also expressed in 'Some Reflections on Method' was that:

> 'Given the complexity of impressions, observations and findings on which an opinion, either acceptance or rejection must rest, it is inevitable that in a number of cases the weighing of positive and negative evidence has been a subtle process which is difficult to mould into rational reasoning. Even if the utmost care has been spent in rendering our train of thoughts, one may feel that, especially in the case of rejections, the reasoning tends to sound more self-assured than it deserves when the actual relevance of the arguments used is considered, and to reflect an excessive optimism about the possibility of basing attributions and rejections on precise criteria. The number of cases where the decision as to whether a painting is considered authentic or not is left open is fairly small. This can be seen as an indication that there has been an urge to express firm opinions. In this respect, this book is in the tradition of oeuvre catalogues that present a solid body of

> accepted works and just as solid a body of rejected paintings, in a situation where in fact there is always room for discussion and reconsideration.'

My reflections ended with a careful reference to the danger of working 'as a team', suggesting that

> 'a closely knit group tends to feel less doubts or hesitations than an individual.'

Naturally, I had to wait to see whether my senior colleagues would approve the inclusion of this text in the foreword. In fact, they did so, albeit without enthusiasm, but there was no discussion of its content. Bruyn, however, appended a further passage which rather undermined my minority standpoint regarding [42], skilfully negating the import of my 'reflections on method':

> 'The expression of open disagreement became a necessary consequence of our growing realization of the inevitability of subjectivity in the quest for authenticity',

thus suggesting that my arguments for the authenticity of the two early paintings discussed above rested on judgments that were just as subjective as the negative connoisseurial assessments of these paintings by my older colleagues. The last words Bruyn appended to my 'Reflections on method' were entirely characteristic of his vision of the RRP:

> 'The fact that the opportunity to express dissenting opinions has hardly been used in this volume serves as a demonstration of the fact that a clarified image of the early Rembrandt oeuvre was developed on the basis of consensus.'

Bruyn had given himself away with his emphasis on 'the inevitability of subjectivity in the quest for authenticity'. Here he exposed precisely what had been at the heart of my concerns from the very beginning of my involvement with the RRP, which 25 years later would lead to a parting of the ways. For I continued to insist that the most important objective of the RRP was to discover the truth, and I have tried as far as possible to do that in the much later published Volumes IV and V of the *Corpus* and in the case of the reattributions in the present book.

The only reviewer who appears to have subjected the foreword the Volume I as a whole to close-reading was Mansfield Kirby Talley Jr. in an article titled 'Connoisseurship and the Methodology of the Rembrandt Research Project'.[61] After a useful introduction to the history of the ideas on the practice of connoisseurship, Talley dissected this foreword, evidently without realizing that the text had been written by two authors whose ideas on the methodology of the RRP were increasingly diverging. It is no wonder that he found ambivalences and a 'rather confusing dichotomy', especially between 'faith and scepticism' in the text, which he finally openly characterized as 'schizophrenic'.

The subjectivity to which, in Bruyn's view, we were inevitably condemned usually concerned those characteristics which, elsewhere in the foreword to Volume I, he referred to as the 'micro-stylistic features of the paintings', meaning the traces of the brush independent of what is being depicted by means of this brushwork. His evaluation of those micro-stylistic 'features' usually determined his eventual verdict as to the authenticity of a painting.

This approach and the way of working based on it were in fact identical to traditional connoisseurship, by which a 'hand' and the 'handwriting' of that hand were or were not recognized as typical for Rembrandt. In attempting to rationally underpin his verdict and to provide a demonstration of objectivity, Bruyn often constructed complex arguments in which the handling of facts was often ambiguous as he usually aimed selectively at a standpoint that had in reality already been taken on the basis of (intuitive) micro-stylistic considerations (see, for instance, *Corpus* II C 47 and III C 87).

These texts were of such complexity, and they made such demands on the reader's capacity to visualize what they asserted, that the latter surrendered to Bruyn's reasoning. Indeed, the conclusion based on the preceding arguments was usually accepted by me in good faith (see, for example, the Note to [173]).

In operating with Bruyn's micro-stylistic criteria it was assumed that Rembrandt's 'handling' of the brush would have specific, autonomous, as it were almost graphological characteristics, independent of what was depicted in the painting. Up to a point I shared this notion, but with one important reservation which I have expressed in the Note to [173] (fig. 52) as follows:

> I now realize that the most important of all the *a priori* assumptions behind Bruyn's argument concerns an anachronistic conception of *peinture*: he refers to a 'relative autonomy of the brushstroke and its strong rhythm of its own' in the two paintings [150] and [174], selected for comparison with the present painting, as typifying Rembrandt. This passage relies on a 20th century conception, influenced by the then current 'Abstract Expressionism'; it implies that the artist's handling of brush and paint is in the first place determined by the artistic individuality of the painter. But when one turns to Samuel van Hoogstratens' book on the art of painting, which more probably reflects Rembrandt's ideas, in particular in the chapter titled *Van de Handeling en of maniere van schilderen* [On the handling of the brush and/or the manner of painting] (SvH pp. 233-242), one has to conclude that Rembrandt would have thought very differently: '*Thus, in order to depict most freely and gracefully the diversity of things in a mannerly fashion, each according to its own nature, the hand and the brush must be subservient to the eye.*' (*Corpus* V pp. 113-123 esp. p. 122/123).

61 Mansfield Kirby Talley Jr., 'Connoisseurship and the Methodology of the Rembrandt Research Project', *The International Journal of Museum Management and curatorship* 8 (1989), pp. 175-214.

Fig. 52. Rembrandt, *The holy family with St Anne*, 1640, panel 40.6 x 34 cm. Paris, Louvre.

The *peinture* was thus adapted to the material to be rendered.

A similar and thus explicable diversity in the ways of handling brush and paint is typical of 173 and many other paintings – and also of the *Supper at Emmaus* in the Louvre 218, the painting which was, unjustifiably in my view, disattributed from Rembrandt by Bruyn and which lead to the break within the RRP. At the time I had virtually no idea of the 17th -century conceptual framework for dealing with this aspect of the art of painting. That only developed during work on Vol. V when I began to think about what Rembrandt's own theory of painting might have been.[62]

Toward Vols. IV and V

The break, the immediate cause of which was the *Supper at Emmaus*, and the subsequent dissolution of the original team, would also lead to a thorough reappraisal of the methods of working within the future RRP. Two changes had already been announced in the letter to the editor of the *Burlington Magazine*: first of all, the abandoning of the A, B and C system.[63] That in itself was a radical break in the format of a coherent series of books, a format that had been adopted for the whole series. The user of the *Corpus* certainly was not prepared for any disturbance to the anticipated uniformity of the books supplied, but now it had turned out that both the authentic Rembrandts and the 'satellites' based on them and executed by pupils had as a rule all originated in Rembrandt's studio and in many respects had to be considered in the context of Rembrandt's own art and his teaching and workshop practice. Would it not therefore be more sensible to deal with them in that same context rather than in different parts of the book, separate from each other?

Another resolution announced in the *Burlington Magazine* was to operate in open consultation and where possible in collaboration with the owners and custodians/curators of the paintings concerned. The existence of the RRP had so decisively raised the question of authenticity of works in Rembrandt's style to the top of the agenda that for the owner/curator it made more sense to cooperate in seeking answers to any questions that might arise concerning the authenticity of his other painting(s) than wait to be surprised by the RRP's verdict.

In this revision of the previous method of working I came to a much more radical decision: to abandon the rule of strict chronology in the catalogue entries (i.e. working through the oeuvre in sequential order) and to replace that method with an approach whereby the oeuvre would be categorized according to function and only chronologically within these categories. The categories chosen were the following: self-portraits; commissioned portraits; *tronies*; small-scale history and genre pieces and landscapes; and large-scale history pieces. In categorizing the paintings in this way it was basically assumed that each type of painting made specific demands on the painter. Effectively, it meant abandoning the implicit assumption of a continuous stylistic development governing Rembrandt's entire artistic oeuvre, independently of the different kinds of images. In retrospect, that turned out to have been a particularly fortunate decision.

It was decided to begin by directing attention to (a) the self-portraits and studies in the mirror, and (b) the small-scale history and genre pieces and landscapes from after 1642. The plan was to treat these two main categories in two separate sections of Vol. IV. The portraits, *tronies* and large-scale history pieces could then be dealt with in separate sections in Vol. V.

In the event, however, the distribution of the main categories between the *Corpus* volumes turned out rather differently: the self-portraits and studies in the mirror alone would fill Vol. IV, and the small-scale history pieces and related small-scale works Vol. V. It was a further decision that mainly necessitated this expansion of the originally intended Vol. IV into two volumes: it was also decided that in the treatment of the painted self-portraits the etched and drawn self-portraits could not be ignored. The same consideration applied to the small-scale history pieces. Moreover, it seemed obvious that for each of these categories more attention should be given to the function of such works; and given the unsatisfactory results of the connoisseurial judgments so far, it was also decided that the works prior to 1642 should also be involved in the chosen new approach to Rembrandt's oeuvre.

This way of working forced us to look more deeply into the paintings and the context in which they could have originated than had been possible in the *Corpus* Volumes I-III. With this new perspective, the possibility emerged of an alternative to the subjectivity in the quest for authenticity that had been accepted as inevitable up to the publication of Vol. III. Perhaps my ambition to get at the truth regarding authenticity could now be given a more objective methodological basis.

Part of this new approach was, on the one hand, to make explicit every kind of doubt and, on the other hand, by means of the Bayesian approach (see for instance the Note 32 and the Glossary in this book), to make use where possible of a far greater range of evidence and arguments than hitherto. The result for Vol. IV was in almost every respect a drastic revision of the way Rembrandt's self-portraits had been viewed hitherto.

62 See *Corpus* V pp. 3-140 and my forthcoming book *Rembrandt. The painter thinking* chapter II.

63 The entries in *Corpus* I-III were divided in three successive categories: A. Paintings by Rembrandt; B. Paintings Rembrandt's authorship of which cannot be positively either accepted or rejected; C. Paintings Rembrandt's authorship of which cannot be accepted.

Obviously, this new way of working implied a wholly different way of marshalling the contents of Volumes IV and V. Essentially, we began the project of the RRP afresh, although of course continuing with – and expanding – the documentation, visual material and objective data that had been assembled since 1968. However, the objective remained the same: to order and delimit Rembrandt's autograph painted oeuvre, but now based on more critically aware and evidence-based methodological thinking compared with Volumes I-III. Associated with this new turn was the decision to publish both volumes (and what would eventually follow them) with full colour reproductions and many large-size details.

Pressure to publish

It will be clear that once I was the sole remaining member of the old team together with Lideke Binkhorst, and having decided to re-set the whole project on a new basis with a newly assembled, interdisciplinary team, we were faced with a gigantic task. Indeed, it would be 12 years before Vol. IV, the book dealing with self-portraits and studies in the mirror, would appear in 2005.

There was much external pressure to complete this book well before that and the pressure only increased when in the meantime I had my book *Rembrandt. The Painter at Work* published. That book, published in 1997, may be seen as an almost desperate attempt to make known an important part of the technical and scientific 'tool kit' that we had developed. However, NWO, the body funding the project, had expected all our energies to be devoted to the completion of the *Corpus*, and failing to appreciate that *Rembrandt. The Painter at Work* was a connecting link in the project, decided in 1998 to end their subsidy. In retrospect, the organization certainly deserves only the highest praise for funding the RRP for almost 30 years rather than the 10 years agreed at the beginning of the project,

The University of Amsterdam kept faith with what we were doing and decided to finance our project for a further five more years, in the hope that it could be completed within that time, but the immediate problem was still that we could see no prospect of finishing Vol. IV. One of the key figures at NWO, who now saw from a distance the likelihood of their former project failing, called me in despair: 'it doesn't matter what's in it as long as a book appears'!

My reaction to this pressure to publish, which was now coming from many corners of the academic and museum world, was firm: that the book could only appear once all the major questions concerning Rembrandt's self-portraits had been convincingly answered; and with such a complex subject, loaded with many misinterpretations from the past, there were a great many such questions (the reader wanting a short account of the salient questions still to be answered at that point, and of the answers given by the RRP researchers, is referred to in the Summary of *Corpus* IV pp. XXIII-XXX).

The collaboration of several colleagues within the reconstituted RRP in the successful completion of that book was extremely important. Fortunately, Lideke Binkhorst had remained attached, while a number of other members of the team assembled in 1993 – whose composition would subsequently fluctuate – provided essential contributions to *Corpus* IV. Peter Klein's dendrochronological research, and Karin Groen's microscopical research, and chemical analysis of grounds and paint yielded crucial evidence. We had, of course, worked with both researchers over a much longer period.

With *Corpus* IV in mind, Karin Groen conducted an extensive investigation of the grounds on Rembrandt's panels and canvases against the background of the workshop practice in other Amsterdam workshops from the period 1642-1670. It was that research which led to the surprising conclusion that a number of Rembrandt's evidently not autograph 'self-portraits' had been painted by pupil/assistants. In its turn, this knowledge was of the greatest significance for our developing insight into the function of, and the market for Rembrandt's effigies, either painted by himself or by members of his workshop (see *Corpus* IV nos. 21 and 22).

Peter Klein collected and processed increasing amounts of useful, occasionally crucial dendrochronological data and in *Corpus* IV collated all these data and those of his colleagues up to 2005, measurements taken from 228 oak panels with works by or attributed to Rembrandt (see *Corpus* IV pp. 648-659).

The contributions to Vol. IV of Groen and Klein were fundamental to demonstrating that the RRP could achieve results far less subjective than the opinions published in Vols. I-III. It also established the role in art history of techniques borrowed from the natural sciences, as was also proving to be the case in their research on the works of other artists, such as Roger van de Weyden and Johannes Vermeer. What is remarkable is that the materials that Groen and Klein investigated belong to the unseen, unappreciated constituent parts of the painting, and for that reason the owners/custodians of the works investigated were as a rule willing to allow the intrusion into these valuable and important paintings, so that Klein and Groen were able to carry out their research on a large scale.

Three other researchers, new to the project team, the costume historian Marieke de Winkel, the historian and archival researcher Jaap van der Veen, and the restorer Martin Bijl provided contributions of a wholly different nature.

What led to Van der Veen's research presented in the first chapter of *Corpus* IV under the title 'By his own hand. The valuation of autograph paintings in the 17th century', was the increasingly urgent question of whether the goal of the RRP – the compila-

tion of a canon of Rembrandt's autograph paintings – was not perhaps in the end anachronistic. Were Rembrandt's contemporaries all that interested in whether a work had been painted by the master or by his pupils or assistants in his workshop?

On the basis of numerous 17th-century sources Van der Veen established that art-lovers in that period in fact attached as much significance to the authenticity of works from the master of a workshop as we do today – which does not necessarily mean, however, that there was no market for paintings 'after' works of a master (see Chapter II in this book).

Marieke de Winkel's research on the very diverse costuming in Rembrandt's self-portraits was presented in Chapter II of *Corpus* IV. In this chapter, De Winkel demonstrated that with his costuming, especially after 1640, Rembrandt was often indirectly referring to his great predecessors of the 15th and 16th centuries. Moreover, in reference to the emancipation of the art of painting, he made 'statements' concerning its dignity, for instance by depicting himself in working clothes [224] or with his tools [319]. Apparently he 'communicated' on these matters with art-lovers through the costuming in his self-portraits.[64] It is to a significant degree due to De Winkel's contribution that we are now able to see Rembrandt's self-portraits with different eyes than before.

In a close collaboration with the painting's restorer Martin Bijl (fig. 53), two newly discovered self-portraits [69] and [122], both with a complicated material history, were investigated and restored as far as possible to their original appearance. These two sub-projects during the work for Volume IV, which extended over several years, were of considerable significance in the development of our ideas about Rembrandt's self-portraits. Equally important was his restoration of [182] in close collaboration with members of the RRP**.** The success of these highly informative restorations has to be credited to a rare combination of Bijl's resourceful ingenuity and caution, his art historical curiosity and his courage in dealing with the technical challenges involved.

My own Chapter III in *Corpus* IV, titled *Function and Authenticity* was an attempt to achieve a synthesis of many of our new insights regarding Rembrandt's studies in front of the mirror and his more formal self-portraits from between 1625 and 1669.

The relatively shorter period of five years after Vol. IV before the appearance of Vol. V is not an accurate reflection of the actual time it took to write it. Bruyn had already begun writing catalogue entries in *c.* 1988, including the Paris *Supper at Emmaus* [218], the painting that had precipitated the break in 1993. Those texts would later be reworked according to more recent insights, while Michiel Franken, my earlier assistant at the Central Laboratory and subsequently member of the RRP team, had already begun working on entries concerning some other small-scale history pieces – for example, the texts on [211b], [213], [237], [283]. Marieke de Winkel, who became the costume specialist member of the team, was also involved in the work on iconographic and cultural historical aspects of entries devoted to genre pieces such as the *Polish rider* [236] and *The slaughtered ox* [240]. Like Jaap van de Veen, who had been mainly occupied with Rembrandt's portraits, both Franken and De Winkel also worked on the preparation of other entries.

Fig. 53. Martin Bijl.

The choice to deal with the small-scale history- and genre pieces as the theme of Vol. V – a choice which many found curious – perhaps requires some explanation. In such paintings the figures were as a rule represented full length and engaged in some kind of action in a more or less clearly defined interior or exterior spatial setting. This demanded of the painter not only insight into complex compositional problems, but also an understanding of the possibilities of light and shadow, and skill to render the appropriate proportions, gestures and affects of his figures; the painter also had to have a thorough knowledge of the relevant Biblical or mythological stories and the associated costumes and other accessories. Moreover, he had to be a competent painter of landscape, architecture, still life and animals. In short, the painter of such works in Rembrandt's time was considered to be an all-rounder. But it was also expected of him that he would be both inventive and possessed of a powerful visual imagination. Producing a (small-scale) history piece, in fact, was considered the most demanding challenge that a painter could undertake. Many large-scale history paintings do not show the figures full-length and this, as well as the their large format, means that such paintings make different demands on the painter.

64 See also M. de Winkel, 'Costume in Rembrandt's Self-Portraits', in exhib. cat. *Rembrandt by himself*, London/The Hague 1999/2000 pp. 58-74; M. de Winkel, *Fashion and Fancy: Dress and Meaning in Rembrandt's Paintings*, Amsterdam 2005.

The potential significance of the theme of small-scale history (and genre) paintings, however, only became fully apparent during the work on Chapter I of Vol. V with the title 'Towards a reconstruction of Rembrandt's art theory'. It resulted in an alternative way of analyzing Rembrandt's works, different from the stylistic approach that had led to so many disattributions – some of which were now no longer tenable. The writing of that part of the book was so unanticipated that Chapter I only came to assume its title and the final focus of its purpose during the writing of it.

Concluding

This was the history of a scholarly project and what went wrong on the way. I have written an unadorned account so that others can perhaps learn something from it. It has been difficult to write, because it dealt with a conflict that entailed more than just a difference of conception of the correct methodology; it is also a personal account of a growing conflict between a teacher and his pupil. The pupil had the privilege of collaborating closely and over a long time with the teacher, but discovered in the process that they remained strangers to each other when it came to both scholarship and art.

It seemed that after our break Bruyn wanted to forget the RRP entirely. He sought no further contact with me, although this did not affect his close association with Lideke Binkhorst, who kept faith with the RRP even after its radical reconstitution and change of direction. For several years after the break Bruyn and I did not meet, but I reflected a great deal over our relationship and what I owed him; and as I later told him, everything I had written in relation to Rembrandt, including Volume IV, and later, Vol. V, I saw as one long letter addressed to him. Eventually I did visit him, roughly once a year. He was a perfect host and manifested an old-fashioned courtesy, but our conversations were always somewhat distant, as indeed had always been the case over our 25 years of working together on the project, even though he had so strongly, and so positively, influenced the course of my career.

On one of those visits I wanted to bring him the just completed *Corpus* IV, the book on the self-portraits, but he showed no curiosity and appeared even unwilling to accept it. But when I asked him in any case to allow me to tell him something about the book's contents he did not refuse, and so I began. His wife (he had remarried after the death of his first wife) sat with him. She was not familiar with the world of art history and so Bruyn soon began to fill in the background to what I was relating. The conversation lasted hours, for a great deal of what was in the book was new to Bruyn as well. At the end of that conversation I asked him if he would accept the first exemplar of the book at the Mauritshuis in The Hague where it was to be publicly presented. He wanted to decline but his wife persuaded him that he should accept the invitation, which he eventually did. In typically conscientious fashion, he spent the next few weeks studying the book and at the presentation gathering it turned out that he had written a detailed response to its contents. Because Bruyn was indisposed on the day itself his response was read by Frits Duparc, the then director of the Mauritshuis.

After commenting on the role that an increasing number of technical and scientific research methods had played in the origin of the book, to my astonishment Bruyn's address then took a very different turn:

> *'Perhaps just as important is the evolution that our thinking has undergone over the stylistic coherence within Rembrandt's development from his 19th to his 63rd year, especially over the factors governing that evolution, and associated with that the boundaries between the autograph work and that of his imitators, even those from the same time and within his own studio. In retrospect, I have to say that the thinking accepted within our team at the beginning was, one might say, highly simplistic. In the judgment of separate works, we took documented paintings (of which there are only a few) as the basic starting point supplemented by other works felt to be typical. The lines of connection within this group determined the stylistic criteria for the acceptance or rejection of each painting. A clear image of the activities in the workshop did not then exist and, above all, the choice of the works selected as models of Rembrandt's style was taken from an already existing image of that style. That image was dominated by the idea that Rembrandt's way of painting changed from one period to another, but very largely remained uniform within those periods, in which there occurred no radical variations. Very early on, Ernst van de Wetering found that he could not share that vision. Perhaps it was his artist's persona that resisted it. We now agree that his conception, backed with impressive argumentation sourced from contemporary texts from Rhetoric in an argument that makes the range of styles within the same period entirely acceptable.'*[65]

I was moved as well as surprised. In fact, what happened here is reminiscent of what Bredius wrote in his letter to Henry Frick: 'We learn constantly by studying and comparing […],

> *our knowledge of the master has developed*'.

Five years later, shortly after publication of Vol. V of the *Corpus*, devoted to the small-scale history pieces and other small-scale paintings, I was able to bring Bruyn a copy of that book too. By then he was living as a widower in a nursing home, but fortunately he was more than ready to hear my account of the contents of the book and responded to it with interest. He died not long afterwards.

For the continuation – or for an end – of this narrative, the reader is referred to the foreword of this book.

65 This fragment is quoted from Bruyn's speech written for the occasion of the presentation of Volume IV of *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings* in March 2005.

Chapter II

What is a non-Rembrandt?

While Rembrandt is generally considered to be a unique artist, the exceptional nature of his work has been questioned by occasional public announcements of problems of attribution, usually treated sensationally by the press and whenever possible hyped to the level of a scandal. One thinks, for example, of the *Saul and David* [212], *The Polish Rider* [236], or the *Man with the golden helmet* (fig. 12). These problems mostly stem from Rembrandt's teaching in which pupils imitated the work of the master as part of their training. This was normal practice in Rembrandt's time, as was the associated practice of combining teaching with commercial production, and should not be seen as detracting from Rembrandt's uniqueness as an artist, as Svetlana Alpers did in her book *Rembrandt's Enterprise* (1988)[1]. As a result of this workshop practice, the large production of works in Rembrandt's style, works actually painted by his pupils, can certainly lead to confusion. As indicated in Chapter I and in many of the Notes to the Plates in this book, this confusion, which tends to undermine the beholder's experience of Rembrandt's unique originality, will only be overcome when the all-too-easily pronounced judgments based on subjective connoisseurship are tested thoroughly and objectively before potentially mistaken opinions reach the lay public as 'breaking news'.

Questions as to whether a particular painting is or is not from Rembrandt's own hand may well have arisen already during his own lifetime. In the Municipal Archive in The Hague a list has been preserved with paintings to be auctioned in 1647 which includes a '*prin*(cipael) *van Rembrant*' (fig. 1). 'Pincipael' was a term then current for an autograph painting (literally, a prototype) by a particular master. In this case, however, the description was crossed out by an other hand and replaced by '*naer Rembrant*' (after Rembrandt).

What is not clear in this case is whether this correction was specifically introduced to indicate that the painting was in fact considered to be a more or less faithful copy after an existing Rembrandt, since it is also possible that whoever altered the attribution thought, or actually knew that it was painted in Rembrandt's style by some other member of his workshop.

1 Svetlana Alpers, *Rembrandt's Enterprise. The studio and the market*, London 1988.

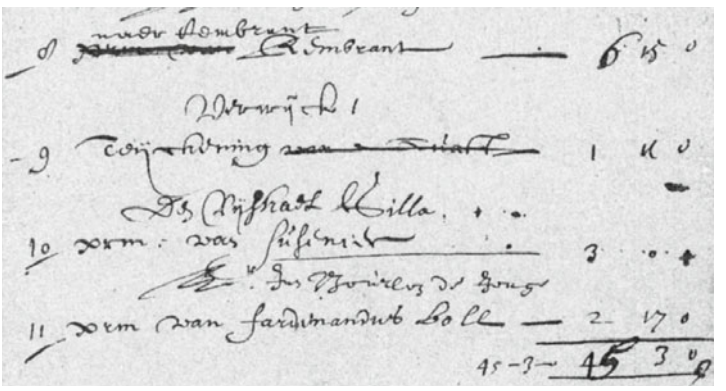


Fig. 1.

Copies

In our own time too we are often confronted with this dilemma when dealing with a possibly dubious old painting in Rembrandt's style - such as [19], [36] and [251], all cases where both the prototypes and copies after those prototypes have survived. Is it a literal copy after a lost original or a non-autograph creation by somebody from his workshop or, after all, 'a principael' by Rembrandt himself?

What is certain is that in Rembrandt's own time copies were produced after his works, and mostly in his own workshop. It was, after all, an integral part of Rembrandt's training method, that his pupils should copy his works; for pupils who came to him expressly to learn how to make his style and technique their own, this was an instructive exercise (figs. 2 and 3). It was at the same time a lucrative practice for the master since, as several contemporary texts indicate, Rembrandt sold the works of his pupils to his own

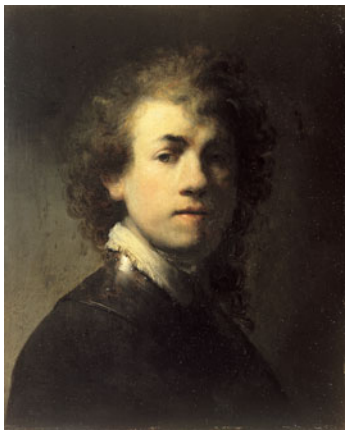


Fig. 2.

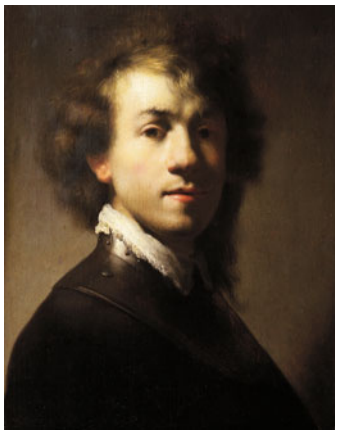


Fig. 3. Copy after fig. 2 (Br. 6).

profit, although as far as is known not as works painted by himself.[2]

'Satellites'

However, it was also commonly part of Rembrandt's training regime that pupils painted free variants based on the work of their master. This was similarly highly instructive, though probably reserved for the more advanced pupils. It was also lucrative for Rembrandt – unless the pupil's exercise pieces went to the proud parents of the pupil concerned (see *Corpus* II p. 48 and *Corpus* V pp. 277-282), although the parents could have paid for such works; after all, the master had provided the materials for his pupils' exercises. We know for certain that among the many 17th century non-Rembrandts there are many workshop copies – some of these are listed above - and free variants on '*principaelen*' by Rembrandt (fig. 4). I coined the term 'satellites' for this latter category, referring to those paintings that have in the past

2 Sandraert (Peltzer p. 203).

Fig. 4. Examples of Rembrandt's prototypes with variants based on them painted by pupils. Rembrandt's prototypes to the left, the variants to the right. Almost all these variants were previously thought to be originals by Rembrandt.

caused the most confusion in the cataloguing of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre because many of these satellites were long thought to be earlier or later versions by Rembrandt himself of one of his own compositions (see Copenhagen 2006 pp. 106-122 and *Corpus* V pp. 259-311).

Tronies

The many heads or half-figures - *tronies* - that were painted by pupils have also caused considerable confusion. Among these are depictions of (old) men or (old) women, sometimes as pendants, in imaginary dress (figs. 5 and 6). One cannot help thinking that such pairs painted by pupils were made for sale as fictional portraits of ancestors for family portrait galleries. Other frequently occurring *tronies* painted by pupils depict, for instance, children (figs. 7 and 8), young women (figs. 9 and 10), men in armour (figs. 11, 12 and 13). As a rule, actual models posed for the *tronies*, often family relatives of the master or other members of the household or the master himself (see fig. 5). They were probably painted mainly as exercises in portrait painting, while at the same time there must have been a ready market for them, given the way many of these portrayed figures are dressed and the attributes that are added as allusions to such qualities as youth, beauty, piety, vanity, martial courage etc.

Fig. 5. Br. 256

Fig. 6. Br. 380

Fig. 9. Br. 88

Fig. 10. Br. 105

Fig. 11. Br. 80

Fig. 12. Br. 128

Tronies of young men

The many *tronies* of young men painted in Rembrandt's workshop are particularly interesting because the pupils may well have used each other as models, an idea suggested by the fact that the 'young man's *tronies*' often display pronounced physiognomic features (figs. 14 and 15).

Proficiency in painting *tronies* after a model meant that pupils who acquired some experience in this area could then be used by Rembrandt as assistants in his painting of portraits. This may well explain why, in so many paired portraits of married couples, one spouse

Fig. 7. Br. 188

Fig. 8. Br. 186

Fig. 13. Br. 287

Fig. 14. Br. 311

was painted partly or wholly by a pupil/assistent.

Judging by their style and technique and the ageing characteristics of most of these paintings, it is almost certain that the non-Rembrandt *tronies* referred to above mostly originated in Rembrandt's workshop. The belief that in these particular cases we are not dealing with autograph works by Rembrandt mainly rests on connoisseurial judgment. Many of these paintings, and this is true for those illustrated here, were once considered (by Bode and Valentiner, and even by Bredius) as autograph works by Rembrandt; sometimes the museums concerned (e.g the Hermitage in St. Petersburg) still display them as such, not least because they are often favourites with the wider public. This is certainly the case, for example, with one of the Berlin's best loved paintings, the *Man with the golden helmet*, a *tronie* now disattributed from Rembrandt (fig. 13) but previously one of the most famous of all 'Rembrandts', and one which many Berliners find it difficult to give up.

Small tronies

Apart from the usually life-size '*tronies*' of various kinds discussed above there is a large group of much smaller *tronies* which would appear to have been produced by pupils in Rembrandt's workshop, probably also as exercise pieces These are sometimes free partial-copies of figures in Rembrandt's history pieces (figs. 16, 17, 18, 19). Previously they were considered to be preparatory sketches by Rembrandt himself but later were disattributed from Rembrandt – perhaps not always correctly - but most of them must certainly have been painted by pupils as exercise pieces. It would be a research project in itself to bring order into the mass of large and small *tronies* and satellites by pupils. To make matters more complicated, many of the small sketchy *tronies* are only known from reproductions. At present they either cannot be located or have been definitively lost.

Fig. 15. Br. 230

Fig. 16. Br. 241

Fig. 17. Br. 373

Fig. 18. Br. 376

'Religious Portraits'

Around the period Rembrandt painted his series of Apostles 289–294 pupil/assistants painted a variety of comparable 'religious portraits', for instance, (figs. 20-21).

Fig. 19. Br. 616

Fig. 20. Br. 618

Life-size history paintings

Among the non-Rembrandts there are also large history pieces with several life-size protagonists, paintings that were earlier considered to be works by Rembrandt. When one surveys the history of the cataloguing of Rembrandt's oeuvre, one is struck by the fact that around twelve large history pieces with two or more life-size figures, once attributed to Rembrandt, have since been disattributed (figs. 22-34). We can be quite sure that these works also originated in Rembrandt's workshop. They must have been made by pupils.

Besides the latter disattributed history pieces with original inventions one also has to take into account a number of large workshop copies after Rembrandt's life-size history pieces, e.g. the copies after 136, 140, 148, it seems probable that, as a rule, during their training period a number of Rembrandt's pupils painted at least one large history painting. With some of these works, one suspects that two young painters probably worked on them together (see, for instance, fig. 34).

Producing a painting on such a large scale is in every respect a project of a significantly different order from making an easel painting. One can speculate that during the final stages of an apprenticeship, perhaps as a 'graduation piece', one such large painting was seen as proof of mastery of the art – or in any case as a demonstration piece to show that the young painter

Fig. 21. Br. 595

Fig. 22. Wallace Collection

was now also capable of producing a large-sized painting. As far as we know, the guilds of St. Luke in the Netherlands in Rembrandt's day no longer demanded the previously obligatory production of proof of mastery, although this was still often the case in the surrounding countries. The large paintings referred to above may have had a similar function within Rembrandt's teaching practice.

Superimposed paintings

Among the *tronies* and other paintings by pupils there are a few complicated cases which can neither be straight-forwardly spoken of as 'non-Rembrandts', nor at present can they be catalogued as Rembrandts. The *Man with a sword* sold in 2013, for example, is in my view largely painted over a man's portrait (whether completed or not is uncertain) painted by Rembrandt (see 191a figs. 2 and 3). The same is also true of a so-called *Sybille* in Los Angeles, painted over a portrait of a woman (*Corpus* III C 115) (figs. 35, 36, 37). And again it holds for the *Eli and Samuel* in the Getty Museum, not without reason attributed to Gerard Dou

Fig. 23. Br. 351

Fig. 24. X-ray of fig. 23.

Fig. 25. The underlying woman's portrait.

(see *Mystery* pp. 324-331), which is probably painted over an unfinished double portrait from Rembrandt's own hand. Among the small-scale history pieces too are found similarly confusing super-imposed paintings where the underlying painting, usually a preparatory oil sketch, is probably from Rembrandt's own hand (see *Corpus* V 8 and 24 and *Corpus* III B 9). The same is – or was – true of some of the self-portraits (see *Corpus* IV 6 and IV pp. 616-626). In the case of the latter self-portrait, the superimposed *tronie* has been removed from the underlying genuine self-portrait 122.

Non-Rembrandts produced after Rembrandt's death

In the foregoing discussion, examples of paintings from Rembrandt's workshop are cited whose existence has contributed to the constantly recurring commotion over the question of whether a Rembrandt is or is not from Rembrandt's own hand. However, there are also many later paintings made in Rembrandt's style, with subjects that are familiar from Rembrandt's own works, which could not possibly have arisen in his workshop but which, to a lesser degree, may also have contributed to the doubts that afflict attempts to establish Rembrandt's autograph oeuvre.

In dealing with works in the style of Rembrandt which originated after his death, it is much easier to be certain over questions of authenticity. Nevertheless, there are always hopeful owners of such paintings who dream that they possess or may have discovered a genuine Rembrandt simply, because it looks like one. Up to the mid-20th century, countless copies after Rembrandt's paintings or after paintings from his workshop were produced with various functions. For instance, in the many cases of copies after Rembrandt's self-portraits, they may have served as an effigy of Rembrandt in a collection containing works by him. One example of this is the copy after *Corpus* IV 11 (itself a workshop variant by a pupil) that was displayed in Düsseldorf along with the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik (reproduced on p. 178) (*Corpus* IV 11 Copies 1). Similarly there were countless copies made after a painting in the Uffizi, for a long time considered one of the most attractive self-portraits by Rem-

brandt (*Corpus* III B. 11), but which may in fact be a young man's *tronie* from Rembrandt's workshop.

When it comes to 18th-century copies after Rembrandt, these are in general readily identifiable as originating in this period on the basis of stylistic and obvious painting-technical grounds alone. Over the course of the 19th century there was a dramatic increase in the production of ever more faithful copies, partly due to the growth of art history as an academic discipline and the related increase in the number of art museums, engendering art tourism. In a time when other techniques of reproduction were still quite primitive, there was a growing need for faithful, life-size (and consequently hand-painted) colour reproductions of certain paintings. (Around this time one also witnesses the creation of museums exclusively for the exhibition of painted copies of famous masterworks[3] as such; there were also sections of museums for casts of famous sculptures). The production of copies by art academy students and professional painters who wanted to master a particular style or technique was also more often seen, while professional copyists satisfied the need for 'old' paintings for the interiors of the wealthier burghers.

Registration of copyists

It was not unusual for museums to keep registers of requests for permission to copy particular paintings. Thanks to this documentation, for example in the Gemäldegalerie in Kassel and the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, we can get an idea of the frequency with which particular Rembrandts were copied. As a result of Julia Gierse's analysis of the registers in Kassel we know that around 40 percent of the many requests to allow a painting from the collection to be copied concerned works by or attributed to Rembrandt (Kassel 2006 pp. 65-76). Pieter van Thiel analysed the registers in the Rijksmuseum.[4]

In the 19th and first half of the 20th century it was common to see a copyist at work in front of many a masterwork in most museums. The German painter Hans von Marees, who for some time earned his living by copying famous masterworks, spoke of 'herumschmierenden Kopiisten Scharen' ['crowds of copyists messing around'] in the Italian museums. Tiny random flecks of paint seen on some old paintings are often from the brushes of copyists, the so-called 'Kopistenspritzer' (copyists' splashes of paint). Almost all these copies eventually found their way into the hands of private owners or on the art market and were not infrequently considered by hopeful owners to be authentic works by Rembrandt. With the substantial growth of our knowledge of Rembrandt's oeuvre, of his use of materials and his painting technique, such paintings are these days identified without difficulty as later copies.

Forgeries

The same also holds for the very occasional forgery that turns up (figs. 23 and 24). In the case of Rembrandt it was – and still is – hardly necessary to introduce forgeries on to the market. As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, so many pupillary works were produced in Rembrandt's style and technique in his workshop that it was no problem to provide such a workshop product with an easily imitated 'Rembrandt' signature and to place it on the market as a work by the master. This occurred especially when the demand for Rembrandts increased. It was above all this active market mechanism which, particularly around 1900, contributed to the fact that even today the image of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre can still sometimes shift. (In this connection, see also Chapter I p. 8). For this reason, the question 'what is a Rembrandt?' and its correlate 'what is a non-Rembrandt?' are still relevant.

Whereabouts unknown

Collection Lurie Tel Aviv

Fig. 23 and *24*. Two Rembrandt forgeries probably produced by the same (German?) forger. Both fakes are applied on 17th-century Dutch portraits

3 Like that founded by Baron von Schack in Munich.

4 Pieter J.J. van Thiel, Het Rijksmuseum in het Trippenhuis 1814-1885 (IV). Kopiisten en fotografen, in *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 30 (1982) pp. 63-86.

Catalogue

Introduction to the catalogue

The main part of this book is largely given over to an illustrated survey of all the paintings this author considers to be works by Rembrandt, whether or not they include contributions by other hands from the workshop. After the Plates (pp. 70-477) follow the Notes to the Plates (pp. 480-687).

Remarks concerning the Plates

Organisation of the Plates

Because Rembrandt dated most of his paintings, it is possible in this survey to show the paintings in their chronological sequence of origin (for a list of these works ordered iconographically, see pp. 711-714). But what one cannot do is to establish the chronology of those paintings which Rembrandt made within any particular year. Moreover, account has to be taken of the fact that Rembrandt worked on different paintings – sometimes over several years – at the same time.

Sometimes, however, where there are marked correspondences between works related to specific pictorial or other problems that Rembrandt set for himself, one assumes that they were created within a relatively short period e.g. his early sunlight paintings 15, 16 or his first landscapes with narrative scenes ('histories') 49, 50; the bird paintings 165, 166 and the different series that probably originated within periods of different length (see pp. 176-179). These 'clusters' of paintings are usually grouped together here.

The advantage of this way of grouping related paintings according to types of commissions and/or various different functions of paintings is that it gives an idea of how Rembrandt may have been thinking about painting and of his workshop practice at a given time. Although it often seems that Rembrandt began each painting as a new adventure, it became clear during the compilation of this survey that his artistic quests actually often encompassed two or more paintings. Whenever possible, these are shown here in a confrontation of the relevant Plates.

Layout of the Plates

Consequently, the layout of the Plates is determined primarily by demands of their content (in the widest sense) rather than by strict adherence to principles of layout design. For example, where paintings are confronted on opposing pages, account is taken of the differences of format between the two paintings – so that the larger painting is usually reproduced somewhat larger than the smaller – while at the same time we have tried to adjust the scales of figures to each other when these are actually identical or related in the paintings concerned. On the other hand, where possible we have striven to match the eye levels of, for instance, two facing half-figures, to ensure that the two pages present a more unified image as a whole. This has also involved taking into account whether the figures are shown standing or seated.

In general, each painting has been given a separate page, apart from those cases where (particularly with small paintings) there appears to be such an obvious correspondence in a group that it makes sense to demonstrate this by grouping them in the layout (see 32–36); 44–46). As in the earlier volumes of *A Corpus*, a standing page format has been chosen for this book – a logical choice since by far the majority of Rembrandt's paintings are of vertical format. In the case of the minority having a horizontal format, many of which are large paintings, additional details are often reproduced. But not only with the large paintings, details are also included of the smaller horizontal paintings, if only because there is room for further illustration on the page concerned. The point of the selection of these details is to maintain the reader's awareness of the materiality of the paint and of the characteristics of Rembrandt's brushwork. In general, in Rembrandt's large paintings, whether they are large group portraits or history pieces, details are frequently added on preceding or following pages, since the scale of the figures (and other elements) is simply too small in a reproduction of the whole work.

No attempt has been made to reproduce all oval paintings and those rounded above in that form. One reason for this is that with many oval paintings it is by no means certain whether they were originally oval or were later altered from an original rectangular format. Moreover, oval paintings were often shown in (black) rectangular frames. It has therefore often been preferred to reproduce such paintings against a black, rectangular background – which also, *mutantis mutandis*, holds for paintings rounded above. Practical considerations also often played a role in this choice.

Captions and additional information regarding the (sometimes hypothetical) original appearance of a painting.

Each painting is provided with the traditional caption, where the opportunity is taken to differentiate between those works that are considered to be completely from Rembrandt's own hand and works in which other hands are suspected to have been involved. The titles

are quite extended in order to include the elementary iconographic information. (The citations of the relevant places in, for instance, the Bible or Ovid in the history pieces are given in the Notes to the Plates.)

Information regarding the present whereabouts or owner of each painting is kept as concise as possible. (More extensive data on locations and owners are provided in the register of locations pp. 715-719). This information was kept to a minimum in order to allow space on that part of the page with the Plate concerned. This space allows for additions in some cases that relate to the difference between the painting in its present state and its (hypothetical) original appearance. Certain paintings have become so familiar in their present condition that the beholder erroneously assumes that this was how Rembrandt conceived them, whereas in fact changes – presumed or confirmed – in the format often result in dramatic deviations from Rembrandt's presumed original conception. Where I am more or less certain what the original format was, this knowledge has been used to introduce dotted frame lines to indicate the original format. This and other kinds of reconstruction have been chosen because Rembrandt attached great significance to subtleties of composition, for instance, the dynamic quality of an asymmetric composition, which can be seriously disturbed when a painting is strongly reduced on one or more sides (see, for example, 190, 206). Occasionally therefore, where possible, the original appearance of a painting is digitally reconstructed (see, for instance, 149, 154, 161, 190, 199, 271). It is also pointed out next to the caption to the Plate that the appearance of a particular painting has been more or less seriously disturbed by yellowed layers of varnish. Sometimes the effect of these disturbances has been lessened to some degree digitally (see, for instance, 28, 173, 181).

Interspersed remarks relating to Rembrandt's biography and his production of paintings in a given period

In the traditional fully illustrated surveys of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre, such as those by Bode and Hofstede de Groot (1897-1905), Valentiner (1909 and 1921), Bredius (1939-1969) and Bauch (1966), the paintings reproduced in the plates section were sometimes grouped according to iconographic criteria – Bredius, for example, grouped together all the self-portraits; presumed family members; men; women; group portraits; genre; landscape; mythology; Old Testament and New Testament subjects, and secondarily within those categories chronologically etc. This has the advantage of facilitating the location or retrieval of particular paintings in the relevant book. (For that reason the present book contains a list of paintings in iconographical order (see pp. 711-714)). The chronological ordering of the present book, however, has the more important advantage that it gives an overview of the history of Rembrandt's development as a painter. This calls for some textual elucidation of his development and the nature of his production in a given period. Short texts are therefore incorporated at six points in the book, where significant turns in his ideas about the art of painting are outlined, or where the main focus of his activities shifts because of external circumstances.

The most important reason for including such texts in the plates section of the book is to give the uninitiated user a knowledge of this background to Rembrandt's artistic development and to give an impression of the great variation in his activities, each time in the form of a succinct biographical sketch of the relevant period and a short description of his activities as a painter in that period.

Rembrandt's life as a painter is accordingly divided into periods as follows

- *The Leiden period (1624–1631); Rembrandt's research of the* 'gronden' (pp. 68-117)
- *The first Amsterdam period (1631–1635) Rembrandt working for Hendrick Uylenburgh* (pp. 118-219)
- *The second Amsterdam period (1635–1642): from leaving Uylenburgh to the completion of the Night Watch* (pp. 220-295)
- *The third Amsterdam period (1643–1651). The turbulent 1640s* (pp. 296-339)
- *The late Rembrandt, first phase (1651–1659)* (pp. 340-409)
- *The late Rembrandt, second phase (1660–1669)* (pp. 410-477)

Remarks concerning the Notes to the Plates

- These Notes should not be taken as catalogue texts in the conventional sense, apart from the concise paragraph immediately following the title and short description of the painting. That paragraph refers the reader to a succinct selection of relevant bibliographic information, where relevant including the particular authors' opinions concerning the authenticity of the relevant painting.
- The bibliographic section also contains reference to information (when available) on the painting concerned in earlier volumes of *A Corpus*. It is intended that (in the near future) internet access to digital versions of the five *Corpus* volumes already published will be provided.
- The fact that a published book or article is referred in the section with bibliographic information does not imply that the present author is necessarily in agreement with the contents thereof.
- Inscriptions applied to the painting concerned – usually a signature with date – are given. This does not necessarily mean that the present author is of the opinion that the inscription was placed by Rembrandt (see below: Signatures) on p. 66.
- With paintings whose image is based on a text (mostly from the Old or New Testament) the relevant text is quoted from the New King James Ver-

sion of the Bible, or where a text is from one of the Books of the Apocrypha – which are not included in the latter – from the Revised Standard Version.
– With portraits, wherever possible brief biographical information on the sitter is given.
– In addition to the basic information mentioned above the Notes may also include comments of very diverse kinds, depending on the status of the painting concerned in this book.
– The most important category of Notes concerns those in which arguments are given for the inclusion in the present Volume of a painting which in recent time (for a shorter or longer time) been disattributed from Rembrandt. Such Notes are marked by an asterisk *. The same applies to paintings that have recently been attributed to Rembrandt, which are marked with an open star ☆.
– In the case of many other paintings the nature of the content of the Note concerned may seem arbitrary. It often has to do with a new insight on the painting in question, sometimes on the previously unfamiliar art theoretical, iconographic or functional context in which the work originated.
– Not all the Notes were originally written with this book in mind. In certain cases – as with the information about the sitters for most portraits – they have been partly taken from earlier volumes of *A Corpus*. Other texts are quoted from earlier publications by the present author. In the latter cases, for the sake of brevity the bibliographical data are not always separately provided.
– Two type sizes are used for references to other literature and other information: for references within the present book the type size is the same as the text of the Note concerned; for references to information not in this book a smaller type is used to prevent the text of the Notes being overloaded with numbers.

On method

The following information should assist the reader in understanding the Notes:

The Bayesian approach
In the Notes, devoted to paintings reattributed to Rembrandt, the kind of thinking employed in seeking to resolve questions of authenticity is different from traditional intuitive connoisseurial judgment, or from the all too one-sided stylistic analysis; it is essentially the so-called Bayesian approach, a rational approach to problems of truth and probability loosely based on the interpretation of probability and the theorem developed by an eighteenth century English clergyman, Thomas Bayes (1702-1761). Specifically, Bayes' theorem shows how the degree of subjective belief in an outcome should rationally change to accommodate evidence. Bayes observed that our beliefs are not all-or-nothing convictions based on simple yes-or-no answers to decisive questions, but rather that there are degrees of belief, that one arrives at a conclusion through inductive reasoning using arguments of varying probability. He also observed that a variety of evidence provides stronger confirmation than a comparable amount of homogeneous evidence.

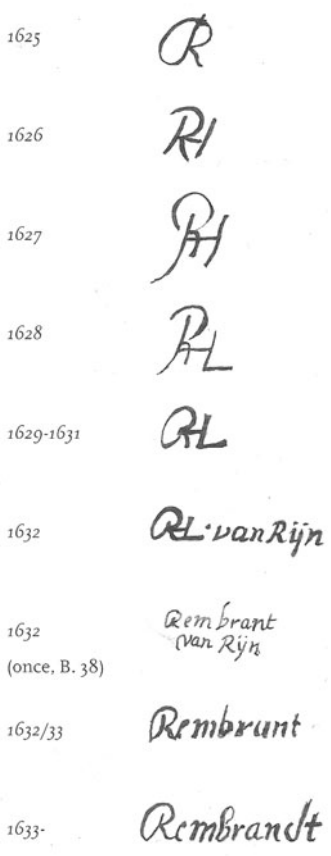
In applying the Bayesian approach – for example, to 18, 32, 134, 266 – I have based my argumentation on a convergence model, in which different kinds of evidence are given their due in a logic of probability. Applying this approach to my own research in this book, I have argued that if several weak items of evidence support the belief that a painting could be by Rembrandt, the probability of a correct attribution becomes stronger to the extent that each piece of evidence tends to eliminate an alternative possibility. Thus, the problems associated with differences in the nature of heterogeneous evidence become irrelevant when the issue is the probability of a judgment being correct; in this case the convergence of objectively significant arguments on an outcome of maximum probability. Using this approach, I have striven step by step to lay the ground for a responsible reattribution of certain paintings, whenever the objective arguments converge.

Technical images in the Notes
Occasionally one finds images in the Notes which are obtained with the help of different types of radiation: X-radiographs; Infrared imaging (IR or IRR); Neutron activation autoradiography; X-ray Spectrometric Fluorescence (XRF) Scanning. These, and also other radiation techniques which do not feature in this book, are summarily described in the Glossary (pp. 727-732). What they all have in common is that they render images (partially) visible that are not visible at the paint surface, which can be important in that they allow insight into the genesis and the material history of a painting.

Such technical images have in common that they are not capable of showing a separate, underlying layer of the painting under investigation in isolation. With X-radiographs, even radio-absorbent material within or behind on the support are registered in the radiographic image obtained along with the traces of radio-absorbent material in the various paint- or ground layers. This also holds *mutatis mutandis* for the other research techniques mentioned above. Reading such technical recordings implies thus that one has to find one's way in a more or less complex maze of spots and smudges each with its own often unknown place and origin in the structure of the painting. It is therefore important to know the painting as an object reasonably well, to have a fairly good idea of Rembrandt's use of materials and painting technique, and some knowledge about the stretching of canvas or the cradling of panels; as traces of such treatments often partly determine the X-radiographic image.

Such technical images are occasionally included in the Notes because they can reveal identifiable forms that are relevant for a better insight into specific aspects of a painting.

Rembrandt's signatures between 1625 and 1633 (facsimiles)



These illustrations are not included for study purposes, they are too small for that. At most, they can assist the reader in broadly observing for him/herself certain phenomena mentioned in the relevant Note.

Signatures

The way in which Rembrandt signed his works went through a striking evolution. He signed his very first works simply with the monogram *R*, and soon after *RH* (Rembrant Harmenszoon); from 1628 with *RHL* (the monogram becoming gradually more compactly shaped), and in 1632 with *RHL van Rijn*. The *L* in the latter monogram presumably stands for *Leydensis* – 'of Leiden', the town of Rembrandt's birth. At the age of twenty six he began to sign his work with his first name alone, *Rembrant* (ending with only a *t*); from early 1633 until his death he spelt his name *Rembrandt* (with *dt*) and signed his works that way. It has been suggested that Rembrandt began using his first name as his signature because he considered himself the equal of the great artists of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, Michelangelo (Michelangelo Buonarotti), Titian (Tizinano Vecello) and Rafaël (Raffaello Sanzio), who were also generally known by their first names.

The very sparing treatment given to the signatures in this book perhaps requires further explanation. In the section *Inscription* in each Note I limit myself to a transcription of what is generally called a signature, which is usually accompanied by *f* (for *fecit*, 'made this') and the year of the work's production.

While Volumes II and III of the *Corpus* were in preparation, cooperation had begun with a team of script experts led by Prof. W. Froentjes at the Forensic Laboratory of the Dutch Ministry of Justice in Rijswijk with the purpose of investigating the possibilities of assessing the authenticity of a signature on the basis of forensic script expertise. The RRP contributed detail photographs of signatures on paintings dating from 1632 to 1642, which were analyzed by the team using comparative handwriting analysis of those signatures with Rembrandt's surname written out in full. The broader aim of this pilot project was to determine whether comparative analysis as used by forensic handwriting experts could produce significant results in the study of signatures on old paintings (Froentjes e.a. 1991). This project seemed so promising that it was decided by the RRP members to cooperate regularly with the researchers at the Forensic Laboratory, in a sub-project involving the analysis of all signatures on paintings in the style of Rembrandt also dating from 1642 to 1669, since this appeared to be the only way of establishing a putative core of original signatures. The results of this research, however, not incorporated in Volumes IV-V for the following reasons:

While the earlier signatures as a rule are better preserved because the majority were applied to panels, the later signatures (primarily on canvas) are, generally speaking, often so badly preserved – and consequently often reinforced by later hands – that they could only safely be investigated with comparative handwriting analysis after thorough material investigation of most of these signatures. On top of that, we were aware that not only are the late Rembrandt signature easier to imitate; the overwhelming interest in his later work also meant that these signatures suffered more at the hands of cleaners and restorers and were more susceptible to forgery, making it far more difficult to isolate a core of reliable signatures for the period after 1642.

Moreover the question of whether forensic handwriting analysis can be applied to Rembrandt's painted signatures will have to be subjected to more fundamental investigation. In daily life Rembrandt used Gothic writing, also in his signatures under letters and other documents, but he shaped his signatures on paintings and etchings in Italian cursive or a derivation thereof. As Rembrandt applied his signature routinely on the relatively many paintings produced between 1633 and 1635, Froentjes' script experts could deduce a number of features from these signatures which appeared to be characteristic for Rembrandt. The method turned out to be of a certain use in the case of paintings from that period and sometimes beyond that period.

Later, Rembrandt applied his often much larger signatures less frequently. He had become less productive than in his period with Uylenburgh. One cannot therefore rely on the premise – essential for handwriting analysis – that in those later years Rembrandt's painted signatures were also routine inscriptions. The question will have to be reconsidered whether handwriting analysis for Rembrandt after 1642 can yield reliable results despite the initially very promising results for paintings from the 1630s.

In certain cases, however, signatures do play a very important role in our deliberations (see e.g. 69, 134, 266) because in these cases it can be demonstrated that the signature was applied while the paint of the layer it was applied to was still wet (see 69 figs. 4 and 5, and 134 fig. 7). The most important given, however, is that Rembrandt, as also with his etchings, provided virtually all his paintings with an inscription with his name. (In the case of the etchings this was as a rule introduced in mirror image writing on the etching plate).

The presence of a Rembrandt-signature is thus of greater potential significance than has been assumed over the last decades. However, while significance can in many cases be attached to the presence of his name and a date on a painting in his style, it can seldom be taken as decisive.

Plates and biographical remarks

The Leiden period (1624-1631). Rembrandt's research of the gronden

Rembrandt van Rijn was born in Leiden in 1606 of parents whose roots were also in Leiden. He attended the city's Latin School up to the age of about 14, but according to his first biographer, the Leiden burgomaster Jan Jansz. Orlers, he left prematurely because '*by nature he was moved toward the art of painting and drawing*'. He may well have been at least partly inspired to do so by the early fame of the Leiden prodigy in the art of painting, Jan Lievens (1607-1674), who was actually a year younger than himself. Indeed, Lievens must have been already famous in Leiden while Rembrandt was still at school.

There is no evidence that Rembrandt himself was a child prodigy but he must have been aware of his exceptional talent for drawing fairly early. The drive to excel as a graphic artist and painter was to stay with him his entire life. Several of his contemporaries paid witness to the exceptional diligence and persistence with which he practised his art.

Jacob Isaacs van Swanenburgh (1571-1638) was Rembrandt's first teacher '*from whom*', according to Orlers, '*he would learn the basic and principal rules*' (of the art of painting). Van Swanenburgh was also a Leiden man, but one should not assume that the young Rembrandt grew up in a narrowly provincial enclave. Not long before Rembrandt came to train under him, Van Swanenburg had returned from a 27 year sojourn in Italy and had first-hand experience of the art scenes of Venice, Rome and Naples. His workshop must have resonated with echoes of the international art world. Knowledge of the legendary artists of the Italian Renaissance was also widespread in Dutch studios, only partly due to Vasari's *Le Vite de' più eccellenti pittori, scultori, ed architettori* (Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects) (1550/1566). Moreover, following the publication of the *Schilderboek* (Book of Painting) of Karel van Mander (1548–1606) one can therefore hardly doubt that stories about the famous painters from the earlier Netherlands were also familiar to the up and coming young painter.

The fact that Rembrandt, after his apprenticeship with Swanenburgh, rounded off his training with the Amsterdam history painter Pieter Lastman (1583-1633), who was famous in his day, only serves to emphasize that young Rembrandt must have already had great ambitions.

The basic aspects of the art of painting

One can argue that, after his training periods with Swanenburgh and Lastman, Rembrandt imposed upon himself a third period of self-taught training that must have lasted for at least six years, and in some respects even longer, a period during which he undertook a deliberate investigation of the range of basic aspects of the art of painting – the *Gronden* – that Karel van Mander had enumerated in his *Schilderboek*. Rembrandt's aim was undoubtedly to master all the skills necessary to become a universal 'all round' history painter.

When one analyses the results of international history painting from the preceding centuries one is in effect presented with a survey of these basic aspects. Karel van Mander wrote up his insights on those aspects that he identified as important for young painters and art-lovers in his *Den Grondt der edelvrij Schilderconst* (The Foundation of the Art of Painting) published in 1604, part of his monumental *Schilder Boek*). The most relevant of these *'gronden'* are set out concisely below in the sequence in which Karel van Mander dealt with them in his *Grondt*, and where desirable they are further broken down into sub-categories. (For a more extensive treatment of this subject, the reader is referred to *Corpus* V, Chapter I, and to Chapter II of my forthcoming book, *Rembrandt. The painter thinking*.)

Behind the relevant *gronden* and sub-*gronden* are listed (by their Plate numbers) those paintings from the Leiden period in which it is clear that Rembrandt was exploring particular basic aspects more specifically. Of course, there could be more than one *grond* in question in any one painting. In certain cases he maintained an intense preoccupation with certain *gronden* well after his Leiden period, or with particular aspects of a *grond* that he had already dealt with earlier, such as, for example, 'room-light' (a lighting situation in which the window through which the light enters is depicted 85 and 86); or 'birds' as a sub-*grond* of the relevant *grond* 'animals' in 1639 165, 166 and 174.

The *gronden* and Rembrandt's Leiden paintings and some later ones in which these are given special attention

1. On draughtsmanship and the art of drawing (relevant for all his works).
2. Analogy, proportion or measure of the parts of the human figure (idem).
3. On the comportment, and proper movement of the human figure (idem).
4. On the ordonnance and invention of 'histories' (idem) However, see especially 9, 10, 22, 23, 37–42, 47–49.
5. The depiction of human affects, emotions, desires and sorrows (see esp. 1, 5, 10, 12, 17, 18, 23, 34–41, 48, 49, 52).
6. On light and its reflection in shaded parts. Besides incident daylight Rembrandt investigated different light effects, such as incident sunlight or celestial light [15, 16, 27, 47]; artificial light 12, 13, 14, 22, 25, 28; reflected light 21, 27, 28 and 51; in 1631/32 he investigated 'room light' for the first time [rather clumsily in 12, with growing sophistication in 85 and 86].
7. On landscape 49, 50, 130, 130A.
8. On cattle, (wild) animals and game 8–10, 12, 13, 42, 49, 50, 53.
9. On textiles, drapery, and costume (relevant for (nearly) all his works).
10. On the choice and ordering of colours (idem).
11. On the application of paint (idem, but especially 11 and 33–35).

With this list I have deliberately restricted references to paintings from the Leiden period and where appropriate the early Amsterdam years. Over the course of his life, Rembrandt would build to varying degrees on the experience and insights he had acquired in this period – but then at critical moments he would strike out in a wholly unprecedented direction, such as after *c.* 1640, when he abruptly ceased to concern himself with the expression of affects in the faces of his protagonists (*grond* 5), or in *c.* 1650 and afterwards when he became largely preoccupied with variation in the application of the paint (*grond* 11).

It may seem obvious to point out that in researching Rembrandt and the *gronden* one is dealing with the *formal* aspects of painting. But equally important, of course, was the *content* with which Rembrandt was largely concerned as a history painter. When one places Rembrandt's paintings against the texts on which his history pieces are based (see the relevant Notes to the Plates for extensive quotations from his written sources), one cannot but be impressed by the thoroughness and intensity with which he must have analysed these texts.

The reason for my frequent reference in this book to Rembrandt's presumed involvement with the *gronden* is that many people tend to approach a painting first of all from the point of view of the subject that is depicted. By seeing it also – and sometimes primarily – as a pictorial challenge for the painter, one often approaches Rembrandt and his works in a more appropriate way.

There are indications that, as a rule, Rembrandt's paintings from his Leiden period were not painted on commission. It is more likely that he chose the subjects himself, and in particular chose those which allowed him to concentrate on exploring specific 'gronden'. The paintings that resulted were apparently bought by art-lovers (in this connection, see *Corpus* V pp. 4-6). One could speculate that 5, 7, 8, 21, 26 or 54 and some of his self-portraits) did, on the other hand, originate as commissions.

While Rembrandt as far as we know produced no painted portraits on commission during his Leiden period, one suspects that his work during the last year of that period on life-size *tronies* 19, 55–58 could have been made as preparation for his subsequent activity as a portrait painter. In addition to them, Rembrandt painted a number of other *tronies* with various different functions, such as exploring particular *gronden* or as preparation for other works 6, 19, 20, 21, 36, 43–46.

Rembrandt turned to his own face in the following Leiden paintings, or studies in front of the mirror 5, 7, 8, 19, 20, 24, 29. Some of these works may have been intended as 'portraits of himself' for art-lovers and collectors 30–33, or possibly for personal use 53.

In his Leiden period the young Rembrandt made large chalk-drawings from the model which he then incorporated in his paintings (see, for instance, Note 86 fig. 3). He must have developed the skills of the etching technique largely by himself as an autodidact (see Note 17 fig. 2 and his series of three scenes from Christ's childhood from 1630 B. 51, B. 66 and B. 48, see p. 166).

In addition, from 1628 he already had a number of pupils, some of whom – such as Gerard Dou and Isack Jouderville – are known by name, while others will probably always remain anonymous.

It has been suggested that for a while he may have worked and taught with Jan Lievens in the same studio. If that was the case, it could explain why the two young painters sometimes seemed to be in competition with each other (see, for instance, Note 52). ◆

1. Rembrandt, *The spectacles-pedlar ('Sight')*,
c. 1624, panel 21 x 17.8 cm.
Private collection

2. Rembrandt, *Three singers ('Hearing')*,
c. 1624, panel 21.6 x 17.8 cm.
Private collection

3. Rembrandt, *The operation ('Touch')*,
c. 1624, panel 21.5 x 17.7 cm.
Private collection

4. Rembrandt, *Christ driving the money-changers from the Temple*, 1624/1625, panel 43.1 x 32 cm.
Moscow, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts

5. Rembrandt, *The stoning of St Stephen*, 1625, panel 89.5 x 123.6 cm.
Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts

6. Rembrandt, *Bust of a man wearing a gorget and plumed beret*, *c.* 1626, panel 40 x 29.4 cm.
Private collection

7. Rembrandt, *History painting* (still under discussion), 1626, panel 90 x 122 cm.
Leiden, Lakenhal

8. Rembrandt, *David with the head of Goliath before Saul*, 1626/1627, panel 27.2 x 39.6 cm.
Basle, Kunstmuseum.

9. Rembrandt, *The baptism of the Eunuch*, 1626, panel 63.5 x 48 cm.
Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent

The abraded face of Philip has been unsatisfactorily retouched.

10. Rembrandt, *Balaam and the ass*, 1626, panel 63.2 x 46.5 cm. Paris, Musée Cognacq-Jay

11. Rembrandt, *Musical allegory*, 1626, panel 63.4 x 47.6 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

12. Rembrandt, *Tobit accusing Anna of stealing the kid*, 1626, panel 40.1 x 29.9 cm.
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

13. Rembrandt, *The flight into Egypt*,
1627, panel 27.5 x 24.7 cm.
Tours, Musée des Beaux-Arts

14. Rembrandt, *The rich man from the parable* (and detail), 1627, panel 31.7 x 42.5 cm.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

15. Rembrandt, *The apostle Paul in prison*, 1627, panel 72.8 x 60.2 cm.
Stuttgart, Staatsgalerie

There are darkened overpaintings on both sides of the seams of the panel.

16. Rembrandt, *Simeon in the Temple*, *c.*1628, panel 55.4 x 43.7 cm. Hamburg, Kunsthalle

Mary's cloak has been overpainted by another hand later; it was probably a lighter blue-grey in the original.

1627-1628

15–16

Detail of **16**

17. Rembrandt, *The foot operation*, 1628, panel 31.8 x 24.4 cm. Switzerland, Private collection

18. Rembrandt, *Rembrandt laughing*, *c.* 1628, copper 22.2 x 17.1 cm.
Private collection

19. Rembrandt, *Study in the mirror (the human skin)*, *c.* 1627/1628, panel 42.8 x 33 cm.
Indianapolis, Museum of Art

20. Rembrandt, *Lighting study in the mirror*, *c.* 1628, panel 22.6 x 18.7 cm.
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

21. Rembrandt, *Bust of a man wearing a turban*, *c.* 1628, panel 26.7 x 20.3 cm.
Private collection

22. Rembrandt, *Interior with figures, called 'La main chaude'*, *c.* 1628, panel 21 x 27 cm.
Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland

23. Rembrandt, *Judas repentant returning the pieces of silver*, 1629, panel 79 x 102.3 cm.
Private collection

24. Rembrandt, *The painter in his studio ('Idea')*, *c.* 1628, panel 24.8 x 31.7 cm.
Boston, Museum of Fine Arts

25. Rembrandt, *The supper at Emmaus*, 1629, paper on panel 37.4 x 42.3 cm.
Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André

Detail of **23**

26. Rembrandt, *An old man asleep by the fire (perhaps typifying 'Sloth')*, 1629, panel 51.9 x 40.8 cm.
Turin, Galleria Sabauda

27. Rembrandt, *Two old men disputing (Peter and Paul)*, 1628, panel 72.3 x 59.5 cm.
Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria

28. Rembrandt, *The apostle Paul at his writing desk*, *c.* 1629/1630, panel 47.2 x 38.6 cm.
Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum

The painting is covered with a thick layer of yellowed varnish.

1628-1630

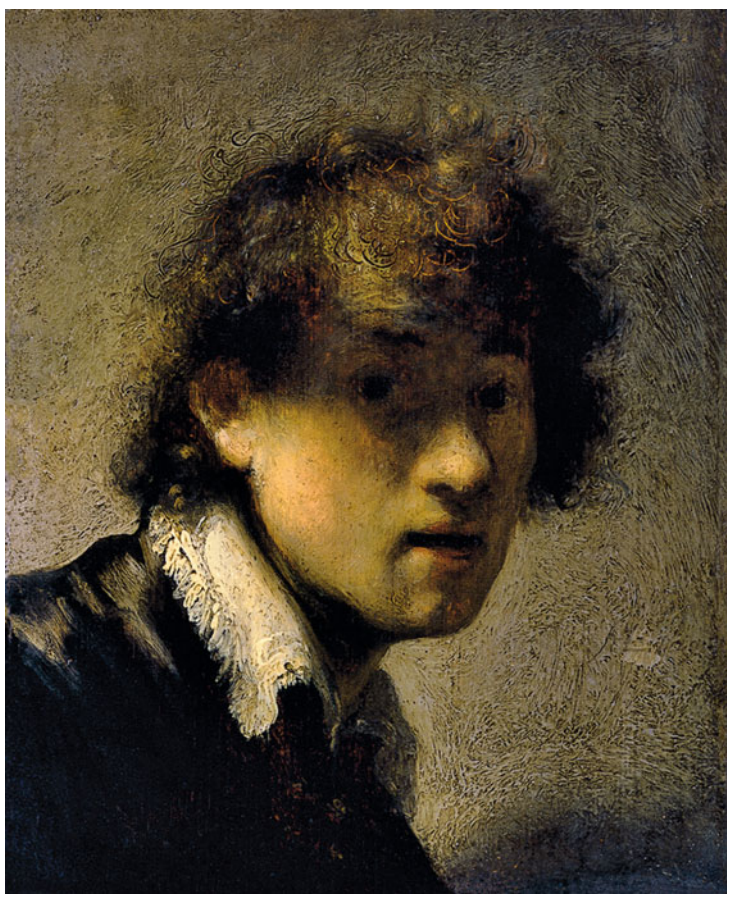
27–28

29. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait with plumed beret*, 1629, panel 89.5 x 73.5 cm.
Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum

30. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait with a gorget*, *c.* 1629, panel 38.2 x 31 cm.
Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum

The painting is covered by a layer of yellowed varnish and shows darkened retouches.

31. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait lit from the left*, 1629, panel 15.5 x 12.7 cm.
Munich, Alte Pinakothek



32. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait*, *c*. 1630, panel 22.2 x 16.6 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

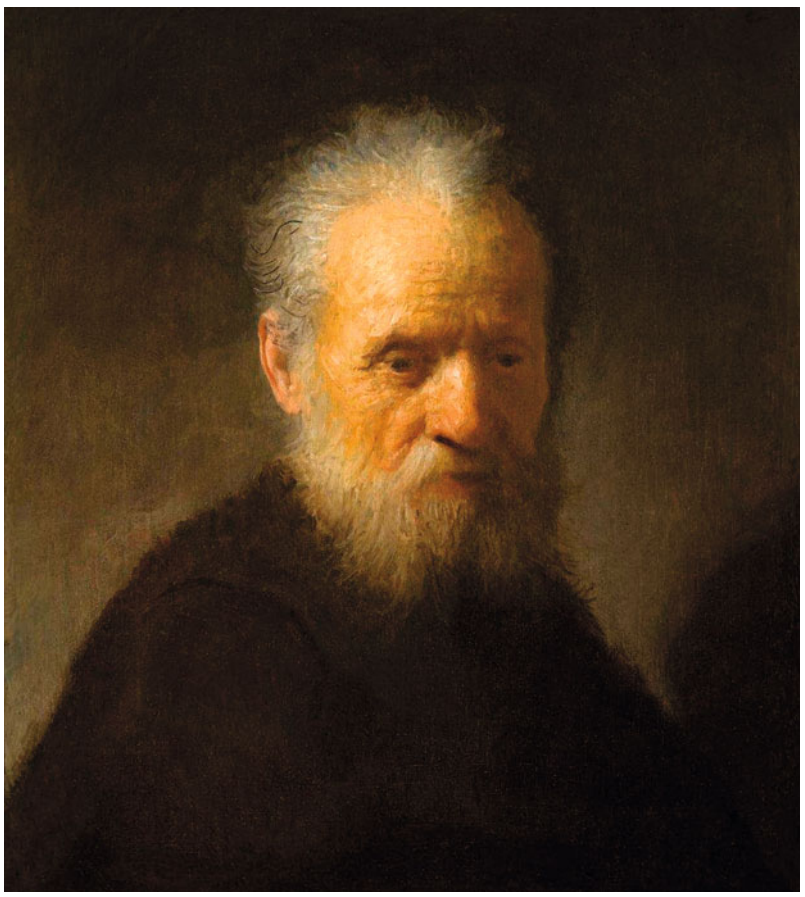
33. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait with beret and gathered shirt ('stilus mediocris')*,1630, gilded copper 15 x 12.2 cm.
Stockholm, Nationalmuseum

36a. During investigation of 36 with X-ray fluorescence imaging an unfinished self-portrait of Rembrandt was discovered under the present image. The red line has been added to mark the contours of the self-portrait.

34. Rembrandt, *Bust of an old woman at prayer ('stilus gravis')*, *c.* 1630, gilded copper 15.5 x 12.2 cm.
Salzburg, Residenzgalerie

35. Rembrandt, *Laughing soldier ('stilus humilis')*, *c.* 1630, gilded copper 15.3 x 12.2 cm.
The Hague, Mauritshuis

36. Rembrandt, *Bust of an old man*, *c.* 1630, panel 18.2 x 17.4 cm. Private collection.
Reduced to an oval form, subsequently made into a rectangle by additions.



Self-portraits and *genera dicendi*

Art-lovers were interested in what the painters whose work they admired actually looked like (*Corpus* IV pp. 132-144). The young Rembrandt initially fulfilled this need in respect of himself by painting small self-portraits 31, 32, 33 (see also 30) or by incorporating his self-portrait in history pieces 7, 8, see also 106. Later on he produced etched self-portraits for the purpose of disseminating them among those interested (B. 7, B. 19, B. 21, B. 22) (see *Corpus* IV pp. 185-199). But not all the works in which Rembrandt rendered his own face had this specific function; many were studies in front of the mirror for which Rembrandt posed as his own most patient model, 18-20 and probably 29.

The small self-portrait on gilded copper 33 together with 34 and 35 constitute a series in which, whether or not challenged to do so by an art-lover, Rembrandt demonstrated that he was the equal of the highly esteemed Roman poet Virgil in being able to work in three different styles, the three *genera dicendi*. The self-portrait included in this series 33, apart from the fact that it is executed in one of the *genera dicendi* (the *stilus mediocris*) could well have served as the 'signature' for this small series.

37. Rembrandt, *Samson betrayed by Delilah*, *c.* 1628-1630, panel 61.3 x 50.1 cm.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

38. Rembrandt, *David playing the harp for King Saul*, *c.* 1630, panel 62 x 50 cm.
Frankfurt am Main, Städelsches Kunstinstitut

The painting is poorly preserved in the thinner areas.

1628-1630

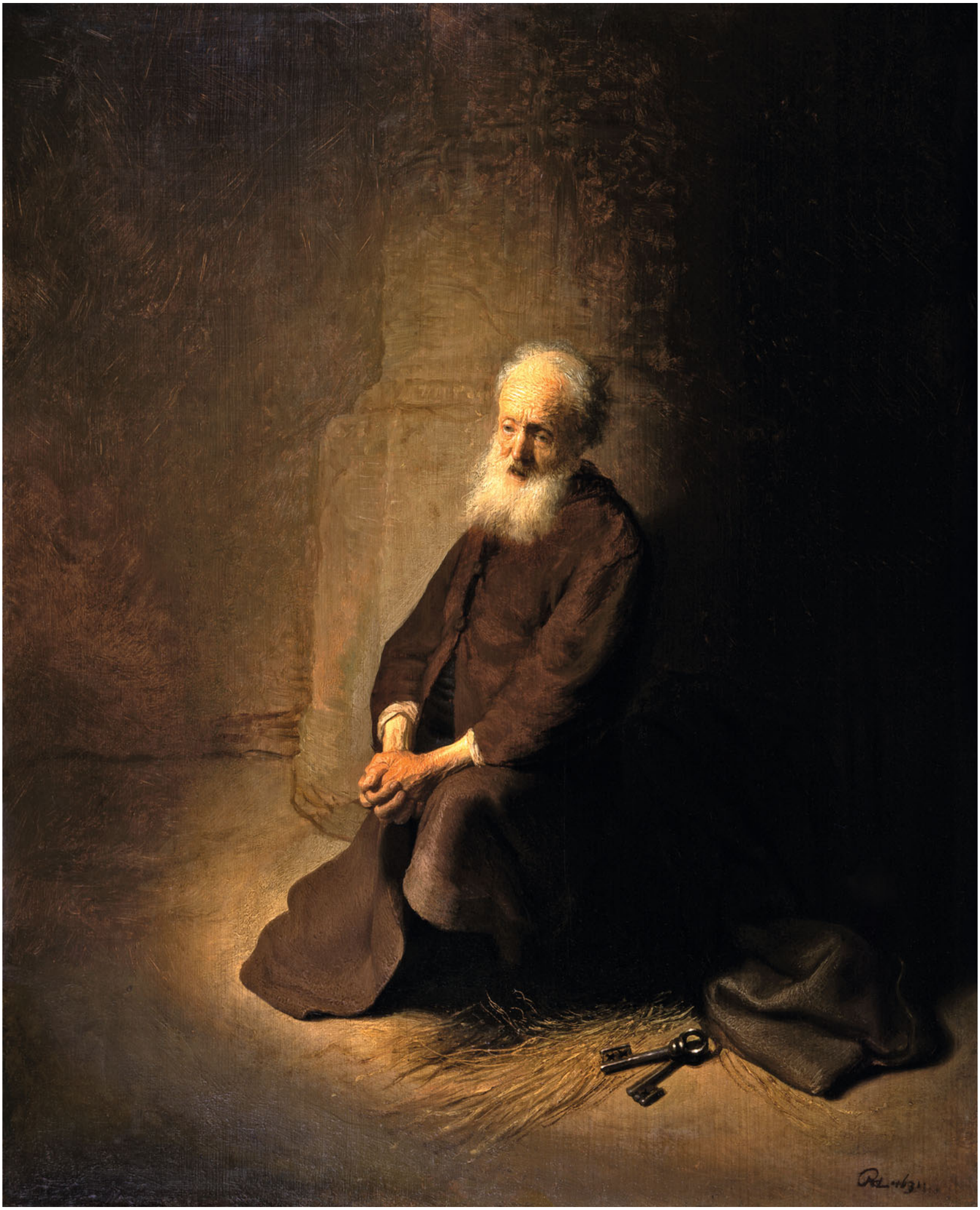
37–38

39. Rembrandt, *Jeremiah lamenting the destruction of Jerusalem*, 1630, panel 58.3 x 46.6 cm.
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

40. Rembrandt, *St Peter in prison*, 1631, panel 59.1 x 47.8 cm. Jerusalem, Israel Museum

1630-1631

39–40



41. Rembrandt, *Andromeda*, *c.* 1630, panel 34.5 x 25 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis

The painting has been cropped on all sides (see Note 41).

42. Rembrandt, *The Good Samaritan*,
1630, panel 24.2 x 19.8 cm.
London, Wallace Collection

43. Rembrandt, *Bust of an old man wearing a fur cap*, 1629, panel 22.2 x 17.7 cm.
Innsbruck, Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum

Oil studies

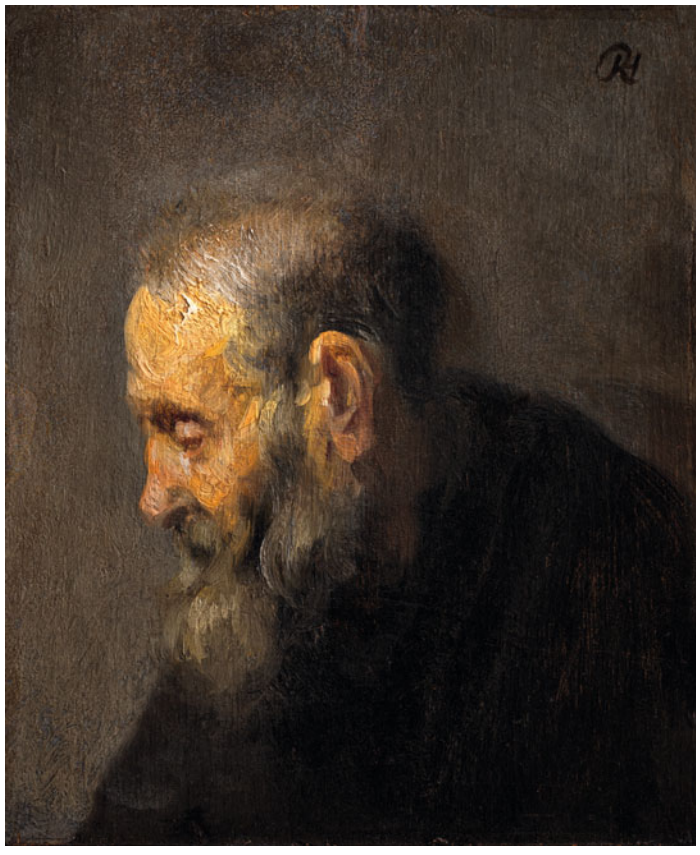
Some of the works shown on these two pages should perhaps be considered as oil studies 44, 45, 46, but their relation to more fully worked out projects is not altogether clear.

Rembrandt seems to have had no fixed habits with regard to this aspect of the preparation of his larger works (see also 20, 22, 82, 106–110, 112–114, 153, 161, 182, 197, 215, 217a, 217b, 230, 239, 260, 271, 276, 277, 285, 288, 295, 296, 209, 210 and commentary on them in the relevant Notes).

Most of such studies were not signed and dated by Rembrandt himself.

44. Rembrandt, *Oil study of an old man*, *c.* 1630, panel 24.3 x 20.3 cm.
Kingston, Queen's University, Agnes Etherington Art Centre

45. Rembrandt, *Oil study of an old man*, *c.* 1630, panel 19.5 x 16 cm.
Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst



46. Rembrandt, *Bust of an old man*, *c.* 1630, panel 46.9 x 38.8 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis

47. Rembrandt, *Simeon in the Temple*,
1631, panel 60.9 x 47.9 cm.
The Hague, Mauritshuis

48. Rembrandt, *The raising of Lazarus*, *c.* 1630-1632, panel 96.2 x 81.5 cm. Los Angeles, County Museum of Art

The panel was originally taller.

1630-1632

47–48

49. Rembrandt, *The abduction of Proserpina*, *c.* 1631, panel 84.8 x 79.7 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

The panel, which was originally taller, must have been cropped at top and bottom. An ultramarine blue sky was discovered under a greyish overpainting and taken to be the original sky. I am convinced that this ultramarine sky also was an overpainting. As it is very disturbing it has been slightly toned down in this reproduction.

50. Rembrandt, *The rape of Europa*,
1632, panel 62.2 x 77 cm.
Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum

51. Rembrandt, *An old woman reading, probably the prophetess Anna*, 1631, panel 59.8 x 47.7 cm.
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

52. Rembrandt, *Christ on the cross*,
1631, transferred from panel to canvas and then stuck on to panel 99.9 x 72.6 cm.
Le Mas d'Agenais, Église Saint-Vincent

53. Rembrandt, *The artist in oriental costume, with a dog at his feet*, 1631 (the dog added in late 1632 or early 1633), panel 66.5 x 52 cm. Paris, Musée du Petit Palais

54. Rembrandt, *Minerva in her study*, *c.* 1631, panel 60.5 x 49 cm.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

55. Rembrandt, *Bust of an old man with a cap and gold chain*, *c.* 1631, panel 59.5 x 51.1 cm.
Private collection

56. Rembrandt, *A man wearing a gorget and plumed cap, c.* 1631, panel 66 x 50.8 cm.
Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum

57. Rembrandt, *Bust of a young man with a plumed cap*,
1631-*c.* 1635, panel 80.3 x 64.8 cm.
Toledo, Museum of Art

58. Rembrandt, *Half-figure of a man wearing a gorget and plumed hat*, *c.* 1631, panel 83.5 x 75.6 cm.
Chicago, The Art Institute

The painting was originally 7 cm taller.

The first Amsterdam period (1631-1635), Rembrandt working with and for Hendrick Uylenburgh

Rembrandt was already an independent master in Leiden, but that didn't mean that he could automatically assert himself as a master in Amsterdam, at that time Holland's rapidly expanding metropolis. Although the guild regulations from Amsterdam have not been preserved, we know from those of several other cities that a painter aspiring to establish himself in another town first had to serve an obligatory period of one or more years in the workshop of a local master (see *Corpus* II pp. 56-60). This is probably the main reason that Rembrandt worked for the 'paintings entrepreneur' Hendrick Uylenburgh during his first Amsterdam years. During this time he also lived in Uylenburgh's house.

Uylenburgh's business also included the production of commissioned portraits. Rembrandt worked as what one might call the head of the portrait studio. At the same time, among other things, he also worked for him as the designer of an ambitiously planned series of prints with scenes from the Life and Passion of Jesus (see p. 179 and 107 – 114).

In 1634 he would be admitted to the Amsterdam Guild of St Luke, the guild of painters, which meant that he could thenceforth set himself up as an independent master. In the same year he married Saskia van Uylenburgh (1612-1642), Hendrick's niece.

In Rembrandt's time it was customary for contracts, rents or work agreements to be initiated or concluded on either the 8th of May (the Feast of St Michael) or the 1st of November (All Saints Day). The couple probably moved on St Michael's day of 1635 into the first of two houses rented between 1635 and 1639 (Dudok van Heel in *M/W* pp. 55/56).

Rembrandt as a portrait painter

In the world of 17th century Dutch painters, portrait painting did not represent the height of ambition. That must also have been true for Rembrandt: indeed, it is evident in the striking correlation between the changes in his economic fortunes and the varying frequency with which he painted or etched portraits. During the six years after completing his formal training, from 1625 to 1631, apart from some self-portraits he painted no formal portraits on commission. In the following three and a half years with Uylenburgh he painted the portraits of *c.* 65 individuals, whether or not with the help of assistants. This was the period in which he earned the money to set up his own household and begin a family.

In the next three years (1635-1638), when he had established his own independence and begun to build his own career he painted only the very occasional portrait 156. When he decided to buy a house, a very expensive house on the Jodenbreestraat which he acquired in 1639, the production of portraits between 1638 and 1642 abruptly increased.

After this, he seems to have done very well financially, for during the following nine years between 1643 and 1652 he passed on a very modest production of portraits almost entirely to pupils and/or assistants. Partly thanks to his income from teaching and the associated production by what seems to have been a considerable group of pupils/assistants, he evidently had hardly need to resort to portrait painting himself in that 10 year period.

However, with the onset of worsening economic conditions in 1652 caused by the first Anglo-Dutch War of 1652-1654, Rembrandt's production of portraits rose markedly up to his bankruptcy in 1656, and in the unfavourable economic climate of the subsequent years this level of production would be maintained – right up to his death.

The fact that Rembrandt functioned as a portrait painter mainly for financial reasons is not to say that he would have thought of portrait painting as an obligatory routine chore. Indeed, the nature and quality of his portraits suggest that he gave his total commitment to the conception and execution of these works almost every time. It seems that his concern was always to achieve the greatest possible illusion of his sitter's presence and potential movement, which was to lead the beholder's attention mainly to the sitter's face and sometimes also to the hand(s). Simplifying the (usually slightly swelling) contours played an important role in this. Where forms overlap he avoided corners, either sharp or blunt (see e.g. 76). The rationale behind this would seem to be that any such abrupt transection of forms diverts the beholder's attention from the face.

Different hands in portraits

In the painting of portraits it was by no means unusual for the work to be divided. In Rembrandt's workshop, for example, this seems sometimes to have happened when both man and wife in a married couple wanted to pose at the same time. In such cases, an assistant or assisting pupil would have executed parts of one of the two paintings, although Rembrandt must usually have had a share in both. In 63b, for instance, he may have only designed the woman's posture and then subsequently improved the pupil/assistant's work by re-painting her left hand. He probably painted her husband 63a (almost) entirely himself. Not uncommonly, however, he would seem to have painted both portraits wholly by himself (64a/b, 87a/b, 72/73). In the case of the Pellicorne portraits 76a/b, it was mainly pupils or assistants – possibly from outside – who executed these works, possibly because Rembrandt was fully occupied with the most ambitious and prestigious painting of that winter, *The anatomy lesson of Dr Nicolaes Tulp* 76.

When one surveys the period Rembrandt spent in the firm of Hendrick Uylenburgh, the picture that emerges is of extremely intensive and varied activity, some of which would have been in fulfilment of his agreement with Uylenburgh, but probably also included work that Rembrandt himself controlled. Admittedly, what follows is largely hypothesis.

Works that were (probably) produced under the auspices of Uylenburgh's enterprise:

- commissioned portraits 59–93, and 115–121b; 132a/b–133a/b;
- saleable tronies whose production was perhaps at the same time an integral part of the training of pupils/assistants 78–81, 98 and 99;
- designs for a series of etchings to be issued by Uylenburgh, with the Life and Passion of Jesus 107–114;
- several history pieces loosely related to the abovementioned series, possibly for Mennonite relations (Uylenburgh belonged to the Mennonite community) (105 and 127);
- possibly incidental commissions such as the *Bellona* 101, *An Oriental* 104, *Cupid* 124.

Activities probably initiated and controlled by Rembrandt himself

- self-portraits (of which there was temporarily an over-production) 66, 69, 96, 97, 122, 123;
- work on the painted Passion series for Frederik Hendrik 106, 107, see p. 178**;**
- works related to Rembrandt's 'research' in connection with the 'Gronden' (for which, see p. 68/69) e.g. landscapes (with narrative subjects) 49 and 50, and later 130 and 130A, and possibly 105. Two scenes with 'room light', 85 and 86, could also be counted as part of the 'gronden' project;
- several portraits of his wife Saskia 94, 95, and possibly 125;
- some large scale history pieces with one or more figures: *The Noble Slav* 84, *The Holy Family* 131, *Sophonisba* 128, *A scholar* 129. What is worth mentioning about these paintings is that Bruyn found indications that three of Rembrandt's sitters from the first Amsterdam period had purchased such capital pieces in the same year during which they had posed for portraits (*Corpus* II p. 97). In this context it is significant that the sitters concerned were almost certainly art-lovers for whom an important work by Rembrandt could have been a desirable and collectible object.

Multi-figured small scale scenes

Rembrandt's intensive work around 1634 – on grisailles 108–114, multi-figured etchings (B. 44 and 114) and dito history pieces 105, 126, 127, 130, 131 which in all entailed the depiction of hundreds of figures in action – constitutes an amazing output. One might see it as a demonstration of what Albrecht Dürer meant when he wrote (in a text that Rembrandt may well have read (see *Corpus* V pp. 35-48)

> '*The minds of artists are full of images which they might be able to produce; therefore if a man properly using this art, and naturally so disposed, were allowed to live for many hundred years, he would be capable – thanks to the power given to man by God – of pouring forth and producing each day new shapes of men and other creatures whose likeness was never before seen nor thought of by any other man.*' (Dürer, Dutch ed. 1622 p. 214)

As an artist Rembrandt can be counted among those before him, such as Dürer himself or Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Michelangelo and Rubens, who were capable of totally immersing themselves in the imaginative recreation of complex scenes involving crowds of figures engaged in countless pursuits and postures. Indeed, Rembrandt's power of imagination in this respect is awe-inspiring. If one compares the *Descent from the cross* from 1632/33 107 with the painting of the same subject from 1634 127 one gets a good idea of the way in which Rembrandt was developing: in the later painting the composition is freer, with more groups of moving figures in various side-scenes, organized in a relatively large space. ◆

59. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts*, 1631, mahogany panel 116 x 87 cm. New York, Frick Collection

60. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man at a writing desk, possibly Jacob Bruyningh*, 1631, canvas 104.4 x 91.8 cm.
St Petersburg, Hermitage

The painting originally seems to have been 9 cm taller.

61. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a couple in an interior*, 1632, canvas 131.5 x 109 cm.
Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (stolen)

The painting must have been substantially reduced on the left, now showing only part of the original composition; the chair on the left is probably a later addition, apparently intended to balance the composition on this side when the canvas was reduced.

Detail of **61**

1632

61

62a. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man* (companion piece to **62b**),
c. 1632, walnut panel 90.8 x 68.5 cm.
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

62b. Rembrandt and (mainly) workshop, *Portrait of a woman* (companion piece to **62a**), *c.* 1632, walnut panel 90 x 68 cm. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

63a. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man* (companion piece to **63b**),
1632, canvas 112 x 89 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

63b. Rembrandt and (mainly) workshop, *Portrait of a woman* (companion piece to **63a**), 1632, canvas 112.5 x 88.8 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

The woman's left hand, which originally hung in a lower position, and the table on which it now rests, are probably executed by Rembrandt himself.

64a. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man trimming his quill* (companion piece to **64b**), 1632, canvas 101.5 x 81.5 cm.
Kassel, Gemäldegalerie

64b. Rembrandt (and workshop?), *Portrait of a woman seated* (companion piece to **64a**), 1632, canvas 92 x 71 cm. Vienna, Gemäldegalerie der Akademie der bildenden Künste

There are sufficient indications that **64a** and **64b** are companion pieces and that **64b** was cropped on all sides.

65a. G. van Honthorst, *Portrait of Prince Frederik Hendrik of Orange* (companion piece to **65b**), 1631, canvas 77 x 60 cm.
The Hague, Huis ten Bosch (Dutch Royal Collection)

65b. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Amalia van Solms* (companion piece to **65a**), 1632, canvas 69.5 x 54.5 cm. Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André

The two paintings must originally have had identical surrounds. At a later stage **65b** was cropped on all sides. The face has suffered from surface wear.

1631-1632

65a–65b

66. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait of the artist as a burger*, 1632, panel 64.4 x 47.6 cm.
Glasgow, Burrell Collection

67. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Maurits Huygens*, 1632, panel 31.1 x 24.5 cm.
Hamburg, Kunsthalle

68. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Jacques de Gheyn III* , 1632, panel 29.9 x 24.9 cm.
London, Dulwich Picture Gallery

69. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait*, 1632, panel 21.8 x 16.3 cm.
Private collection

70. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Joris de Caullery*, 1632, canvas on panel 102.5 x 83.8 cm. San Francisco, Fine Arts Museum

71. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a young man*, 1632, panel 63 x 46 cm.
Aachen, Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum

72. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Marten Looten*,
1632, panel 92.8 x 74.9 cm.
Los Angeles, County Museum of Art

73. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a 40-year-old man*, 1632, panel 75.6 x 52.1 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

1632

72–73

74. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a 39-year-old woman*, 1632, panel 74.5 x 55 cm.
Nivå, Nivaagaards Malerisamling

The hand and the booklet were added by another painter.

75. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a 62-year-old woman, possibly Aeltje Pietersdr Uylenburgh*, 1632, panel 73.5 x 55 cm.
Private collection

76. Rembrandt, *The anatomy lesson of Dr Nicolaes Tulp*, 1632, canvas 169.5 x 216.5 cm.
The Hague, Mauritshuis

77a. Rembrandt and (almost entirely) workshop, *Portraits of Jean Pellicorne and his son Casper* (companion piece to **77b**), 1632, canvas 155 x 123 cm.
London, Wallace Collection

77b. Rembrandt and (in the main parts) workshop, *Portraits of Susanna van Collen and her daughter Anna* (companion piece to **77a**), 1632, canvas 153 x 121 cm.
London, Wallace Collection

Detail of **77**

78. Rembrandt, *Bust of a young woman*, 1632, panel 60.6 x 45 cm.
Private collection

79. Rembrandt, *Bust of a young woman wearing a plumed cap*, 1632, canvas stuck on to panel 60.6 x 45 cm.
Private collection

Originally rectangular and larger on all sides.

80. Rembrandt, *Half-figure of a young woman in profile with a fan*, 1632, canvas 72.5 x 54.8 cm.
Stockholm, Nationalmuseum

Reduced on all sides (see Note 80).

81. Rembrandt, *Bearded old man*,
1632, panel 66.5 x 51 cm.
Cambridge Mass., Fogg Art Museum

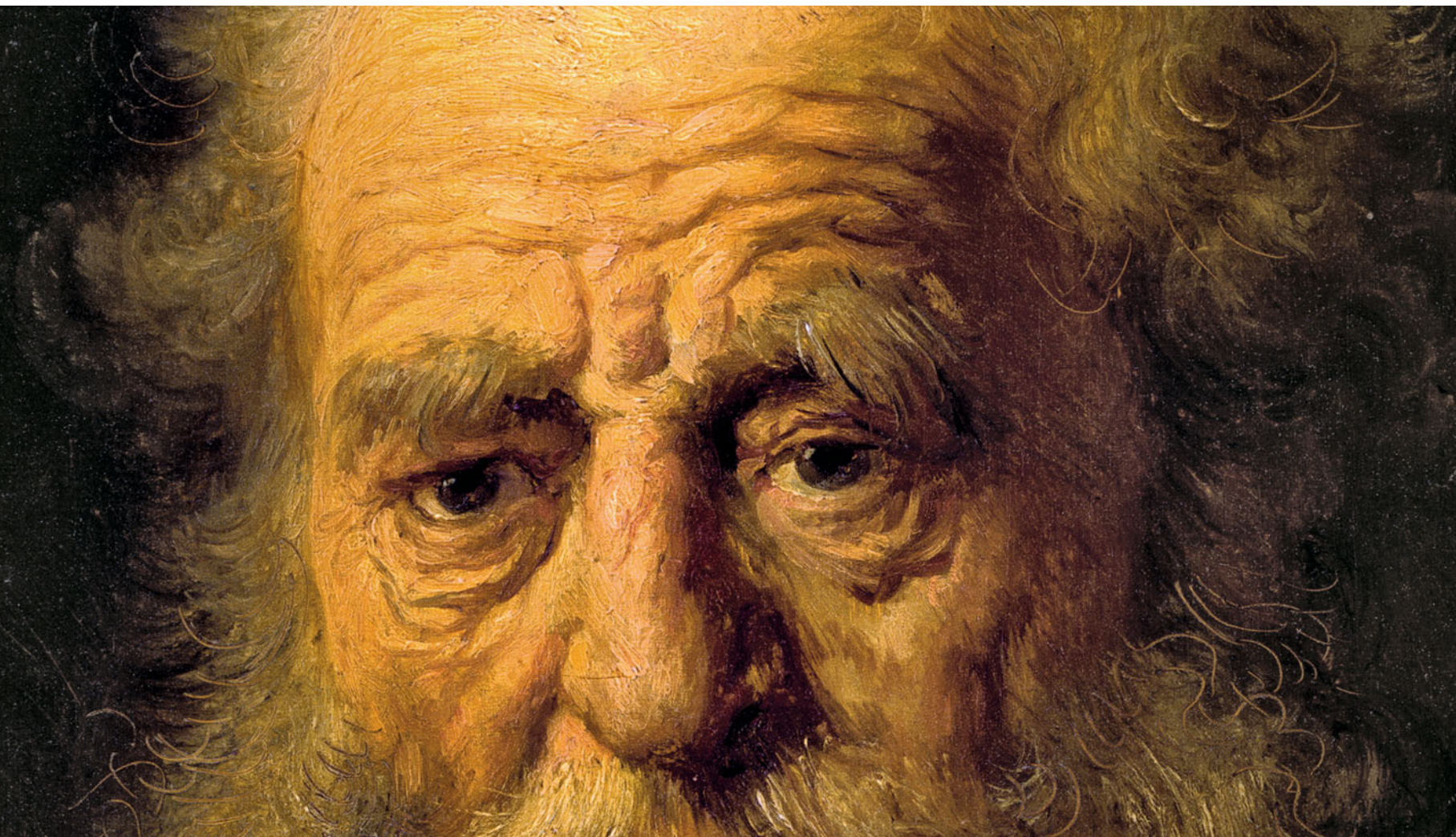
1632

80–81

82. Rembrandt, *Study of an old man with a gold chain*, 1632, panel 59 x 46.5 cm.
Kassel, Gemäldegalerie

83. Rembrandt, *The apostle Peter*, 1632, canvas 81.3 x 66.2 cm.
Stockholm, Nationalmuseum

The faces in these three paintings [82], [83], [84], with their landscape of wrinkles, are so strikingly similar as to suggest that the same man posed for all three paintings. However, it is more probable that [82] served as a sketch for [83] and [84]. On the fact that the head in [82] is slightly turned compared to the other two paintings see also [271], [272] and [296], [297b].



84. Rembrandt, *Knee-length figure of a man in oriental dress ('The Noble Slav')*, 1632, canvas 152.7 x 111.1 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

85. Rembrandt, *A scholar near a window (a study in 'kamerlicht')*,
1631, panel 60.8 x 47.3 cm.
Stockholm, Nationalmuseum

86. Rembrandt, *Interior with a window and a winding staircase (a study in 'kamerlicht')*, 1632, panel 28.2 x 34.4 cm. Paris, Louvre

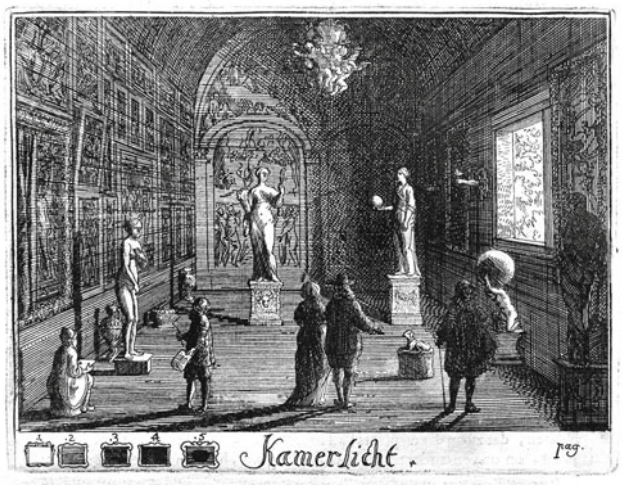
The painting is covered with such a heavy layer of yellowed varnish that a figure of a woman on the stairs can scarcely be distinguished.

1631-1632

85–86

The subjects that Rembrandt chose for his paintings in these first ten year of his career were often no more than the pretext for getting to grips with a pictorial challenge or to solve a pictorial problem, in this case Rembrandt's exploration of so-called '*Kamerlicht*' ['Room light'].

Rembrandt's explorations of the effects of light falling in an enclosed space have been discussed on *Corpus* V pp. 73-80 with reference to Van Hoogstraten's discourse on '*Kamerlicht*' (SvH pp. 267/268).



S. van Hoogstraten's illustration accompanying his discourse on '*Kamerlicht*'. ▶

87a. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man* (companion piece to **87b**),
1632, panel 63.5 x 47.3 cm.
Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum

87b. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a woman* (companion piece to **87a**), 1633, panel 63 x 48 cm.
Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum

88a. Rembrandt and (perhaps) workshop, *Portrait of a man rising from a chair* (companion piece to **88b**), 1633, canvas 124 x 98.5 cm.
Cincinnati, Taft Museum of Art

88b. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a young woman with a fan* (companion piece to **88a**), 1633, canvas 126.2 x 100.5 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

89. Rembrandt, *Portrait of the shipbuilder Jan Rijcksen and his wife Griet Jans*, 1633, canvas 111 x 166 cm.
London, Royal Collection

A strip of 17 cm was removed from the top-edge before 1800 (see Note 89).

1633

89

90. Rembrandt and workshop, *Portrait of the minister Johannes Wtenbogaert*, 1633, canvas 123 x 105 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

The hands seem to be painted by a member of the workshop.

91. Rembrandt and/or workshop?, *Portrait of a man*, 1633, canvas 128.5 x 100.5 cm.
Kassel, Gemäldegalerie

Originally this portrait was probably full size (see Note 91).

1633

90-91

92. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man in a red doublet*, 1633, panel 63.5 x 50.5 cm.
Private collection

93. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a young woman*, 1633, panel 63.5 x 47.5 cm.
Houston, The Museum of Fine Arts

Rembrandt, *Saskia as a bride* (detail), 1633, silverpoint on white prepared parchment 18.5 x 10.6 cm.
Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

94. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Saskia smiling*, 1633, panel 52.5 x 44.5 cm.
Dresden, Gemäldegalerie

95. Rembrandt, *Half-length portrait of Saskia van Uylenburgh*, *c.* 1633-1642, panel 99.5 x 78.8 cm.
Kassel, Gemäldegalerie

An 18th-century document provides evidence that the painting originally measured *c.* 128 x 104.5 cm and was rounded above (see Notes **95** and **269**).

Detail of **95**

c. 1633-1642

95

96. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait with gold chain*,
1633, panel 61 x 48.1 cm.
Paris, Louvre

97. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait with beret and gold chain*, 1633, panel 70.4 x 54 cm.
Paris, Louvre

98. Rembrandt, *Bust of a young woman*, 1633, panel 65 x 49 cm.
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

99. Rembrandt and pupil (?), *Man in oriental costume*, *c.* 1633/1634, canvas 98 x 74 cm.
Washington, National Gallery

This work was probably larger on all sides.

100. Rembrandt, *A young woman (Esther? Judith?) at her toilet*, 1633, canvas 110.5 x 94.3 cm.
Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada

101. Rembrandt, *Bellona*,
1633, canvas 127 x 97.5 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

102. Rembrandt, *Daniel refuses to worship the idol Baal*, 1633, panel 23.4 x 30.1 cm.
Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum

103. Rembrandt, *Bust of an old man* (grisaille), 1633, paper on panel 10.6 x 7.2 cm.
Private collection

104. Rembrandt, *Bust of a man in oriental dress*, 1633, panel 85.8 x 63.8 cm.
Munich, Alte Pinakothek

105. Rembrandt, *Christ in the storm on the Lake of Galilee*,
1633, canvas 160 x 128 cm.
Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (stolen)

Detail of **105**

1633

105

Rembrandt's series

It is well known to anyone familiar with his career that between 1632/33 en 1646 Rembrandt painted a series of works with scenes from the childhood and Passion of Christ, the so-called *Passion series*, for (the Stadholder) *Frederik Hendrik* (see p. 178). These paintings are not among the most admired works in his oeuvre, not only because they are poorly preserved, but also because one does not first and foremost imagine Rembrandt as a producer of series. The usual image of Rembrandt is that of a creator of unique masterpieces, each of which is admired for its specific qualities.

The way in which Rembrandt's oeuvre has been presented in the different surveys to date has contributed to Rembrandt's relatively obscure status as the author of series. These surveys – those of Bartsch (for the etchings) and Bredius (for the paintings) for instance – were usually organized by the presumed iconography of the image, and chronologically within each subject or type of work. As a result, Rembrandt's series were taken out of their context – which applies not only to the series of paintings but also the groups of etchings that belonged together. For many, therefore, it may come as a surprise that Rembrandt produced certainly six series of three or more paintings and four series of etchings including an unfinished series which came no further than two prints and a number of painted grisailles made as designs for more prints that would have constituted part of the same series (see p. 179).

Rembrandt's earliest painted series, in fact his earliest paintings as far as is known, consists of three *Senses* which originated around 1624 [1], [2], [3] and which would probably have belonged to a series of five such paintings.

Rembrandt, who seems to have been an autodidact as an etcher, created his first mature etchings, executed in a painterly manner, about 1630. These are three tiny scenes from the childhood of Jesus (B. 48, B. 51, B. 66).

It is plausible that in 1630 some learned art-lover could have challenged Rembrandt to paint in three different styles, *the genera dicendi* (see Notes [33]–[35]), which resulted in the series of three tiny gilded copper plates painted in three markedly different manners.

A year later, apparently in competition with Jan Lievens, originated Rembrandt's *Christ on the cross* [52] which may well have sown the original idea for the subsequent above-mentioned *Passion series* Frederik Hendrik [106], [107], [145], [162], [163], [211a] and [211b].

When in 1633 a reproduction print was produced of one of the earliest works from this series, the *Descent from the cross* [107], there must have arisen an almost megalomaniac plan: to publish a long series of very large (*c.* 55 x 45 cm) prints with scenes from the life and Passion of Christ. It is quite likely that Hendrick Uylenburgh, with whom Rembrandt worked closely together during this period, played an important role as publisher in this project, for which seven or eight subjects were produced only as designs in grisaille (see p. 179). The random gaps in the narrative succession of scenes that were actually designed could well indicate that the series was originally planned to be much more extensive. One of the possible preparatory grisailles; a *Washing of the Feet* has vanished (Bredius 1910b).

Although this project ran aground, it bequeathed a splendid inheritance of monochrome history pieces from Rembrandt's hand. We can only guess at the reason for aborting the project.

In 1654 Rembrandt did create two series of etchings, one with six episodes from the youth of Christ (B. 45, B. 47, B. 55, B. 63, B. 64, B. 60) and the other with five from Christ's Life and Passion (B. 50, B. 83, B. 86, B. 87, B. 89).

Two series each with three monumental paintings originated in the 1650s and early '60s. The best known of these – only two works of which still survive – began in 1653 with the *Aristotle contemplating the bust of Homer* [228]. The purchaser of that painting would later order the *Homer reciting* [301] and an *Alexander*, both with the same measurements as the *Aristotle*. The *Alexander* has been lost, while the Homer was badly damaged in a fire.

The other series from this period, with three Greek goddesses, probably originated in *c.* 1657, possibly on the initiative of the Amsterdam art-lover and gentleman dealer Herman Becker [251], [252] and [253].

In 1661 Rembrandt painted a series of Apostles and Evangelists, six of which have survived [289]–[294].

The wealth of this harvest of painted and etched series by Rembrandt does not necessarily mean that Rembrandt was in his true element when working on this kind of sequences with linked subject matter. One should not even infer that from the fact that he was busy in the last year of his life with the preparation, once again, for an etched Passion series. We know from a document that he was to execute this series on a commission from the Amsterdam art-lover, Dirk van Cattenburgh (see Note [324]).

These projects give us a deeper insight into Rembrandt as narrator and as an explorer of pictorial possibilities within the rather broad limits that he allowed himself with such series projects.

Rembrandt worked on a series, which actually had no narrative or symbolic function and which he did not execute himself: in 1634 in collaboration with the engraver J.G. van Vliet he published a series of six prints of the same size, based on six of his paintings (see Note [43]). These prints may have been meant to serve as exemplary models for coming artists. ◆

c. 1624 – Three of the five senses

1630 – Scenes from the childhood of Jesus

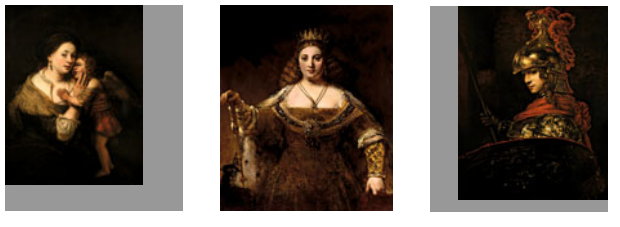
1630 – The three *genera dicendi* (styles)

1632-1646 – The Passion series for Fredrik Hendrik

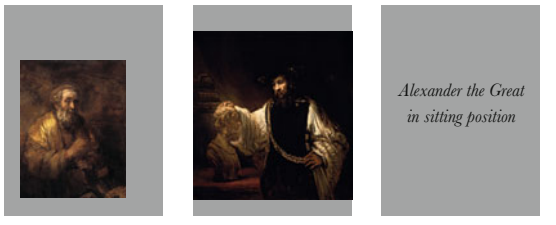
1633-1635 – Design in grisaille and prints for an unfinished Passion series

1654 – Six scenes from the childhood of Jesus

1654 – Five scenes from the life and Passion of Christ



c. 1657-1665 – A classical 'trinity' of goddesses (Venus, Juno and Pallas)



c. 1653-1663 – Homer, Artistotle and Alexander

1661 – An incomplete series of apostles

1. (hypothetical) (see 52)

The *Christ on the Cross* [52] did not belong to the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik. But given that it has the same size as the paintings belonging to that series and is also rounded above there seems to be some connection. In Note 52 this problem is discussed in more detail. I am inclined toward Ernst Brochhagen's standpoint, that the painting must have been the immediate cause for ordering the series.

2. (see 107)

3. (see 106)

4. (see 145)

5. (see 163)

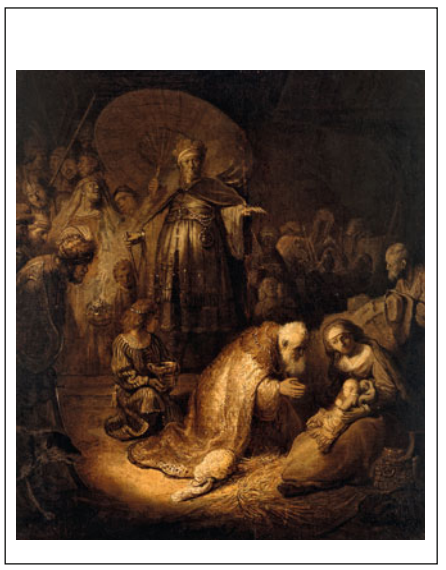
6. (see 162)

7. (see 190)

8. (copy after lost original) (see 192)

c. 1633-1635

1. (see 108)



2. (see 109)

3. (see 110)

Een graeutie van Rembrandt
daer Cristus de voete wast
(A grisaille by Rembrandt
in which Christ washes the feet)
Inventory of Herman Becker's estate 1678

This lost painting may have belonged to this group of designs for the present, unfinished Passion series.

4.

5. (see 111)

6. (see 112)

7. (see 107)

8. (hypothetical) (see 113)

9. (hypothetical) (see 114)

106. Rembrandt, *The Raising of the cross* (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik, see p. 178), 1633, canvas 95.7 x 72.2 cm.
Munich, Alte Pinakothek

107. Rembrandt, *The Descent from the cross* (part of the Passion Series for Frederik Hendrik, see p. 178), 1632/1633, panel 89.6 x 65 cm.
Munich, Alte Pinakothek

1632-1633

106–107

108. Rembrandt, *Joseph telling his dreams* (grisaille), *c.* 1634, paper stuck on card 55.8 x 39.7 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

Made in preparation for an unfinished printed Passion series (see p.179).

109. Rembrandt, *The adoration of the Magi* (grisaille), *c.* 1633, paper stuck on card (?) 44.8 x 39.1 cm.
St Petersburg, Hermitage

Made in preparation for an unfinished printed Passion series (see p. 179).

1633-1634

108–109

110. Rembrandt, *John the Baptist preaching* (grisaille), *c.* 1633/1634, canvas (enlarged) stuck on panel 62.7 x 81.1 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

The grisaille as illustrated below originated in the same period as the other grisailles that Rembrandt produced with the large etched Passion series in view (see p. 179). It was enlarged around 1640, acquiring the form illustrated on the right-hand page.

Enlarged version

1633-1634

110

111. Rembrandt, *Christ and his disciples in Gethsemane* (drawing on paper), 1634, pen and brown ink with brown and other washes and red and black chalk 35.7 x 48.8 cm. Haarlem, Teylers Museum

Although executed with drawing materials on paper, in view of its presumed function this work is counted here among Rembrandt's grisailles in preparation for an unfinished printed Passion series (see p. 179).

112. Rembrandt, *Ecce Homo* (grisaille), 1634, paper on canvas 54.5 x 44.5 cm. London, National Gallery

Grisaille in preparation for an unfinished printed Passion series (see p. 179); in this case the grisaille was actually used for one of the prints, produced by J.G. van Vliet and Rembrandt (Bartsch 77)

1634

111–112

113. Rembrandt, *The Lamentation* (grisaille), *c.* 1633/1634, paper on canvas; enlarged by another hand on a panel measuring 31.9 x 26.7 cm.
London, National Gallery

113 and **114** may be fragments of the planned Passion series shown on p. 179.

114. Rembrandt, *The Entombment* (grisaille), *c.* 1633/1634, panel 32.1 x 40.3 cm.
Glasgow, Hunterian Museum

Detail of **114**

1633-1634

113–114

115. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a young bachelor*, 1634, panel 70 x 52 cm.
St Petersburg, Hermitage

The painting is covered by a layer of yellowed varnish.

116. Rembrandt, *Portrait of an 83-year old woman* (*possibly Aechje Claesdr, mother of Dirck Jansz Presser*), 1634, panel 68.7 x 53.8 cm.
London, National Gallery

117a. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Dirck Jansz Pesser* (companion piece to **117b**), 1634, panel 71 x 53 cm.
Los Angeles, County Museum of Art

117b. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Haesje Jacobsdr van Cleyburg* (companion piece to **117a**), 1634, panel 71 x 53 cm.
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

118a. Rembrandt and mainly workshop, *Portrait of a man in a broad-brimmed hat* (companion piece to **118b**), 1634, panel 70 x 53 cm.
Boston, Museum of Fine Arts

118b. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a woman* (companion piece to **118a**), 1634, panel 69.5 x 53 cm.
Boston, Museum of Fine Arts

Detail of **118a**

Detail of **118b**

119a. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a 41-year-old man, possibly Pieter Sijen* (companion piece to **119b**), 1633, panel 69.3 x 54.8 cm.
Pasadena, Norton Simon Museum

119b. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a 40-year-old woman, possibly Marretje Cornelisdr van Grotewal* (companion piece to **119a**), 1634, panel 69 x 55 cm.
Louisville, Speed Art Museum

120a. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Marten Soolmans* (companion piece to **120b**), 1634, canvas 207 x 132.5 cm.
Paris, Private collection

120b. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Oopjen Coppit* (companion piece to **120a**), 1634, canvas 207 x 132 cm.
Paris, Private collection

121a. Rembrandt, *Portrait of the minister Johannes Elison* (companion piece to **121b**), 1634, canvas 173 x 123 cm.
Boston, Museum of Fine Arts

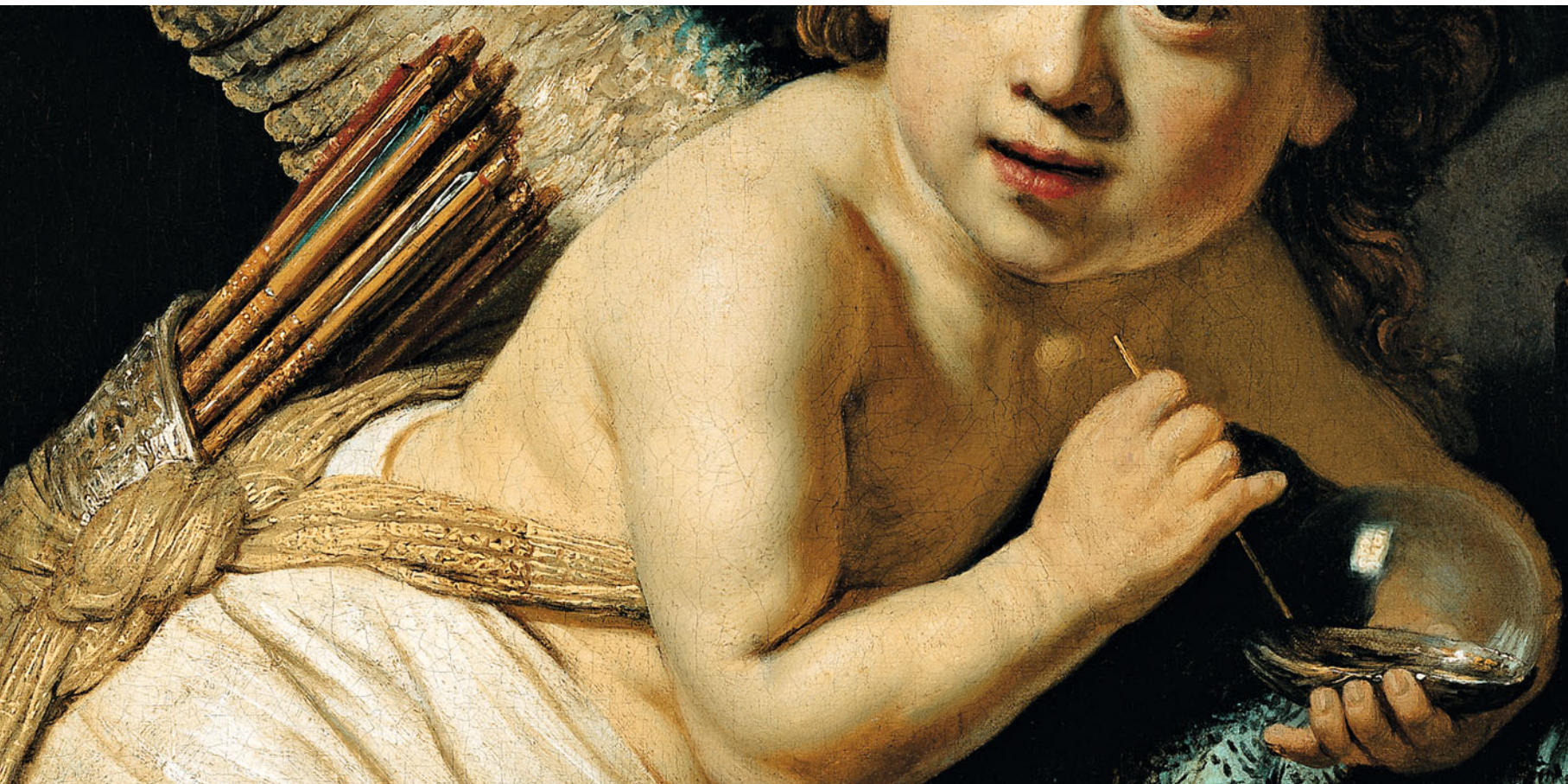
121b. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Maria Bockenolle* (companion piece to **121a**), 1634, canvas 174.5 x 123 cm.
Boston, Museum of Fine Arts

122. Rembrandt, *Oval self-portrait with shaded eyes*, 1634, panel 70.8 x 55.2 cm.
Private collection

123. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait with a cap and fur-trimmed cloak*, 1634, panel 58.3 x 47.5 cm.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

The painting is covered by a layer of yellowed varnish.

124. Rembrandt, *Cupid blowing a soap bubble*, 1634, canvas 75 x 92.6 cm.
Vienna, Liechtenstein Museum



125. Rembrandt, *Flora*,
1634, canvas 125 x 101 cm.
St Petersburg, Hermitage

◀ **126.** Rembrandt, *The Descent from the Cross*, 1634, canvas 159.3 x 116.4 cm.
St Petersburg, Hermitage

127. Rembrandt, *The incredulity of Thomas*, 1634, panel 53 x 50 cm.
Moscow, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts

128. Rembrandt, *Sophonisba receiving the poisoned cup*, 1634, canvas 142 x 153 cm.
Madrid, Prado

129. Rembrandt, *A scholar, seated at a table with books*, 1634, canvas 145 x 134 cm.
Prague, Národní Gallery

1634

128–129

Detail of **130**

130. Rembrandt, *Diana bathing with her nymphs, with the stories of Actaeon and Callisto*, 1634, canvas 73.5 x 93.5 cm.
Anholt, Museum Wasserburg

130A. Rembrandt, *The flight into Egypt*,
1634, panel 52 x 40.1 cm.
Private collection

131. Rembrandt, *The Holy Family*, *c.* 1634, canvas 195 x 132 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek

The painting was originally probably wider than it is today.

1634

130A–131

132a. Rembrandt and workshop, *Portrait of Philips Lucasz* (companion piece to **132b**), 1635, panel 79.5 x 58.9 cm. London, National Gallery

132b. Rembrandt and workshop,
Portrait of Petronella Buys (companion piece to **132a**),
1635, panel 78.8 x 65.3 cm. Whereabouts unknown

No colour Plate available.

133a. Rembrandt and/or workshop, *Portrait of a man in a slouched hat and bandoleer* (companion piece to **133b**), 1635, panel on canvas 78.5 x 65.7 cm.
Sakura, Kawamura Memorial Museum of Art

The painting suffered severely when it was transferred from panel to canvas in 1929 and also from overcleaning. Originally rectangular and possibly also larger below.

133b. Rembrandt and mainly workshop, *Portrait of a young woman* (companion piece to **133a**), 1635, panel 78 x 65 cm. Cleveland, Museum of Art

The painting has suffered severely from overcleaning. Originally rectangular and possibly also larger below.

The second Amsterdam period (1635-1642) From leaving Uylenburgh to the completion of the Night Watch

The way the project of the large etched Passion series 107–114 (see also p. 179) petered out prematurely leads one to suspect that Rembrandt's collaboration with Uylenburgh was no longer running smoothly. At the final count, the project had delivered only two prints while most of the sketches remained unused. The production of portraits also seems to have encountered problems, with only four relatively small ones completed in 1635, of which two at most may have been executed more or less by Rembrandt himself 132a/b and 133a/b.

Early in 1635 the collaboration came to an end. No doubt also the fact that Rembrandt was admitted to the Guild of St Luke played a role in this, for it meant that he could now set himself up as an independent master.

One can only conclude from the significantly different character of Rembrandt's artistic activities between 1635 and 1642 that his ambition as a painter had also taken a different direction. He was in effect making a new beginning.

What strikes one most is that Rembrandt painted a considerable number of large biblical and mythological history pieces with life-size figures 135–140, 143, 148 and 149 in close succession. These compositions were mainly dramatic scenes with a distinctly Rubensian ambition. One wonders whether he painted these pieces, not on commission but on his own initiative, with the intention of putting himself forward as a new Rubens. In the case of two of these paintings the *Blinding of Samson* 148, and the *Danae* 149 we can be almost certain that they were not done on commission. Rembrandt offered a painting with the format of these two works – probably the *Blinding of Samson* 148 – as a kind of promotional gift to Constantijn Huygens. It would appear, however, that Huygens declined to accept it; in his memoires of his youth he admitted that he was not inclined to keep works of art with gruesome subjects (like the *Blinding of Samson*) around him. Rembrandt was still working on the *Danae* 149 – probably begun in 1636 – up to 1643, so it can scarcely have been a commission. Nor is it easy to see how a painting like *The prodigal son in the tavern* with his self-portrait with Saskia in it 135 could have originated as a commission.

The dynamism of the figures depicted in this cluster of dramatic history pieces and the powerful emotions one reads in the protagonists' faces surpass in these respects comparable paintings by Rembrandt's older Flemish contemporary. Rembrandt's management of light and shade in these paintings also makes the compositional unity of these monumental works more convincing than in comparable paintings by Rubens.

As abruptly as this episode began in 1635, with almost exclusively large history pieces with life-size figures, it ended two years later just as suddenly. As far as we know, from 1637 until the beginning of the 1640s he produced no more of these monumental paintings. *The Night Watch* 190 was the next such case, but that, of course, was the result of a commission – a commission that he perhaps would never have been given, or at least he may not have been able to execute, if he had not experienced and demonstrated in 1635 and '36 that he was more than equal to the task. The first time he had begun a large work, the *Esther, Ahasuerus and Mordechai* measuring 235 x 190 cm on which he worked in 1633/34, he abandoned it. (At some stage during the 1650s one of his pupils would re-work and complete this monumental painting (Esther 1991) (see Note 320 fig. 1).)

Between 1636 and 1639, among other things Rembrandt worked on three paintings for the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik 145, 162, 163 – a series that would only painfully slowly reach completion in 1646.

Otherwise Rembrandt's activities in this period display a remarkable variety. In 1637 he resumed his work as a painter of landscapes that he had ended in 1634 with his ambitious woodland landscape with two scenes from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* 130 and a *Flight into Egypt* in a similarly forested, but this time nocturnal setting 130A. He painted his next narrative landscape, the *Landscape with the Good Samaritan* in 1638 159. It was almost ten years before he produced another such narrative landscape, the *Nocturnal landscape with the Holy Family* 214. The other landscapes that originated between the 1630s and the 1650s were pure landscapes with staffage 152, 175 and 176 from the mid 1640s 205–207.

It would seem that in other respects too Rembrandt further pursued his investigations of the '*gronden*'. This

is especially clear in the case of two exquisite small-scale history pieces from 1640. In his *Holy Family with St Anne* 173 he ingeniously combines two previously explored light effects: incoming sunlight and 'room light'. (The latter effect evidently played an important role for Rembrandt in the *Parable of the labourers in the vineyard* 151.)

In the *Visitation* 174 from 1640 Rembrandt seems mainly to be concentrating on a single sub-aspect of 'Invention and Ordonnance': *'sprong'*. When Van Hoogstraten in his *Introduction to the Academy of Painting* outlined what was meant by '*sprong*' he could very well be taking the words from the mouth of his master: '*one should give the figures a 'sprong' that is pleasing [to the eye], such that, whether high or low, together they create a 'shape' that is attractive to the eye, and there appears an interplay between them resulting from their diversity* (*Corpus* V Ch. II p. 215). The introduction of different levels on which adults, children and animals comport was something that must have particularly engaged Rembrandt during the period when he started his work on the *Night Watch* in *c.* 1640.

The fact that in 1639 he painted two large 'still lifes' with dead birds 165 and 166 and in 1640 a brilliantly observed family of peacocks in the *Visitation* 174 may also indicate that he was still tackling new artistic challenges: just as with his activities as a landscape painter around 1637-1640 mentioned above and his work on small-scale history pieces 144, 150, 151. Undoubtedly, Rembrandt was seeking to develop further as an all-round painter, in 160 obviously emulating Leonardo da Vinci as a history painter.

In the early 1640s he acquired a marked interest in *trompe l'oeil* painting, with living figures placed in a space in which the beholder also finds himself. Between 165 and the *Night Watch* 190 one finds many works with *trompe l'oeil* characteristics, even in the *Night Watch* itself. Among the five self-portraits that originated in this period, there was certainly one, 179, that Rembrandt must have conceived as a living *trompe l'oeil*.

His time of portrait painting seemed to be in the past. In 1637 he did again paint one 156, but it was only in 1638/1639, when Rembrandt must have been contemplating buying a large house, large enough for his family and his workshop and for teaching purposes, that he returned to portrait painting on a significant scale. He painted 10 portraits – among which a double portrait 183 and a group portrait, the *Night Watch* 190, which contained the portraits of 20 individuals, most of whom paid one hundred or more guilders be portrayed. During four years he thus portrayed 32 individuals in total. As already indicated on p. 118, it was mainly for economic reasons that he returned to the well-paid activity of portrait painting. Exceptions to this were his portrait of *Saskia as Flora* 181 and portraits of friends, the Doomer couple 177a/b. For a discussion of a presumed category of 'portraits of family members and friends', see the Notes to Plates 304 and 316.

Rembrandt's experience acquired in the years 1633-'34 as a designer of complex prints bore fruit when in 1637 he produced his brilliant design for a political print, *The Concord of the State* 153.

In the second edition of his *'Beschrijving der Stadt Leyden'* [Description of the City of Leiden], published in 1641, Orlers wrote of Rembrandt that:

> *'(h)e was so talented that since* [his Leiden years] *he has become one of the most esteemed painters of this century. And because his work and art had greatly pleased and impressed the citizens and residents of Amsterdam, and because he received frequent portrait commissions, as well as requests for other pictures, he decided to move from Leiden to Amsterdam. Accordingly, he left here* [i.e. Leiden] *in about 1630 and took up residence there, and is still living there in the year 1641.'*

The astonishing multifaceted nature of his output in the period discussed above already amply justifies this proud estimate of Leiden's greatest son. ◆

134. Rembrandt (and workshop?), *Half-length figure of Rembrandt or autograph self-portrait?* 1635, canvas 90.5 x 71.8 cm.
Buckland Abbey (National Trust)

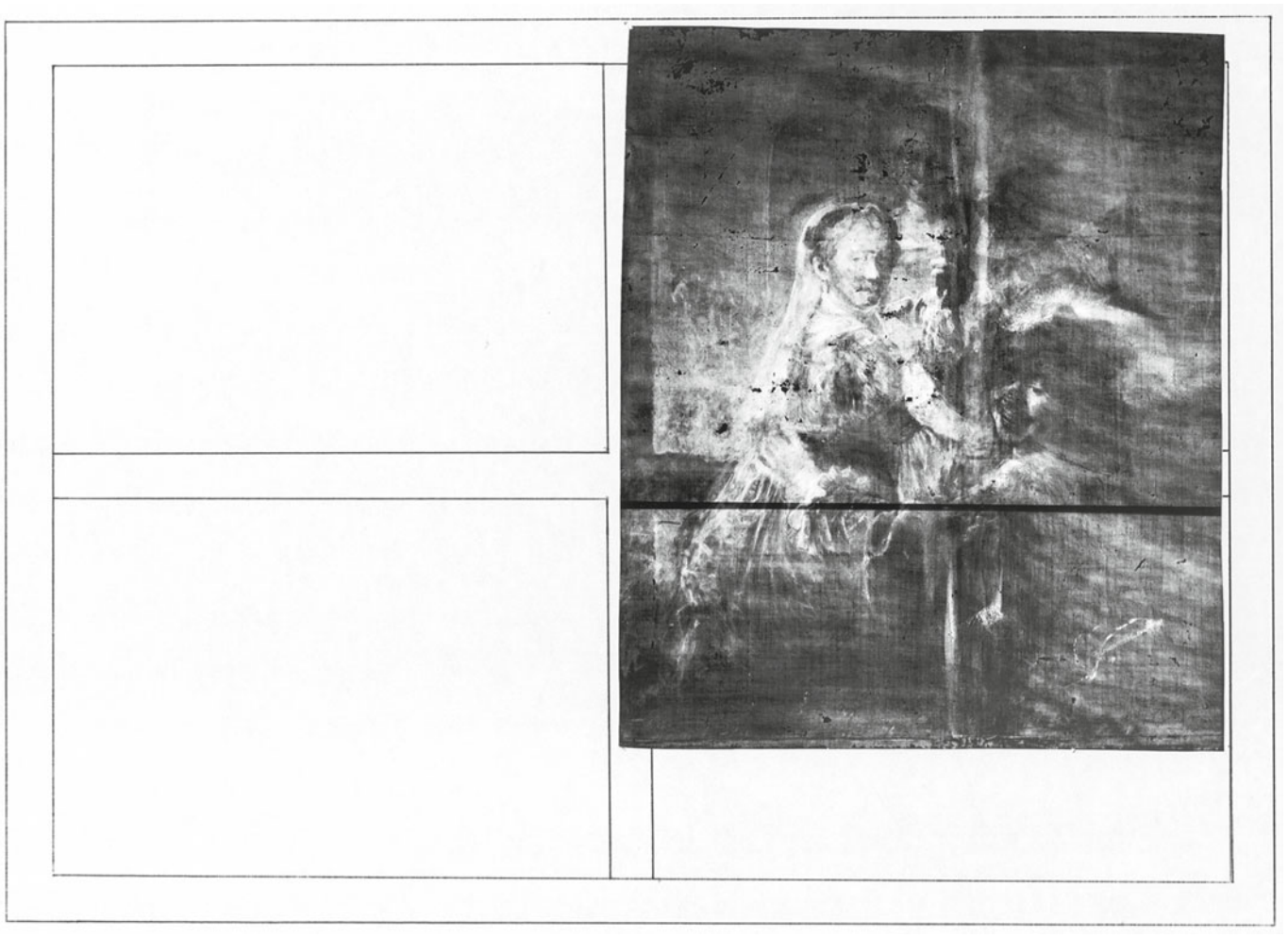
Detail of **134**

1635
134

135. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait as the prodigal son in the tavern*, *c.* 1635, canvas 161 x 131 cm. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie

There can be no doubt that the painting has been trimmed on the left side: the fragmentary still-life on the table and the transected tally-board against the back wall testify to this. The hypothesis mooted here is that the painting could have been more than twice its present size originally. First of all, it should be noted that the seam in the still existing part of the original canvas runs horizontally, which may be seen as an indication that the painting originally had a horizontal format. Since the sixteenth century, a woman writing on the tally-board was a standard part of the iconography of this scene of the parable. Such a figure would require considerable space beyond the present left border of the painting. Drawings by – or after – Rembrandt showing this scene from the parable also have a horizontal format. As they contain one or two more figures, apart from the woman writing on the tally-board, this may also have been the case with the painting under discussion. The X-ray shows that between the present figures there had once been a girl playing a lute. There is a technical indication in favour of the idea that the painting once extended further to the left and downwards as well. This indication concerns the dark bands, visible in the X-radiograph running along the left edge and in horizontal direction at about the height of the prodigal son's hand on the woman's hip. A dark band of roughly the same width runs along the top edge. It is likely that we are looking here at the traces of a preservation treatment carried out (using a radio-absorbent material such as an oil paint containing red lead or lead white of varying thickness on the reverse side of the canvas) before 1754, the year in which the painting is mentioned with its present dimensions. If one assumes that the horizontal and vertical bands to the left of Rembrandt's hand indicate the position of the cross-battens of a stretcher, this would mean that the painting must have been larger not only on the left but also below and possibly somewhat larger to the right, since no dark band is visible along the right edge. In fact, it must have been originally a large painting, possibly of a format slightly smaller than that of *The blinding of Samson* (see 146) and the *Danaë* (see 147) (in its original format some 185 x 260 cm). This would also mean that the figures in the Dresden painting, like those in *The blinding of Samson*, were originally represented full length.

The reconstruction of the stretcher on the basis of the X-ray shows just how much the painting was reduced in size. The paint surface of the lower part of the remaining fragment suffered badly, such that it had to be repainted.



Detail van **135**

1635
135

136. Rembrandt, *Abraham's sacrifice*, 1635, canvas 193.5 x 132.8 cm.
St Petersburg, Hermitage

The painting is covered by a layer of yellowed varnish.

137. Rembrandt, *The rape of Ganymede*, 1635, canvas 177 x 130 cm. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie

138. Rembrandt, *Flora*,
1635, canvas 123.5 x 97.5 cm.
London, National Gallery

139. Rembrandt, *Minerva*,
1635, canvas 137 x 116 cm.
Private collection

140. Rembrandt, *Samson threatening his father in law*, *c.* 1635, canvas 159 x 131 cm.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

140a. Copy of **140** in its original appearance

When a photograph of another version of the present painting first appeared in which the composition extended further to the left than in this one [140] (see [140a]), it was initially concluded that [140] must have been cut down on the left side. But when the canvas of [140] was investigated, a clear pattern of cusping was observed along the left edge, indicating that the canvas could never have been wider there. In 2000 the larger version resurfaced, having long been lost from view. It turned out to be an old copy. A series of technical and material characteristics indicate beyond any reasonable doubt that it must have originated in Rembrandt's workshop. To our surprise the resurfaced copy had a seam running vertically in a position corresponding to the left edge of the Berlin original. The copy had thus been enlarged. Moreover, the way in which the enlargement had been carried out made it certain that this had been carried out in Rembrandt's workshop.

The problem that remains is the difficulty of establishing the relationship between [140] and [140a], a problem which is further complicated by the fact that a crucial iconographic element was painted on the canvas piece sewn on to the copy, viz. the kid that Samson had brought as a gift to his wife. Parts of the heads of the two negro boys leading the kid on a rope are also visible at the extreme left of the Berlin original; but it has simply not been possible to establish whether the original was also enlarged on the left side. There were traces of the original selvedge of the canvas but no evidence of any seam. The bottom zone of [140] has been seriously damaged, probably water damage. One may therefore speculate that if a left-hand strip had been added to the original, this could subsequently have been lost as a result of the same water damage. If that were the case, it could be that Rembrandt, either during or after the origin of the Berlin painting in its present form, decided to alter his conception and to enlarge the painting on the left – in which his copyist followed suit. However, it is also possible that the copy (which seems to be painted by one of Rembrandt's pupils) was used by Rembrandt to explore a different narrative and iconographic solution for the composition of this history piece – as happened during the same period in the case of [136] – and that the prototype remained unchanged. But that would not explain the fragmentary appearance of the boys' heads on the Berlin prototype.

This complex puzzle has not yet been satisfactorily resolved.

141. Rembrandt, *Bust of a man in oriental dress*, 1635, panel 72 x 54.5 cm.
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

142. Rembrandt, *Bust of a bearded old man in fanciful costume*, 1635, mahogany panel 72.5 x 62.1 cm.
London, Royal collection

143. Rembrandt, *Belshazzar's feast*, *c.* 1635, canvas 167.6 x 209.2 cm. London, National Gallery

On the basis of the pattern of cusping, it may be concluded that the painting was tilted to the left by later hands and cut to shape accordingly. This is also apparent from the edge of the table and the stream of wine poured from the jug by the woman on the right.

Detail of **143**

1635
143

144. Rembrandt, *Susanna bathing*, 1636, panel 47.2 x 38.6 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis

145. Rembrandt, *The Ascension* (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik, see p. 178), 1636, canvas 93 x 68.7 cm.
Munich, Alte Pinakothek

1636

144–145

146. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait transformed into a 'tronie'*, *c.* 1633-1636, panel 56 x 47 cm.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

147. Rembrandt, *The standard-bearer*, 1636, canvas 118.8 x 96.8 cm.
Private collection

148. Rembrandt, *The blinding of Samson*,
1636, canvas 205 x 272 cm.
Frankfurt am Main, Städelsches Kunstinstitut

149. Rembrandt, *Danae*
c. 1636-*c.* 1643, canvas 185 x 203 cm.
St Petersburg, Hermitage

The reproduction shows the painting before it was very badly damaged in 1985.

The painting of *Danae* in her luxurious prison, who receives the supreme god Zeus in the form of a beam of light is painted on canvas that comes from the same roll of linen as the canvas of the *Blinding of Samson* (see 148), both canvases composed of two lengths of the customary standard width of 1.5 ell (*c.* 105 cm) with the seam in the middle. The two paintings originated the same year, in 1636. By studying the 'cusping' (the pattern of distortions of the weave caused by stretching a canvas) of the canvases of the two paintings, one can deduce that substantial strips are missing from the *Danae*.

The hypothesis inferred from the above is that *Danae* and the *Samson* were originally painted on similarly large canvases. With the help of a free copy by a pupil, probably painted by Ferdinand Bol, painted around 1640 (see below left), the painting could be digitally reconstructed (see below right). In *c.* 1643 Rembrandt painted the figure of Danae and the old woman opening the curtain again. See for the relevant detail the plate opposite 194. (see also *Corpus* V p. 282)

Detail of **148**

150. Rembrandt, *The angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family*, 1637, panel 66 x 52 cm.
Paris, Louvre

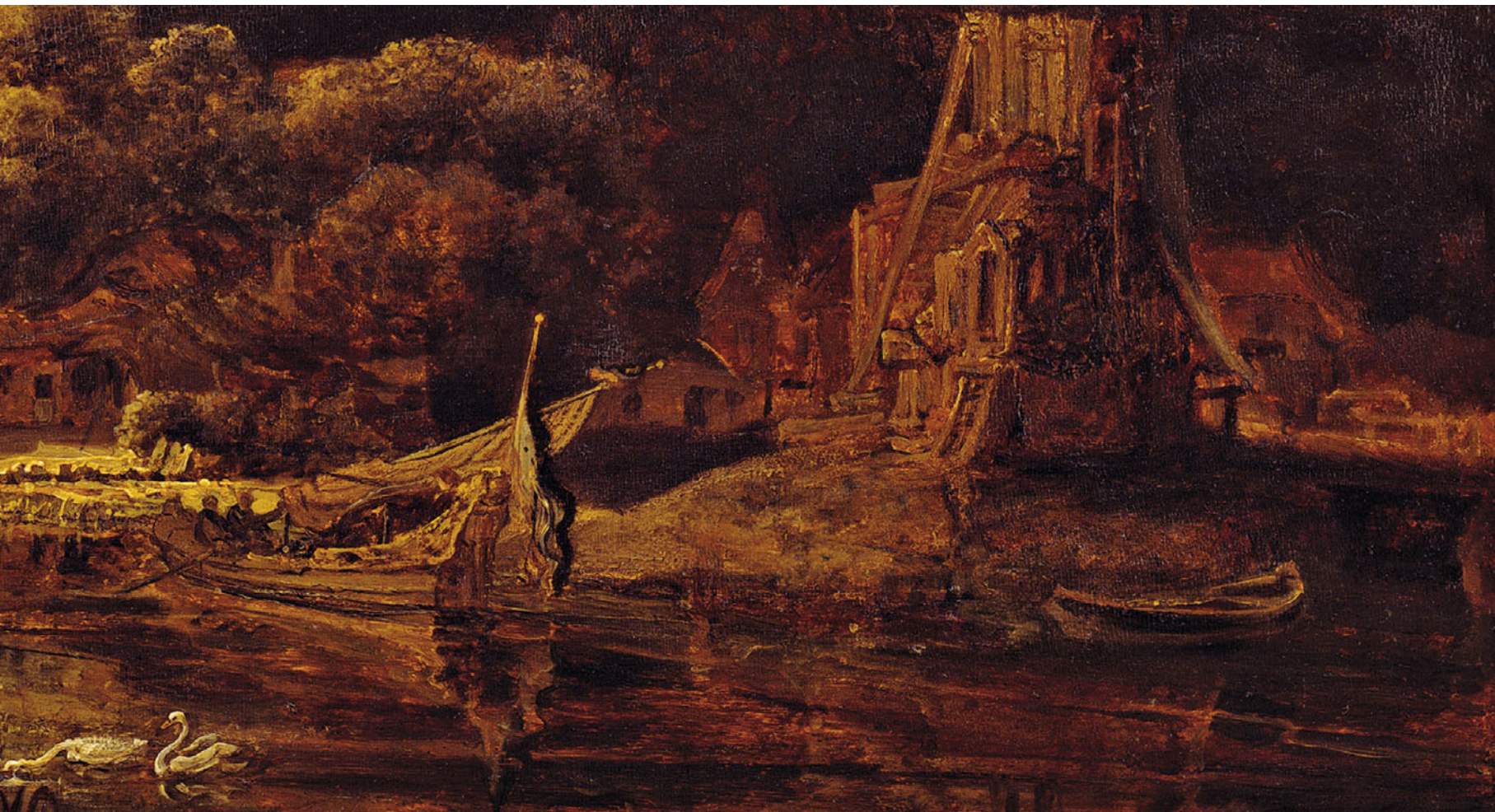
151. Rembrandt, *The parable of the labourers in the vineyard*, 1637, panel 31 x 42 cm.
St Petersburg, Hermitage

The paint of the figures to the right have suffered from blanching. 1637

150–151

152. Rembrandt, *River landscape with ruins*, *c.* 1637-*c.* 1645, panel 67 x 87.5 cm. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie

The mill together with its immediate surroundings was originally placed in a flat Dutch landscape. Rembrandt transformed it into classical mountainous landscape around 1645.



153. Rembrandt, *The Concord of the State* (grisaille serving as a design for a political print which was never realized), *c.* 1637, panel 74.6 x 101 cm. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen

154. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait*, *c.* 1637, panel 64 x 49 cm. London, Wallace Collection

The painting originally was larger (*c.* 75 x 55 cm) and rectangular. The upper corners of the background are digitally reconstructed (see Note 154)

155. Rembrandt, *Man in Russian costume*, 1637, panel 96.7 x 66.1 cm.
Washington, National Gallery of Art

156. Rembrandt, *Portrait of the preacher Eleazar Swalmius*, 1637, canvas 132 x 109 cm.
Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten

157. Rembrandt, *Bust of a man with plumed cap*, *c.* 1637, panel 62.5 x 47 cm.
The Hague, Mauritshuis

158. Rembrandt, *The risen Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene*, 1638, panel 61 x 49.5 cm.
London, Royal Collection

Pupil of Rembrandt, *Copy from around 1643 after an early stage of the Susanna and the elders,* (see **213**) 1638-1647, pen and brown ink, brown and grey washes, red chalk on paper 17.8 x 23.8 cm. Rembrandt worked on this painting nearly a decade with long intervals. The added detail of the painting (see below) shows a figure on which Rembrandt did not work any further after 1638.

159. Rembrandt, *Landscape with the Good Samaritan*, 1638, panel 46.5 x 66 cm.
Cracow, Muzeum Narodowe

160. Rembrandt, *The wedding of Samson*, 1638, canvas 126 x 175 cm.
Dresden, Gemäldegalerie

Detail of **160**

161. Rembrandt, *Woman with a mirror* (oil sketch), *c.* 1638, mahogany panel 23.9 x 32.5 cm. St Petersburg, Hermitage

Later additions to the top and bottom have been omitted in this reproduction (see Note 161).

162. Rembrandt, *The Entombment* (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik, see p. 178), 1635-1639, canvas 92.6 x 68.9 cm.
Munich, Alte Pinakothek

163. Rembrandt, *The Resurrection* (Part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik see p. 178), 1639, canvas 92.9 x 67 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek

164. Rembrandt, *King Uzziah stricken with leprosy*, *c.* 1639/1640, poplar panel 102.8 x 78.8 cm. Chatsworth

Covered with a disturbing layer of yellowed varnish. The dark patches in Uzziah's face are probably painted indications of his leprosy.

Detail of **164**

1639-1640

164

165. Rembrandt, *Two dead peacocks and a girl*, *c.* 1639, canvas 145 x 135.5 cm.
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

166. Rembrandt, *A dead bittern*, 1639, panel 120.7 x 88.3 cm. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie

The painting is covered by a layer of yellowed varnish.

1639

165–166

167. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man holding a hat*, *c.* 1640, poplar panel 81.4 x 71.4 cm.
Los Angeles, Armand Hammer Museum

The panel has been trimmed on all sides. It belonged to a batch of equally large poplar panels, which makes it possible to speculate about the original size of the painting (see dotted line).

168. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man standing, possibly Andries de Graeff,* 1639, canvas 200 x 124.2 cm.
Kassel, Gemäldegalerie

169. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Aletta Adriaensdr*, 1639, panel 64.7 x 55.3 cm.
Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, on loan from the Van der Vorm Foundation

The heavily damaged fingers were reconstructed during a restoration in the 1960s.

170. Rembrandt and workshop?, *Self-portrait*, *c.* 1640, panel 80.5 x 62.8 cm.
Paris, Louvre

Adaption of an earlier self-portrait.

1639-1640

169–170

171. Rembrandt, *Bust of a young woman*,
c. 1640, poplar panel 60.5 x 49 cm.
Washington, National Gallery, Widener Collection

172. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait*,
c. 1639, panel 63 x 50.1 cm.
Pasadena, Norton Simon Museum of Art

173. Rembrandt, *The holy family with St Anne*, 1640, panel 40.6 x 34 cm.
Paris, Louvre

The painting is covered by a layer of yellowed varnish.

174. Rembrandt, *The Visitation*, 1640, panel 56.6 x 47.8 cm. Detroit, Detroit Institute of Art

175. Rembrandt, *Landscape with a stone bridge*, *c.* 1638/1640, panel 29.5 x 42.5 cm.
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

176. Rembrandt, *Mountain landscape with approaching storm*, *c.* 1640, panel 52 x 72 cm. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum

177a. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Herman Doomer* (companion piece to **177b**),
1640, panel 75 x 55.3 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

177b. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Baertje Martens* (companion piece to **177a**),
c. 1640, panel 75.1 x 55.9 cm.
St Petersburg, Hermitage

178. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait*, *c.* 1640, panel 72.2 x 58.3 cm. Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza

The panel was slightly cropped later; the roughly blocked out hand was revealed during a restoration. Originally it must have been painted out by Rembrandt himself.

179. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait*, 1640, canvas 93 x 80 cm. London, The National Gallery

180. Rembrandt and workshop, *Portrait of a woman, possibly Anna Wijmer*, 1641, panel 99.5 x 81.5 cm.
Amsterdam, Six Foundation

For the original appearance of the painting (see Note 180).

181. Rembrandt, *Saskia as Flora*, 1641,
panel 98.5 x 82.5 cm.
Dresden, Gemäldegalerie

The paint is covered by a disturbing yellowed layer of varnish.

182. Rembrandt, *Oil study of a woman lit obliquely from behind*, *c.* 1640, panel 46.5 x 37.5 cm.
Private collection

It is tempting to speculate that this lighting study of a woman in a white bonnet may have a connection with one of Rembrandt's most unusual projects from its period, the highly ambitious Double portrait of the preacher Anslo and his wife in Berlin. The unusual feature of this monumental painting is its composition as a whole, and in particular the placing of the two figures in the pictorial space and in relation to each other. The entire left half of the composition is taken up by a complex still life with books and a candelabra on a table covered with a Persian rug.

183. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Cornelis Anslo and his wife Aeltje Schouten*, 1641, canvas
176 x 210 cm.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

Rembrandt's surprising invention is to place the two portrayed subjects, the famous preacher, Cornelis Claesz. Anslo and his wife, Aeltje Gerritsdochter Schouten, close together in the other half of the composition. However, this particular and unusual composition is not unique in Rembrandt's oeuvre: it was pointed out in Volume III of *A Corpus* p. 409 that there is a striking similarity in compositional terms between the Anslo double portrait and one of the paintings mentioned above, the *Old men disputing* (Peter and Paul) in Melbourne from *c.* 1628 (see 27). These two paintings are in a sense mirror images of each other: in the painting in Melbourne it is the *left* half of the composition that is taken up by the two figures, while in the *right* half a complex still life with books and with a candelabra can be seen. But in both paintings the incident light comes from the left, as is usual in Rembrandt's paintings.

Here, precisely were the lighting of the figures is concerned, the dilemma that the Anslo double portrait presented to Rembrandt becomes clear. In the painting in Melbourne, the figure of Paul – who is apparently speaking and indicating with his forefinger a passage in the book on Peter's lap – is placed in full lighting. Only the right side of his face is slightly in shadow. Peter, on the other hand, is lit from behind, so that his face remains entirely in shadow. In the Anslo painting the situation is reversed. The face of Aeltje is placed in full light, whereas, on the contrary, of the main personage in the painting, Cornelis Anslo, is largely cloaked in shadow.

One could speculate on whether Rembrandt might originally have based the composition of the Anslo double portrait on the scheme of the *Peter and Paul*, Anslo, the chief personage, would then, like Paul, have been most favourable placed with regard to the incident light, while his wife would have been partially lit from behind. Perhaps the study discussed here played some role in taking the decision. As remarked earlier, when Rembrandt was deciding the composition of the *Brunswick Family* portrait 313 he chose to place one of those portrayed with her back to the light. Why should the same solution not have been considered – but in the event ejected – some 25 years earlier?

Like the lighting study in front of the mirror in the Rijksmuseum, one suspects that the study of the woman with the white bonnet must have served some function within the workshop. This is confirmed by the existence of two old copies, probably the work of Rembrandt's pupils (see *Quest* p. 191).

Detail of **183**

184a. Rembrandt workshop, *Portrait of a man (Balthasar Coymans?)* (companion piece to **184b**), 1641 (?), poplar panel 106 x 79 cm.
Private collection

184b. Rembrandt and the painter of 184a, *Portrait of a woman (Maria Trip?)* (companion piece to **184a**), 1641 (?), poplar panel 107 x 82 cm.
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

185. Rembrandt, *A scholar at a writing desk*, 1641, poplar panel 104 x 76 cm. Warsaw, Royal Castle

186. Rembrandt, *Girl in fanciful costume in a picture frame*, 1641, poplar panel 104 x 76 cm.
Warsaw, Royal Castle

187a. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Nicolaes van Bambeeck in a picture frame* (companion piece to **187b**), 1641, canvas 108.8 x 83.3 cm.
Brussels, Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten

187b. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Agatha Bas in a picture frame* (companion piece to **187a**), 1641, canvas 104 x 82 cm.
London, Royal Collection

188. Rembrandt, *David's parting from Jonathan*, 1642, panel 73 x 61 cm.
St Petersburg, Hermitage

189. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait*, 1642, panel 69.9 x 58.4 cm. Windsor Castle, Royal Collection

The costume and the hand are largely overpainted by a much later hand.

1642

188–189

190. Rembrandt, *The Night Watch* (actually: *'The painting in the great hall of the Kloveniers Doelen in which the young Lord of Purmerland* [Frans Banninck Cocq] *as Captain, gives the order to his Lieutenant, the Lord of Vlaerdingen* [Willem van Ruytenburgh] *to march off his Company of Citizens'*, as the painting is called in the family album of Frans Banninck Cocq), 1642, canvas 363 x 438 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

The painting has been cropped on all four sides. For a reconstruction of the original appearance see the right-hand page.

Digital reconstruction of the 'Night Watch'
based on a small-scale copy painted before 1648 by Gerrit Lundens.

1642

190

Detail of **190**

The third Amsterdam period (1643-1650); the turbulent 1640s

Events following the completion of the *Night Watch* in 1642 as alleged in the Rembrandt literature of the late 19th and early 20th century were central to the growth of a Rembrandt myth. Part of the myth was that the *Night Watch* was not appreciated by those who had commissioned it and that this was why Rembrandt received no more portrait commissions in the subsequent decade. The death of Rembrandt's wife Saskia in the same year also crucially fed into this myth: these severe blows falling in the same year, it was thought, constituted a turning point in Rembrandt's life both as a man and as an artist. From an outward-going, happily married man and highly successful painter he retreated into himself. The alleged failure by the outside world to recognize his mastery led to his art turning inward and becoming correspondingly 'deeper', such that his works from the so-called 'late period' were accorded an almost magical quality. Art historians such as Schmidt Degener (1881-1941), Jacob Rosenberg (1893-1980) and many others have spread this myth in eloquent fashion; it became accepted worldwide. At the same time, Rembrandt's self-portraits were read as documenting the development of Rembrandt's inner life.

Jan Emmens argued in 1954 that the turn of 1642 in Rembrandt's mythologised biography was based on the Saul/Paul conversion narrative, a much used biographical *topos* in which a supposedly sudden inner and outer change in the life of a historical personage is raised to the status of a crucial determining event.

However, as Seymour Slive demonstrated on the basis of 17th century documents, the *Night Watch* was absolutely accepted by its commissioners and widely admired at the time (Slive 1953 pp. 41-54). Rembrandt's affair with Geertje Dircx (who entered his household in *c.* 1643 as a wet nurse to his son Titus), after first being concealed by the community of Rembrandt specialists and devotees, was also later blown up into a scandal that cast a slur on Rembrandt's character and queried his love for and his grief over Saskia.

There may be, as we know meanwhile (p. 118) a much less portentous reason for the fact that in the ten years after completing the *Night Watch* he scarcely painted any more portraits: as already mentioned, Rembrandt apparently had no need of such a side income during this period.

Certainly, it is true that the period between 1642 and 1651 offers a picture of Rembrandt's activities as a painter that is not easily explained; a period in which his production of paintings was remarkably low – and yet so highly variable that there seems to be no stylistic development evident in the rather small group of *c.* 30 paintings from this period. For those art historians who assumed that the changing style of Rembrandt's painting would follow a model of gradual evolution this was a major stumbling block. For the original team of Rembrandt Research Project it was actually one of the reasons to end the project prematurely after *Corpus* III (1635-1642) (see p. 37)**:** for such stylistic reasons, it seemed virtually impossible to find the kind of connections between different works that would provide a basis for asserting stylistic relationships – or the lack of them – on which to argue for or against attributions or disattributions (in this context, see Note 171 and p. 37).

There are, however, grounds for thinking that in the decade under discussion Rembrandt was heavily preoccupied with basic problems in the art of painting, just as he had been in his Leiden period . This can actually be demonstrated in the cases of three paintings on which he had begun in the 1630s but which had stood unfinished in his studio ever since (149, 152 and 213). In *c.* 1643, *c.* 1645 and 1647 he would work on them further. The way in which he did so in all three cases clearly shows that he was engaged in the exploration of fundamental artistic questions, the play of light and shade on human flesh; compositional problems in landscape painting and the suggestion of motion in history painting. This latter problem seems to have occupied his thinking as a history painter more than anything else (and for that reason it will be dealt with here more in particular. For the other two issues see related remarks in Notes 212 and 206 respectively).

One may speculate that Rembrandt was preoccupied with the question of whether the emphatic suggestion of movement and the expression of emotional states by his protagonists, which he had striven for in his work up till then, had perhaps after all been the wrong path.

It is certainly remarkable that the depiction of a wide range of affects (such as one can still see on the faces of the many guests in *Samson's wedding* from 1638 [160]) does not occur after 1642. Nor does one encounter in his history pieces after '42 the violent movement seen in his large history pieces from the years '35/'36 [135] et seq. or the bold activity of figures as in the *Night Watch*. One can see that this must have been a deliberate decision when one analyses the alterations that he carried out in the *Susanna and the Elders* (see the Plate opposite to [158] compared with [213]). The abruptness of the action originally depicted in that painting – the flying fowl, the vase that has been knocked over and spills its contents, the foremost Elder's grabbing hand – had as far as possible been eliminated in 1647 when he handed the painting over to a buyer.

When one surveys Rembrandt's oeuvre from the completion of the *Night Watch* onward, the attitudes or postures of the figures are characterized by a calm action which conveys a deeper sense of implied – rather than explicit – emotions than in his paintings before 1642, which can often seem more like ' stills' from a film (see *Corpus* V pp. 208-212).

In the '40s landscape assumes a conspicuous role in Rembrandt's activities. This is obviously true for the many drawings and prints with landscapes that originated during this period, but in a number of his paintings too he took a landscape as his subject [205]–[208] and [214]. In effect, he was continuing an activity that he had begun hesitantly in 1637 (see Note [152]). Far more than in his drawings and etchings, in addition to the Dutch landscape he also depicted fantasy landscapes, apparently as a possible means for resolving specific artistic problems, particularly of composition [205], [206], [152] (second state). Analyses by Peter Schatborn and others of the many landscape drawings in Rembrandt's style that originated in the decade under discussion suggest a Rembrandt in lively communication with his pupils during trips in the environments of Amsterdam.

As remarked on p. 118, in the decade of the '40s Rembrandt painted hardly any portraits. For the most part he left the execution of the two portraits dated 1643b [191a/b] to an assistant. Other portrait commissions that he evidently still accepted were also given for pupils/assistants (such as probably Carel Fabritius) to execute either wholly or in part, even though they could be signed by the master (see Note [191a/b] figs. 3-9). Only one entirely autograph portrait, painted in 1644, has survived from these years, [195]. And in 1647 Rembrandt painted an oil sketch [215] with an eye to an etched portrait of Ephraim Bueno (B. 252) and in 1648 he created an unusual painting that I am inclined to see as a portrait in which the sitter, probably an art-lover, is painted in a highly unusual lighting, somewhat comparable to the way that Jan Six had himself immortalized in his etched portrait the previous year (B. 285). Besides Carel Fabritius, another noteworthy pupil from this period was Samuel van Hoogstraten. I am convinced that he incorporated in his treatise for trainee painters and art-lovers a great deal of what he had learned from Rembrandt (see *Corpus* V Chapter I).

Another specific line of activity that had played an especially important role for Rembrandt in the years '39 to '42 continued through to the mid '40s, that of the *trompe l'oeil* with live figures [194] and [200]. And in the meantime the work on the series for Frederik Hendrik continued (see [211a] and [211b]).

With intervening pauses Rembrandt worked on other, sometimes extremely refined small history pieces [196], [198], [209], [218] and [219]. It is surprising that in the period under discussion (if my re-attribution and dating of the *Saul and David* are correct) Rembrandt also worked on one ambitious history piece with life-size figures, the *Saul and David* [212].

This decade also seems to have witnessed an important phase of Rembrandt's teaching activity. The only true genius among his pupils, Carel Fabritius frequented his workshop. A few small history pieces [201], [202] and perhaps [208] give us glimpses into aspects of Rembrandt's teaching practice (see also *Corpus* V no. 24).

Remarkably enough, during this decade Rembrandt painted only a single self-portrait. Of course, he must still have had some of his stock of earlier etched self-portraits available (B. 19 and 21) in case the necessity arose to provide a self-portrait. In 1648 he produced again a new etched 'official' self-portrait (B. 22). (On this aspect of Rembrandt's activities see *Corpus* IV pp. 184-199). ◆

191a. Rembrandt and workshop, *Portrait of a man with a hawk* (companion piece to **191b**), 1643, canvas 114 x 97.3 cm.
Private collection

191b. Rembrandt and (mainly) workshop, *Portrait of a woman with a fan* (companion piece to **191a**), 1643, canvas 114.5 x 98 cm.
Private collection

192. Rembrandt, *An old man in rich costume (Boas?)* (possibly companion piece to **193**), 1643, mahogany panel 72.5 x 58.5 cm. Woburn Abbey

The series of curved cracks in the panel and paintlayer are typical for paintings on mahogany panels.

193. Rembrandt, *Bust of a woman (Ruth?)* (possibly companion piece to **192**), 1643, mahogany panel 72 x 59 cm.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

The darker parts of the costume were originally lighter and more colourful.

194. Rembrandt, *Sarah waiting for Tobias*, *c.* 1643, canvas on panel 81.2 x 67.9 cm. Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland

Detail of **149.** Having finished his *Danae* in 1636, Rembrandt reworked the painting drastically in *c.* 1643. This detail is reproduced here because, for various reasons, it is conceivable that Rembrandt's revision of the *Danae* in some way may be related to the work on 194, which shows another approach to rendering the human skin (the fettered Amor, the table cloth and the shoes remained untouched). This reproduction shows the painting before it was heavily damaged in 1985.

195. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man with a steel gorget.*
1644, canvas 94.3 x 77.8 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Cropped along the bottom edge.

Detail of **195**

1644
195

196. Rembrandt, *Christ and the woman taken in adultery*, 1644, panel 83.8 x 65.4 cm.
London, National Gallery

Detail of **196**

1644

196–197

197. Rembrandt, *A weeping woman* (oil sketch in preparation for **196**),
c. 1644, panel 21.3 x 16.8 cm.
Detroit, Institute of Arts

Detail of **196**

1644

196–197

198. Rembrandt, *The Holy Family with angels*, 1645, canvas 117 x 91 cm.
St Petersburg, Hermitage

Strips of canvas of considerable width are missing on the side and top edges.

Detail of **198**

1645
198

199. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait with beret and red cloak*, *c.* 1645/1648, panel 73.5 x 59.6 cm. (measurements of the painting in its present form including an added strip on the left which is not shown in the plate), Karlsruhe, Staatliche Kunsthalle

The size of this painting has been altered several times, as has its format (from rectangular to oval to rectangular to oval again). This reproduction shows a hypothetical reconstruction of the painting's original appearance.

200. Rembrandt, *Girl leaning on a stone window sill*, 1645, canvas 81.6 x 66 cm.
London, Dulwich Picture Gallery

201. Rembrandt and pupil, *Tobit and Anna*, 1645, mahogany panel 20 x 27 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

202. Rembrandt and (mainly) pupil, *Joseph's dream in the stable at Bethlehem*, 1645, mahogany panel 20.7 x 27.8 cm.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

These two closely related small paintings, both executed on same-sized mahogany panels, present the art historian with a puzzle. There are parts – specifically the graphically sketched, largely monochrome passages – which would seem to betray the hand of Rembrandt. Moreover, they both bear a Rembrandt signature and the date 1645 or 1646. But in the (mainly light) passages executed in pastose paint they are much more primitive in quality and cruder in execution than one would expect of Rembrandt. Compare the two paintings, for example, with the equally small *Abraham and the angels* from 1646 Plate 208 which is unquestionably entirely by Rembrandt.

However, infrared (*Corpus* V 7 fig. 3 and *Corpus* V 8 fig. 3) and X-radiographic images of the two paintings (see the Notes to 201 and 202) show that the parts of the paintings covered with pastose paint were originally of a more complex design in their details.

As a possible explanation for these discrepancies in design and quality within each of these two paintings one might suggest that these works were assignments given to one or two different pupils, who were expected to create a convincing illusion of light and colour on top of oil sketches painted by Rembrandt.

In the *Joseph's dream* 202 these pastose sections would represent heavenly light from above and the supernatural light radiating from the angel which illuminate various parts of the scene. The pupil putatively concerned here seems to have repainted virtually the whole of the image except for the figure of the sleeping Joseph sketched by the master in a complicated pose. In the process, the young painter covered over the form indicated by the master of a ladder, shown in perspective, placed against the wall.

In the case of the *Tobit and Anna* 201 the same – or another – pupil was apparently asked to render 'room light' (see also 85, 86) in a work where Rembrandt had already painted the window and had sketched the interior with the figures of Tobit and Anna. The inferred pupil over-painted variously lit passages in the vicinity of the window, as a result of which the complex form of a spinning wheel disappeared and was replaced by the simple cupboard next to the window.

These two cases are not isolated. In the New York *Christ and the Samaritan woman at the well* (Metropolitan Museum *Corpus* V 24), and a *Self-portrait* in the Washington National Gallery (*Corpus* IV 6)

203. Rembrandt, *Old man with fur coat*, 1645, canvas 110 x 82 cm.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

The painting was probably cropped on all sides. It may well have had the same size as **204**.

204. Rembrandt, *Old man with a stick*, 1645, canvas 128 x 112 cm.
Lisbon, Museu Calouste Gulbenkian

205. Rembrandt, *Landscape with a castle* (unfinished),
c. 1645, panel 44.5 x 70 cm.
Paris, Louvre

206. Rembrandt, *The Mill*, *c.* 1645, canvas 87.6 x 105.6 cm. Washington, National Gallery.

As reproduced here, in the painting in its present state the mill is tilted forward.

After a long period during which this painting was considered to be one of Rembrandt's most beautiful works, in 1911 the attribution to Rembrandt was rejected by the German art-historian Woldemar von Seidlitz (1850-1922), whose ill-founded, negative opinion was then followed by the majority of Rembrandt specialists. Perhaps their apparently instinctive rejection of the attribution to Rembrandt had something to do with the fact that the painting had been cut down on three sides, as a result of which it had lost certain characteristics typical of Rembrandt. Moreover, this had happened in such a way that the painting was placed in its frame askew, tilted a few degrees to the right (see below). This meant that it lost the typical Rembrandtesque sense of balance attaching to the horizontal and the vertical, and the compositional asymmetry which would lend the painting its dynamic quality. Further, the specific relation between light and dark passages, again characteristic of Rembrandt, was disturbed. Using X-irradiation to investigate the painting's canvas, and analyzing the obliquely running edge of the original paint layer along the untrimmed right side, and mobilizing our knowledge about the standard sizes of painter's canvases, we were able digitally to reconstruct the painting as shown below.

207. Rembrandt, *Winter landscape*,
1646, panel 17 x 23 cm.
Kassel, Gemäldegalerie

208. Rembrandt, *Abraham serving the three angels*, 1646, panel 16 x 21 cm.
Private collection

209. Rembrandt or pupil, *The Holy Family with painted frame and curtain*, 1646, panel 46.8 x 68.4 cm.
Kassel, Gemäldegalerie

The painting is covered by a layer of yellowed varnish.

210. Rembrandt?, *The prophetess Anna in the Temple*, 1650 or *c.* 1646, walnut? panel 40.5 x 31.5 cm. Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland

The painting is covered by a layer of yellowed varnish.

1646

209–210

211a. Rembrandt, *The Nativity* (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik), see p. 178), 1646, canvas 92 x 71 cm.
Munich, Alte Pinakothek

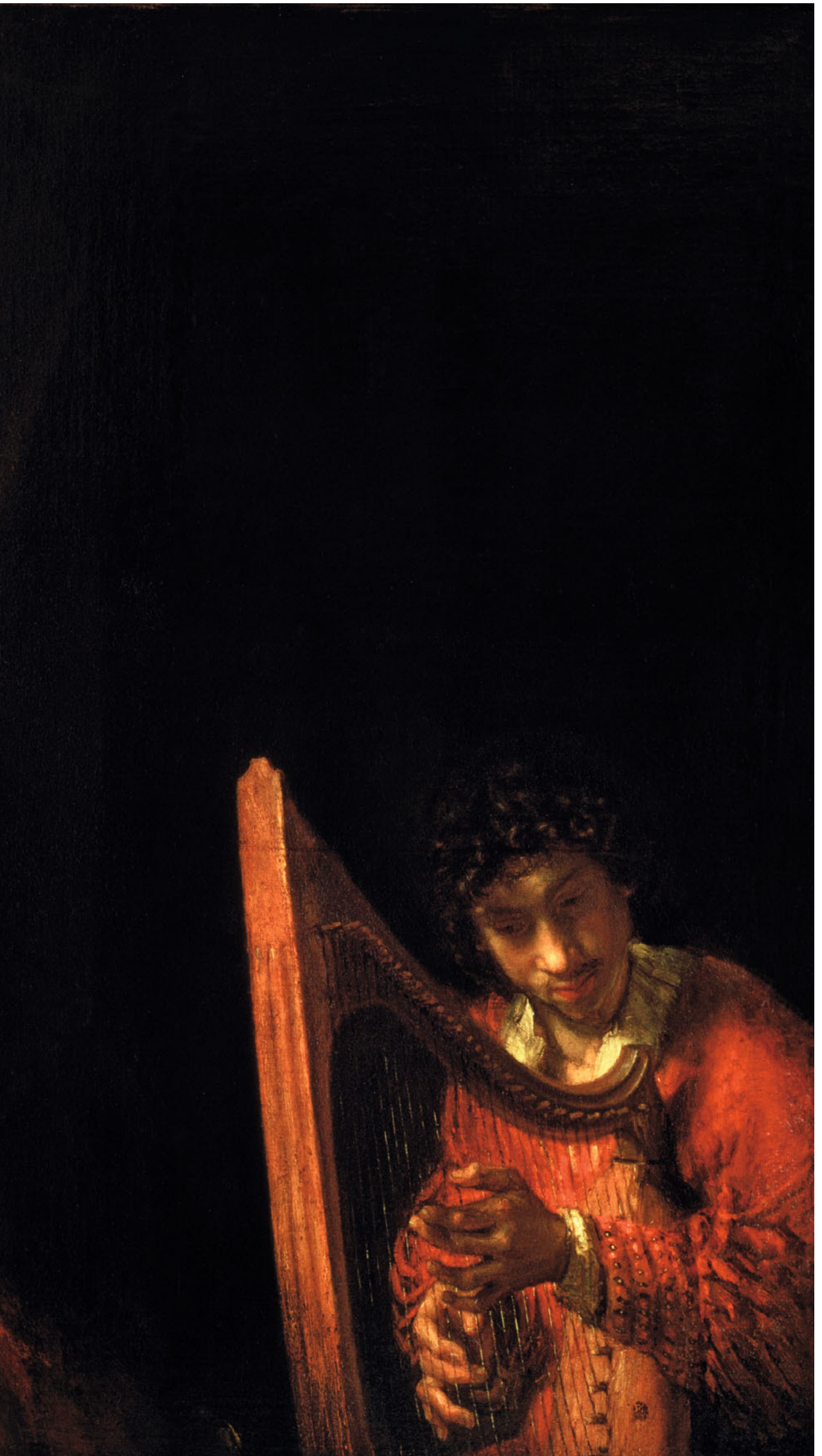
211b. Studio copy after a lost *Circumcision* (which was part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik, see p. 178), in or after 1646, canvas 97.8 x 72 cm.
Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum

212. Rembrandt, *Saul and David* (before restauration),
c. 1645 and *c.* 1652, canvas 130 x 164.5 cm.
The Hague, Mauritshuis

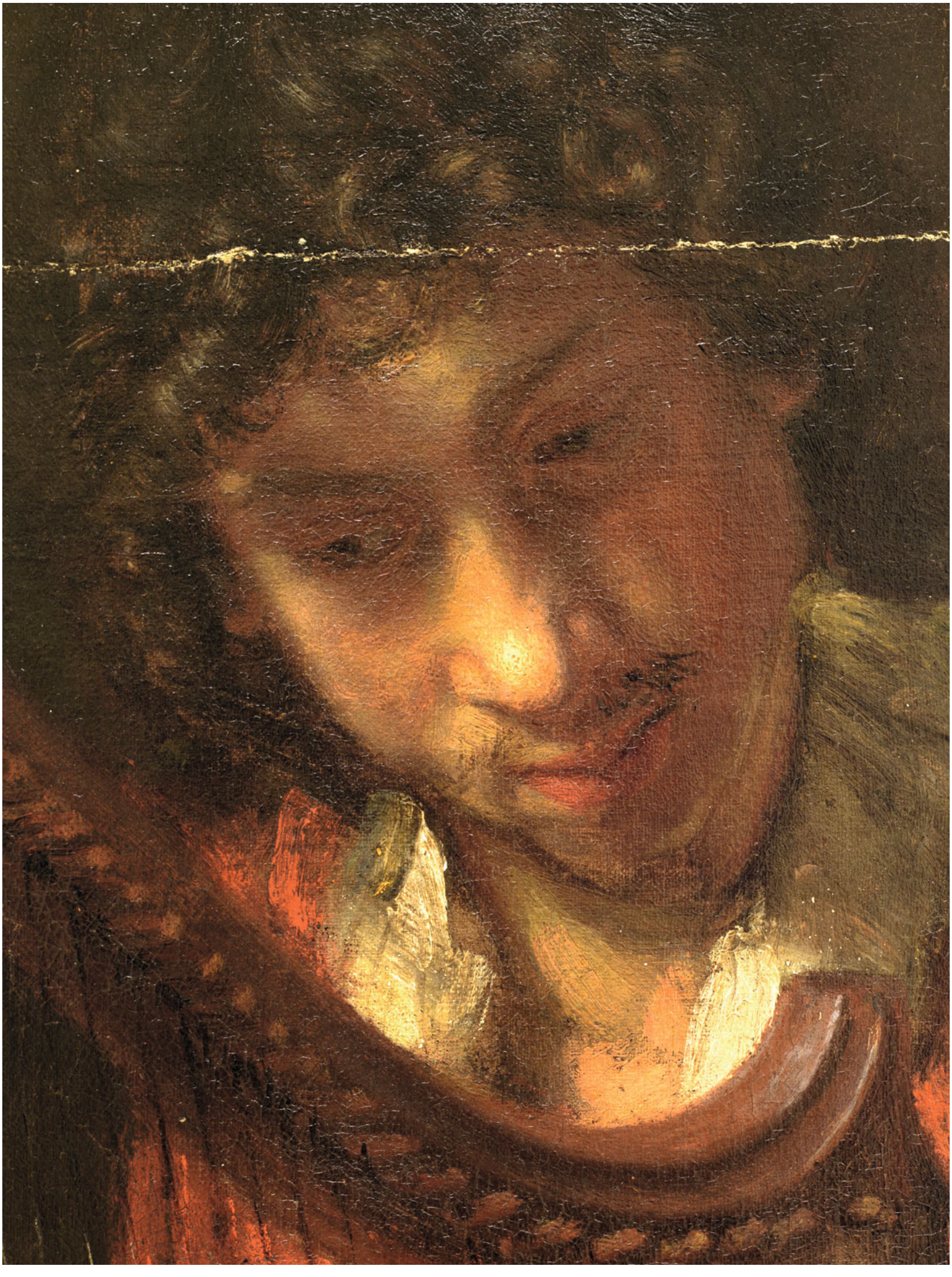
The painting originally was considerable larger. A vertical strip, wide *c.* 20 cm is missing to the left of David's harp. Along the bottom the painting was *c.* 18 cm larger. The top right square piece of canvas above David was replaced by a fragment of a seventeenth century painting and overpainted.

c. 1646-1652

212



Details of **212** during restauration (July 2014)



213. Rembrandt, *Susanna and the elders,*
c. 1638-1647, mahogany panel 76.6 x 92.8 cm.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

The painting is covered by a layer of yellowed varnish.

214. Rembrandt, *Nocturnal landscape with the Holy Family*, 1647, mahogany panel 33.8 x 47.8 cm.
Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland

215. Rembrandt, *Preparatory oil sketch for the etched portrait of Dr Efraim Bueno* (B. 278)
c. 1647, panel 19 x 15 cm.
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

216. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man reading by candlelight*, 1648, canvas 66.5 x 58 cm.
Williamstown, Clark Institute

217a. Rembrandt or pupil, *Oil study of Christ*, *c.* 1648, panel 25 x 20 cm.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

217b. Rembrandt or pupil, *Oil study of Christ*, *c.* 1648, panel 25.5 x 20.1 cm.
Private collection

218. Rembrandt, *The supper at Emmaus*, 1648, mahogany panel 68 x 65 cm. Paris, Louvre

The panel, whose grain runs horizontally, may have extended further on the left where there could have been a window.

Detail of **218**

1648
218

219. Rembrandt, *Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene, 'Noli me tangere'*, 1650 or slightly later, canvas 65 x 79 cm. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum

The painting is in an extremely bad condition and shows disturbing blanching in places.

Detail of **219**

1650

219

The 'late Rembrandt', first phase (1651-1659)

Between 1647 and 1650 Rembrandt's activity as a painter had almost come to a standstill. In 1647 he worked on three paintings [213], [214], [215]; in 1648 on only two [216] and [218]; from 1649 not a single painting is known, while in *c.* 1650 he finished just one [219].

One possible reason for this stagnation may have been the turbulence in his personal life over Geertje Dirxs, his housekeeper/concubine, who in an increasingly hostile atmosphere tried to hold Rembrandt to the promise of marriage she alleged he had made. We can glean only a fragmentary picture of the situation.

Even less can we imagine the impact on Rembrandt's state of mind and the feelings in the household caused by the arrival of the young Hendrickje Stoffels, first as a domestic help, subsequently as the new housekeeper, mistress and – as Bas Dudok van Heel, the researcher of Rembrandt's biography, has called her – Rembrandt's 'new muse'. Did Hendrickje's arrival in Rembrandt's household lead to a breakthrough in Rembrandt's life as an artist? It is difficult to say.

There could also have been a very different reason behind the temporary break in Rembrandt's output as a painter. One must remember that in the period 1647-'50 he worked on a number of remarkably ambitious etching projects (B. 277, B. 278, B. 285, B. 126 (surviving as a fragment), B. 176, B. 22, B. 112, B. 74, B. 217). Did he perhaps consider moving the main thrust of his career in that direction? Rembrandt sat for weeks on end at his etching plates carefully hatching with infinite patience in order to achieve the gradations of light and dark when rendering his numerous figures – effects which in a much larger painting could be realized with a few strokes of well mixed oil paint. One must also bear in mind that in the years before Rembrandt had worked on a very detailed large history piece with two life-size figures, the *Saul and David* [212], which was probably left unfinished or abandoned as unsatisfactory. One could imagine that during this period Rembrandt was thinking about a more efficient way of working that was still optically effective. It seems likely that he now decided to opt for the 'rough manner' and that this was tried out in life-size, single figures such as the *Girl at the window* from 1651 [220] and the *Old man in an armchair* from 1652 [221]. Those paintings were executed in a locally broad, daring manner.

In the *Old man in an armchair* the Venetian inspiration is obvious. The scenario for Rembrandt's transformation as a painter in this period may have been already prepared for him: the transition from a fine to a rough manner of painting was already exemplified by the career of Titian.

Titian had begun working in a fine manner but later switched to a way of painting which, when viewed close up, consisted of a constellation of blotches which, thanks to his mastery, when seen from a distance resulted in a stronger illusion of reality than before. Every Dutch painter and art-lover knew the story about Titian as relayed by Karel van Mander from the second edition of Vasari's 'Lives'. Every painter would also have been familiar with Van Mander's warning that it was much more difficult to paint in the rough manner than might at first appear.

The drastic changes in the dress and other parts of the figure of Saul in the *Saul and David* [212] appear to have been executed at this stage of Rembrandt's turn to the rough manner. As with the *Girl at the window* [220] and the *Old man in an armchair* [221], and as also in his large self-portrait of 1652 [224] one finds in the altered version of Saul's cloak rough lines sketched with a wide brush, see also [223] and Note [223] fig. 1.

One should not think that Rembrandt had become an imitator of the late Titian or Tintoretto. His way of dealing with form, space and light, and also the way in which he dealt with the consistency of the paint, was significantly different and in all respects highly original. In the differentiation of his brushwork too Rembrandt went much further than the late Titian and his Venetian followers.

Parallel to the switch from the fine to the rough manner, from 1651 Rembrandt definitively abandoned his former conception of the art of painting which he had articulated as '*striving for the greatest and most natural effect of movement*' in his history paintings. Henceforth it would be by means of the varied movement in his broad brushwork that he would give a new dynamic to his monumental figures. This new *peinture* actively holds the viewer's attention; what Ernst Gombrich referred

to as 'the beholder's share' is stimulated more in Rembrandt's late works than in his earlier works and (excepting Frans Hals), in the works of his contemporaries. It creates in the beholder that impression which makes the paintings of the late Rembrandt always seem new, because the eye, in scanning these works, continues to seek – almost as though participating in the painting process. This way of working was to remain characteristic of Rembrandt's painting from 1651 onward, although it should be emphasized that he was never dogmatic over his use of the rough manner.

Jan Six was the only art-lover of whom we can be certain that he must have followed Rembrandt closely during this revolution. One might speculate that his portrait by Rembrandt 233, with its singular conception and loose *peinture*, could never have been realized if the 1652 *Old man in an armchair* 221 had not been painted, possible under Six's own eyes, 1652 was the year in which Rembrandt contributed two magnificent drawings to Six's *Album Amicorum*. It appears that their friendship was particularly close that year.

With the breakthrough in 1651 there began an amazingly fruitful period in Rembrandt's life as a painter. Between 1651 and the end of 1659 he painted more than 50 paintings, almost all with life-size figures. Rembrandt painted many portraits during these years, mostly more controlled in their execution than the works mentioned above. As said before (see p. 118) this intense activity as a portrait painter can surely be explained by his need to earn money in the difficult time before and following his bankruptcy in 1656. These straightened circumstances led Rembrandt to paint some 24 portraits in this period: 225, 226, 233, 234, 244, 246, 247, 248a/b, 249, 250, 258, 259, 260, 263 and the nine separate sitters in his *Anatomy lesson of Dr Joan Deyman* 246.

One cannot but be struck by the sharp increase in the number of self-portraits Rembrandt painted toward the end of this decade 224, 256, 264, 273, 274, 275 – a sign perhaps of Rembrandt's increasing (international) fame. The fact that there are several conspicuously large self-portraits among them is an indication that, certainly in these cases, they must have been commissioned by important patrons. Given the provenance of some of them, one may even wonder whether any of these works originated as royal commissions.

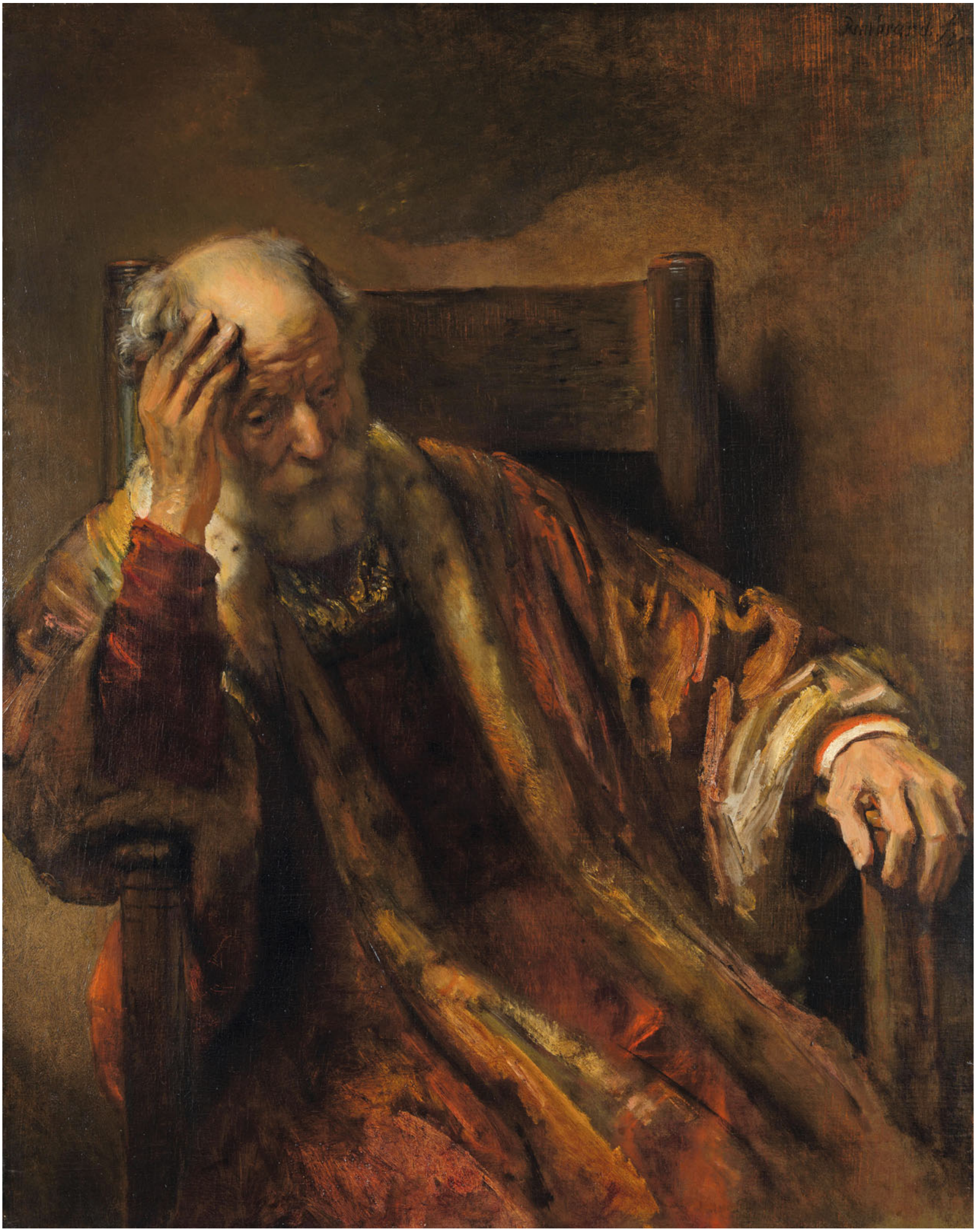
If one assumes that Rembrandt's main ambition was to be a history painter, he may well have experienced the heavy demands on him for portraits during this period as an obstacle to achieving his real aims. Between 1651 and 1659 only a modest number of small-scale history and genre paintings originated (229, 236, 237, 240, 265, 266). However, it seems that he compensated for this with a remarkable production of etched histories, his 'home industry' conducted in the evenings when the daylight that is essential to painting had gone (on this hypothesis, see *Corpus* V pp. 192 and 219). Such etchings particularly must have contributed to his international fame.

One history piece with life-size figures, *Jacob's blessing* from 1656, can be considered to be his absolute masterwork in this field. But apart from this he painted a number of pieces with single biblical, historical or mythological figures (sometimes with an additional figure) (228, 231, 239, 251, 252, 253, 262, 267, 268).

Between all the works mentioned above he also painted works that belonged in a familial context (229, 235a/b, 242, 257). ◆

220. Rembrandt, *Girl at a window*, 1651, canvas 78 x 63 cm. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum

221. Rembrandt, *Old man in an armchair*,
1652, canvas 111 x 88 cm.
London, National Gallery



222. Rembrandt, *An old man in fanciful costume*, 1651, canvas 78.5 x 67.5 cm.
Chatsworth

The painting was originally taller. It is covered by a disturbing layer of yellowed varnish.

223. Rembrandt, *Hendrickje with fur wrap*, *c.* 1652, canvas 103.3 x 86.5 cm.
London, National Gallery

224. Rembrandt, *The so-called large Vienna self-portrait with beret*, 1652, canvas 112.1 x 81 cm.
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

The painting has been cropped both at top left and bottom. It is covered by a disturbing layer of yellowed varnish.

Detail of **224**

1652

224

225. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man*,
c. 1651, canvas 92.5 x 73.5 cm.
Oxfordshire, Buscot Park, Faringdon Collection

226. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Nicolaes Bruyningh*, 1652, canvas 106.8 x 91.5 cm.
Kassel, Gemäldegalerie

The painting is covered by a layer of yellowed varnish.

1651-1652

225–226

227. Rembrandt, *Half-figure of a bearded man with beret*, *c.* 1653, canvas 78 x 66.5 cm.
London, National Gallery

228. Rembrandt, *Aristotle with the bust of Homer*, 1653, canvas 141.8 x 134.4 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

The painting was larger at both top and bottom. The original proportions of the canvas were 4 : 3.

229. Rembrandt, *A woman wading in a pool (Callisto in the wilderness)*, 1654, panel 61.8 x 47 cm.
London, National Gallery

230. Rembrandt, *Oil study of an old man with a red hat*, *c.* 1654, canvas 52.4 x 37 cm.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

The painting is covered by a disturbing layer of darkened varnish.

231. Rembrandt, *Bathsheba at her toilet*, 1654, canvas 142 x 142 cm.
Paris, Louvre

The canvas was originally considerably higher and wider at the left. Strips are missing from the bottom and right. In the process of changing the format of the painting the remaining part with the figures was slightly tilted to the left (see Note 231).

232. Rembrandt, *Woman at an open half-door*, *c.* 1654, canvas 88.5 x 67 cm.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

The painting is covered by a disturbing layer of yellowed varnish.

233. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Jan Six*, 1654, canvas 112 x 102 cm. Amsterdam, Six Foundation

234. Rembrandt, *The Standard-Bearer (Floris Soop)*, 1654, canvas, 138 x 113 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

235a. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait* (companion piece to **233b**),
1654, canvas 72 x 58.5 cm.
Kassel, Gemäldegalerie

235b. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Hendrickje Stoffels* (companion piece to **233a**), *c.* 1654, canvas 72 x 60 cm.
Paris, Louvre

236. Rembrandt, *The Polish Rider* (partly unfinished, locally completed by later hand), *c.* 1655, canvas 116.8 x 134.9 cm. New York, Frick Collection

At least 8-10 cm of the canvas are missing at the right. Along the bottom a strip of c. 10 cm was lost at some stage and subsequently replaced by a reconstruction painted by the restorer William Suhr.

237. Rembrandt, *Joseph accused by Potiphar's wife* (with possible additions by another hand), 1655, canvas 110 x 87 cm.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

The figure of Joseph and the left part of the pillow seem to have been added by a later hand on the basis of a rough underpainting by Rembrandt.

1655

236–237

238. Rembrandt, Oil sketch of an old man,
c. 1645, panel 23 x 18 cm.
Private collection

239. Rembrandt, *Man in armour, c.* 1655,
canvas 137 x 104.5 cm (113 x 90 without additions).
Glasgow, City Art Gallery and Museum

The canvas has been enlarged on all four sides (see Note 239).
In this reproductions the added pieces are omitted.

240. Rembrandt, *A slaughtered ox*, 1655, beech panel 95.5 x 69 cm. Paris, Louvre

Detail of **240**.

1655
240

241. Rembrandt, *Old woman reading (study in lighting effects)*,
1655, canvas 79 x 65 cm.
Drumlanrig Castle, Duke of Buccleuch Collection

242. Rembrandt, *Titus at a desk*,
1655 (?), canvas 77 x 63 cm.
Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen

243. Rembrandt, *Unfinished portrait of a boy*, *c.* 1656, canvas 65 x 56 cm.
Pasadena, Norton Simon Museum

244. Rembrandt, *Man with beret and tabard (a falconer?)*, *c.* 1656, canvas 115 x 88.3 cm.
Toledo, Museum of Art

The painting must originally have extended considerably further to the right.

245. Rembrandt, *Jacob blessing the sons of Joseph*,
1656, canvas 175 x 210.5 cm.
Kassel, Gemäldegalerie

Detail of **245**

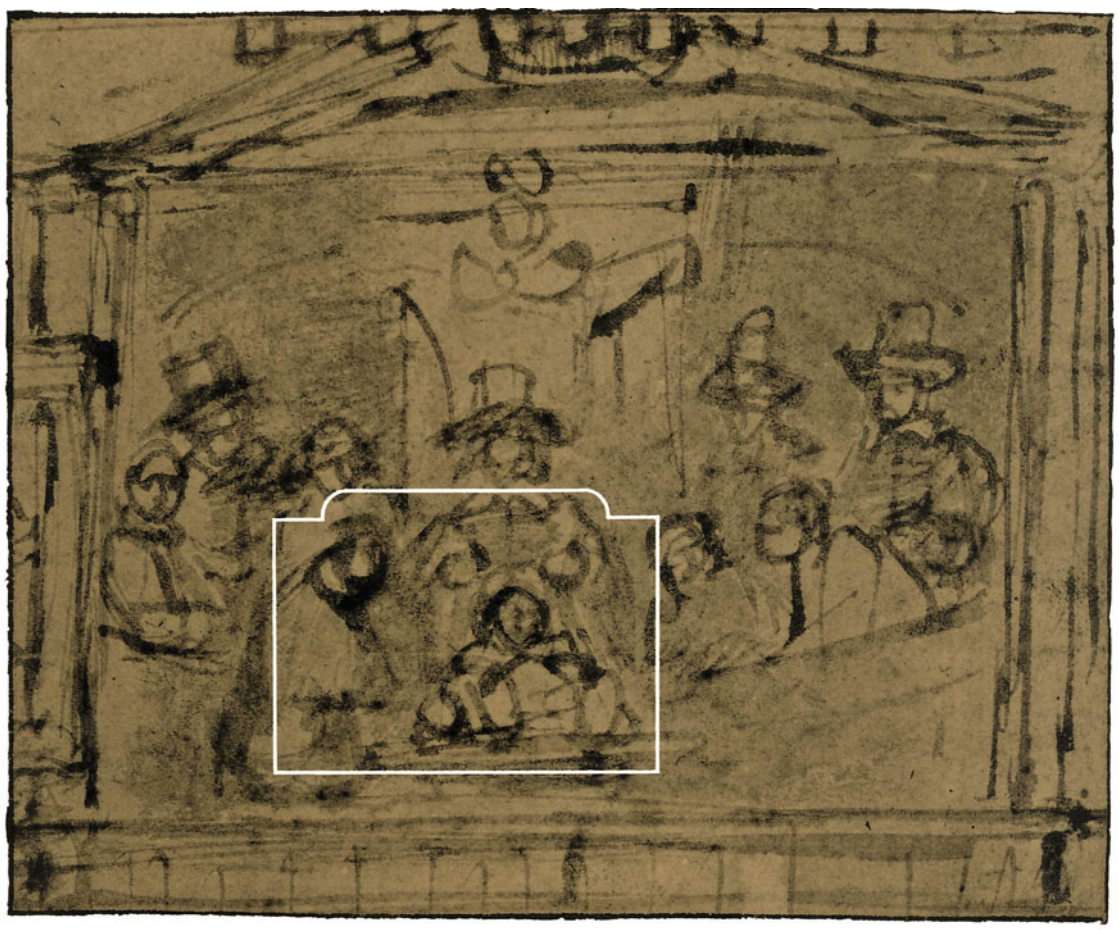
1656

245

246. Rembrandt, *The anatomy lesson of Dr Joan Deyman* (fragment that survived a fire), 1656, canvas 100 x 134 cm. Amsterdam, Amsterdam Museum

Blisters and traces of other fire-damage are still visible along the upper edge and in the hands of the dissector, Dr Deyman.

The painting was seriously damaged in a fire in 1723. However, Rembrandt had made a drawing of it in its original state, apparently in connection with the painting's framing and hanging. In this drawing he drew the beams in the ceiling of the Anatomy Theatre in the Weigh House on Amsterdam's Nieuwmarkt in which it was to be hung. To the left a half-open window can be seen. Thanks to this drawing we can envisage the original painting and locate the fragment within the original composition. It must have been a most impressive painting before the dramatic mutilation.



Detail of **246**

1656

246

Detail of **246**

247. Rembrandt, *A young man seated at a table*, *c.* 1656, canvas 109.9 x 89.5 cm.
Washington, National Gallery

248a. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a gentleman with a tall hat and gloves* (companion piece to **248b**), *c.* 1656,
canvas 99.5 x 82.5 cm. Washington, National Gallery

The painting (and its companion piece) seems to be a fragment of a full-size portrait.

248b. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a lady with an ostrich-feather fan* (companion piece to **248a**), *c.* 1656, canvas 99.5 x 83 cm. Washington, National Gallery

The painting (and its companion piece) seems to be a fragment of a full-size portrait. For a hypothetic reconstruction see Note 248 a/b.

249. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man, possibly Arnout Tholincx*, 1656, canvas 76 x 63 cm.
Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André

250. Rembrandt, *Portrait of the poet Jeremias de Decker*, 1656, panel 71 x 56 cm.
St Petersburg, Hermitage

See **251**

See **252**

See **253**

A classical 'trinity' of goddesses (Venus, Juno and Pallas)

Following the death in 1678 of the rich collector and gentleman-dealer Herman Becker (b. 1617), a probate inventory of his possessions was drawn up. This document was discovered in1910 by Abraham Bredius in the Amsterdam municipal archive. Among the great many paintings included in the inventory were found 15 works by Rembrandt. Three of these depicted classical goddesses*: 'een Juno van REMBRANT VAN RYN', 'een Pallas van REMBRANT VAN RYN', 'een Venus en Cupido van deselve'*. The art historian Jan Emmens suggested that these could have constituted a linked 'classical' trinity of goddesses, i.e. a small series. (Not only had the rivalry of these three goddesses over beauty led to the Trojan War, they also played a major role behind the scenes in Homer's *Iliad*.) Emmens also thought that the Venus reproduced here 251 (with the features of Hendrickje Stoffels) and Cupid (according to Emmens probably painted after Cornelia, the child of Rembrandt and Hendrickje) might have belonged to Becker's 'classical' trinity.

No doubt Rembrandt and his commissioning patron – possibly Becker himself – were familiar with a series of three prints with these three goddesses (see below). In the captions to these prints the goddesses are identified by the same mix of Greek and Roman names as in Becker's inventory from left to right, Venus, Juno and Pallas. The prints were produced in 1646 by Wenzel Hollar (1607-1677) – unquestionably as a coherent 'triptych'– after paintings by Adam Elsheimer (1578-1610).

Rembrandt must have already been familiar with such a 'trinity'. In the inventory of Pieter Lastman, his second teacher, drawn up in 1632 are mentioned "*Drie tronien van* [Frans] *Baden* [1571-*c*. 1621], *als Venus, Juno en Pallas*" (Freise p. 19).

Rembrandt's three goddesses in Becker's inventory may well have formed a similar triptych. The question is then which of the paintings by Rembrandt that are known today could have belonged to this triptych. My suggestion is that these could be the three paintings shown above. The arguments for this hypothesis are presented in the Notes accompanying 251, 252, 253.

The suggestion that the three paintings reproduced above could indeed constitute the 'trinity of goddesses' proposed by Emmens is supported by the fact that these are the only paintings by Rembrandt in which these three goddesses are depicted. Further significant corroboration of this hypothesis is provided by the symmetrical placing and three-quarter view of Venus and Pallas with regard to the strictly frontal portrayal of Juno. It is not impossible that the execution of the three paintings extended over a longer period. The canvases come from three different bolts of linen and there are significant differences in style. In this regard there are parallels with another triptych that Rembrandt executed between 1653 and '63, that with *Aristotle* 228, the lost *Alexander*, and the *Homer* 301.

Wenzel Hollar after Adam Elsheimer – A classical 'trinity' of godesses (Venus, Juno and Pallas).

251. Rembrandt, *Venus and Cupid* (possibly part of a tripartite series with **252** and **253**), *c.* 1657, canvas 110 x 88 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre

The canvas has been cropped on all sides.

252. Rembrandt, *Juno* (possibly part of a tripartite series with **251** and **253**), *c*. 1657-1665, canvas 127 x 106 cm.
Los Angeles, Armand Hammer Museum

253. Rembrandt and pupil, *Pallas Athene*, (possibly part of a tripartite series with **251** and **252**), *c.* 1657, canvas 118 x 91 cm.
Lisbon, Museu Calouste Gulbenkian

The canvas has been reduced at the left and bottom.

254. Rembrandt and workshop, *The apostle Paul at his writing desk*, *c.* 1657, canvas 129 x 102 cm.
Washington, National Gallery

The painting has undergone a complicated material history, reconstructed in Wheelock 1995.

255. Rembrandt, *The apostle Bartholomew*,
1657, canvas 122.7 x 99.5 cm.
San Diego, Timken Museum of Art

1657

254–255

256. Rembrandt, *The so-called small Vienna self-portrait* (fragment of larger painting), *c.* 1657, walnut panel 48.9 x 40.2 cm. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

Serious overcleaning and related overpaintings are evident in the shaded part of the face and in the costume. The painting appears to be a fragment of a considerably larger self-portrait.

257. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Titus van Rijn*, *c.* 1657, canvas 67.3 x 55.2 cm.
London, Wallace Collection

The figure may have been placed before a larger, rather lively background.

258. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Catharina Hoogsaet*,
1657, canvas 123.5 x 95 cm.
Wales, Penrhyn Castle

Details of fig. **258**

1657
258

259. Rembrandt, *Portrait of an unknown scholar* (also known as *'The Auctioneer'*), 1658, canvas 108 x 85 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

260. Rembrandt. *Preparatory oil sketch for the etched portrait of Lieven Willemsz van Coppenol* (B. 283), in or before 1658, panel 35.6 x 28 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

1658

259–260

261. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man with arms akimbo*,
1658, canvas 107.4 x 87 cm.
Private collection

262. Rembrandt, *The risen Christ*, *c.* 1658, canvas 81 x 64 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek

The painting was not originally oval.

263. Rembrandt, *Portrait of the dyke reeve Dirck van Os*, *c.* 1658, canvas 113.5 x 88.7 cm.
Omaha, Joslyn Art Museum

264. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait*, 1658, canvas 131 x 102 cm. New York, Frick Collection

265. Rembrandt. *Philemon and Baucis*,
1658, transferred from panel to gauze and then stuck on a new panel, 54.5 x 68.5 cm.
Washington, National Gallery

266. Rembrandt, *Tobit and Anna*,
1659, panel 41.8 x 54.6 cm. (V28)
Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (on loan from the Willem van der Vorm Foundation)

267. Rembrandt, *Moses smashes the stone tablets with the covenant* (unfinished), 1659, canvas 168.5 x 136.5 cm.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

268. Rembrandt, *Jacob wrestling with the angel*, *c.* 1659, canvas 137 x 116 cm.
Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

The painting must have been cropped on all sides. A piece of the same canvas bearing Rembrandt's signature is stuck on the lower right corner. Many of the contours have been strengthened by a later hand.

269. Rembrandt (and workshop?), *Posthumous portrait of Saskia van Uylenburgh as Flora*, *c.* 1660, canvas 100 x 91.8 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

270. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man as the apostle Paul*,
1659, canvas 102 x 85.5 cm.
London, National Gallery

1659-1660

269–270

271. Rembrandt, *Oil sketch for* 272, *c.* 1659, canvas 68.5 x 55.5 cm. Copenhagen, Statens Museum

Reproduced without the lower part of the canvas, on which a cross was painted by a later hand (see Note 271).

272. Rembrandt, *'Portrait historié' of an unknown gentleman as St Bavo*, *c.* 1659, canvas 98.5 x 79 cm.
Göteborg, Kunstmuseum

273. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait*,
1657/1659, canvas 50 x 42.5 cm.
Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland (on loan from the Duke of Sutherland)

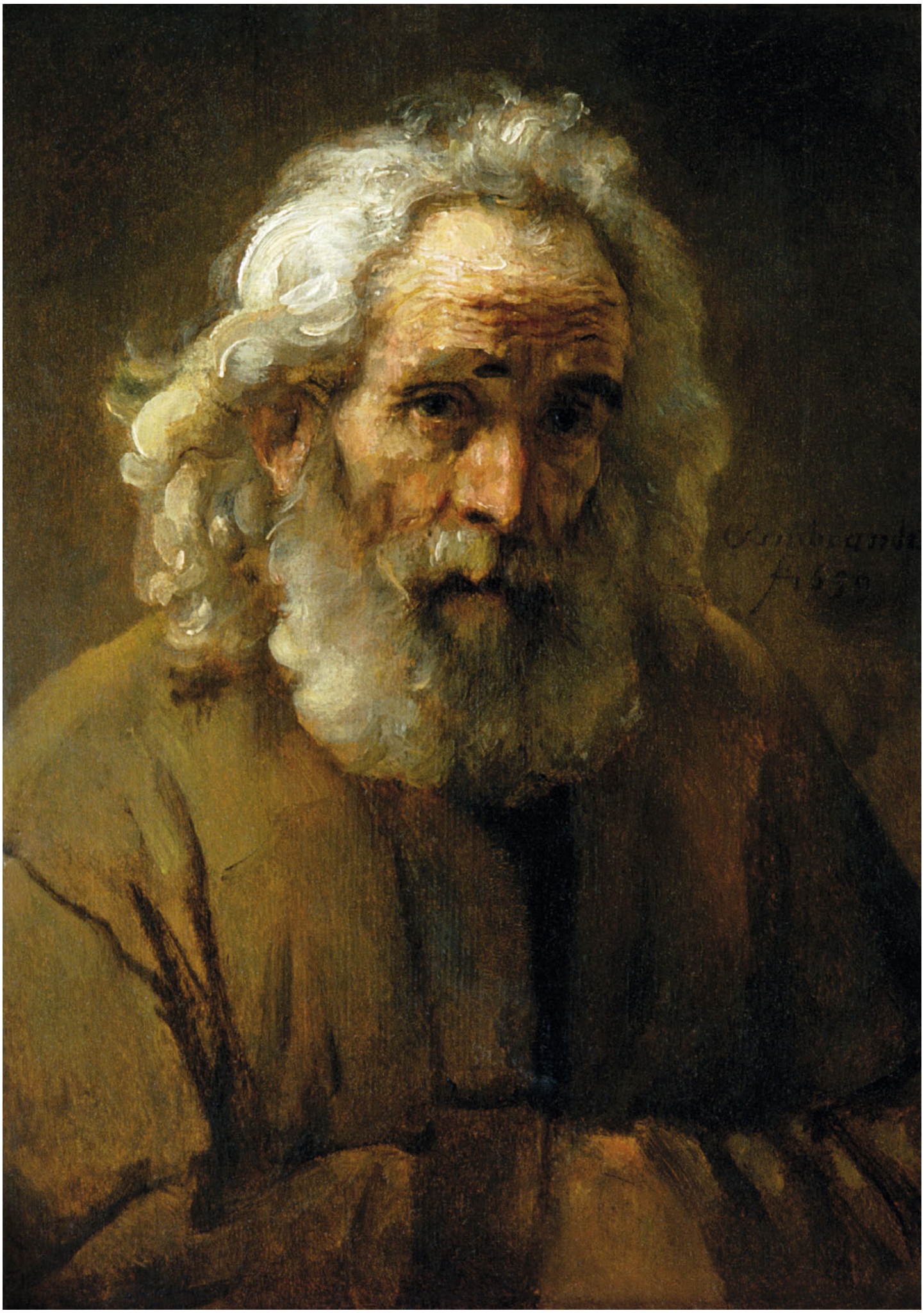
274. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait*, 1659, canvas 84.4 x 66 cm. Washington, National Gallery

275. Rembrandt, S*elf-portrait* (unfinished),
c. 1659, panel 30.7 x 24.3 cm.
Aix-en-Provence, Musée Granet

275a. Digitally reconstruction of **275**.

This painting has for a long time been excluded from Rembrandt's oeuvre because of strange deformations in the face. These turned out to be caused by the yellow-brown ground, which is exposed in many places, having faded to a lighter yellowish tone. We have digitally reconstructed this painting by giving all these areas of exposed ground an identical, darker yellow-brown tint. See **275a**.

276. Rembrandt, *Lighting study with an old man as a model*, 1659, panel 38.1 x 26.8 cm.
Milwaukee, Daniel and Linda Bader Collection



277. Rembrandt, *Lighting study with Hendrickje Stoffels in a silk gown as a model*, *c.* 1659, panel 72.5 x 51.5 cm.
Frankfurt, Städelsches Kunstinstitut (on loan from the BRD)

A narrow strip is missing along the left side, a consequence of woodworm attack. The painting is covered with a yellowed varnish.

1659

276–277

The 'late Rembrandt', second phase (1660-1669)

When one surveys Rembrandt's painted oeuvre from the 1660s one gets a clear impression that his work after the bankruptcy and up to his death must still have been much in demand by well-to-do art-lovers. Yet this is in apparent contradiction with the fact that in his domestic circle he developed a construction whereby he was employed by a firm led by his common-law wife Hendrickje Stoffels and his son Titus. Rembrandt was the sole employee of this firm (*Doc.* 1660/20). Before taking this as a proof of Rembrandt's ultimate downfall, however, one should first consider a very different – and better – explanation. Rembrandt must have still enjoyed a good income. Thanks to the work of Eric Jan Sluijter we know that Rembrandt demanded much higher prices for his works than any of his Amsterdam contemporaries (Sluijter 2014). Consequently he needed to prevent this income immediately being handed over to his creditors.

In the years from 1660 onward, in fact, we see an activity just as great as in the preceding decade. Rembrandt painted a remarkably large number of portraits during the last nine years of his life, among them the *Syndics of the Clothmakers Guild* 299, the *Portrait historié of a couple as Isaac and Rebecca* (the *Jewish Bride* 312), the so-called *Brunswick family portrait* 313, and a multiplicity of portraits of individual figures 296–297b, 300, 303–306, 308–311b, 317 and 318. Altogether, in these years he portrayed approximately 30 individuals, together with eight self-portraits 281, 382, 294, 302, 319, 321–323.

Such a considerable number of self-portraits proves that Rembrandt had by this time become an internationally famous master. Those who entertain the picture of Rembrandt as an inwardly retired old master preoccupied with his 'ultima maniera' must take into consideration that he made most of those magical paintings – such as the *Jewish Bride*, the *Brunswick family portrait* and other portraits – eye to eye with models who hoped to become immortalized in a verisimilar portrait.

Rembrandt's unique place in the art world and the fame he had achieved must have played a role in attracting commissions for other paintings that continued to arrive. Why otherwise would a wealthy Italian dealer have conceived the plan to order from Rembrandt in 1666 two large paintings for his vast family church in Genoa, including an *Assumption of the Virgin Mary* for the church's altar? The city of Amsterdam commissioned Rembrandt to paint one of the works for the Batavian series in the Town Hall 298. His last history piece, *Simeon's song of praise* 324, which stood unfinished on Rembrandt's easel at the time of his death in October 1669 had been ordered by an art-lover (Dirck van Cattenburgh) (see Note 324). Hendrickje was already deceased by then and in 1667 Titus also died. Their art firm ceased to exist, but Rembrandt continued painting.

While Rembrandt lived predominantly from commissions he remained an explorer still determined to develop and extend his ideas as an artist. It is evident that he hoped his art would gain a wide distribution and recognition. From the correspondence from 1666 between the agent of his Genoese patron we learn that:

> '*he [Rembrandt] says that he wants to garner praise and honour in our parts [i.e. Italy] with this commission*'.

Despite the time and effort demanded by the joint art firm alluded to above, we can infer from the works which originated in that period that Rembrandt had remained a questing artist. What seems to have occurred in his thinking during this late period from 1651 to 1669 may be summarized as follows: in the first years of this period a sketchy approach came to predominate in the creation of a painted illusion – the 'rough' manner. How Rembrandt thought about sketchiness seems to have been articulated by Samuel van Hoogstraten, who may well have based the following text on notes made during his training with Rembrandt:

> *Just as when one espies a friend at a distance, or on meeting him in the twilight, one suddenly sees his form and recognizes him in one's mind, in the same way a rough sketch frequently makes so great an impression on connoisseurs of art that they see more in it than the one who made it* (SvH p. 27).

But Rembrandt went further in the later years. Where chance to a certain extent had played a part in his sketchy way of working, he now appears to have allowed chance to play a greater role in his handling of

paint during the painting process. Dealing with Rembrandt's late painting technique, Joshua Reynolds, the great English painter and theoretician, gave the following highly apposite description of this phenomenon in Rembrandt's paintings.

> *Works produced in an accidental manner will have the same free, unrestrained air as the works of nature, whose particular combinations seem to depend upon accident* (Reynolds p. 223).

That comparable possibilities were already a staple of Rembrandt's thinking can be substantiated by introducing into this discussion the Dutch term '*kenlijkheyt*' as used by Samuel van Hoogstraten. Thanks to Hoogstraten, we are well informed of a phenomenon that undoubtedly engrossed Rembrandt – perhaps he even discovered it himself: the phenomenon that an uneven paint surface gives the beholder the sense of experiencing that part of the painting as almost tangible nature; it conveys the impression that the painted form stands at an almost measurable distance from him. Van Hoogstraten refered to this property as '*kenlijkheyt*', or 'perceptibility' (SvH pp. 307/308). In his later works, Rembrandt usually ensured that the forms in the foreground (the figures, their dress and attributes etc.) manifested this roughness of the surface in differentiated degrees, as a result of which these forms in the painting acquire a certain concreteness and physical presence.

There is a tendency to see the major change of course in Rembrandt's thinking about painting that began to take place in the 1650's as a change in *style*, with that formulaic expression 'the fine and the rough manner' soon wheeled in. But I hope from the above biographical remarks it will have become clear that such expressions as 'stylistic development' or 'change of style' are wholly inadequate to describe what was presuably going on in Rembrandt's mind. What was at stake seems to have been a fundamental re-thinking of the question of pictorial illusion and the means that could be used in order to stimulate the beholder's perception when experiencing the painterly illusion in a more concrete way.

The path Rembrandt took in pursuit of extreme illusionism in his *tromp l'oeil* painting, which came to a dead end soon after the *Night Watch*, may be taken as a dramatic change of course but, surprisingly perhaps, his ultimate goal remained the same: to confront the beholder with a convincing experience of an illusion, created with the materials and tools of the painter. From then on, his works seem to be permanently *in statu nascendi*. It is as if, in his images, the dynamic that Rembrandt had striven for in the suggested movement of the protagonists was now transferred to the dynamic of the traces of the painter's moving hand and the concrete materiality of those traces. In this way he created a reality that was so convincingly natural that painting replaced reality more effectively than the traditional painterly illusion created with smooth paint layers on the flat surface. ◆

278. Rembrandt, *Hendrickje Stoffels*, *c.* 1660, canvas 78.4 x 68.9 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

The painting is in a badly overcleaned and abraded condition.

279. Rembrandt, *Titus van Rijn as St Francis*, *c.* 1660, canvas 79.5 x 67.5 cm.
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

280. Rembrandt, *A smiling young man (Titus)*, 1660, canvas 81.5 x 78.5 cm. Baltimore The Baltimore Museum of Art

Detail of **280**

1660
280

281. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait at the easel*,
1660, canvas 110.9 x 90.6 cm.
Paris, Louvre

282. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait with silk gown*, 1660, canvas 81 x 67.6 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

283. Rembrandt, *Esther, Ahasuerus and Haman*, between *c.* 1655 and 1665, canvas 71.5 x 93 cm. Moscow, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts

Detail of **283**

c. 1660

283

284. Rembrandt, *The denial of Peter*, 1660, canvas 154 x 169 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

The canvas was reduced on the right. 286 was painted on part of the trimmed piece.

Detail of **284**

1660

284

285. Rembrandt, *Lighting study of an old man in profile, probably painted in preparation for* **286**, *c.* 1661, panel 24.8 x 19.1 cm.
Kingston, Ontario, Queens University, Agnes Etherington Art Centre

286. Rembrandt, *The Circumcision in the stable*, 1661, canvas 56.5 x 75 cm.
Washington, National Gallery

287. Rembrandt, *Virgin of Sorrows*,
1661, canvas 107 x 81 cm.
Epinal, Musée départemental des Vosges

289-294. An incomplete serie of apostles, 1661, *c.* 90 x 75 cm each.

289

290

291

292

293

294

An (incomplete) series of apostles

This series could be reconstructed because in all six paintings Rembrandt indicated with black lines or by scratching in the wet paint that they should be set in frames of the same size. These paintings are related in technical ways as well, primarily in that they have all been executed at a remarkably high tempo.

The apostles were Christ's disciples (less Judas Iscariot) whom he commissioned before his Ascension to go out and spread the Gospel, the teaching of the New Testament. The apostle Paul ("the apostle to the gentiles") was a later convert. All of them were persecuted, tortured and killed:

Matthew 289, apostle and evangelist, with the angel. Rembrandt's son Titus served as the model for the angel 288 who whispered in Matthew's ear the Word of God while the evangelist wrote down his Gospel.

The apostle Bartholomew 290 is usually depicted with a knife, the instrument of his torture.

Simon 291 is recognizable by the handle of the saw with which he was tortured to death.

James the Greater 292 is recognized by his long cloak, wide-brimmed hat, staff and pilgrim's scallop.

James the Less 293, successor to James the Major as leader of the early Christian community in Jerusalem, is said by some to have been one of Christ's brothers; hence the similarity to the accepted facial features of Jesus. This explains why this painting was often considered to be an image of Christ. His attribute is the fuller's staff with which he was clubbed to death.

The self-portrait 294 in this series was only in 1919 recognized as representing the apostle Paul. Apart from Matthias, chosen to replace Judas Iscariot, Paul was the only apostle who did not belong to the original band of Christ's disciples. The identification of Rembrandt as Paul is based on the incorporation of the latter's two attributes in this painting – the book and the sword. The sword's hilt is visible in the shadow before Paul's chest. The apostle Paul must have been of special significance to Rembrandt. He portrayed him in seven paintings with particular care. It has been suggested that his admiration stemmed from the enlightened way in which Paul warned against theological hair-splitting and the conflicts and schisms that would ensue within the Christian community.

288. Rembrandt, *Titus posing for a study of an angel (possibly painted in preparation for* **289***)*, *c.* 1661, panel 40.6 x 34.9 cm.
Detroit Institute of Arts

289. Rembrandt, *The apostle St Matthew (part of a series with* **290-294***)*,
1661, canvas 96 x 81 cm.
Paris, Louvre

1661

288–289

290. Rembrandt, *The apostle Bartholomew* (part of a series with **289**, **291-294**), 1661, canvas 87.5 x 75 cm.
Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum

291. Rembrandt, *The apostle Simon* (part of a series with **289**, **290** and **292-294**), 1661, canvas 98.5 x 79 cm.
Zürich, Kunsthaus

292. Rembrandt, *The apostle James the Greater* (part of a series with **289-291** and **293, 294**), 1661, canvas 92.1 x 74.9 cm.
Whereabouts unknown

293. Rembrandt, *The apostle James the Less* (part of a series with **289-292** and **294**), 1661, canvas 94.5 x 81.5 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

1661

292–293

294. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait as St Paul* (part of a series with **289-293**), 1661, canvas 93.2 x 79.1 cm.
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

295. Rembrandt, *Two negroes*, 1661, canvas 77.8 x 64.5 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis

The paint surface is severely worn. The painting has been cropped to the right and bottom.

296. Rembrandt, *The small Margaretha de Geer* (sketch for **297b**)
1661, canvas 73.5 x 60.7 cm.
London, National Gallery

Detail of **296**

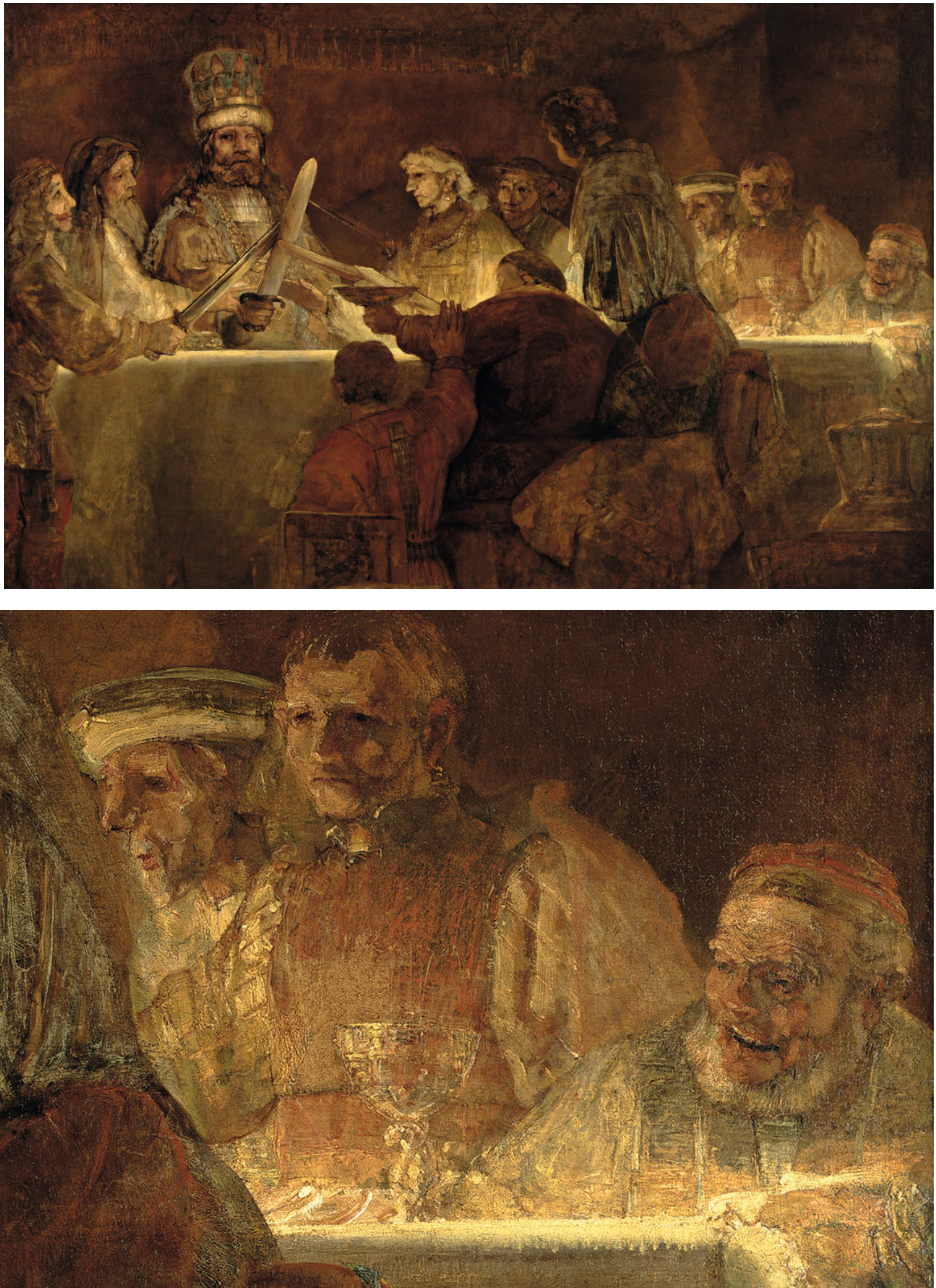
1661

296

297a. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Jacob Trip* (companion piece to **297b**),
c. 1661, canvas 130.5 x 97 cm.
London, National Gallery

297b. Rembrandt, *Margaretha de Geer* (companion piece to **297a**), *c.* 1661, canvas 130.5 x 97 cm.
London, National Gallery

298. Rembrandt, *The conspiracy of the Batavians under Claudius Civilis* (fragment)
c. 1661-1662, canvas 309 x 196 cm.
Stockholm, Nationalmuseum



298a. Digital reconstruction of **298** with the help of a (digitally toned down) drawing made by Rembrandt at an interim stage (Ben. 1061).

Detail of **298**

299. Rembrandt, *Portrait of the Syndics of the Amsterdam Clothmakers' Guild, known as the 'Staalmeesters'*, 1662, canvas 191.5 x 279 cm.
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

300. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a young man with a black beret*, *c*. 1662, canvas 80 x 64.7 cm.
Kansas City, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

Detail of **300**

c. 1662

300

301. Rembrandt, *Homer dictating his verses* (mutilated by fire), 1663, canvas 108 x 82.4 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis

Made as part of a tripartite series with **228** and a lost *Alexander the Great*. In the right lower corner part of the manuscript, fingertips with pen and rim of the inkwell of a scribe. For a tentative reconstruction of the painting (see Note 301).

302. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait as the laughing Zeuxis while painting an old woman*, *c.* 1663, canvas 82.5 x 65 cm. Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum

Cropped on all four sides; the upper left and right corners are later additions.

303. Rembrandt and workshop, *Equestrian portrait of Frederick Rihel*,
1663, canvas 294.5 x 241 cm.
London, National Gallery The horse is painted by a different painter, possibly Titus van Rijn

X-radiograph of 303. When turned 90° to the left the X-radiograph shows a standing man in a wooded landscape, most probably an earlier, unfinished portrait of Frederick Rihel.

1663
303

304. Rembrandt, *Bust of a bearded young man with a skullcap*, 1663, canvas 65.8 x 57.5 cm.
Fort Worth, Kimbell Art Museum

305. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a young woman with a lapdog*, *c.* 1665, canvas 81 x 64 cm.
Toronto, Art Gallery of Ontario

The originally more differentiated background is overpainted with black.

306. Rembrandt, *Old man in an armchair, possibly a portrait of Jan Amos Comenius*, *c.* 1665, canvas 104 x 86 cm.
Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi

Covered with remnants of darkened varnish. 1665

305–306

307. Rembrandt, *Titus reading (study in direct and reflected light)*, *c.* 1660/1665, canvas 70.5 x 64 cm.
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

308. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Gerard de Lairesse*,
1665, canvas 112 x 87 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Robert Lehman Collection

309. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Jan Boursse, sitting by a stove; probably painted in preparation of an unrealized etched portrait, c.* 1666, panel 47 x 40.5 cm.
Winterthur, Museum Oskar Reinhart 'Am Römerholz'

The painting has suffered heavily from overcleaning and wear and is covered with a thick layer of yellowed varnish.

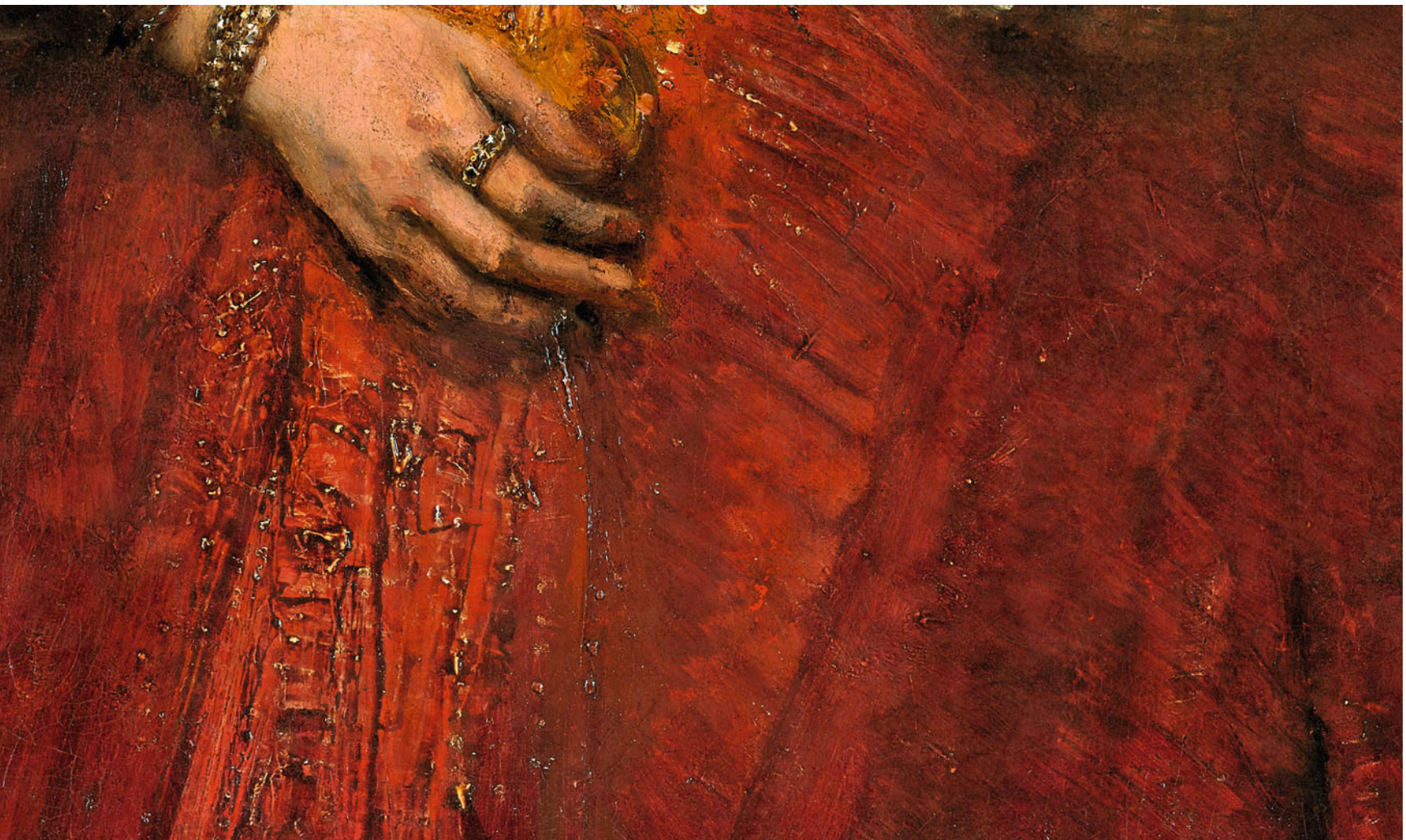
310. Rembrandt, *A presumed sketch for the male sitter in the 'Jewish Bride'*, mid-1660s, panel 38.4 x 31.1 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

311a. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man with a magnifying glass, possibly Pieter Haaringh* (companion piece to **311b**), *c.* 1665, canvas 91.4 x 74.3 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

311b. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a woman with a carnation, possibly Lysbet Jansdr Delft* (companion piece to **311a**), *c.* 1665, canvas 92.1 x 74.6 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

312. Rembrandt, '*Portrait historié' of a couple as Isaac and Rebecca (known as 'The Jewish Bride')*, *c.* 1665, canvas 121.5 x 166.5 cm.
Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

Originally the painting was larger (see Note 312).



Detail of **312**

1665
312

313. Rembrandt, *Family portrait*,
c. 1665, canvas 126 x 167 cm.
Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum

Detail of **313**

1665

313

314. Rembrandt, *Lucretia*, 1666, canvas 111 x 95 cm. Minneapolis, Institute of Art

Both hands have been (clumsily) overpainted by a later painter.

Detail of **313**

1666

314

315. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a white-haired man*, 1667, canvas 108.9 x 92.7 cm.
Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria

316. Rembrandt, *Portrait of an elderly man seated, possibly Pieter de la Tombe*, 1667, canvas 81.9 x 67.7 cm.
The Hague, Mauritshuis

317. Rembrandt, *Portrait of Titus van Rijn,* (companion piece to **318**?), *c.* 1668, canvas 72 x 56 cm.
Paris, Louvre

318. Rembrandt, *Portrait of* a *young woman, possibly Magdalena van Loo* (companion piece to **317**?), *c.* 1668, canvas 56 x 47 cm. Montreal, Museum of Fine Arts

Cropped on all four sides.

319. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait with two circles* (unfinished),
c. 1665/1669, canvas 114.3 x 94 cm.
London, Kenwood House, The Iveagh Bequest

Detail of **319**

1665/1669

319

320. Rembrandt and other hand(s), *The return of the prodigal son*, *c.* 1660/1665, canvas 262 x 206 cm.
St Petersburg, Hermitage

A 10 cm wide strip has been added or replaced along the right edge.

Detail of **320**

1660/1665

320

321. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait*, 1669, canvas 86 x 70.5 cm. London, National Gallery

322. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait with beret*, 1669, canvas 71 x 54 cm.
Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi

Strips of c. 15 cm may have been removed on all four sides as early as the seventeenth century to accommodate the painting in an assemblage of self-portraits owned by the Medici family. The painting is now almost hidden behind a strongly discoloured or tinted layer of varnish under which there also seem to be extensive overpaintings.

323. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait*, 1669, canvas 63.5 x 57.8 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis

A strip of c. 10 cm is missing from the bottom.

324. Rembrandt, *Simeon's song of praise*, 1669, canvas 98.5 x 79.5 cm. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum

This painting remained unfinished in his studio after Rembrandt's death. The woman (Mary?) was probably added later by another hand. Still later, the painting was so crudely treated that it is now a ruin.

Notes to the plates

* 1 Rembrandt, **The spectacles pedlar (‘Sight’)**, *c.* 1624, panel 21 x 17.8 cm. Leiden, Lakenhal. HdG -; Br. -; Bauch -; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 421A (as ‘rather poor’); ***Corpus* I B 3**; Tümpel -; ***Corpus* IV *Corrigenda* p. 627** (as by Rembrandt); see for 1 - 4 also B. van den Boogert in *Mystery* pp. 150-163.
Inscription: none

* 2 Rembrandt, **Three singers (‘Hearing’)**, *c.* 1624, panel 21.6 x 17.8 cm. Private collection. HdG -; Br. 421; Bauch -; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 421 (the attribution to the young Rembrandt is not wholly convincing); ***Corpus* I B 1**; Tümpel -; ***Corpus* IV *Corrigenda* p. 627** (as by Rembrandt); see also under 1.
Inscription: none

* 3 Rembrandt, **The operation (‘Touch’)**, *c.* 1624, panel 21.5 x 17.7 cm. Private collection. HdG -; Br. -; Bauch -; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 421A; ***Corpus* I B 2**; Tümpel -; ***Corpus* IV *Corrigenda* p. 627** (as by Rembrandt); see also under 1.
Inscription: none

1, 2 and 3 are discussed in conjunction with 4 in Note 4.

4 Rembrandt, **Christ driving the money-changers from the Temple**, 1624/1625, panel 43.1 x 32 cm. Moscow, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts. HdG -; Br. 532, Bauch 42; Gerson 5; Br./Gerson 532; ***Corpus* I A 4**; Tümpel 34; ***Corpus* V p. 148/49**.
Inscription: on the column ‹*RH* (in monogram: should perhaps be read as *RHF*). *1626*›; this inscription is scored in the partially dried paint, probably by Rembrandt himself, at some later stage after completion of the painting (see below)

The scene depicted is described almost identically in all four Gospels of the New Testament (Matthew 21: 12-13; Mark 11: 15; Luke 19: 45; John 2: 13-17). The most detailed account is that found in

> **John 2: 13-16** ‘Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business. When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers’ money and overturned the tables. And He said to those who sold doves, “Take these things away! Do not make My Father’s house a house of merchandise!”’

The three small paintings with the *Senses* 1 2 3 re-surfaced one after the other over the course of the twentieth century. At the time of their rediscovery they were larger than they are now (**fig. 1**). It was gradually realized that they actually belong together: they are painted in the same style, in format are more or less the same size, and are related to each other in respect of content. They must have been part of a series illustrating the senses. Although two of the traditional five senses are missing – taste and smell – it seems likely that this series was once complete.

X-radiographic investigation of the three paintings clearly showed that originally they were much smaller (**fig. 2**). The original small panels measure 21 x 17.8 cm (‘sight’), 21.6 x 17.8 cm (‘hearing’) and 21.5 x 17.7 cm (‘touch’). These were embedded in larger oak panels, respectively 32.8 x 25.3 cm (‘sight’), 31.6 x 25 cm (‘hearing’) and 31.7 x 25.3 cm (‘touch’). Given the correspondences in the technique employed in enlarging the paintings, this must have been carried out by the same carpenter. The painter who extended the images to the edge of the added panels must similarly have been one and the same person. In the process he overpainted considerable parts of the original paintings in order to merge the addition with the original convincingly (**fig. 3**).

Fig. 1. 2 including eighteenth-century additions.

Fig. 2. X-ray corresponding to fig. 1.

Fig. 3. Fig. 1 with overpainted areas shown in a lighter tone.

Judging by style and technique, the original panels appear to have been painted in the 17th century, whereas the style of the additions betrays a much smoother 18th century hand. Dendrochronological investigation showed that 1712 is the earliest possible felling date for the tree from which two of the added panels derive (*Corpus* IV p. 652).

Initially there were different ideas regarding the possibility that the three *Senses* could have been painted by the young Rembrandt. But one must take into account that when the paintings were critically assessed by Gerson, the RRP and Tümpel they were seen in their enlarged state. These judgments were inevitably influenced by the extent to which they were overpainted during the enlargement (**fig. 3**). In *Corpus* I, p. 404, in comparing the *Senses* with the Moscow *Christ driving the money-changers from the Temple* 4, it was asserted that ‘the plasticity and the effect of depth were less convincing’ than in that painting; but it is precisely that type of difference that one found in the overpainted state of the three works. What was clear is that, if they were from Rembrandt’s hand, they must have been painted around 1624.

The members of the RRP who investigated the three paintings decided to class them in the B-category of ‘paintings whose Rembrandt authorship cannot be positively either accepted or rejected’. This hesitant judgment was perhaps the reason that the three owners of the paintings decided to return them, as far as it was possible, to their original state, i.e. to allow them to be better judged. The

Dutch restorer Menno Dooijes carried out these extremely difficult restorations with the utmost care and infinite patience. The overpaintings could in the main only be removed with a scalpel. The greatest problem associated with this was that the adhesion of the 18th-century additions to the original paint was stronger than the adhesion of the original paint to the ground of the panels. I was invited by Mr. Dooijes from time to time to follow the steps in this slow process and to share difficult decisions and help resolve dilemmas.

When one compares the three small paintings with *Christ driving the money-changers from the Temple*, with which they show greatest kinship in virtually all respects, one becomes convinced that the same hand must have been at work in all four cases, and given the strong relationship with **5**, that can only have been Rembrandt's hand. The alternative is that the 18-year-old Rembrandt had an imitative doppelganger; but it is surely inconceivable that at this time, when he was still in his apprentice period, Rembrandt should himself already have had a pupil or imitator. One should also bear in mind that the *Christ driving the money-changers from the Temple* is twice as large and, with its five protagonists, a clearly more ambitious work than the *Senses*. Apart from the difference of scale, this greater ambition would also have been manifest in the greater detailing of the faces and hands. The four paintings witness to the same, great interest in the rendering of human affects and a strikingly adventurous exploration of the colouristic possibilities in the rendering of costumes.

What is most conspicuous, of course, is the very cramped composition of all four paintings. In his chapter on ordonnance and invention Karel van Mander advises:

> '*... [one must] always adapt oneself to the dimensions of the space available and avoid making the figures carry the frame, or lie as cramped [by it] as though squeezed in boxes.*' (KvM *Grondt* Cap. 5:5; *Corpus* V p. 54).

The question is whether Rembrandt was aware of this advice when he painted his *Senses* and the *Christ driving the money-changers from the temple*. Jan Lievens, Rembrandt's youthful associate in Leiden, may well have influenced this way of framing the scenes represented (cf. *Mystery* cat. 8 and 9). Certainly, in the ordonnance and use of colour in these four paintings, one finds no trace of the teaching of the history painter Pieter Lastman, Rembrandt's second teacher. One is therefore tempted to speculate that Rembrandt may have painted **1** **2** **3** and **4** after or perhaps even during his apprenticeship with Jacob van Swanenburgh and *before* he went to Amsterdam to continue his training with Lastman.

However, the *Christ driving the money-changers from the temple* bears the date 1626, by which time Rembrandt's apprenticeship with Lastman was already behind him. The date 1626, placed with the monogram on the pillar behind the figures in **4**, is therefore put in question. The large monogram RH (F?) – formed by upright capitals and together with the date is scored in the partially dried paint of the pillar – could well have been added later (in 1626, according to the inscribed date) – most likely by Rembrandt himself. Sometimes, like in **53** and **85**, he added his signature and a date only later, possibly when selling the work. In this context, it may perhaps be significant that there is no trace of a signature to be found on any of the three *Senses*.

5 Rembrandt, **The stoning of St Stephen**, 1625, panel 89.5 x 123.6 cm. Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts. HdG -; Br. -; Bauch 41; Gerson 2; Br./Gerson 531A; ***Corpus* I A 1**; Tümpel 33; ***Corpus* V p. 150**; see also Gerson 1962).
Inscription: in the lower left ‹*R f. 1625.*›

The image refers to a passage in the New Testament:

> **Acts 7: 54-59** 'The apostle Stephen has been defending himself against false accusations before the high priests. 'When they heard these things they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed at him with *their* teeth. But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God, and said, "Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!" Then they cried out with a loud voice, stopped their ears, and ran at him with one accord; and they cast *him* out of the city and stoned *him*. And the witnesses laid down their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on *God* and saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."'

Just above the martyred Stephen, Rembrandt has included his own face. This is not the only occasion on which he does this in a history piece (see also **7** **8** **106** **107** and B. 77/II), but here he gives his face the expression of a bystander weeping at the torture he is witnessing. Particularly in the early years, Rembrandt was deeply interested in rendering the various human affects (see also for instance **10** **12** **17** **18** **23** and **25**).

Horst Gerson in 1962 identified this painting in the reserves of the Lyon Museum as a work by Rembrandt.

6 Rembrandt, **Bust of a man wearing a gorget and plumed beret**, *c.* 1626, panel 40 x 29.4 cm. Private collection. HdG -; Br. 132; Bauch 109; Gerson 28; Br./Gerson 132; ***Corpus* I A 8**; Tümpel 126; see also Bl. cat. 1; Christie's, Old Master and British Painting Auction 3 July 2012 cat. 24.
Inscription: to the left on the background ‹*RH* (in monogram).*v Rin.*› (undoubtedly introduced by a later hand)

Fig. 1. X-ray of **6**

This soldier, with an iron collar and a mace under his right arm, the slashed beret worn aslant, reminds one of the captain of an approaching squad of troops in the background of the *Leiden History piece* **7**. It is a so-called *tronie*, the type of half-figure that Rembrandt must have seen his friend Jan Lievens (with whom he may have shared a studio) turning out in a steady stream. The painting is superimposed on the head of a slightly bent old man with a white beard and bald skull, of the type that Rembrandt himself would later draw and paint (**fig. 1**) but was at that time being produced by Lievens. Was Rembrandt perhaps working on top of a rejected painting by Lievens? It is not impossible. We know for certain that in one case the panel of a painting by Lievens came from the same tree as a panel on which Rembrandt had painted (*Corpus* IV p. 649, I A 24).

In the 17th-century such *tronies* must have been prized as wall decoration (see *Corpus* I B 4). For the painter, they could have served as a way

of exploring certain pictorial possibilities. In the present painting, light, colour and above all the rendering of material surface textures play major roles. Highlights, in all their different forms, constitute the most important means of achieving a convincing rendering of the various materials. When Karel van Mander in his book on the art of painting devoted a section to such lights, he was mainly referring to precisely the kind of gleams and reflections that one sees in this painting:

> '*One sees clear reflections and gleams mirrored and reflected on many more things; each of which is a special lesson whereby, through constant attention, one learns from nature, the painters' mistress: how gleaming fishes, pewter and brassware impart their reflections.*' (KvM *Grondt* Cap. 7: 53)

A short time later, it would be a very different aspect of reflected light that would come to preoccupy Rembrandt. If one compares this painting with the *Bust of a man wearing a turban* **21** from two years later, one sees in the latter that in the shadowed part another type of reflected light plays an important role: light that is reflected from a light surface (that lies either in or outside the picture space) into the shadow zone of an adjacent form.

In the many paintings from his Leiden period in which the gorget – the steel collar – is depicted (cf. **18** **19** **30** **35** **56** **58**) one sees the rapid development of the mastery and economy with which Rembrandt renders this piece of decorative armour.

7 Rembrandt, **History painting** (**subject still under discussion**), 1626, panel 90 x 122 cm. Leiden, Lakenhal as a long-term loan. HdG -; Br. 460; Bauch 96; Gerson 1; Br./Gerson 460; ***Corpus* I A 6**; Tümpel 117; ***Corpus* V p. 150**; see also Van Straten 2005 pp. 300-313, and below.
Inscription: thinly drawn in dark brown at bottom right ‹*R f.* or *RH* (in monogram). *1626*›

This painting is usually referred to as the *Leiden History painting*, a 'title of convenience' because there is still no consensus regarding the painting's iconography. Numerous suggestions have been proposed to solve this enigma. Frans Grijzenhout listed the various efforts as follows:

Subjects from biblical history
'Saul giving arms to David' (Hofstede de Groot 1924 p. 127.)
'Saul sentencing Jonathan' (Sumowski 1957/58 p. 231.)

Subjects from classical history
'The justice of the consul Lucius Junius Brutus' (Stechow 1929)
'The judgment on the son of Titus Manlius Torquatus' (Valentiner 1925/34 II p. 401 no. 577)
'The clemency of the emperor Titus' (Schmidt-Degener 1941)
'Consul Cerealis pardons the German legions which have taken sides with the rebels' (Bauch 1960 pp. 99-101)
'Coriolanus' (Pelinck 1949 p. 231)
'Palamedes before Agamemnon' (Leiden 1976/77 p. 66-68, following up Van Gelder 1953 p. 285)
'The magnanimity of Alexander the Great' (Bruyn 1987)
'The magnanimity of Claudius Civilis' (Schama 1999 pp. 227-228)
'The Horatian brothers before Tullus' (Tuynman 1999, Stumpel 2000/01)

Subjects from modern history
'Ludolph and Conrad the Red before emperor Otto I' (Demus in two letters to the director of the museum in Leiden, as cited by Wurfbain in Leiden 1976/77 p. 66)
'The magnanimity of emperor Charles V' (B. van den Boogert in *Mystery* pp. 142-147)
'The magnanimity of emperor Ferdinand II' (Van Straten 1991, Van Straten 2005 pp. 301-315)

Grijzenhout's own suggestion (forthcoming publication) for the iconography of the painting belongs with the Subjects from biblical history: 'King David of Judah takes an oath of allegiance from messengers, sent by Abner, commander of the people of Israel, in the presence of his commander-in-chief, Joab' (II Samuel 3: 12-13).

8 Rembrandt, **David with the head of Goliath before Saul**, 1626/1627, panel 27.2 x 39.6 cm. Basle, Kunstmuseum. HdG 34; Br. 488; Bauch 3; Gerson 3; Br./Gerson 488; ***Corpus* I A 9**; Tümpel 3; ***Corpus* V pp. 150-151**.
Inscription: at bottom centre, inside a dark brown outline, thinly applied in the same dark brown ‹*RH* (in monogram). *1627*›

The scene depicted comes from the First Book of Samuel of the Old Testament.

> **I Samuel 17: 55-58** 'When Saul saw David going out against the Philistine [Goliath], he said to Abner, the commander of the army, "Abner, whose son is this youth?" And Abner said, "As your soul lives, O king, I do not know." So the king said, "Inquire whose son this young man is." Then, as David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Abner [the man with the turban behind the kneeling David] took him and brought him before Saul with the head of the Philistine in his hand. And Saul said to him, "Whose son are you, young man?" So David answered, "I am the son of your servant Jesse the Bethlehemite."'
>
> **I Samuel 18: 1-2** 'Now when he had finished speaking to Saul [the figure with the long yellow train], the soul of Jonathan [the horserider in the left foreground] was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul. Saul took him that day, and would not let him go home to his father's house anymore.'

This complex scene – with many figures, horses, a large tent in the background, soldiers resting in the foreground – so sketchily executed, must surely be understood as the preparation for a much more ambitious project. Perhaps the commissioning patron wanted to see in advance what his painting would look like and asked to see a small version of it, a 'vidimus'. In any case, we don't know whether the (putative) intended version was ever realized.

It seems that the patron wanted Rembrandt to include himself in the scene. Behind the bending figure of the prophet Samuel one can see his youthful self-portrait – just as in the *Leiden History piece* and in virtually the same place in the composition **7**. In 1727 Rembrandt's biographer, Arnold Houbraken, wrote of such self-portraits worked into history pieces:

> *'certainly, when their [the artists'] own likenesses were observed in the old Historical paintings, for the erudite art-lovers .... this was most gratifying.'* (Houbraken II pp. 178-9)

The way Rembrandt introduced a minute RH monogram in the zone of shadow below could indicate that he signed this sketch retrospectively when it was later sold, for as a rule sketches were not signed

20 **45** **46** p. 104. If so – similarly to the case of **4** – the date <1627> after the monogram need not necessarily indicate the date of origin but rather the date of sale. If that were so, it could mean that in 1626 the sketch was already related in some way to **5** and **7**.

☆ **9** Rembrandt, **The baptism of the Eunuch**, 1626, panel 63.5 x 48 cm. Utrecht, Museum Catharijne-convent. HdG -; Br. -; Bauch -; Gerson -; Br./Gerson -; ***Corpus* I A 5**; Tümpel 35; ***Corpus* V p. 153-154**; see also Defoer 1977.
Inscription: in the lower right corner ‹*RH* (in monogram). *1626*›

The scene depicted here derives from the New Testament:

> **Acts 8: 26-39** 'Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, "Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." This is desert. So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship, was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet. Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go near and overtake this chariot." So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, "Do you understand what you are reading?" And he said, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him. The place in the Scripture which he read was this: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter/ And as a lamb before its shearer is silent, So He opened not His mouth. In His humiliation His justice was taken away, And who will declare His generation? For His life is taken from the earth."
> So the eunuch answered Philip and said, "I ask you, of whom does the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man?" Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?"
> Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may."
> And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."
> So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.'

In 1975 the art historian Henri Defoer discovered this painting in a Dutch living room. For those who thought their image of the young Rembrandt already defined, its emergence was a revelation. When Defoer showed Rembrandt scholars his photographs, the initial reactions of Gerson and those members of the RRP whom he met were negative; the painting simply did not match their idea of the artist's style. As it turned out, however, there were a range of aspects, of different kinds, that linked the work to Rembrandt's oeuvre. Taken separately, none of these aspects would have yielded a conclusive argument in favour of the attribution, but taking all of them together provided a compelling constellation of positive evidence. These aspects included (1) the size and (2) composition of the panel; (3) the nature and function of the ground and (4) of the underpainting; (6) the extent to which these were left visible; (7) the order of working and (8) the characteristics of the areas left in reserve at an earlier stage of the painting; (9) the way in which the edges of the paint surface were (partly) left uncovered; (10) the degree and nature of changes in the composition (the palm tree replaced an oak tree; the X-ray and infrared images showed that originally the travellers in the carriage were sheltered by a parasol); (11) the way these changes demonstrated the painter's engagement with Lastman (see **fig. 1**); (12) characteristic features of the application of the paint, its consistency and behaviour over the course of time; (13) certain compositional principles in the organization of the groups of figures, and (14) certain peculiarities of the colour scheme. (For a full presentation of these arguments see *Corpus* I A 5).

These arguments forced Rembrandt scholars to accept unusual features in the spatial organization, the treatment of the foreground and landscape, the execution of Philip's (overcleaned) head, the posture of the cowering negro etc., and to accept these features into their image of the young Rembrandt as previously unsuspected pictorial possibilities.

Lastman had painted this subject more than once and Rembrandt must have known at least one of these versions (**fig. 1**). It is evident that Rembrandt incorporated in his painting several elements from Lastman. Nevertheless, there are striking differences in execution and composition. The wide and incoherent grouping of figures in Lastman is replaced in Rembrandt's painting by a much more concentrated composition. He orients the group, as it were, vertically rather than horizontally, and ensures that the eyes of all the figures are directed toward the baptism. The composition acquires a certain dynamic through the placing of the figures in a spiral movement from behind forward. Further, the rendering of the different material textures is far more differentiated in Rembrandt's work than in Lastman's.

Fig. 1. Pieter Lastman, *The Baptism of the Eunich c.* 1612, Karlsruhe Museum.

The investigation of the discovered painting was carried out in 1975 in the Central Research Laboratory of Objects of Art and Science in Amsterdam. For the interpretation of our observations it was possible to make use of the knowledge we had built up during our work on the painting materials and working methods of the young Rembrandt published in Groen 1977; and Van de Wetering 1977, which would subsequently also appear in *Corpus* I pp.11-33 and *Painter at Work* pp.11-45.

10 Rembrandt, **Balaam and the ass**, 1626, panel 63.2 x 46.5 cm. Paris, Musée Cognacq-Jay. HdG 26 (26A); Br. 487; Bauch 1; Gerson 6; Br./Gerson 487; ***Corpus* I A 2**; Tümpel 1; ***Corpus* V p. 152**; see also Van Thiel 2008.
Inscription: in grey-brown on the rock in the left foreground ‹*RH* (in monogram) *1626*›

The scene depicted here comes from the Old Testament book of Numbers. The King of Moab has requested the Israelite soothsayer Balaam – against God's will – to come to him.

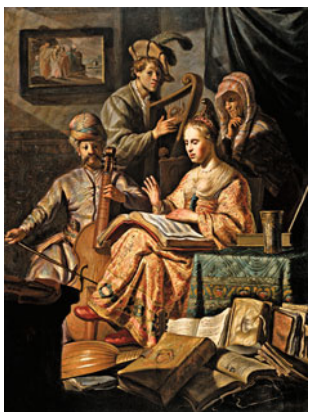
> **Numbers 22: 21-31** 'So Balaam rose in the morning, saddled his donkey, and went with the princes of Moab. Then God's anger was aroused because he went, and the Angel of the Lord took His stand in the way as an adversary against him. And he was riding on his donkey, and his two servants were with him. Now the donkey saw the Angel of the Lord standing in the way with His drawn sword in His hand, and the donkey turned aside out of the way and went into the field. So Balaam struck the donkey to turn her back onto the road. Then the Angel of the Lord stood in a narrow path between the vineyards, with a wall on this side and a wall on that side. And when the donkey saw the Angel of the Lord, she pushed herself against the wall and crushed Balaam's foot against the wall; so he struck her again. Then the Angel of the Lord went further, and stood in a narrow place where there was no way to turn either to the right hand or to the left. And when the donkey saw the Angel of the Lord, she lay down under Balaam; so Balaam's anger was aroused, and he struck the donkey with his staff.
> Then the Lord opened the mouth of the donkey, and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?" And Balaam said to the donkey, "Because you have abused me. I wish there were a sword in my hand, for now I would kill you!" So the donkey said to Balaam, "Am I not your donkey on which you have ridden, ever since I became yours,

to this day? Was I ever disposed to do this to you?" And he said, "No." Then the Lord opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the Angel of the Lord standing in the way with His drawn sword in His hand; and he bowed his head and fell flat on his face.'

In the present painting, and later that same year in the *Tobit and Anna* **12**, Rembrandt pursued his exploration of the rendering of human affects, an investigation he had already begun in 1624/25 **1** – **5**. In doing so he seems to have distanced himself from the prescriptive approach to the task recommended by Van Mander (see *Corpus* V pp. 65-70). Apparently Rembrandt was convinced that the expression of human emotions is much too subtle to be caught by prescription. As later noted by Van Hoogstraten, the painter can better take as his starting point the situation given in the painting and try to feel the state of mind of the protagonists (see *Corpus* V p. 68) – for example, Balaam's rage verging on frenzy, or Anna's indignation at being unjustly accused, or Tobit's despairing sorrow. The fact that Rembrandt seems to have wanted to give even Balaam's ass a facial expression underlines his intense interest in the affects – and in animals.

For the probability that this painting and many other of Rembrandt's early history pieces were not painted on commission (see *Corpus* V pp. 3-5).

11 Rembrandt, **Musical allegory**, 1626, panel 63.4 x 47.6 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. HdG -; Br. 632; Bauch 97; Gerson 18; Br./Gerson 632; ***Corpus* I A 7**; Tümpel 118; see also *Painter at Work*, pp. 169-179; B. van den Boogert in *Mystery* pp. 184-189; Van Straten 2005 pp. 315-320.
Inscription: in rather large grey script on the repoussoir in the left foreground ‹*RH* (in monogram).*1626*›



Samuel van Hoogstraten wrote in his book on the art of painting:

'*Jan Lievens was expert in seeking wonders in smeared (aengesmeerde) pigments, varnishes and oils*' (SvH p. 238).

This text could be read as surviving testimony, perhaps handed down by Rembrandt himself, that Lievens carried out technical experiments with the consistency of paint. If so, Rembrandt may have been party to it. One can well imagine that they tried to render the various different materials convincingly by varying the paint substance and painting technique accordingly. In the present painting one can see the results of experimentation in painting techniques. Rembrandt tries here to render various materials – gold brocade, the shiny leather of the red patent leather shoes, parchment and the multicoloured glossy materials, the human skin or the wood of the lute – by means of constantly differing paint structures and by varying the consistency of his paint and brush movements.

12 Rembrandt, **Tobit accusing Anna of stealing the kid**, 1626, panel 40.1 x 29.9 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. HdG 64A; Br. 486; Bauch 2; Gerson 4; Br./Gerson 486; ***Corpus* I A 3**; Tümpel 2; ***Corpus* V pp. 152-153**; see also *M/W* cat. 1
Inscription: bottom left in the wet paint ‹*RH* (in monogram).*1626*›

The scene depicted here refers to a story from the Old Testament Apocryphal Book of Tobit, set in the period of the Jews' exile in Nineveh. Tobit, who relates his own history in this book, is blind and impoverished.

Tobit 2: 11-14, **3: 1-2** 'Then my wife Anna earned money at women's work. She used to send the product to the owners. Once when they paid her wages, they also gave her a kid; and when she returned to me it began to bleat. So I said to her, "Where did you get the kid? It is not stolen, is it? Return it to the owners; for it is not right to eat what is stolen."
And she said, "It was given to me as a gift in addition to my wages." But I did not believe her, and told her to return it to the owners; and I blushed for her. Then she replied to me, "Where are your charities and your righteous deeds? You seem to know everything!" Then in my grief I wept, and I prayed in anguish, saying, "Righteous art thou, O Lord; all thy deeds and all they ways are mercy and truth, and thou dost render true and righteous judgment for ever.'

In the *Tobit and Anna* Rembrandt for the first time introduces two light sources, which in itself was no innovation. In his treatise on the art of painting, Van Mander referred to Raphael's *Liberation of St Peter* in the Stanze as an *'Example of night painted with different lights'* (KvM, *Grondt* Cap. 7:37/38). But that was not a night scene. The fact that Rembrandt in the present painting introduces two light sources in a daylight scene – the window and a small fire in the right foreground – may be seen as evidence of his investigative and creative drive which from then on would manifest itself in the way he dealt with different kinds of light and shadow. But not until 1631/32 did he manage to render the light from a visible window in a more convincing way than in the present painting (see **85** **86**).

There can be little doubt that the present work is one of the last paintings Rembrandt completed in 1626, if not the last. In several respects, the painting points forward to his pictorial explorations of 1627.

* **13** Rembrandt, **The flight into Egypt**, 1627, panel 27.5 x 24.7 cm. Tours, Musée des Beaux-Arts. HdG -; Br. -; Bauch 43; Gerson 8; Br./Gerson 532A; ***Corpus* I C 5**; Tümpel A4 (as from Rembrandt's workshop); *Mystery* cat. 60.
Inscription: at the lower right ‹*RH* (in monogram) *1627*›

This scene is from the New Testament Gospel of St Matthew.

Matthew 2: 13-15 'Now when they [the Magi] had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him." When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son."'

In *Corpus* I C 5, this painting was disattributed from Rembrandt on the basis of arguments – mainly urged, it must be admitted, by the present author, who at that stage was not fully aware of the small scale of this painting. Subsequently, my arguments proved to be untenable and accordingly, in *Mystery* (exh. cat. 60 and pp. 58-81 esp. pp. 76-78), I re-attributed the painting to Rembrandt. To reiterate that judgment here: I have no hesitation in linking the present painting in style with *La Main Chaude* **22** and the paintings on which its attribution was based. The *Flight into Egypt* was introduced into the Rembrandt literature by Otto Benesch as an early work by Rembrandt, but was subsequently removed by others. In *Corpus* I it was tentatively attributed to the young Gerard Dou. It has virtually the same minute format as **22** and is similarly a nocturnal piece in which an invisible light-source illuminates the protagonists. The light casts sharp shadows just as in **22**, shadows that have the same tendency to undulate rhythmically. The figures have the billowing outlines characteristic of Rembrandt in this period, and even Joseph's little finger is freed from the rest of the hand in the same way as it is in the Boston *Studio* **24** and *La main chaude* **22**. There are also striking correspondences between Mary's head and that of the

figure behind the table in *La main chaude*. With Mary, there was initially the impression that the head had been damaged, without it being clear how the head had originally been painted, but the solution is apparent when one turns to the head of the man in yellow behind the table in *La main chaude*. In both cases, one is looking at a cursorily indicated oval with the suggestion of a nose, spots for the two eyes and a mouth done in similar fashion. The colour schemes of the two paintings are also related: mainly cool blue-grey, ochre, flesh colour and brown. In the *Flight into Egypt*, the subdued orangey tints in the donkey's basket also add to this. For the question of attribution, one hardly need write about the relevance of the dark *repoussoirs* in the corner. This was at the time a widely-employed way of creating space in the image and strengthening the suggestion of light. There are a number of other striking similarities in the details when one compares *La main chaude* and the *Flight into Egypt*. The rhythm of the half-drawn, half-painted strokes with which the sagging form of Joseph's bag is painted is strongly reminiscent of the manner in which parts of the costume of the man about to strike in *La main chaude* have been executed: one can hardly imagine that two different hands were at work in the two paintings. The pointedly typical way, too, in which the pipe and spout of the wine jug are indicated, on the one hand, and that used in Joseph's hat, on the other, is strikingly similar. This is not merely a stylistic detail; it tells us something about the technique. Introducing such fine lines in oil paint calls for a specific consistency of the paint, but it also demands a particular hand and specific brush. Rembrandt was a master of the free yet controlled introduction of such linear details (for example, compare the illuminated edge of the panel in the Boston *Studio* **24**).

14 Rembrandt, **The rich man from the parable**, 1627, panel 31.7 x 42.5 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 282; Br. 420; Bauch 110; Gerson 19; Br./Gerson 420; ***Corpus* I A 10**; Tümpel 36; see also Tümpel 1971 pp. 27-30; *M/W* cat. 2

Inscription: in the shadow part of the pile of books to the left ‹*RH* (in monogram).*1627.*›

The scene depicted most probably refers to a parable from a sermon that Christ preached to a crowd of listeners.

> **Luke 12: 13-21** 'Then one from the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." But He said to him, "Man, who made Me a judge or an arbitrator over you?" And He said to them, "Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses." Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.' But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?'"'

In Rembrandt's time the painting of candle-light was considered extremely difficult. From a single small light source (in Van Mander's words)

> '*the shadow has to seek its direction everywhere away from that point*' (KvM, *Grondt* Cap 7:34).

The painter thus has to be aware of the different directions an illumninated object casts its shadow and also where this shadow in turn falls on other objects in the room. Note in the present painting, for example, the shadow of the man's spectacles on his face, or the shadow of the handle of the *stokbeurs* on the sheet of paper hanging down behind it.

Another aspect of candle light that must have already intrigued Rembrandt for some time is that the open flame of a candle in a dark room reduces the degree of visibility – or perhaps one should say,

Figs. 1 and *2:* Rembrandt's experiments with small, blinding light sources in dark rooms, B.148 and 105.

hinders our perception – of things, something which he had not yet realized at the time of his work on the *Sense of Touch* **3**. This problem continued to engage him, as Van Hoogstraten testifies. Rembrandt

> *'has depicted the strength of candle-light to the best of his abilities in several dark prints* (**figs. 1** and **2**) *but if one covers these small lights, the rest of the work remains dark; just as, when someone shows us something by candle-light, we usually hold our hands in front of the light so that it does not prevent us seeing everything in as much detail and as recognizably as possible.'* (SvH p. 268; see also *Corpus* V pp.78-79).

In his scenes lit by candle or lamp light from 1627, Rembrandt would therefore cover the light source, either partially or wholly. The present painting is Rembrandt's first masterpiece in this respect. Because the candle flame is largely shielded from the beholder's viewpoint, the old man's loosely hanging pleated collar could be painted dead white and many objects surrounding the man rendered in great detail.

15 Rembrandt, **The apostle Paul in prison**, 1627, panel 72.8 x 60.2 cm. Stuttgart, Staatsgalerie. HdG 179; Br. 601; Bauch 111; Gerson 22; Br./Gerson 601; ***Corpus* I A 11**; Tümpel 37.

Inscription: on the bench to the right of Paul's left knee ‹*R f 1627*> originally <*RH*> but reinforced by a later hand and extended with unusual flourishes and the letter *f* a second, suspect inscription can be found on the folded sheet of Paul's knee <*Rembrand/fecit.*›. For a detailed discussion of these two confusing inscriptions, see *Corpus* I p. 146.

The scene is probably not based on the New Testament account of Paul's imprisonment in Philippi (together with Silas – Acts 16: 23 ff) or in Caesarea (Acts 23: 35 to 26: 32) but rather on that in Rome (not related in the Acts of the Apostles) during which he wrote a number of epistles.

This work, painted on a conspicuously large panel (comprising three joined vertical planks), is one of the most impressive paintings from Rembrandt's early Leiden years. It could well have originated shortly after he painted the *Tobit and Anna* **12**. In the present painting Rembrandt achieved an even more muted colour scheme than in **12**.

The choice of these subdued colours can be related to the strong effect of incident sunlight suggested by Rembrandt in this painting. It is clear that between 1624 and '27/28 he became further interested in the possibilities of painting different kinds of light and it is worth looking briefly at this development. In each of the three surviving *Senses* **1** **2** **3** Rembrandt applied a particular kind of light: daylight in the *Spectacles pedlar* **1**, open candlelight in the *Operation* **2** and artificial light from beyond the picture frame in the *Singers* **3**. This marks the beginning of his investigation of these and other kinds of illumination.

Having dealt with the potential of the dark repoussoir as a means

of intensifying the strength of daylight in a scene, his attention was drawn to the light of a hidden candle – or of other light sources shielded from sight (see 5 8 11 and also 16 23 - 25). In 1627 he also began to concentrate on the effects of incident sunlight 15 16 and 27. Albrecht Dürer had already tackled this problem in the famous engraving with *St Jerome in his study* (**fig. 1**), a print which Rembrandt must undoubtedly have studied in the course of seeking better solutions to the problem of suggesting sunlight in an interior. The effect of direct sunlight entering a room in Dürer's print is shown by the projection of the window's frame and the lead strips of the panes on the side of the window recess. But Dürer goes no further: the details in the room are all equally visible. In Rembrandt's paintings with incident sunlight, the projection of the window is also shown, but the visibility of the details of the depicted space decreases markedly, depending on where they are in that space. This phenomenon evidently engaged Rembrandt's mind: his ideas on the matter led to theorizing that was subsequently set down in an extended argument on so-called *'kamerlicht'* ('room-light') by Samuel van Hoogstraten (SvH pp. 76-77; *Corpus* V pp. 76-78). The degree to which Rembrandt must have given serious thought to the effects of sunlight is evident, not only from 15 and 16, but also from a description of the painting reproduced in 27 passed down by Jacques de Gheyn III in whose inventory the figures in the painting were described (*'two old men disputing'*) with the addition '*with sunlight entering*' ['daer comt een sonnelicht in']. There Rembrandt no longer uses a white background wall as a projection screen for the sunlight, but in an equally sophisticated manner shows the strength of the sunlight as it illuminates the more distant figure and a constellation of objects and draperies below in the pictorial space.

Fig. 1. A. Dürer, *St Jerome in his study*, 1514, engraving.

16 Rembrandt, **Simeon in the Temple**, *c.* 1628, panel 55.4 x 43.7 cm. Hamburg, Kunsthalle. HdG 81; Br. 535; Bauch 46; Gerson 10; Br./Gerson 535; ***Corpus* I A 12**, Tümpel 39; ***Corpus* V p. 156**; see also Bl. cat. 2.
Inscription: at bottom right, in stifflydrawn letters in dark paint on a dark background ‹*Rembrandt. f*›. This is inconceivable for the Leiden period, and is definitely a later addition by another hand.

The scene here combines two successive moments, taken from the New Testament: Simeon's song of praise (Luke 2: 22-35) and the thanksgiving of the prophetess Anna (Luke 2: 36-38) at the presentation of the baby Jesus in the Temple, when Mary offers to God her firstborn male child according to Old Testament Law. This is also the moment when, after 40 days following childbirth, she is first allowed to enter the Temple once again, for the ritual purification commanded in Leviticus.

> **Luke 2: 22-35** 'Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the LORD"), and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, "A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. So he came by the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, he took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said: "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word; For my eyes have seen Your salvation Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel." And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed."'
> And **Luke 2: 36-38** 'Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, [...] who did not depart from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers night and day. And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.'

Fig. 1. X-ray of 16 detail.

For Rembrandt's introduction of sunlight in several of his paintings, see 15. This painting is somewhat disfigured by the fact that Mary's gown has been drastically overpainted by a later hand. The originally light blue, simply draped material of her travelling cloak has been altered as a result. In the X-radiograph can be seen that the paint mixture with which Mary's garment originally was painted contained a considerable quantity of lead white (**fig. 1**). For Rembrandt's choice of the symbolically important blue in Mary's cloak see the paintings 13 47 and 174.

* **17** Rembrandt, **The foot operation**, 1628, panel 31.8 x 24.4 cm. Switzerland, Private collection. HdG -; Br. 422; Bauch 98; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 422 (leaves open the question of whether the painting is by Rembrandt or Lievens); ***Corpus* I C 11**; Tümpel -; see also *Mystery* cat. 26.
Inscription: on the piece of furniture to the right of the surgeon's leg ‹*RHL* (in monogram). *1628.*› (**fig. 1**)

The image in this painting can be related to one of the five senses: feeling (see also 2). The question of whether this *Foot operation* was or was not painted by Rembrandt is not so easily answered. When one tries to disentangle the closely interwoven studio productions of Lievens and Rembrandt in Leiden, it is impossible to say how many and which young painters were being trained, or by whom, whilst simultaneously contributing to the studio production of the two young masters.

To begin with, of course, there was the young Rembrandt and his fellow-painter Jan Lievens themselves, whose works were already being confused in the 17th-century. And then we don't know how many pupils either of them had, or whether the pupils of the one were influenced by the other. Nor do we know for sure whether Rembrandt and Lievens did *share* a workshop and could have had the same pupils together. Sometimes a cluster of works once attributed to Rembrandt condenses into what appears to have been the production of one of the pupils, manifesting characteristics of both Rembrandt and Lievens. This is the case, for example, with the group of works attributed to the painter of the much-admired *Scholar in a lofty room* in the London National Gallery (see *R. Mother* cat. 8). In other cases the attempt to distinguish between hands or to identify further mini-oeuvres rests on a laboriously constructed, but ultimately tautological apparatus: qualitative differences are provisionally raised to the status of criteria of authenticity and used as arguments for or against attributions.

On the few occasions where works from this group of painters bear a Rembrandt monogram, this carries significant weight, especially when it is known that such a monogram is not a later addition and is of a type that occasionally occurs within a limited period. Such is the case with the present painting (**fig. 1**).

This type of monogram is only found with Rembrandt between 1627 and '29 and is moreover so rare that no later imitator could have known it. Surprise has been expressed over the fact that the 'tail' of the *R* in the inscription is missing on the present painting; but the start of this tail – which was notably short anyway in this period – is actually visible, just above the horizontal stroke of the *H* where this stroke meets the shaft of the *R*. Part of the tail could have been lost.

Fig. 1. Detail with signature (enlarged).

Fig. 2. Rembrandt, *St Jerome kneeling*, etching *c.* 1628 (reproduced in reverse), 38.9 x 33.2 cm (B. 106).

If we accept that this *Foot operation* is indeed by Rembrandt, it is worth pointing out that he produced another work around the same time with another figure, similarly tensed with his back bent and hands clasped to his chest, this time in a large (unfinished) etching of St Jerome intently praying before a skull and Bible (**fig. 2**). The two works depict different emotional states of the figure, with slight, though significant variation in affect, body posture and hand gestures.

☆ **18** Rembrandt, **Rembrandt laughing**, *c.* 1628, copper 22.2 x 17.1 cm. Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum. HdG -; Br. -; Bauch -; Gerson -; Br./Gerson -; Tümpel -; see Van de Wetering 2007.
Inscription: top right ‹*RHL* (in monogram).› introduced into the wet paint

This brilliant little painting was unexpectedly recognized as a Rembrandt at an English provincial auction in October 2007 and immediately hailed in the press as a 'sensational find'. However, the work's existence had already been recorded – indirectly – in the Rembrandt literature for a long time. It was known from a reproductive print by the Flemish engraver Lambertus Antonius Claessens (1763-1834), who had at that time thought that it was a work by Frans Hals. Kurt Bauch, however, recognized from Claessens' very faithful print that it was a lost work by the early Rembrandt (Bauch 1966 A 25).

The arguments and stylistic observations that follow below all converge so strongly on the same conclusion that the painting can now confidently be attributed to Rembrandt. These arguments, which have been presented in detail elsewhere (Van de Wetering 2007), are summarized below.

– The monogram is of a rare type employed only in 1628 (or possibly late 1627 or early 1629). In fact, it is so rare that no counterfeiter or imitator from a later period (up to about 1980) could ever have known it in conjunction with the style of the painting. The fact that the inscription was applied to paint still wet provides a reliable key to the dating of the painting.
– The size of the copper plate on which the work is painted is the same as that of a copper plate used by Rembrandt for an etching usually dated to 1628 (*St Peter and St John at the Temple Gate* (B. 95) and therefore may well derive from the same batch. The etching measures 22.1 x 16.9 cm, the present painting 22.2 x 17 cm (± 0.5 mm).
– The laughing figure is painted on top of an earlier history piece (with figures of a different scale from the laughing figure itself). Traces of the underlying painting were first discovered by Nicholas Eastaugh in London using electron emission, and infrared radiation techniques. See my article referred to above, figs. 18-20. For the later results of a subsequent investigation of the underlying painting, see below.
– From his earliest works onwards Rembrandt was deeply involved in efforts to convincingly render a great variety of human emotions or 'affects'. In the present painting 'laughter' is explored (see also *Corpus* V pp. 65-70).
– A free copy of approximately the same size as the present painting was once part of the collection of Baron Edmond de Rothschild (**fig. 1**). It could only be studied by the Rembrandt Research Project from photographs (see also *Corpus* I C 33). Experts such as Bode, Lugt, Bauch and Gerson, who saw the painting and published on it, seem to have doubted the attribution to Rembrandt but not the painting's early seventeenth-century origin. Given the evidence that it is a free copy after the present painting, fig. 1 is a 'document' of considerable significance, lending support to the attribution of the present painting to Rembrandt, since prototypes used for free (studio) copies were usually works produced by the master of that studio (see also *Corpus* V p. 262 no. 4a and b).

Fig. 1. Free copy after **18**, panel, 20.5 x 17.5 cm. Whereabouts unknown.

– From his early years until well into the Amsterdam period, Rembrandt's paintings demonstrate a sequence of pioneering innovations. The precise dating of this work tells us that certain of the pictorial means in evidence here are used for perhaps the first time. A notable feature of this painting is that it presages Rembrandt's later treatment of the lay-out and use of contours in paintings with single figures (see for instance **58** and **59**).
– Another Rembrandtesque feature in the present painting is the constellation of cursorily and remarkably thickly applied flesh-coloured highlights in the face. Apart from their essential colouristic contribution, the casual application of these touches helps to suggest the fleeting nature of the facial expression depicted. *Mutatis mutandis*, one finds this same type of looseness in Rembrandt's other depictions of the laugh in the 1630 *Laughing Soldier* in The Hague **35**, and it is still there in the 1663 *Self-Portrait as Zeuxis Laughing* in Cologne **302**. This feature appears to have been developed in the present painting for the first time. The same can be said of the execution of the gleaming gorget, done with a brilliance familiar from a number of other, later Leiden paintings like **19** and **30** and more elaborately in **56** and **58**.
– Comparing the physiognomy of the figure in the present painting with that in the Nuremberg *Self-Portrait* of *c.* 1629 **30**, the subject looks remarkably like Rembrandt – at least, to the extent that a laughing face can be compared with a face in repose. See, for instance, the way the hair grows around the temples and the forehead, and the type (fine, wavy) and colour (dark blond with lighter strands) of the hair. Note the shape of the eyebrows and eyelids, the type of nose and the characteristic break of the nose from the forehead to the bridge, the position and shape of the visible part of the ear, the smooth, glistening red lower lip and the broad chin; they are all strikingly similar. The way the head sits on the neck is also typical of Rembrandt. The painting that has resurfaced must consequently have been painted in front of a mirror reflecting Rembrandt's own grimacing face.

Fig. 2. Visual traces of a painting under *Rembrandt laughing* revealed with SR-XRF.

Fig. 3. Rembrandt (?), *A biblical or historical nocturnal scene*, 1628, copper 22.1 x 17.1 cm. Tokyo, Bridgestone Museum of Art (I C 10).

In 2008 the painting was investigated by Koen Janssens of Antwerp University and Joris Dik, Technical University, Delft using Synchrotron Radiation – Based X-ray Fluorescence Spectrometry – (**fig. 2**). The image of the underlying painting thus obtained shows areas containing such elements as silver (bluish), mercury (reddish), tin (yellowish) etc. In the foreground can be seen a golden shield with a colourful, fringe-like edge (which one may compare with the shield partially visible to the left in a small painting on copper in Tokyo with figures by a campfire (Br. 533; Tokyo 1989) (**fig. 3**)). Weapons lie on the ground and draperies hang from an elevation. Elsewhere, vague shadowy figures can be seen, the most clearly distinct being the silhouette of a gesticulating figure with a sash round his waist, seen from the back in the right part of the scene. Behind this figure light streams into the pictural space from the right, as though produced by an artificial light emitting from an invisible source. Evidently it is a nocturnal scene. This underlying scene, still to be clarified, may be considered as yet another though overpainted small-scale history piece in Rembrandt's oeuvre. The scene shows a striking kinship with the much discussed campfire scene in Tokyo. It is conspicuous that both paintings are painted on virtually identically sized, thin copper plates. (The one with the Tokyo painting was clumsily repaired before it was painted on, and is so thin toward the left edge that fragments have since been broken off). In view of the doubts concerning the authenticity of the Tokyo painting, one can speculate that the newly discovered nocturnal scene under the present painting may perhaps be a prototype and the painting in Tokyo its satellite, possibly – as earlier suggested – by the young Gerard Dou. But perhaps the status of the painting in Tokyo will change as a consequence of further investigation of the history piece underneath the present painting.

* **19** Rembrandt, **Study in the mirror (the human skin)**, *c.* 1627/1628, panel 42.8 x 33 cm. Indianapolis, Museum of Art. HdG 549; Br. 3; Bauch 289; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 3 (not seen; a copy of it suggests a prototype by Lievens rather than Rembrandt); ***Corpus* I A 22 (copies 1)**; Tümpel -; ***Corpus* IV Corrigendum pp. 598-601**. Inscription: in the right background ‹*RHL* (in monogram)›; see Van de Wetering 2007 fig. 8

In the entry on another version of the present painting in *Corpus* I (A 22) (see **fig. 2**), that version (in the MOA Museum, Japan) was considered to be the autograph work. The following study of the X-radiographs (**figs. 1** and **3**) shows that the version in MOA (**fig. 2**) is a copy and the present painting the prototype. There is a series of discrepancies with regard to the contours between the X-ray image of this version (**fig. 1**) and the visible image at the surface – particularly the beret, the hair on the left and the figure's left shoulder. These discrepancies are characteristic indicators of the way in which Rembrandt worked out his early paintings from back to front. Some of the contours visible in the X-radiograph belong to an earlier sketched version of the work left in reserve in an initial background done with paint containing lead white applied around this figure. The most important changes concern the beret. Above the left part of the beret in its present form a dark reserve can be discerned. At the same height, to the right of the head, a semi-circular reserve is also seen in the lead white-containing background. These reserves, visible both in the X-radiograph and in the paint relief and marked by tonal differences in the paint of the background, were covered with a second background at a subsequent stage of the work. One can safely conclude that the beret was originally depicted as set horizontally on the head and only placed askew at a subsequent stage. This decision by the painter contributed strongly to the impression of the tilting of the head that is so remarkable a feature of the painting's conception.

Another deliberate decision was to move the chest/shoulder contour so far to the left as to exaggerate the turn of the head relative to the trunk, considerably enhancing the dynamic effect of the figure's movement. It is already clear that these traces of the genesis of the painting do not betray the fumbling of a copyist, but reveal rather an artist seeking better solutions. The same holds for another, until now unremarked pentimento. The transition from cheek to neck was originally accentuated with radioabsorbent paint. Apparently the painter initially wanted to make the jaw line starker, whereas now the transition is more gradual. These repentirs betray a creative process such as, *mutatis mutandis*, one is familiar with in many works of Rembrandt. In the radiograph of the MOA painting (**fig. 3**) the delimiting outlines of the sections containing lead white match the corresponding outlines in the painting itself so accurately that one is forced to conclude that the MOA painting is a copy, whose author (possibly the young Gerard Dou) based his painting on the Indianapolis prototype by Rembrandt himself.

It is striking that the execution of the present painting has little in common with that in the Amsterdam and Munich paintings **20** and **31**, which are also based on Rembrandt's face in the mirror

Fig. 1. X-ray of **19**

Fig. 2. Copy of **19**. MOA Museum, Japan.

Fig. 3. X-ray of the painting in fig. 2 (detail).

and date from the same period. Whereas the flesh tones in the latter two paintings are rendered by cursory, only locally merging brushwork needed to suggest the illumination of the face, the painting in Indianapolis manifests a carefully and thoroughly modelled rendering of human skin. It would seem that the task the painter sets himself here is totally different from the challenges presented by the Amsterdam painting **20** (and in its Munich derivative **31**). One cannot help wondering whether in the present painting the more important motivation might have been to render the continuity of the subtle *modelé* of the human face.

It should be pointed out that the scale of the head in the present painting is more than twice that of **20** (and enormous compared with the painting in Munich **31**).

As far as is known, **19** is the first life-size representation of the human face by Rembrandt. In this connection, it is relevant that after his apprenticeship with Lastman Rembrandt continued to paint figures in his history pieces on the same relatively small scale as Lastman did. **19** appears to be Rembrandt's first attempt to paint the continuous surface of human skin as faithfully as possible on a life-size scale including three facial spots, pimples, on his chin and jaw-line (which, incidentally, are missing in the MOA copy). Although we shall probably never know whether he already had in mind his future activities as a portrait painter, it is nevertheless a fact that the incidental magnification of the scale of his figures on this study and in the later Leiden *tronies* **55** - **58** was to reap its reward in his later career as a portrait painter. Rembrandt was to develop an ability to suggest the continuous topography, the integrated three-dimensional character of a human face that has been equalled by few other painters.

20 Rembrandt, **Lighting study in the mirror**, *c.* 1628, panel 22.6 x 18.7 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. HdG -; Br. -; Bauch 287; Gerson -; Br./Gerson -; ***Corpus* I A 14**; Tümpel 153; ***Corpus* IV p. 91**, **173**; ***Corpus* V p. 159**; see also *Quest* pp. 179-182.
Inscription: none

The suspicion that some of Rembrandt's paintings should be considered as studies for figures in larger compositions forced itself on our attention during the investigations of Rembrandt's self-portraits, published in Volume IV of *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*. During those investigations, the question of the *function* of different works bearing Rembrandt's effigy became increasingly significant (*Corpus* IV Chapter III esp. pp. 158-164). In that context, the hypothesis was suggested that the present painting, which is usually dated to 1628, might have been a preliminary study painted in front of the mirror as preparation for the *Judas Repentant* (probably begun in 1628) **23**. In that painting, in the left of the composition there appear two figures similarly lit obliquely from behind. The fact that the small Amsterdam painting was not signed, plus the fact that it was copied remarkably often (in Rembrandt's workshop, it would seem), suggests that it was a studio prop and was never intended for sale. Rembrandt evidently sometimes used himself as a model to solve particular pictorial problems in front of the mirror. In this case it was the problem of the figure lit obliquely from behind, a problem which in fact continued to engage him in different forms throughout his life (see also **182**, **285** and **313**).

That problem undoubtedly arose as a consequence of Rembrandt's need to suggest interactions between the figures in both his history pieces and his double- or group-portraits; this necessarily entailed placing the actors in such scenes opposite each other, which meant that one or more figures had to be situated almost with their backs to the incident light. In painting such unusually lit figures, however, the most pressing problem must have been *where* and *how* the transitions from light to shade should be located. As part of his training, the seventeenth-century artist gained an enormous skill in the rendering of the human form or parts of it; but these forms were as a rule placed in normal lighting, i.e. light falling obliquely (usually) from above left, as can be seen in the examples in drawing books like that of Chrispijn van de Passe from 1643 (Van de Passe/Bolten 1973). But this skill would have been inadequate when confronted with the problem of an unusually lit figure. In the case of the present study, not a single painter, however experienced, would have been able to determine by visual imagination alone the transitions between light and shade – on the cheek, the neck, around the mouth and the nose. Only patient study of a model posing under the correct lighting would have made such a rendering possible (see also **182**, **276**, and **277**).

The existence of **20** was unknown until 1959, when it was offered for sale at a London auction. At first sight it is almost identical to a painting that had always been considered to be Rembrandt's earliest 'self-portrait', in the famous Rembrandt collection in Kassel since 1751 (**fig. 1**).

Fig. 1. Copy after **20**, Kassel Gemäldegalerie.

After the painting had surfaced in London the newly discovered work received hardly any further attention, since the Kassel version was not only much better known but was moreover painted with more flair. In 1962 Kurt Bauch, the most significant Rembrandt authority at the time, wrote a brilliant analysis of the present painting in relation to the Kassel version, in which he advanced convincing stylistic arguments in favour of its attribution to Rembrandt (Bauch 1962b). However, many other Rembrandt experts of the time, including Jacob Rosenberg, Seymour Slive and Horst Gerson, remained of the opinion that the painting was a careful copy after the more spontaneously painted Kassel work. When the two versions were shown beside each other in 1964-65 in the exhibition *De schilder in zijn wereld* in Delft and Antwerp, there were heated discussions over which of the two was the original.

Everyone is nowadays convinced that the Amsterdam version **20** is the original. In the investigation of this question conducted by the RRP, the recently acquired insights into Rembrandt's method of painting played a major role. It was found that, like many of his contemporaries, after sketching a painting Rembrandt worked it out from back- to foreground. In doing so, he left a reserve for the sketched forms – in this case the head and shoulders – in the initially completed background. Given that such a sketch was locally as a rule rather rough, the contour of the reserve visible in the X-radiograph only partly corresponded with the eventual contour of the painted figure. This was the case with the present painting – a significant indication that it is not a copy. In the version in Kassel, the contours of the reserve and of the eventual

head, as far as can be seen, correspond, thus indicating that it is a copy (compare *Corpus* I A14 figs. 2 and 5). Whoever painted it had a completed example before him, viz. the present painting. As far as the greater spontaneity of the Kassel version is concerned, in Rembrandt's time a copy was not usually a slavish stroke-for-stroke repetition of the prototype. The copyist could thus work freely since he had, after all, the original as a constant reference. Moreover, as a rule no absolute fidelity to the original was demanded of a copyist at that time.

☆ **21** Rembrandt, **Bust of a man wearing a turban**, *c.* 1628, panel 26.7 x 20.3 cm. Private collection. HdG -; Br. 72; Bauch – (p. 47: probably by Lievens); Gerson -; Br./Gerson 72 (the attribution to Rembrandt is wholly unconvincing); Tümpel -; ***Corpus* IV *Addendum* 3**; see also Van de Wetering 1998.
Inscription: in the right background ‹*RHL* (in monogram)› (**fig. 1**)

This painting, which Bredius alone accepted as authentic, disappeared from view in 1956, re-surfacing in 1995.
Following Bredius's acceptance of the painting as a work by Rembrandt, doubts arose as to its authenticity. Bauch (1966 p. 47 no. 72) regarded an attribution to Rembrandt as impossible and credited it to Jan Lievens. Rosenberg also rejected the attribution to Rembrandt (Rosenberg 1948 p. 371). Gerson, in his 1969 revised edition of Bredius' book, found an attribution to Rembrandt `wholly unconvincing'. He was not, however, fully persuaded by Bauch's attribution to Lievens. Incidentally, Gerson remarked that neither he nor Rosenberg had seen the actual painting. In 1983, on the basis of a photograph Sumowski attributed it to the Leiden painter Jacques des Rousseaux (*c.* 1600-1638) who was under Rembrandt's tutelidge around 1628 (Sumowski *Gemälde* IV no. 1675a). Tümpel omitted the present painting altogether from his survey of Rembrandt's painting.

In the following I shall present the arguments which, to my mind, converge convincingly on the conclusion that the work should be considered as a painting from Rembrandt's hand.

The *Bust of an old man wearing a turban* is painted on an oak panel, as are all of Rembrandt's early works – and indeed paintings from the first decades of the 17th-century in general. The panel belongs to the relatively small category panels made from trees coming from the climatic region of the Netherlands/West Germany. **20** is another painting by Rembrandt on wood from the same region. Dendrochronological examination showed that the earliest annual ring of heartwood dates from 1615 and if we assume that, on average, there are 17 sapwood rings, the earliest possible felling date is 1622. Allowing for a seasoning period of two years, the earliest conceivable date at which the panel could have been painted is 1624 (see *Corpus* IV pp. 648 and 655; Addendum 3).

The ground is the kind of chalk and glue priming frequently found in the 17th-century and in Rembrandt's early panels, covered with an imprimatura of lead white and brownish pigments in oil. What is more significant in the context of a possible attribution to Rembrandt is that this is a superimposed painting (for the X-ray see *Corpus* IV p. 637). Although we have so far been unable to identify the underlying image, there can be no doubt that the present work was painted over an existing one. One finds this often with the early Rembrandts (see **1**, **6**, **8**, **13**, **17**, **18**, **22**, **24**, **29**, **32**, **36**, **44**, **45** and **56**), although other painters from Rembrandt's studio may also have occasionally worked on used panels (Br. 12 and 64).

Technically, the execution is typical of Rembrandt in that the contours of the figure overlap the background at most points. The contour corrections that one usually finds with his paintings, done with paint in the colour of the background, are found in particular in the right contour along the cheek and the lower part of the turban and in the right contour of the torso.

The forms are modelled to quite a considerable extent with only local use made of a marked impasto. A noticeable feature is the ridges of paint found both in the turban and on the cheek where forms are strongly illuminated. The lit background shows some impasto in the lightest parts, supporting the impression of a plastered wall, and revealing a working method comparable to that in the *Study in the mirror* in Amsterdam, which we date to 1628 **20** and the *Self-portrait* in Munich of 1629 **31**, where, however, the brushwork in the light backgrounds is considerably freer.

The figure is lit in a way that must have intrigued the early Rembrandt and the art lovers that surrounded him: the light falls from behind at an angle so that the larger part of the face remains in shadow, while the light striking the back of the head is so strong that the ear glows red. This kind of red ear is seen in several paintings by Rembrandt, specifically the *Bust of an old man* in the Mauritshuis in The Hague **46** and the – in this respect related – *Raising of Lazarus* in Los Angeles **48**. The model used here often posed for Rembrandt and Lievens but also for young painters from their circle (see p. 7).

There is one piece of evidence that weighs particularly heavily in favour of the attribution to Rembrandt and of the proposed date of in or around 1628, viz. the signature (**fig. 1**). Examination of a cross section of a paint sample showed that the signature had been added while the paint of the background was still wet, and must therefore in all probability have been applied by the maker. It is an <*RHL*> monogram of a type used by Rembrandt for only a short time (see **17** fig. 1). The letters are elongated with graceful curves in the vertical parts; the *R* is not closed as in the later monograms and the leg of the *R* joins its stem above the cross bar of the *H*. The monograms most closely related, both in their fairly large size and the slenderness of the joined letters, are those on the *Rich man* **14** and *The apostle Paul in prison* **15**, where the *H* has not yet been transformed into *HL*. Both of these are from 1627, while *The foot operation* **17**, *Rembrandt laughing* **18**, and *Study in the mirror* **19** all with the *RHL* monograms, are from *c.* 1628. A date of in or around 1628 is supported by stylistic evidence. Both the somewhat leathery closed modelling of the form and the cautious manner of painting accord with the style of that period (compare **14**, **16**, **17**).

As suggested in the case of **31**, there are reasons to think that a painting such as the present one might have been painted on commission from an art-lover inspired by Rembrandt's exceptional oil-study **20**.

The careful attention given in the present painting to the rendering of reflected light in those parts of the figure in shadow is remarkable for so early in Rembrandt's development. On Rembrandt's predilection for such effects, Samuel van Hoogstraten wrote:

> '*Our Rembrandt has acquitted himself wondrously in reflections, yes it would appear that the election to cast back some of the light was his true element*' (SvH p. 273).

Fig.1. Detail with signature of **21**

☆ **22** Rembrandt, **Interior with figures, called 'La main chaude'**, *c.* 1628, panel 21 x 27 cm. Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland. HdG -; Br. -; Bauch -; Gerson -; Br./Gerson -; Tümpel -; ***Corpus* V pp. 158-159**; see also *Mystery* pp. 70-76 and 308-311.
Inscription: none

Several figures are seen in a room illuminated by a hidden candle. A figure with a large hat seated before a table in the left foreground obscures the light source, with the result that this figure is outlined as a silhouette. The figure and costume may at first sight seem strange, but in 1628/29, the period in which the painting originated, it was fashionable for men to wear enormous hats – like that worn by the central figure in the painting – turned up at the front, and with its exaggeratedly wide brim resting on the wearer's back (oral communication, Marieke de Winkel). Of the two main protagonists in the middle, one has his back turned to the other, who raises his hand as though about to slap the first. To their right can be made out a third figure as a dark shadow, while to the right of them all sits a fiddler on an elevation. In the background a man and a woman are seen approaching.

According to De Winkel, the three central figures are playing an unusual variant on a party game that was popular in the 17th century called *Handjeklap* in Dutch (or in German *Heisshandspiel* and/or *Schinckenklopfen*, in English *Slap Hands*, and in French *La main chaude*). The usual form of the game was that one of the players turns his back to the others and with his eyes shut holds one hand behind his back, palm uppermost. At a given moment one of the other players had to slap his hand (or his behind). If the 'victim' correctly guesses who it was that slapped him, this player has to take his place, and if he is wrong he has to remain in his role. In the painting discussed here the 'victim' has not closed his eyes but is trying to cheat, looking to see which of the two other players is going to slap him. It is evident from the many paintings with similar genre scenes by such painters as Jan Miense Molenaer, Cornelis de Man, Gerrit Lundens etc. that this game, which had several variants, enjoyed considerable popularity in the 17th-century Netherlands.

The attribution of the painting has been contested ever since its discovery. Bauch, for instance, refused to admit the painting in his idea of Rembrandt's oeuvre on the basis of the way the figures are placed:

> 'There is much that argues against the possibility that Rembrandt could have been the author of this painting. With him one does not find such genre-like, confused figures, nor so many protagonists as supporting staffage' (Bauch 1960 p. 244).

However, Bauch failed to put forward any alternative attribution, while the attempts made by various authorities to attribute it to a painter other than Rembrandt always encountered the difficulty that they found it 'too good'. Thus Bauch, for instance, responding to a suggestion by Collins Baker, wrote: 'For Dou the painting is almost too good'. This was already the view held at the beginning of the last century. For example, following the announcement of the work in 1896 as a painting by Willem de Poorter, Duncan wrote in 1906 that it was 'far above that painter's [De Poorter's] usual work in imagination and quality' (Potterton 1986 no. 439).

Such hesitation to attribute the painting to Rembrandt must partly have been influenced by the banality of the subject depicted. Benesch, Naumann and Haverkamp-Begemann, however, all pointed out that an attribution to Rembrandt should not be excluded (oral communication, Haverkamp-Begemann). In 2001 the present author presented arguments in favour of an attribution to Rembrandt (*Mystery* pp. 70-76). A further argument being that the painting was done over an earlier painting (**fig. 1**). (In this connection, see the Notes to **21** and **32**.)

Fig.1. X-ray of **22** showing an underlying male halffigure turned to the right.

Since then few have questioned this attribution. One argument to the contrary, raised by Roelof van Straten, was that the edges of the shadows cast on the floor are sharper than those in Rembrandt's *Judas repentant* **23** (Van Straten 2006 pp. 103-107); but this argument loses its force once one becomes aware of the fact that these are different kinds of light. In the present painting the room is evidently illuminated by a candle which (for the beholder) is obscured by the silhouetted figure in the left foreground. In the *Judas repentant*, daylight streams into the interior space from the left. It had been known since classical antiquity that shadows cast by candle-light are different from those caused by daylight. Van Hoogstraten refers to Seneca the Younger's *Naturales Quaestiones* when discussing the difference between candle-light and daylight:

> *'Things illuminated by fire ... are different than when they are illuminated by a wider source of light. The sharpness of the shadow is caused by the light of a small flame, because the light of a small flame radiates out as from a point source: it only strikes things that it can reach in a straight line [...] whereas daylight is so much larger than the particular parts that it illuminates, shining around, as it were, and by its magnitude surrounding them'* (SvH p. 259)

– implying that the shadows cast by daylight have blurred contours.

In view of the painting's somewhat schematic lay-out, and because it is not signed, it could be argued that this is a study that originated in the context of Rembrandt's intensely questing work on the *Judas repentant* **23**, a work that would give decisive direction to the further course of his career as a painter.

23 Rembrandt, **Judas repentant returning the pieces of silver**, 1629, panel 79 x 102.3 cm. Private collection. HdG -; Br. -; Bauch 47; Gerson 12; Br./Gerson 539A; ***Corpus* I A 15**; Tümpel 40; ***Corpus* II Corrigenda p. 837**; ***Corpus* V pp. 158-159**.
Inscription: in light brown paint on the far right, level with Judas's waist ‹*RL* (in monogram).*1629.*›

This scene is taken from the New Testament:

> **Matthew 27: 1-5** 'When morning came, all the chief priests and elders of the people plotted against Jesus to put Him to death. And when they had bound Him, they led Him away and delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor. Then Judas, His betrayer, seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." And they said, "What is that to us? You see to it!" Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself.'

This painting is one of the most important works from Rembrandt's Leiden period, because here he has light play a new role in the organization of his figures. He also adapts the colours of the costumes to the decreasing intensity of light in the picture space. The figures loom out of the shadow and disappear into it as though actually alive. Not so long before he painted the *Judas repentant* Rembrandt had been setting down his figures like so many colourfully clad puppets in an evenly lit space (compare **7** - **12**; (see also *Quest* pp. 80-84).

Rembrandt must have wrestled with the conception of this painting, both over the grouping of the figures and the treatment of light. Many local small shrinkage cracks in the paint show that changes were made during work on the painting. These changes relate not only to the organization of the figures but also to the composition and handling of the light.

This far from simple genesis of the painting can be reconstructed with X-rays (**fig. 1**) and with the help of some drawings made by Rembrandt during the painting process. The X-radiograph shows that one of the figures, probably the high priest, had originally been seated on a higher background elevation (**fig. 2**).

Fig. 1. X-ray of **23**

Fig. 2. Hypothetical reconstruction of the painting's first state.

24 Rembrandt, **The painter in his studio (‘Idea’)**, *c.* 1628, panel 24.8 x 31.7 cm. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts. HdG -; Br. 419; Bauch 112; Gerson 20; Br./Gerson 419; ***Corpus* I A 18**; ***Corpus* V p. 162-163**; Tümpel 157; see also *M/W* cat. 3; *Painter at Work* pp. 74-89; De Winkel 2006 pp. 152-157; De Koomen 2006 esp. pp. 236-241.
Inscription: none

Seventeenth-century painters usually sat when they worked. The two concavities on the bottom horizontal bar of the easel in this painting, worn down by the painter's feet, testify to sedentary work. For this reason painters, like scholars and others who followed seated professions, wore long, thick tabards such as this painter wears, for in Rembrandt's time houses were barely heated (De Winkel 2006 pp. 152-157). But this painter, probably representing Rembrandt himself, is standing.

The many studio scenes painted in the 17th century were never incidental snapshots. They usually had a deeper significance that was of interest both to the painter and to the art lover. Here, in all probability, the subject refers to Rembrandt's creative process a hypothesis which I elaborated for the first time in 1976 (Leiden 1976/77 p. 26; see also *Painter at Work* pp. 74-89).

According to De Koomen, studio-images such as this were probably seen as the equivalents of the visits that were recommended to art lovers to see painters in their studios and observe them at work (De Koomen 2006). The conversations held there offered the best way of gaining a deeper understanding of the art of painting.

25 Rembrandt, **The supper at Emmaus**, 1629, paper on panel 37.4 x 42.3 cm. Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André. HdG 147; Br. 539; Bauch 49; Gerson 14; Br./Gerson 539; ***Corpus* I A 16**; Tümpel 41; ***Corpus* V pp. 162-163**.
Inscription: on the right, almost at the bottom, in the same darker grey as the other lines in the grey plaster work: a distinct cursive ‹*R*›, open on the left and with a swash stem curving away to the left, on the right of which is another vertical stem that may perhaps be read as the vestige of other parts of a monogram. The inscription definitely forms part of the original paint layer.

The scene depicted here refers to the New Testament Gospel of St Luke 24: 13-35 and perhaps especially 30/31 To the amazement of his disciples and the women associated with them, Christ had risen from the tomb.

> **Luke 24: 13-35** 'Now behold, two of them were traveling that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was seven miles from Jerusalem. And they talked together of all these things which had happened. So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them. But their eyes were restrained, so that they did not know Him. And He said to them, "What kind of conversation is this that you have with one another as you walk and are sad?" Then the one whose name was Cleopas answered and said to Him, "Are You the only stranger in Jerusalem, and have You not known the things which happened there in these days?" And He said to them, "What things?" So they said to Him, "The things concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a Prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, and how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, and crucified Him. But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened. Yes, and certain women of our company, who arrived at the tomb early, astonished us. When they did not find His body, they came saying that they had also seen a vision of angels who said He was alive. And certain of those who were with us went

to the tomb and found it just as the women had said; but Him they did not see." Then He said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken! Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory?" And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself.
Then they drew near to the village where they were going, and He indicated that He would have gone farther. But they constrained Him, saying, "Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." And He went in to stay with them. Now it came to pass, as He sat at the table with them, that He took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes were opened and they knew Him; and He vanished from their sight. And they said to one another, "Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?" So they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem, and found the eleven and those who were with them gathered together, saying, "The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!" And they told about the things that had happened on the road, and how He was known to them in the breaking of bread.'

Because the paint has darkened it is difficult to see in this painting and in reproductions of it that the second disciple is kneeling on the ground before the table. To his left lies his fallen chair.

The painting is executed on a sheet of paper that was at some stage attached to a panel, probably oak. In other instances in which Rembrandt painted on paper (see **109**, **110**, **111**, **112** and **113**) the work was intended as preparation for graphic works that may or may not have subsequently been realized. It cannot be said with certainty whether or not that was also the case here.

26 Rembrandt, **An old man asleep by the fire (perhaps typifying 'Sloth')**, 1629, panel 51.9 x 40.8 cm. Turin, Galleria Sabauda. HdG 293; Br. 428; Bauch 121; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 428 (with doubts about the attribution); ***Corpus* I A 17**; ***Corpus* V pp. 162-163**; Tümpel 119; see also Koslow 1975 pp. 418-432 *Mystery* cat. 31.
Inscription: bottom right ‹*P* (to be read as *R*) *L..29*›

For the 17th-century viewer this posture must have immediately signalled that the painting depicts sloth (*acedia*), which itself inevitably leads one to speculate on the *raison d'être* of the painting. The key to an answer may be found in the painting's connection with Jacques de Gheyn III (1596-1641), who was probably the first and until his death in 1641 sole owner of the painting. The painting was recorded in the inventory of his estate as follows: *'an old man sitting asleep by a fire with his hand in his bosom'* (*Doc.* 1641/1). According to the inventory, the deceased had also been in possession of **27**, one of the most extraordinary early works by Rembrandt.

Jacques de Gheyn III was the son of the engraver of the same name (Jacques de Gheyn II), who was highly esteemed at the Stadholder's court. The young Jacques was also trained as an artist, although only a few works by him are known. The admirer of Rembrandt, Constantijn Huygens, who must have visited Rembrandt in the year during which the painting discussed here originated, considered Jacques III as the *'voortreffelykste van mijn vrienden'* ('foremost of my friends'). But at the same time, according to the autobiography that he wrote in *c.* 1630, he was very concerned about him:

'If I think back on De Gheyn's promising beginning it incenses me [...] *that someone who was so evidently born in the Netherlands to be forever a pearl in the crown of his fatherland can bury his talent in this way and can slumber in barren and ignoble indolence* [...]*'*

It is not unthinkable that Huygens commissioned Rembrandt to do this painting for Jacques III as a gibe at his indolence, an example of what was known in Rembrandt's time as a *schimpschilderij* – an admonitory painting (SvH p. 91).

27 Rembrandt, **Two old men disputing (probably Peter and Paul)**, *c.* 1628, panel 72.3 x 59.5 cm. Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria. HdG -; Br. 423; Bauch 5; Gerson 11; Br./Gerson 423; ***Corpus* I A 13**; Tümpel 38; ***Corpus* V p. 156**; see also Tümpel 1969, pp. 182-187, Bl. cat. 3.
Inscription: at the lower left, difficult to read, large, slender *capitals ‹RL.›*

The scene depicted here may refer to one of the epistles of Paul to the Galatians.

Galatians 1: 18 'Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and remained with him fifteen days.'

For the heated theological discussion between the two apostles, see Galatians 2: 11-14.

We know the names of several possible visitors to Rembrandt in his studio. Jacques de Gheyn III must have been one of them: trained as a painter himself, from a wealthy family of artists in The Hague (see the Note to **26**). He was a close friend of Constantijn Huygens and his brother Maurits (see **67** and **68**). Together with these two friends he may have visited Rembrandt in his studio and possibly purchased the present painting on one such visit, as it appears some twelve years later in the inventory of his possessions drawn up on his death in 1641 (*Doc.* 1641/1).

Contributing to the surmise that the two old men in this painting are St Peter and St Paul is the fact that Rembrandt's illustrious Leiden predecessor Lucas van Leyden depicted these two apostles, who are rarely shown together (**fig. 1**). Rembrandt probably regarded Lucas as his model of a 'painter-engraver'.

Fig. 1. Lucas van Leyden, Peter and Paul on the outside of the outer wings of the altarpiece with the *Last Judgment*, Leiden, Lakenhal.

Although both apostles are usually depicted with their attributes (Peter with the keys and Paul with a sword and a book), in the present painting they are shown without these. Peter is nevertheless recognizable by his bald crown and Paul, in the right context as in this case, by his long beard. Over the fact that the actual subject of the present painting, suggested above, is not mentioned in de Gheyn's inventory, quoted below: see *Corpus* I p. 165.

There may have been other than iconographic motives for Rembrandt choosing this subject. For the first time, Rembrandt applies a painting procedure that we know about from one of his pupils. In his book on the art of painting, Samuel van Hoogstraten refers to this as 'painting with *bevriende verwen*, tonally related colours (literally: 'friendly colours').

'I therefore recommend you not to jumble up light and shadow too much, but to group them appropriately; let your strongest lights be accompanied by lesser lights, and I assure you that they will stand out the more beautifully; let your deepest darks be surrounded by light darks, so that they enable the strength of the light to stand out more forcefully.'

In this connection Hoogstraten states that

'Rembrandt has taken this virtue to the highest level.' (SvH, p. 273)

This combining of '*bevriende verwen*' is a fascinating way of working. In the light, central part of this painting a splendid interplay of light colours stands out against the dark surroundings. It is almost like looking into a burning stove.

In Jacques de Gheyn III's probate inventory the painting was described as follows:

> *'Item another painting done by Rembrandt, in which two old men are sitting in discussion, one with a large book on his lap, [and] in which sunlight enters.'*

Rarely has entering sunlight been rendered with such force as in this painting. The sunlight on the objects to the right and behind him is in turn reflected by the material (probably intended to be wool) of Peter's brown robe. As a result, the beholder experiences even more strongly the exceptional force of the sunlight streaming into the room.

The still-life in the background of the present painting would seem to have been made in emulation of what Van Mander describes enthusiastically in a work by Pieter Aertsen (1508 – 1575):

> *'This man (Pieter Aertsen) used paint in a wonderful way, as far as these things are concerned* [the reflected lights on different materials, discussed earlier in Van Mander's text, see the Note to **6**]. *Without exception, it appeared to be the very life; one almost wants to reach out to grasp a pair of plates standing in the dusk, where such a reflection strikes – just as one can see with an art lover in Amsterdam, with glowing affection.'* (KvM *Grondt* VII 54)

28 Rembrandt, **The apostle Paul at his writing desk**, *c.* 1629/1630, panel 47.2 x 38.6 cm. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum. HdG 177; Br. 602; Bauch 120; Gerson 23; Br./Gerson 602; ***Corpus* I A 26**; Tümpel 74; ***Corpus* V pp. 166-167**; see also *M/W* cat. 5.
Inscription: none

The apostle Paul, recognizable by his attributes of the sword(s) and a book and by his long beard, sits at his writing table, deep in thought, a writing pen between the fingers of his right hand, hanging idly by his side.

The many letters written by Paul to the earliest Christian communities were judged so important that they were included in the New Testament. Reading them, one is impressed by their author as a wise and forceful but also highly sensitive man. That is how we see Paul here.

In this painting Rembrandt treats the light in such a miraculously refined manner that in this respect one is inclined to compare it with the works of the late Rembrandt. The richly differentiated *peinture* also contributes to this association.

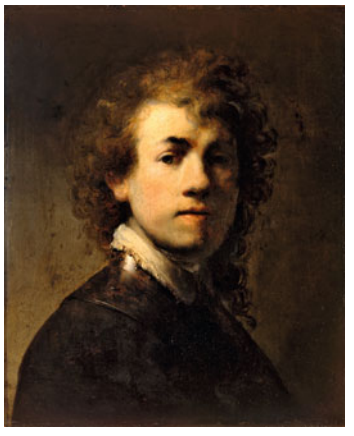
There are two actual, but invisible, sources of light; various surfaces, some visible to the beholder, some not, reflect the light of these sources and thus play a role in turn as secondary light sources. Daylight falling from an invisible window above left shines on St Paul's head and trunk and on the wall behind him. Against this lit back wall, the arm hanging over the back of the chair is outlined as a dark silhouette.

The second, invisible source of light is a candle or lamp hidden behind the book that lies opened on the table. This light source shines from the right on the back of Paul's left hand resting on the table, while the other side of this hand is lit by the incident daylight. The candle or lamp hidden behind the book also throws light upwards onto the hanging weapons, the beams and the wall. Paul's face and beard also catch some of this light.

Our feeling for the effects of the light, largely unconscious of course, tells us that light striking the walls and falling on the invisible pages of the open book will also be partly reflected. As indicated above, this reflected light is also a part of the play of light in this painting. The impression arises as a result as though the light roams, as it were, through the room, helping in turn to create a strongly spatial effect in the painting. In addition, Paul's expression is so penetratingly rendered – not only the facial expression but also the attitude of the bowed head and the body posture – that this still expression of concentrated thought uncannily seems almost part of the complex play of light. Equally marvellous is the execution of the painting with its rich and accurate application of painterly means (the differentiated way in which the paint is handled, the course of the contours, the suggestion of space by overlapping passages).

29 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait with plumed beret**, 1629, panel 89.5 x 73.5 cm. Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. HdG 529; Br. 8; Bauch 292; Gerson 38; Br./Gerson 8; ***Corpus* I A 20**; Tümpel 156; ***Corpus* IV pp. 173-177**.
Inscription: ‹*RHL* [in monogram] ...*9*›

One is dealing here with a painting significant for Rembrandt's artistic development. It appears to have been an experimental field to try out several ideas that would subsequently develop into important pictorial devices. Here, for the first time in a painting with a single figure, Rembrandt applies the principle of related colours (*'bevriende verwen'*) (see the Note to **27**) as well as the darker repoussoir worked into the figure, as he would also do later, for example in **70** or **84**. In these respects, he elaborated on the pictorial solutions that he had so gloriously applied in the *Judas* **23** and more especially in the *Two old men* **27**: by placing related light tones beside each other in his right shoulder and the adjacent part of the background – behind a dark repoussoir – he achieves a heightening of the effect of light. The masterstroke here is that the repoussoir is formed by a part of the figure itself. Another new element in this painting is the relatively low placing of the figure in the picture plane, as a result of which the spatial effect is considerably enhanced. All these new ideas are to be found again in later works, in one or another form, but never so adventurously as here. Only the cap seems to be an alien element. With the emphatic treatment of its shape and its precious technique, one is inclined to see another hand at work here. But the treatment of form and the nature of the contours of the cap, with the complexity of its foreshortened folds, the treatment of light and dark and the rhythm of the brushwork, all betray Rembrandt's hand. The meticulous execution of the cap appears to have been another new concept, which was to have no consequence for Rembrandt himself, but may perhaps have been of decisive significance for Rembrandt's pupil at that time, Gerard Dou.



☆ **30** Rembrandt, **Self-portrait with a gorget**, *c.* 1629, panel 38.2 x 31 cm. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum. HdG -; Br. -; Bauch -; Gerson -; Br./Gerson -; ***Corpus* I p. 229** (**as a copy**); Tümpel -; ***Corpus* IV Corrigendum I A 21 p. 597**; see also *M/W* cat. 4; *R. Self* 14 a/b; for further literature see below.
Inscription: top right <*RHL* (in monogram)>

In *Corpus* I the RRP accepted the copy of this painting (**fig. 1**) as an autograph Rembrandt, despite its "unusual execution" (*Corpus* I A 21). The affinity with the copy after **19** fig. 2, which at the time of publi-

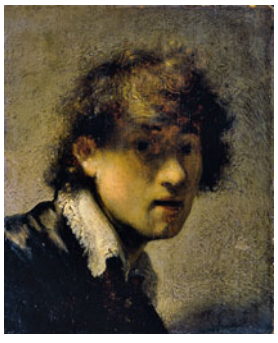
cation of Vol. I was also accepted as authentic, contributed to this opinion. Subsequently it was demonstrated that both paintings are copies, and that the present painting and **19** must be considered the prototypes for those works. In the case of the painting in The Hague (**fig. 1**), the RRP changed its opinion under the force of Claus Grimm's stylistic arguments and his observations on the two X-radiographs (Grimm 1991 pp. 24-28), together with the results of IRR investigations by the staff of the Mauritshuis (Wadum 2000).

Fig. 1. Rembrandt workshop, Copy after **30**, *c.* 1629, panel 37.9 x 28.9 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis.

As discussed in detail by Edwin Buysen, the issue of which of these two paintings, either **30** or (**fig. 1**), was the original and which the copy is not new (Buysen 2000). What is remarkable, however, is that the discussion of this question lay for so long dormant, and that the long held assumption of the authenticity of the painting in The Hague was only seen to be in error following the X-ray and infrared investigations. In the meantime, there are still art historians who, although unquestioningly attributing the Nuremberg version to Rembrandt, nevertheless entertain the possibility that the painting in The Hague could also be from Rembrandt's hand (Sluijter 2000). Against this standpoint one might point out that the version in The Hague displays the typical faults of a copyist – for example the enlargement of the figure or the elongation of forms that often occur in the process of copying. One also sees this in a comparison of e.g. **20** (the Amsterdam original) with its copy in Kassel **20** fig. 1; or of **53** with the copy now in a private collection **53** fig. 2; or the figure of Potiphar's wife in *Joseph accused by Potiphar's wife*, in the Washington free variant **237** fig. 1 compared with the same figure in the Berlin prototype **237**.

Against the authenticity of the version of the present painting in the Hague it should also be pointed out that its author has set the various elements of physiognomy – eyes, nose, mouth and chin – on a single basic cylindrical form, as it were, whereas in the Nuremberg prototype one sees that the anatomically more correct alignment of lower jaw and mouthparts with respect to the upper facial parts is observed and executed with exceptional acuity. A further argument against the authenticity of the The Hague painting is given by the way in which the border between light and shadow passes over the eyelid (compare figs. 135-136 in Chapter III of *Corpus* IV).

31 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait lit from the left**, 1629, panel 15.5 x 12.7 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek. HdG 542; Br. 2; Bauch 209; Gerson 32; Br./Gerson 2; ***Corpus* I A 19**; Tümpel 154; ***Corpus* IV p. 164**.
Inscription: in the right background in thin grey ‹*RHL 1629*›



Since the Amsterdam lighting study of Rembrandt's own face in the mirror **20** would seem to have arisen in the context of solving a lighting problem in **23** (it is accordingly unsigned) one may wonder why Rembrandt decided to paint virtually the same image again. In this much smaller version in Munich **31** Rembrandt portrays himself in a similar posture and almost identical, unusual, lighting; but this time both a monogram and date have been inscribed by the painter. Did the two works have different functions? It may be significant that, whereas costume plays a minimal role in the Amsterdam painting, in the Munich painting Rembrandt paints himself with a shirt collar with a decorated border, turned over against the darker shiny material of a garment of a more formal character than in the Amsterdam version. More attention has also been paid to the characterization of physiognomy and the posture of the figure.

It is of course a risky speculation to suggest a patron for this painting – a kind of *Deus ex machina* to explain a puzzling art historical problem. Nevertheless, it is proposed here that the present painting could have been a smaller, slightly adapted repetition of the Amsterdam study ordered as a 'portrait of Rembrandt done by himself' in his revolutionary new style. Although a most unusual portrait, one needs to see it through the eyes of those contemporary art-lovers and connoisseurs who so admired his work – those art-lovers mentioned in texts written during, or referring to, Rembrandt's first years as a promising artist (*Mystery* pp. 29-32 and *Corpus* IV pp. 137-139). The idea that the present painting might have been handed over to a new owner soon after completion is consistent with the fact that no studio copies have survived, whereas copies of **20** have, indicating that the latter painting remained in the studio and was eventually used by pupils to copy as an exercise.

* **32** Rembrandt, **Self-portrait**, *c.* 1630, panel 22.2 x 16.6 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 564; Br. 10; Bauch 293; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 10 (being not convinced that the attribution to the young Rembrandt is correct); ***Corpus* I C 38** (as an imitation); Tümpel -.
Inscription: traces of a damaged ‹*RL*› in monogram

Fig. 1. X-ray of **32**

This little painting was accepted as a Rembrandt by many twentieth-century scholars, including Wilhelm Valentiner, Cornelis Hofstede de Groot, Abraham Bredius, Jakob Rosenberg and Kurt Bauch, but in 1969, in his revised edition of Bredius' survey, Horst Gerson questioned that attribution. In its first volume of *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings* (1982) the old RRP classified the painting as follows:

> 'Because of its pictorial features this painting must be seen as an imitation, based on a general picture of Rembrandt's early self-portraits and painted with a technique rather different from his. It is difficult to date, but must have been produced well after 1630 and definitely before 1790.'

The recent Metropolitan Museum's Website Collection Database, and also its 2007 catalogue *Dutch Paintings in The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, lists the work as 'Style of Rembrandt (Dutch, about 1630-35)', implying that the painting was not made by Rembrandt.

When asked by the International Foundation for Art Research (*IFAR Journal* Vol. 12) for specific reasons for the Metropolitan Museum's rejection of the painting as a genuine Rembrandt, the curator concerned replied:

> 'There are sloppy qualities of execution on the surface. Certain elements, such as the swirls of black and brown horizontal lines above the eyebrows, don't seem worthy of Rembrandt. There is poor articulation; the painting lacks Rembrandt's convincing effect of modelling with light; and the highlights are wrong – the patch next to the nose, for example, flattens the cheekbone, and Rembrandt would not flatten like that. Moreover, the sitter's hair lacks the soft volume of curls that one would find in a Rembrandt.'

In my article 'Connoisseurship and Rembrandt's paintings' (*Burlington Magazine*, February 2008) I wrote:

> 'rigid reliance on familiar characteristics can end up by dictating, as it were, how Rembrandt should or should not have painted.'

It would seem that the Metropolitan Museum curator falls into that trap. One only has to reverse his negative judgments to see how he believes – implicitly dictates – how Rembrandt should have painted. Whereas his reasoning is essentially based on amassing a homogeneous body of observations concerning style and brushwork, the following argumentation is based on a convergence model, in which *different kinds* of evidence are given their due in a logic of *probability* (see the remarks on the Bayesian approach in the Glossary). The range of evidence considered in this case comprises the following:

Fig. 2. XRF-image of **32** showing an underlying figure with a steel gorget.

Fig. 3. Detail of **18**

- Like almost all of Rembrandt's paintings on panel, this painting is painted on an oak panel.
- The panel measures 22.2 x 16.6 cm. Panels of approximately this size are found with a number of early works by Rembrandt and from his studio (see **1**, **2**, **3**, **18** (copper), **20**, **43**, **69**).
- According to dendrochronological data the panel comes from a tree that was felled earlier than 1612, well before the earliest possible origin of the painting (see *Corpus* IV p. 653).
- As with *c.* 14 other (mainly small) paintings from Rembrandt's Leiden period, this panel was used twice (**figs. 1-2**) (see **1**, **6**, **8**, **13**, **17**, **18**, **21**, **22**, **24**, **29**, **36**, **44**, **45**, **56**).
- The underlying painting, depicting a figure in a metal gorget, belongs to a type that occurs several times in Rembrandt's early oeuvre (see **4**, **6**, **fig. 3**, **30**, **35**, **56**, **58**).
- The painting shows a likeness of Rembrandt's face, which is significant, given that Rembrandt from early on painted, drew and etched his face in front of the mirror (see **5**, **7**, **8**, **18**, **19**, **20**, **24**, **30**, **33**, **36a**, **69** and B. 5, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 27, 320, 338).
- It belongs to a common type, the small-scale self-portrait which he first produced – probably for art-lovers – in painted form (see **7**, **8**, **24**, **30**, **31**, **33**, **36a**, **69**). In 1631/32, when his fame increased, Rembrandt began to produce editions of etched small-scale self-portraits.
- The sitter casts a shadow below right on a cursorily indicated wall surface, as is found frequently with Rembrandt.
- In the X-radiograph (**fig. 1**), the slightly smaller dark reserve for the self-portrait in the radio-absorbent background shows blurred contours. This is typical for Rembrandt, who first sketched his images roughly, then finished the background and only then painted the figure in more detail, such that it slightly overlapped the background.
- The type of undulating contours with occasional kinks of the figure in this painting is found frequently with Rembrandt.
- As in the painting under discussion, Rembrandt's brushwork can vary in the degree of its precision or casualness. As a rule, it is effective in suggesting a convincing form, anatomy and costume, effects of light and shadow and the illusion of surface texture without the brushstrokes precisely following the various details. From one work to another and within a given work Rembrandt could vary the degree of elaboration and precision of the brushwork (compare **33**, **34**, **35**).
- Rembrandt often mixed painting and drawing with the brush in variable ways. One also finds this feature in this painting.
- The painting does not have the characteristics of a copy and does not reflect any known prototype.
- Neutron activation autoradiography shows that the painting must once have been signed RHL (in monogram) (**fig. 5**), i.e. in the way Rembrandt signed his works during the period in which this painting fits stylistically. The monogram visible on the paint surface of the same spot (**fig. 4**) has suffered damage which made the Museum's curator read it 'RL in monogram'. In his detailed catalogue entry (Liedtke 2007 pp. 709-713), he described these remnants as being 'inscribed falsely', unaware of the fact that the neutron autoradiograph shows a monogram typical of Rembrandt between 1628 and 1631.

Fig. 4. Remnants of a monogram.

Fig. 5. Neutron activation autoradiograph of the spot shown in fig. 4.

The reader's first inclination will be to put each of these arguments into proportion. Not one of them, it must be emphasized, is presented as decisive. Taken together, however, they constitute a mutually reinforcing, coherent web of arguments converging with high probability on the conclusion that we are dealing with a work by Rembrandt – indeed, with a probability so high that, in the context of what is possible to say about historical objects, it can be taken as a certainty.

34 Rembrandt, **Bust of an old woman at prayer** (‘*stilus gravis*’), *c.* 1630, gilded copper 15.5 x 12.2 cm. Salzburg, Residenzgalerie. HdG 687; Br. 63; Bauch 250; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 63; ***Corpus* I A 27**; Tümpel 75; ***Corpus* IV pp. 166-171**; see also *M/W* cat. 6.
Inscription: ‹*R*›

* **33** Rembrandt, **Self-portrait with beret and gathered shirt** (‘*stilus mediocris*’), 1630, gilded copper 15 x 12.2 cm. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum. HdG 570; Br. 11; Bauch 299; Gerson 44; Br./Gerson 11; ***Corpus* I B 5**; Tümpel 158; ***Corpus* IV Corrigenda I B 5** and **pp. 166-171**.
Inscription: ‹*R...1630*›

* **35** Rembrandt, **Laughing soldier** (‘*stilus humilis*’), *c.* 1630, gilded copper 15.3 x 12.2 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis. HdG 543; Br. 134; Bauch 113; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 134 (as a not particularly sensitive work, not of sufficient quality to be attributed to Rembrandt himself); ***Corpus* I B 6**; Tümpel 127; ***Corpus* IV Corrigenda I B 6 pp. 166-171**.
Inscription: none.

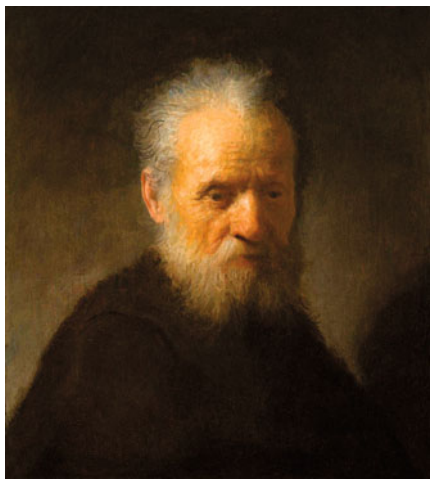
What do these three paintings – showing a self-portrait 33, an old woman praying 34 and a laughing soldier 35 – have in common? At first glance nothing, but in fact they share two important characteristics: they are all of the same size and they are painted on copper plate coated with a thin layer of gold leaf. Their three identical supports – unique for Rembrandt – tell us that these paintings belong together in some way or other, even though their contents seem to be entirely unrelated and their stylistic differences are remarkably large. The soldier is roughly painted with relatively broad brushwork, the old woman praying is accurately described with fine, careful brushwork and the self-portrait is modelled with merging brush strokes. But it is probably precisely these stylistic differences that are the key to the puzzle of this strange trio.

At the time Rembrandt made these paintings, connoisseurs of Latin literature were intrigued by a characteristic of the poetry of the Roman poet Virgil, author of the *Aeneid*. Virgil was admired for his ability to deploy three different styles: one for scenes where love was involved, another in relating scenes of war and violence, and a third style elsewhere. These three styles – the *genera dicendi*, or ‘three manners of speaking’ – were the *mediocris*, *stilus gravis* and *humilis*, i.e. the elevated, the rough and the moderate style.

We know from a letter written by Nicolas Poussin (1594-1665) to Paul Fréart de Chantelou in 1647 that he found the use of these three styles a challenge for the painter (Merot 1990 pp. 311-312). One wonders therefore whether Rembrandt was perhaps challenged by one of the scholars from the circle of Leiden art-lovers in which he was moved to prove that one and the same painter could master three different styles. Perhaps it was actually a commission, for which purpose the art-lover provided these three costly gilded copper plates.

The rough laughing soldier, ‘roughly’ painted, may thus have been executed in the *stilus humilis*, the finely painted devout old woman in the *stilus gravis* and the self-portrait in the *stilus mediocris*. This self-portrait could have served as a kind of painted signature accompanying this demonstration of Rembrandt’s artistic versatility. Later in his life Rembrandt often worked in several different styles, but nowhere is the relation between style and subject so clear as it is here.

* **36** Rembrandt, **Bust of an old man**, *c.* 1630, panel 18.2 x 17.4 cm (measured in the present frame). Private collection. HdG 390 (the Leipzig version); Br. 140 (the Leipzig version); Bauch 344 (as the best of various versions); Gerson -; Bredius/Gerson Appendix A p. 536 (to poor for Rembrandt); ***Corpus* I C 25 Copies 1** (as probably 18th century); Tümpel -. Inscription: none



Several versions of this painting exist (or have existed), two of which are known in the form of old photographs in the reproduction collection of the Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD). One was photographed in 1937 at the art dealer D. Katz in Dieren (present whereabouts unknown) (**fig. 1**). A reproduction of a second version only arrived in the RKD in 1943 (**fig. 2**). This reproduction came from the catalogue compiled in 1943 for the sale of the Goudstikker collection (no. 239). The painting concerned measured 20 x 15.5 cm, approximately the same size as an existing copy in Leipzig (**fig. 3**).

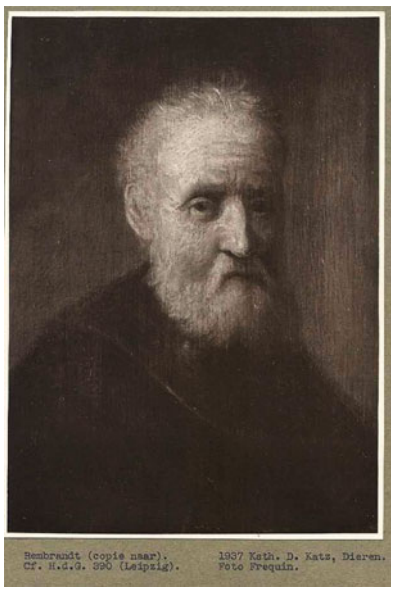


Fig. 1. Reproduction from the RKD collection.

Fig. 2. Reproduction from the RKD collection.

When they compiled their surveys of Rembrandt's printed oeuvre, Hofstede de Groot and Bredius probably knew only the version in Leipzig (**fig. 3**). This version was treated in detail in *Corpus* I C 25. With all aspects considered, the Leipzig version can be regarded with certainty as a 17th-century painting. The earliest possible date for the felling of the oak tree from which its panel derives is 1567, while the tree itself grew in the Baltic region, the region from which the vast majority of Rembrandt's panels came. The material substance of the paint and the manner of painting are similar to Rembrandt's, only the quality of the execution is clearly inferior to that in Rembrandt's own works. The Leipzig painting therefore almost certainly came from Rembrandt's workshop. The present author has never actually seen the versions documented in the RKD mentioned above and documented between 1937 and *c.* 1943 (**figs. 1, 2**). However, on the basis of the traces of ageing visible in the reproductions these too appear to have originated in the 17th century, possibly in Rembrandt's workshop.

Fig. 3. Rembrandt workshop, copy after **36**. panel 20.5 x 17 cm. Leipzig, Museum der bildenden Künste.

Fig. 4. **36** before restoration. The X-ray image, fig. 5, shows that the painting was originally rectangular. In the course of the 17th or 18th century (compare fig. 6) it must have been enlarged into an oval shape. In Plate **36** the added parts are covered by a modified rectangular frame.

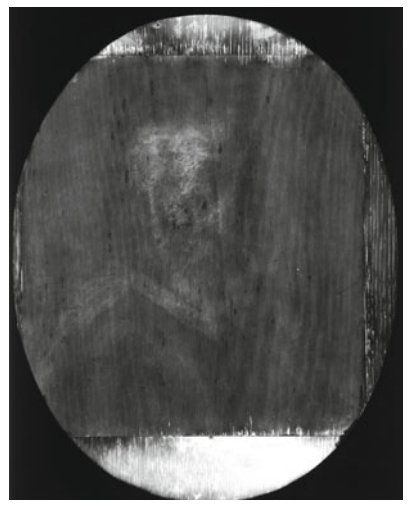


Fig. 5. X-radiograph of **36**. When a rectangular painting was to be given an oval format, it was not unusual first to enlarge the panel both above and below and also on one of the sides before giving it the desired oval format (see also **199**)

In the 1950's Bauch discovered a previously unknown version (**fig. 4**) in a private collection in the US. He published it in 1960 as a work by Rembrandt (Bauch 1960 p. 172) but he included it in his in 1966 completed survey of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre with the note 'Best of several versions'. In Gersons's judgement (published in Bredius/Gerson no. 140) all known versions, i.e. including the version discovered by Bauch, '*seem too poor for Rembrandt*'. But apart from perhaps the Leipzig version, Gerson only knew the different versions – including the one discovered by Bauch – only in reproduction.

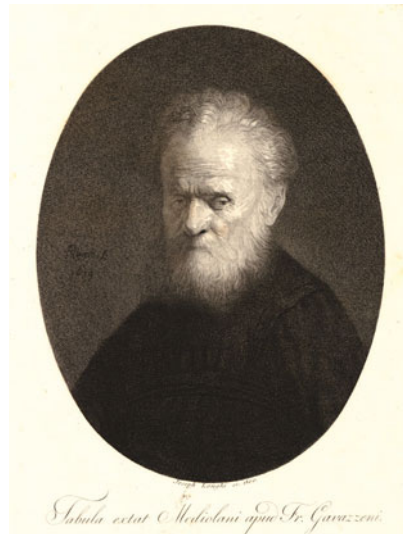


Fig. 6. G. Longhi, engraving dated 1800 after **36** (see fig. 4).

Corpus I C 25 was devoted primarily to the Leipzig version (**fig. 3**), which was tentatively, albeit rather speculatively, attributed by Bruyn, the author of that entry, to Rembrandt's pupil Paulus Lesire (1611- after 1656). The version discovered by Bauch (**fig. 4**) was dealt with in that same entry under the heading *Copies*. This version was studied in April 1969 by Josua Bruyn and Bob Haak, whose opinion reads:

> 'The colour, especially points to a relatively late date of production, probably in the 18th century'.

Their view was undoubtedly determined in part by the RRP's preconceived initial idea that most of the dubious paintings in Rembrandt's style were the products of a later time (see p. 12). A brilliantly executed engraving (**fig. 6**), made in 1800 by Giuseppe Longhi (Bonza 1766-Milan 1832) was almost certainly produced after this version. The print bears the inscription: *Joseph Longhi sc. 1800/Tabula extat Mediolani apud Fr. Gavazzeni*. In the left background on the printed image the inscription: *Remb. f. / 1639* is applied.

Hofstede de Groot had already pointed out the existence of a

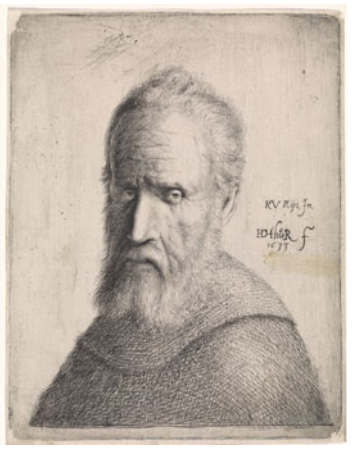


Fig. 7. H. Dethier, etched copy after **36**

Fig. 8. XRF-scan of **36**

Fig. 9. Red lines clarify the image as was discovered in fig. 8.

print dated 1633 (**fig. 7**) which, he thought, was copied (in mirror image) after the Leipzig version. The print bears the inscription *RV Rijn. In(venit)*. This print, however, whose inscription indicates that it was made by the Dordrecht graphic artist Hendrik Dethier (1610-1634), is so clumsily executed that one cannot tell which version of the painting it represents.

This was the situation in 2007 when the RRP was approached by the present owner of the version that both Bauch and members of the RRP had earlier seen in a private collection in the US (**fig. 4**). As its new owner, he wanted the RRP to study the painting again. This request was welcomed and led to a thorough investigation of the work using X-ray (**fig. 5**), infrared and UV investigations by René Gerritsen and Synchrotron Radiation Based X-ray Fluorescence Spectrometry carried out in Brookhaven (NY) on the initiative of Joris Dik (Technical University Delft) (**fig. 8**). Dendrochronological dating by Peter Klein produced no useful data, because the panel was found to be from the heartwood of an oak trunk. Karin Groen conducted an investigation of the composition of the ground on one of the added pieces.

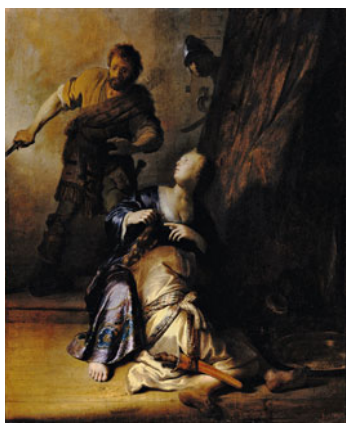
At some time in the past the panel was cut to an oval shape, certainly before it was copied in the engraving of Longhi in 1800 (**fig. 6**) (see the caption to **figs. 4** and **5**) The painting was restored by Martin Bijl: the old varnish layers were removed, the flaking paint layer conserved, restored and the image reconstructed to its original rectangular format by covering the added pieces under a new, rectangular frame. The Canadian film director Kevin Sullivan made a documentary on the investigation and restoration of this painting under the title 'Out of the Shadows'.

With regard to painting technique, the painting does not deviate from what is known of the young Rembrandt's technique. The remarkable presence of this small figure placed in a light that is totally convincingly rendered, and the rendition of the skin, the hair and the physiognomy are wholly in keeping with the way that Rembrandt approached these pictorial challenges. This, added to the fact that it was painted over a different image previously painted on the same panel, was strong evidence for an attribution to Rembrandt. There are 15 known examples of superimposed paintings among the early works by Rembrandt (listed in **32**). In this case, the Brookhaven investigation enabled us to recognize the underlying, evidently unfinished painting as the silhouette of a bust of a figure reserved in a background (**figs. 8** and **9**). With the familiar tufts of hair on either side of the head and the characteristic beret this figure was in all probability that of Rembrandt himself. It may be assumed that this was a brush sketch whose background had already been executed. The underlying image thus appears to be an unfinished, small self-portrait that must have belonged to the category of painted and etched self-portraits which, the present author believes, played a role in the relations between Rembrandt and art-lovers interested in his work, and in the latter's debates among themselves over the artist (see **31** - **33**).

In view of the above, there can be little doubt that the painting dealt with here was executed wholly by Rembrandt himself.

One can only speculate over the function of this small painting of an old man. The existence of the Leipzig and the other copies – which in all probability also originated in Rembrandt's workshop – may suggest that the master had several of his pupils copy his prototype as a useful exercise, and possibly also as a lucrative source of income for Rembrandt himself (see Glossary: workshop).

37 Rembrandt, **Samson betrayed by Delilah**, *c.* 1628-1630, panel 61.3 x 50.1 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 33; Br. 489; Bauch 4; Gerson 9; Br./Gerson 489; ***Corpus* I A 24**; ***Corpus* V p. 166**; Tümpel 4; see also Kahr 1973; Berlin 1975, p. 344.
Inscription: to the left, on the step on which Delilah is sitting ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *1628*› The dating 1628 on this painting remains a puzzle because stylistically the work does not match that period (see *Corpus* I A 24 p. 253).



The scene depicted here comes from the Old Testament.

Judges 16: 4-5, 16-19: 'Afterward it happened that he loved a woman in the Valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah. And the lords of the Philistines came up to her and said to her, "Entice him, and find out where his great strength lies, and by what means we may overpower him, that we may bind him to afflict him; and every one of us will give you eleven hundred pieces of silver"'
'And it came to pass, when she pestered him daily with her words and pressed him, so that his soul was vexed to death, that he told her all his heart, and said to her, "No razor has ever come upon my head, for I have been a Nazirite to God from my mother's womb. If I am shaven, then my strength will leave me, and I shall become weak, and be like any other man." When Delilah saw that he had told her all his heart, she sent and called for the lords of the Philistines, saying, "Come up once more, for he has told me all his heart." So the lords of the Philistines came up to her and brought the money in their hand. Then she lulled him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him.'

The theme of Samson and Delilah was often depicted in the 16th and 17th centuries as a warning that women could destroy a man.

The figures in a small-scale history piece like this appear to act within an ample pictorial space in a manner more true to life than in history pieces with life-size figures. This calls for a 'stage direction' that involves not only the costuming and acting of the figures but the entire stage setting of the scene as well. Combining these various aspects was a task that demanded the most from the painter, and for this reason the small-scale history piece offered the best opportunity for improving on, if not for renewing all the *'gronden'* of the art of painting (see p. 68/69). For a comparison of the present painting with a work with life-size figures by Jan Lievens that originated in the same period. (see *Corpus* V pp.10-11).

Rembrandt and Jan Lievens depicted the same scene at the same time. The difference between their respective conceptions is a clear illustration of Constantijn Huygens' remark that, contrary to Jan Lievens, Rembrandt

'*would rather concentrate totally on a small painting and he achieves a result on a small scale that one might seek in vain in the largest paintings of others.*'

38 Rembrandt, **David playing the harp for King Saul**, *c.* 1630, panel 62 x 50 cm. Frankfurt am Main, Städelsches Kunstinstitut. HdG 35; Br. 490; Bauch 7; Gerson 13; Br./Gerson 490; ***Corpus* I A 25**; Tümpel 5; ***Corpus* V pp. 166-167**.

Inscription: none (perhaps lost, as all thinly painted areas of the painting have suffered badly from overcleaning)

The scene represented here is a story from the Old Testament book of Samuel. It could either depict the scene from:

> **I Samuel 16: 23** 'And so it was, whenever the spirit from God was upon Saul, that David would take a harp and play it with his hand. Then Saul would become refreshed and well, and the distressing spirit would depart from him.'

Or from:

> **I Samuel 18: 10 and 11** 'The next day an evil spirit from God came forcefully on Saul. He was prophesying in his house, while David was playing the lyre, as he usually did. Saul had a spear in his hand and he hurled it, saying to himself, "I'll pin David to the wall." But David eluded him twice.'

In a poem written by C.G. Plempius (1574-1638), an older contemporary of Rembrandt, the episode as narrated in I Samuel 18: 10-11 is imagined as follows:

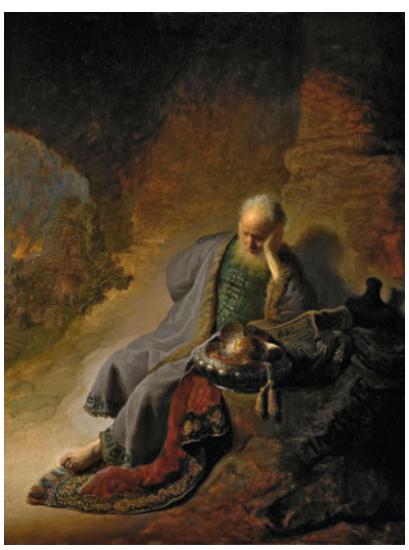
Fig. 1. W. van der Leeuw, engraving after **38** reproduced in reverse).

'His eyes bulge with his bile; angry and bitter is the mind of Saul; yea, putrid ruin devours his bowels with envy. Because of this he sees no longer his own royalty, bravest of youths, but is consumed from within and with grim countenance sees none but yours. O, mighty is your excellence which in its humbleness conquers your enemy with the sound of strings, while even without a battle your military renown inflicts a wound.'

This poem describing Saul's jealousy toward David was placed beneath an engraving after the present painting (or a copy of it) that was produced by the Antwerp engraver Willem van der Leeuw (1603-1665) (**fig. 1**). This can be taken as an indication that Rembrandt's contemporaries – and probably Rembrandt himself – took the painting to represent the second of the biblical passages quoted above. The fact that Saul's fist grasping the spear is placed at the centre of the composition certainly suggests as much.

39 Rembrandt, **Jeremiah lamenting the destruction of Jerusalem**, 1630, panel 58.3 x 46.6 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. HdG 49; Br. 604; Bauch 127; Gerson 24; Br./Gerson 604; ***Corpus* I A 28**; Tümpel 6; see also Bl. cat. 5.

Inscriptions: in the centre, on the stone edge beneath the still-life ‹*RHL 1630*›; the inscription <BiBel> on the book Jeremiah is leaning on is generally considered to be a later addition



The secene represented here refers to the Old Testament book of Jeremiah. Jerusalem was besieged by the army of the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar. The prophet Jeremiah spoke to Zedekiah, King of Judah (reign 597-586 BC) the word of the Lord:

> **Jeremiah 32: 28** "Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the King of Babylon, and he shall take it; ..."

upon which Zedekiah had Jeremiah locked up in a dungeon. The city was eventually taken, razed and burnt, while Zedekiah was taken captive and had his eyes put out. Rembrandt has depicted him here outside the city gate with his hands over his face.

> **Jeremiah 39: 11-14** 'Now Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, saying, "Take him and look after him, and do him no harm; but do to him just as he says to you." So Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard sent all the king of Babylon's chief officers; then they sent *someone* to take Jeremiah from the court of the prison ...'
>
> **Jeremiah 40: 2-6** 'And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah and said to him: "The LORD your God has pronounced this doom on this place. Now the LORD has brought *it,* and has done just as He said. Because you *people* have sinned against the LORD, and not obeyed His voice, therefore this thing has come upon you. And now look, I free you this day from the chains that *were* on your hand. If it seems good to you to come with me to Babylon, come, and I will look after you. But if it seems wrong for you to come with me to Babylon, remain here. [...] So the captain of the guard gave him rations and a gift and let him go.'

The objects depicted by Rembrandt around Jeremiah probably represent the rations and the gift presented by the captain of the guard.

In the Catholic Bible, *the superscript* at the head of the first chapter of the Lamentations of Jeremiah reads:

> And it came to pass, after Israel was carried into captivity, and Jerusalem was desolate, that Jeremiah the prophet sat weeping, and mourned with this lamentation over Jerusalem, and with a sorrowful mind, sighing and moaning.

Josua Bruyn analysed the present painting with regard to style (Bruyn 1970). His views on the painting in this regard are summarized as follows in *Corpus* I A 28 pp. 280-283:

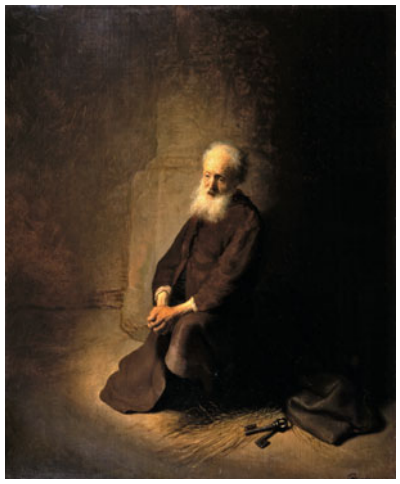
> 'The attitude of the figure, and its function as a diagonal axis for the whole composition, represent the achievement of a formal unity which, more than in any of the previous works, places Rembrandt's artistic ideas at that particular moment in the mainstream of an international development that was governed mainly by Italian models. Van Rijckevorsel 1932 was thus right to point to Italian prototypes for the Jeremiah figure. In particular the Peter figure in Guido Reni's *The apostles Peter and Paul* in Milan, datable in 1604/05 (**fig. 1**).'

Against Bruyn's analysis (and Van Rijckevorsel's thesis that Rembrandt was linking up with the Italian tradition) it may be pointed out that Rembrandt has striven in this painting for an ordonnation which supports a coherent spatial illusion. This corresponds more with 17th-century ideas concerning invention and ordonnation in which the diagonal is not mentioned as a principal of composition (*Corpus* V pp. 53-64). If Rembrandt did know the painting by Reni, then rather than speak of Reni's influence it would be more appropriate to speak of Rembrandt's possible ambition to surpass Reni in this respect.

Fig. 1. G. Reni, Sts Peter and Paul, Milan, Pinacoteca di Brera.

The spatial illusion in the present painting is somewhat spoiled by the fact that to the left of Jeremiah the ground, which has become lighter over time, now shows through the monochrome underpainting, which itself has become more transparent (compare **275**).

40 Rembrandt, **St Peter in prison**, 1631, panel 59.1 x 47.8 cm. Jerusalem, Israel Museum. HdG 122; Br. 607; Bauch 134; Gerson 25, Br./Gerson 607; ***Corpus* I A 36**; Tümpel K2 (as a copy); see also Bl. cat. 6.
Inscription: bottom right ‹*RHL.1631*›



This image refers to a passage from the New Testament:

> **Acts 12: 1-4** 'Now about that time Herod the king stretched out his hand to harass some from the church. Then he killed James the brother of John with the sword. And because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to seize Peter also. Now it was during the Days of Unleavened Bread. So when he had arrested him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of soldiers to keep him, intending to bring him before the people after Passover.'

There are elements of the image which could refer to another episode from Peter's life: the moment when, having denied Jesus three times, he wept bitterly from remorse.

The fact that the image is open to divergent readings has influenced the differences of iconographic details between the different copies of the painting (or a possible lost prototype of them). Tümpel considered the present painting to be one of the copies after a lost prototype but did not commit himself as to whether this opinion was based on iconography or arguments regarding style or quality.

41 Rembrandt, **Andromeda**, *c.* 1630, panel 34.5 x 25 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis. HdG 195; Br. 462; Bauch 254; Gerson 55; Br./Gerson 462; ***Corpus* I A 31**; Tümpel 94; ***Corpus* V pp. 168-169**; see also *R. in Mauritshuis* pp. 63-70; Sluijter 2006 (Chapter II).
Inscription: none

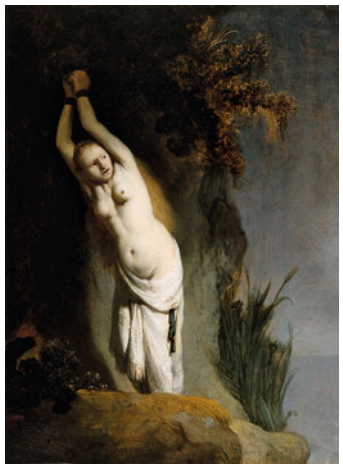


Fig. 1. Copy of **41** before it was cropped.

The scene depicted derives from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* IV 671 ff. [trans. A.S. Kline 2000]:

> 'There Jupiter had unjustly ordered the innocent Andromeda to pay the penalty for her mother Cassipeia's words. As soon as Perseus .... saw her fastened by her arms to the hard rock, he would have thought she was a marble statue, except that a light breeze stirred her hair, and warm tears ran from her eyes...'

There has been speculation in the Rembrandt literature over the question whether the painting could have originally been larger on the right side, large enough for the approaching Perseus to have had a place in the composition. There are indeed traces on the reverse side from which one infers that the painting has been cropped on all four sides. But there was a copy (now known only from a photograph) (**fig. 1**) which indicates that the original painting could have been no larger than *c.* 44 x 33 cm. From this one infers that Rembrandt could not have intended to include Perseus in the composition.

This is perhaps the place in this book to emphasize that Rembrandt's history pieces should not be seen exclusively as illustrations of texts – whether for a notional 'Rembrandt Bible' or an illustrated version of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. As a rule moral or metaphorical 'messages' were embodied in the image by the artist, or possibly desired by a patron. In the case of this painting the likelihood is that an echo of a passage from Karel van Mander's *Wtlegghingh op den Metamorphosis* (fol. 41-41v) was intended:

> '*The blameless Andromeda saved by Perseus shows us that the pious, often being in extreme distress, through the mercy of God are unexpectedly delivered.*'

But one cannot exclude the possibility that Rembrandt chose this theme in a first attempt to paint a female nude convincingly.

42 Rembrandt, **The Good Samaritan**, 1630, panel 24.2 x 19.8 cm. London, Wallace Collection. HdG 111; Br. 545; Bauch 55; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 545 (as an old copy after a (lost) original); ***Corpus* II C 48** (following Gerson); Tümpel -; ***Corpus* V pp. 168-169**; see also Ingamells 1992 no. 2; Brown 2006 pp. 56-58 (as a genuine Rembrandt).
Inscription: on a stone in the left foreground ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *1630*›

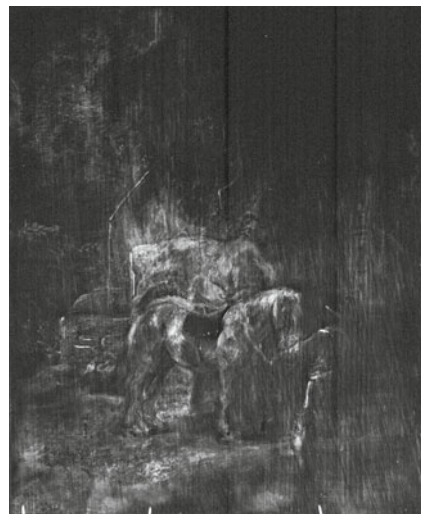


Fig. 1. X-ray of **42**

The scene depicted here comes from the New Testament:

> **Luke 10: 25-37** 'And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, "Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" He said to him, "What is written in the law? What is your reading *of it?*" So he answered and said, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,' and 'your neighbor as yourself.'" And He said to him, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live." But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Then Jesus answered and said: "A certain *man* went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded *him,* and departed, leaving *him* half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to *him* and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave *them* to the innkeeper, and said to him, 'Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.' So which of these three do you think was neighbor to him who fell among the thieves?" And he said, "He who showed mercy on him." Then Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."'

This painting is closely related to an etching by Rembrandt, dated in 1633 (B. 90) (**fig. 2**). The etching shows the same image apart from one detail, the dog in the foreground. In 1969 Horst Gerson suggested that the painting might be a copy after a lost original (Br./Gerson 545). This suggestion was adopted by the RRP (*Corpus* II C 48) and maintained even when the painting was found to be signed and dated. The monogram *RHL* and the date 1630 on the stone in the bottom left corner were hidden beneath an overpainting and were only revealed in 1976. This overpainting was perhaps commissioned or carried out by one of the painting's earlier owners unfamiliar with Rembrandt's early monograms, in the mistaken belief that the inscription may be the inventory number of an even earlier owner. It was not unusual to introduce such numbers in paint on the front of paintings. In view of the way this inscription has been applied, however, there can be scarcely any doubt that we are dealing here with a monogram and date applied by Rembrandt himself.

Fig. 2. Rembrandt, Graphic reproduction of **42**, etching 25.2 x 21.8 cm (B. 90).

That was understandably sufficient reason in itself for Christopher Brown to reconsider the attribution of this painting (Brown 2006 pp. 56-58). There was a further reason for revisiting this question: the finding of the inscription meant that the dating of the painting to *c.* 1633, proposed by the RRP, had to be revised. That dating was based on the presumed close link between the painting and the etching mentioned above, which bears the date 1633. Apart from the dog added to the scene, this etching corresponds so exactly with the painting that the etching's design must have been transferred from the painting via a tracing technique. The only other possibility seemed to be that both the etching and the painting were based on a lost prototype – as indeed was assumed both by Gerson and the Rembrandt Research Project.

However, the strongest evidence that the *Good Samaritan* cannot be a copy (and consequently must be the prototype of the etching) comes from a comparison of the painting with the X-radiograph (**fig. 1**). The difference betrays the painting's exploratory genesis – as one often sees with Rembrandt's paintings. This is evident, for example, in the zone under the horse's belly where the light distribution must originally have been different. In the X-radiograph, the leg of the helper, who is lifting the wounded man from the horse, is still only roughly reserved in the background; while the horse's head seems to have been turned initially more toward the beholder.

The question remains as to what could have been the painting's *raison d'être*. Was it really intended as the design for the print? That the painting is so definitively signed and dated, as well as the fact that the dates of the painting and the etching are so far apart, makes that unlikely. Moreover, the painting has been executed with close attention to color. When the RRP suggested that another, almost identical painting must have served as the prototype of this painting (and for the etching), that prototype was thought to have been a (lost) grisaille made specifically in preparation for the etching. This idea was based on the assumption that Rembrandt usually prepared for his more ambitious etchings with grisailles. But this theory became untenable once Royalton Kisch had demonstrated that the etching (B. 77) after the London *Ecce Homo* grisaille **112** was wholly or partly executed by J.G. van Vliet. It is more likely that the Wallace *Good Samaritan* was an independent work and that, some time later, Rembrandt wanted to bring out a print of it that he himself executed, changing the image slightly, perhaps in order to fill the empty space in the foreground.

The idea that Rembrandt had conceived a plan at this stage of his career to make autograph reproduction prints himself after his own paintings, instead of handing the work over to graphic artists like J.G. van Vliet, is supported by the fact that in the same period he produced the etched *Raising of Lazarus* (B.73) after an earlier painted version superimposed by **48** (see also *Corpus* V pp.173-175).

43 Rembrandt, **Bust of an old man wearing a fur cap**, 1629, panel 22.2 x 17.7 cm. Innsbruck, Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum. HdG 677; Br. 76; Bauch 124; Gerson 24; Br./Gerson 76; ***Corpus* I A 29**; Tümpel 129; see also *M/W* cat. 7; *R. & Van Vliet* cat. 11a/b; E. van de Wetering in *R. Printmaker* 2000 p. 37.
Inscription: to the right of the fur collar ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *1630*›

With a small painting like this the question arises of what its function could have been. The fact that there are a number of old copies of it suggests that the present painting may have been intended as an example for pupils to copy. In this context, see also **36**. The painting was copied around 1634 by J.G. van Vliet as part of a series of six prints, all exactly the same size, after works by Rembrandt (**figs. 1-6**). Rembrandt's prototypes for five of those six prints have been pre-

Fig. 1. see **20**

Fig. 2. see **23**

Fig. 3. prototype lost

Fig. 4. see **44**

Fig. 5. see **35**

Fig. 6. see **43**

served: 20, 23, 44, 35, 43. The prototype of **fig. 3** is missing. There are good reasons for thinking that Rembrandt and Van Vliet chose these six to issue as prints in order to market them as models for aspiring artists to copy. (Emmens suggested that Rembrandt was planning a book of prints to serve as drawing exercises (see Emmens 1979 pp. 215-218).) They include, for instance, studies of different affects (compare **figs. 2, 5**) or the complicated shading of a figure lit from almost behind (**figs. 1, 4**) and oriental costumes (**figs. 3, 6**) one of which is the etching after the present painting. That these etchings were in fact used by young artists during their training is documented by a drawing by the young Moses Terborch (1645-1667) (**fig. 7**).

Fig. 7. Moses Terborch, partial copy after fig. 2, *c.* 1660.

The headgear of the man in the present painting resembles a *Kolpak*, a high fur hat made of sable and worn by Polish Jews until well into the 19th century. However, the fact that a similar kind of soft fur hat, widened towards the top, is worn by a priest in the *Judas repentant* of 1629 23 suggests that the subject of the present painting was perhaps meant to be seen as an oriental, possibly Jewish figure (see *Corpus* I A 29 p. 289).

* **44** Rembrandt, **Oil study of an old man**, *c.* 1630, panel 24.3 x 20.3 cm. Kingston, Queen's University, Agnes Etherington Art Centre. HdG -; Br. 633; Bauch 343; Gerson 29; Br./Gerson 633; ***Corpus* I C 22**; Tümpel 128 (not fully convinced of the authenticity); ***Corpus* I C 22** (as a work from Rembrandt's immediate circle; ***Corpus* IV Corrigenda I C 22 p. 628**; see also Bl. cat. 4; *Bader Collection* no. 161.
Inscription: top right ‹*RHL* (in monogram)›

For the controversy within the RRP concerning the attribution of this painting, see pp. 20, 40/41, 42-47.

* **45** Rembrandt, **Oil study of an old man**, *c.* 1630, panel 19.5 x 16 cm. Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst. HdG 388; Br. 136; Bauch 345; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 136 (as not by Rembrandt); ***Corpus* I C 27**; Tümpel -; see also Copenhagen 2006 pp. 71-80 esp. pp. 74-77 and 174-177; *Quest* pp. 201-204.
Inscription: A monogram ‹*RH*› is placed in the right upper corner,

Fig. 1. X-ray of 45.

in relatively thick paint. Given the meticulous execution of that inscription and the peculiar, reddish dark brown colour, it must have been applied at a late stage. Moreover, according to *Corpus* I C 27, 'the lack of any sign of the L certainly does occur prior to 1628, but is invariably coupled with an 'open' R. If only on this score, the signature cannot be authentic.'

Kurt Bauch was the first art historian to doubt the attribution of the painting to Rembrandt (Bauch 1933 p. 205). He suggested that it might be a copy of a lost Rembrandt original. Gerson rejected the painting, stating that, 'because of its poor quality, it must be doubtful whether it is based on an autograph painting by Rembrandt'.

The members of the RRP rejected it on the basis of the following arguments:

> 'The execution is too coarse, the paint surface too continuous, the colour-scheme too orangey and the link between brushwork and form too weak.' Their conclusion was that it must be 'a copy after a lost original by Rembrandt or one of his circle', adding that '[t]he predominance of orangey shades might be explained as the result of copying from a painting with a yellowed coating of varnish.'

The suggestion that the painting is a copy made after the varnish on the hypothetical prototype had yellowed is essentially undermined by the results of dendrochronological analysis. The support is a small oak panel which originates from the Baltic region, as were most of Rembrandt's panels. The earliest possible felling date of the tree from which it derived is 1627. Adding a minimum of 2 years for seasoning, the earliest date that the painting could have been created is 1629.

Radiographic investigation indicates that the present painting cannot possibly be a copy. The X-radiograph shows the kind of freely executed traces of an earlier image – which could indicate double use of the panel, so typical of Rembrandt (**fig. 1**). The *Corpus* text refers to the fact that the model and the posture of the figure in the present painting are reminiscent of the *Oil study of an old man* in Kingston 44, a painting which the RRP in *Corpus* I C 22 also did not accept as an original work by Rembrandt. That painting, however, has since been reattributed to Rembrandt (see *Corpus* IV p. 628), which has implications for the attribution of the present painting. The brushwork and the orangey and grey colour-scheme of both paintings are closely comparable: both paintings display a similar free, almost coarse brushwork, together with a characteristic rhythmic quality of the brushwork in the lit areas of the forehead and hair. Moreover, in both there is a similar relation of the figure to the grey background. Further evidence in favour of an attribution of the present painting to Rembrandt is provided by a comparative analysis (using macro-photography) of the paint consistency and 'brushability' in this painting and in 34 (see Copenhagen 2006 pp 76-77). All in all, it appears justified to reattribute 45 to Rembrandt and to date it to *c.* 1630.

* **46** Rembrandt, **Bust of an old man**, *c.* 1630, panel 46.9 x 38.8 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis. HdG 676; Br. 77; Bauch 116; Gerson 36; Br./Gerson 77; ***Corpus* I B 7**; ***Corpus* II p. 847**; Tümpel 130; see also De Vries et al. 1978 no. III.
Inscription: none

In the early years of the RRP a strong consensus existed within the team over this painting: it was felt that it could not be from Rembrandt's hand but was rather the product of a later imitator.

The summary of the text devoted to this painting in *Corpus* I – where the painting was included under Category B (Paintings that can be neither positively attributed to Rembrandt nor rejected as such) – gives a good idea of how the insight gradually developed

that this initial judgment had to be abandoned. The summary reads:

> 'In style and execution no. B 7 (our **46**) exhibits a number of features that cause surprise when compared with similar works by Rembrandt. Neither the generally somewhat coarse and sketchy brushwork nor the dull colour scheme with scattered accents of bright red fits in easily with the picture of his style one gains from the various *tronies* that can be attributed to him. An admittedly much smaller head in Rembrandt's *Raising of Lazarus* of *c.* 1630/32 **48** does, however, present some striking similarities, most of all in the use of colour, with the present painting. The panel of the present painting is, moreover, made of wood from the same tree as panels used for two authentic Rembrandt paintings from the late 1620s and the early 1630s **16** and **54**; it must be assumed, therefore, that the panel used for **46** was in Leiden and most probably in Rembrandt's possession around 1630. From this fact, plus the similarities to the *Raising of Lazarus* already mentioned, one may tentatively conclude that no. B 7 (our **46**) reveals an aspect of either Rembrandt's manner of painting around 1630/31 or of a painting style practiced by a pupil in his studio. A third possibility, that a later imitator was responsible for the picture, has little to recommend it.'

There were thus a number of mutually reinforcing arguments for attributing the painting to Rembrandt. Yet that step could not then be taken; as in the case of earlier entries **35** and **44** it was blocked by preconceived notions of Rembrandt's style – specifically a rigid conception of his brushwork and a dogmatic idea of his use of colour. It is also relevant that it was still some time before the realization dawned on us that Rembrandt occasionally made oil studies (*Quest* pp. 178-207). In the meantime there have been such advances on all these points that one can now once again confidently attribute the painting to Rembrandt.

47 Rembrandt, **Simeon in the Temple**, 1631, panel 60.9 x 47.9 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis. HdG 80; Br. 543; Bauch 52; Gerson 17; Br./Gerson 543; ***Corpus* I A 34**; Tümpel 43; ***Corpus* V pp. 170-171**; see also *R. in Mauritshuis* no. V.
Inscription: ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *1631*›

For the biblical texts on which this painting is based see the Note to **16**.

This painting is one of Rembrandt's most impressive early masterpieces, at the same time delicate in its execution and monumental in its conception.

It had a great impact on artists such as Willem de Poorter (1608-1649), who executed a faithful copy (Dresden). There is, however, another pictorial document from which one may infer indirectly how much it must have been admired viz. the *Christ and the woman taken in adultery* in the National Gallery in London **196**, painted thirteen years later in 1644. To a significant extent that painting was created to conform to the present painting. A comparison of the two paintings palpably demonstrates the compositional power and dynamic of the *Simeon in the Temple* and the significance of the role played in this by the relation between light and shadow.

48 Rembrandt, **The raising of Lazarus**, *c.* 1630-1632, panel 96.2 x 81.5 cm. Los Angeles, County Museum of Art. HdG Zusätze 107A; Br. 538; Bauch 51; Gerson 16; Br./Gerson 538; ***Corpus* I A 30**; Tümpel 42; ***Corpus* V p. 175**.
Inscription: none (the absence of a signature may be explained by the fact that the format has been drastically reduced).

The scene depicted comes from the New Testament.

John 11: 1-44 'Now a certain man was sick, Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. It was that Mary who anointed the Lord with fragrant oil and wiped His feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. Therefore the sisters sent to Him, saying, "Lord, behold, he whom You love is sick." When Jesus heard that, He said, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So, when He heard that he was sick, He stayed two more days in the place where He was. Then after this He said to the disciples, "Let us go to Judea again." The disciples said to Him, "Rabbi, lately the Jews sought to stone You, and are You going there again?" Jesus answered, "Are there not twelve hours in the day? If anyone walks in the day, he does not stumble, because he sees the light of this world. But if one walks in the night, he stumbles, because the light is not in him." These things He said, and after that He said to them, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps, but I go that I may wake him up." Then His disciples said, "Lord, if he sleeps he will get well." However, Jesus spoke of his death, but they thought that He was speaking about taking rest in sleep. Then Jesus said to them plainly, "Lazarus is dead. And I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, that you may believe. Nevertheless let us go to him." Then Thomas, who is called the Twin, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with Him. So when Jesus came, He found that he had already been in the tomb four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, about two miles away. And many of the Jews had joined the women around Martha and Mary, to comfort them concerning their brother. Now Martha, as soon as she heard that Jesus was coming, went and met Him, but Mary was sitting in the house. Now Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise again." Martha said to Him, "I know that he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?" She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that You are the Christ, the Son of God, who is to come into the world." And when she had said these things, she went her way and secretly called Mary her sister, saying, "The Teacher has come and is calling for you." As soon as she heard that, she arose quickly and came to Him. Now Jesus had not yet come into the town, but was in the place where Martha met Him. Then the Jews who were with her in the house, and comforting her, when they saw that Mary rose up quickly and went out, followed her, saying, "She is going to the tomb to weep there." Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my

Fig. 1. X-ray of **48**

brother would not have died." Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. And He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to Him, "Lord, come and see." Jesus wept. Then the Jews said, "See how He loved him!" And some of them said, "Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?" Then Jesus, again groaning in Himself, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone." Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days." Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me." Now when He had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go." '

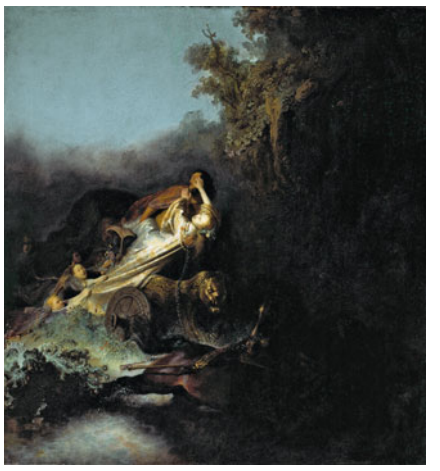
The panels used for **48** and **49** probably come from the same oak tree. They have been sawn from this trunk such that the soft heart of the trunk runs through the middle of the panels of both paintings. Not only do they show a serious (though restored) more or less vertical split in the middle, they have both been sawn off at the top. The X-radiograph of the *Raising of Lazarus* testifies to an unusually eventful genesis, during which large parts of an earlier image – probably a wholly different depiction of the same scene with a radically different ordonnance – were scraped away (**fig. 1**). Josua Bruyn, who (in *Corpus* I pp. 307-08) was responsible for this reading of the painting's material history, summarized his daring conclusions as follows:

'The course of this painting's production seems to have been complicated by radical alterations, and one must therefore assume a longish process, probably stretching over the years 1630/31. [The present author prefers a dating of that process from 1631-'32.] Of the, roughly, three stages that can be distinguished by means of the X-ray photographs the second must have had a composition which in its left-hand half bore a striking likeness to that of the etching shown in **fig. 2**. Presumably this etching was started when the painting was in this second stage.

[...] The unusual appearance of the etching [with its black frame] could be explained if one looks on it as a graphic reproduction of the painting. The hypothesis that the painting in its second stage would have matched the etching in the right-hand half as well and perhaps even in an arched top section removed by Rembrandt cannot be checked against the X-ray photograph, since this is difficult to interpret in the right-hand half due partly to paint having been scraped away. It does allow one to conclude that the figures of Christ and Lazarus were given their present positions only in the third and final stage; as a result of this, the character of the composition of the painting changed radically vis-à-vis that of the etching as shown in **fig. 2** despite a number of motifs still shared by the two images.' (see in this context also note **42**)

Fig. 2. Rembrandt, *The raising of Lazarus*, *c.* 1632, etching, 36.6 x 25.8; B. 73.

49 Rembrandt, **The abduction of Proserpina**, *c.* 1631, panel 84.8 x 79.7 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 213; Br. 463; Bauch 99; Gerson 57; Br./Gerson 463; ***Corpus* I A 39**; Tümpel 96; ***Corpus* V pp. 174-175**; see also Golahny 1988; *Quest* pp. 79-123 esp. 103-106; Ovid *Metamorphoses* V 391 ff.
Inscription: none (the absence of a signature may be explained by the fact that the format has been drastically reduced)



Proserpina was the daughter of Ceres, goddess of agriculture. Because Venus, the goddess of love, was concerned that she would lose her power over the underworld if Pluto, the god of the underworld, should remain unmarried, she saw to it – by means of an arrow to the heart from Cupid's bow – that Pluto should fall in love with Proserpina. He abducted her while she and her nymphs, in the company of two other divine maidens, Diana and Minerva, were out picking flowers in the fields. There is a passage in the poem by the Roman Claudianus (*c.* 375-*c.* 404), which, as demonstrated in a penetrating analysis by Amy Golahny (Golahny 1988) not only influenced Rubens (**fig. 1**) but was indeed familiar to Rembrandt as well. The passage describes the scene depicted by both painters:

'Meanwhile Proserpina is borne away by the fleeing chariot / Her hair streaming in the wind, she beats on her arms and wails her lament, / she cries out to her companions nearby and to her mother afar, / and shrieks to the clouds in vain'

In its present state Rembrandt's *Abduction of Proserpina* can still be only partly appreciated. Much of the detail in the dark brown passages has been lost through subsequent darkening. Further, the present garish blue of the sky, a recently exposed overpainting – which had in turn been overpainted with a more subdued tone – largely undermines the pictorial force of the painting. In its original form, however, the painting must have been a revelation, at least for those of his contemporaries who had an understanding of Rembrandt's intentions in this work. Shortly after its completion the painting entered the collection of the Stadholder Frederik Hendrik.

Fig. 1. Engraving by P. Soutman after P.P. Rubens, *The abduction of Proserpina.*

The similarity between the print after Rubens (**fig. 1**) and Rembrandt's depiction of the same subject had not escaped Rembrandt specialists; nor had the differences in conception. But the similarities were usually classified as 'influence' and the differences under the heading 'style'. It had been noted that while Rubens made use of a formal language derived from classical examples Rembrandt, in his own version of the subject, had specifically not done so.

He stood diametrically opposed to Rubens because the main objective of his work was to move beyond classical antiquity, not thinking in terms of 'style' but striving above all for progress in the art of painting through an uncompromising search for an extreme *naturalness* (*Quest* pp. 105-108).

The first difference that strikes the eye between Rembrandt's treatment of the *Abduction of Proserpina* and Rubens' version is Proserpina's golden yellow cloak stretched under great tension. This was a stroke of genius on Rembrandt's part, to transgress in this way the rule of the pleasing variation in pleated, falling or streaming drapery, a rule obediently followed by Rubens. What makes Rembrandt's solution so brilliant is that the stretched cloak connects the group containing Pluto and Proserpina to the group of women, including the goddess Diana who tries with all her might to prevent Pluto from taking the struggling Proserpina with him to the underworld. With Rubens, despite the effect of strenuous movement in the scene, the figures are grouped as in a frieze, as separate figures, whereas Rembrandt has joined them at either end of a cloak stretched to its tearing point.

Where in the history of western painting up till then does one find female figures – including the goddess Diana – so extremely inelegantly dragged over the ground? Where does one find a woman thrashing and scratching so wildly and desperately as Proserpina?

50 Rembrandt, **The rape of Europa**, 1632, panel 62.2 x 77 cm. Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum. HdG 201; Br. 464; Bauch 100; Gerson 62; Br./Gerson 464; Tümpel 95; ***Corpus* II A 47**; ***Corpus* V pp. 194-195**.
Inscription: in light colour, on a brown stone to the right of the standing woman ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *van / Ryn.1632*›

This image refers to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* II, 870 ff.

> *'The royal virgin even dares to sit on the bull's back, not realizing whom she presses on, while the god, first from dry land and then from the shoreline, gradually slips his deceitful hooves into the waves. Then he goes further out and carries his prize over the mid-surface of the sea. She is terrified and looks back at the abandoned shore she has been stolen from and her right hand grips a horn, the other his back, her clothes fluttering, winding, behind her in the breeze.'*

It is usually assumed, and indeed it appears fairly obvious, that this painting should be regarded as an image from classical mythology. And equally obvious the same would seem to apply to *The abduction of Proserpina* **49** and the *Diana bathing with her nymphs with the stories of Actaeon and Callisto* **130**. But in the light of Rembrandt's explorations of the basic aspects of the art of painting, the *'Gronden'* (see *Corpus* V Chapters I and II), on the other hand, it was not surprising that he would pay extra attention to the landscape.

Up to 1630 Rembrandt included open air landscape as a rather simple background before which the relevant scene was enacted (Cf. Plates **9**, **10**, **39**, **41** and **42**). In the painting discussed here, as in **49** from *c.* 1631 and in **130** painted two years after the present painting, the landscape assumes an altogether greater significance. Now it is in all respects a richly varied setting in which the dramatic action takes place. When Karel van Mander wrote his chapter titled *On landscape* (see *Corpus* V pp. 81-88), the concept of landscape as an independent genre of painting did not yet exist; it only arose during the late 1620s. Van Mander and his contemporaries – and undoubtedly the early Rembrandt as well – used the term *Landtschap* to refer to an extensive, elaborated setting, usually with a deep vista as in the present painting. As Van Mander put it:

> '*It is advisable to know the story* (*storiken*: the history that you are going to situate in the landscape) *in advance – according to the Holy writ or the poets* (of classical mythology), *as it suits you – the better to adapt your landscape to it.'* (*Corpus* V p. 82).

One of the other '*Gronden*' to which Rembrandt has given extra attention in this painting, as in the other two landscapes with *storikens* (see above), was the convincing rendering of animals (including the fine group of cattle in the middle ground that has now become almost illegible through darkening of the paint).

51 Rembrandt, **An old woman reading, probably the prophetess Anna**, 1631, panel 59.8 x 47.7 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. HdG 316; Br. 69; Bauch 252; Gerson 27; Br./Gerson 69; ***Corpus* I A 37**; Tümpel 76; ***Corpus* V p. 173**; see also Tümpel 1967 no. 19; Tümpel 1971 p. 31.
Inscription: at the bottom left in dark grey ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *1631*›

This image relates to a text from the New Testament.

> **Luke 2: 36-37** 'Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity; and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day.'

The prophetess Anna was present when Mary, Joseph and the Child came to the Temple in Jerusalem for Mary's ritual purification. The Biblical text quoted here then continues:

> **Luke 2: 38** ' And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem.'

In relation to this scene from the New Testament, see also **16** and **47**.

The fact that J.G. van Vliet, undoubtedly in consultation with

Rembrandt, copied this painting in a print with the inscription <*RHL van Rijn inventor*> (**fig. 1**) suggests that Rembrandt, to quote Samuel van Hoogstraten (SvH p. 195) was concerned to '*publicize his art*' rather than merely producing an image of a biblical theme to be disseminated as such. If one asks oneself what Rembrandt could have considered of particular pictorial significance in this work, then perhaps the answer lies in the continuation of his efforts to explore the possibilities of reflected light, as discussed in **21** and **28**. The face of Anna is wholly in shadow and is only visible because of the light reflected from the pages of her book. For Karel van Mander things are visible because they reflect the light from some light source, such as sun or the light of a candle. But Rembrandt had in mind a much narrower concept of reflection, specifically in relation to the art of painting. In the words of his pupil Samuel van Hoogstraten:

Fig. 1. Etching by J.G. van Vliet after **51**

> *'Reflection is actually a rebounding of the light from all lit things, but in art we speak only of reflection when referring to the secondary illumination that falls in the shadow.'* (*Corpus* V pp. 703-706; see also Note **21**).

The present painting and its reproduction in print were daring demonstrations of Rembrandt's interest in this phenomenon.

The white lines along the folds of Anna's red cloak which immediately strike one are light underpaintings that were meant to be covered wholly or partly by the transparent red 'glaze' applied as the last layer of paint. This would have created the light red highlights along the folds that are essential to a convincing rendering of (red) velvet. This glaze over the grainy white paint has been partly worn away.

52 Rembrandt, **Christ on the Cross**, 1631, transferred from panel to canvas and subsequently adhered to panel, 99.9 x 72.6 cm. Le Mas d'Agenais, Église Saint-Vincent. HdG -; Br. -; Bauch 54; Gerson 56; Br./Gerson 543A; ***Corpus* I A 35**; Tümpel 44; ***Corpus* V p. 176, 185**; see also Bauch 1962a; Hours 1969; *R. & Lievens* p. 116.
Inscription: at the bottom on the shaft of the cross ‹*RHL* (in monogram) / *1631*›

The image is most likely based on:

> **Matthew 27: 45-46** 'Now from the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was darkness over all the land. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"'

Around 1800 a French family Duffour, originally from le Mas d'Agenais bought this painting at the sale of a private collection at Dunkirk. In 1805 a son, Xavier Duffour, donated it to the parishioners of Le Mas, a village in the department Lot-et-Garonne, where today it fulfils its function on the altar in the parish church. In 1850 it was reported in a local newspaper that the painting in the church of Saint-Vincent "Le Christ en Croix" appeared to be by Rembrandt. This news did not at once reach the art historical world. Only in 1962 did Kurt Bauch publish the existence of this painting in the art historical journal *Pantheon* (Bauch 1962a pp. 137-144), following the discovery of the *RHL* monogram and the dating 1631 when it was cleaned in the Louvre (Hours 1969).

The earliest known owner of the work was probably the Delft collector Valerius Röver (d. 1739) (Bredius 1910a p. 17).

The origin of the painting and its history prior to its purchase by Röver have given rise to various questions. It has been noted that in the same year, 1631, Jan Lievens painted a frontally depicted Christ on the Cross in darkness (**fig. 1**). Bauch thought it inconceivable that both paintings would not have been painted without knowledge of the print by P. Pontius after Rubens' *Christ on the Cross*, a print which also originated in 1631 (**fig. 2**). Rembrandt and Lievens were both following the example of Rubens in using the three-language inscription fixed above Christ's head, and in the way Christ was nailed to the cross with four nails. The question thus arose of whether the paintings by Rembrandt and Lievens were the result of a competition between them (and possibly with Rubens?). It is not inconceivable, as the two young Leiden painters had already engaged in such 'painting contests' (*Mystery* cat. 66).

There is another question connected to this, one that is raised by the fact that Rubens himself wrote the following words on a copy of the print by Pontius, now in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris: *Clamans voce magna Jesus ait: Pater in manus tuas, Luc. Cap. XXIII* ['In a loud voice Jesus cried: Father, into Your hands']. This directs attention to the fact that two versions are given in the New Testament of what Christ is supposed to have called out in the three hours of darkness while he was on the cross. According to Luke 23: 46 he cried: '*Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit*' – the text to which Rubens refers – and according to Matthew 27: 46 '*My God, My God why have You forsaken me*'. Christ's exalted expression in the print after Rubens appears to correspond better with the words in Luke. One has the impression that either Lievens has Jesus speak these same words from Luke, or that he has portrayed Christ after his death. The tormented facial expression of Rembrandt's Christ in the present painting, plus the fact that he shows Christ's mouth open, is perhaps an indication that when he painted his *Christ on the Cross* Rembrandt had in mind Christ's utterance as recorded by Matthew (or Mark 15: 34, where Jesus speaks the same words). Consequently the painting may be considered as a history piece rather than a devotional piece, as was proposed in *Corpus* I A 35.

Fig. 1. Jan Lievens , *Christ on the Cross*, 1631 canvas, 129 x 184 cm. Musée des Beaux-Arts, Nancy.

Fig. 2. Engraving by P. Pontius after Rubens, *Christ on the Cross*, 1631.

Another question is whether there is a connection between Rembrandt's *Christ on the Cross* and the seven paintings of the *Passion series* that he made for Frederik Hendrik. The painting has roughly the same measurements as the latter works and is also rounded above. To date, there have been different opinions on the relation of the present painting to the *Passion series*. Bauch (1962), and following him Gerson (1968), assumed that because of the rounded top and

the almost identical format the *Christ on the Cross* must be seen as having a close connection with the *Passion series*: a connection as close and as loose as that shown by the other seven paintings with each other. Brochhagen did not go quite as far as this, but mentioned the present painting as being the starting-point for the series, both as regards form and content, yet without being part of it (Brochhagen 1968 p. 38). Foucart (Foucart 1970/71 no. 170) rightly commented on the difference in the scale of the figure of Christ compared to the figures in the series, and thought that **52** should be regarded as a prelude to the series, albeit conceived independently of it. All authors are aware of the fact that there is no mention of this painting in connection with the *Passion series* in either Rembrandt's correspondence with Constantijn Huygens or in the inventory of Prince Frederik Hendrik's widow Amalia van Solms. It was remarked in *Corpus* I (p. 344) that, as a devotional picture the present painting has no place among a series of narrative scenes, however loosely connected they may be (see, however, above). On the other hand, Bauch's assertion – without supporting argument – that the painting could not have had a ritual function is unconvincing; indeed, in Rembrandt's *A Scholar near a window* from 1631 **85**, there is a remarkably similar picture above an altar.

In the present book I have reproduced the painting together with the *Passion series* (see p. 176) because there is a connection between the eight paintings that is hard to deny. I am inclined toward Ernst Brochhagen's standpoint, that the painting must have been the immediate cause for ordering the series.

53 Rembrandt, **The artist in oriental costume, with a dog at his feet**, 1631 (the dog added in late 1632 or early 1633), panel 66.5 x 52 cm. Paris, Musée du Petit Palais. HdG 350; Br. 16; Bauch 301; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 16 (a painting by one of Rembrandt's followers); ***Corpus* I A 40**; Tümpel 160; ***Corpus* IV pp. 182-183**.
Inscription: at the bottom right ‹*Rembrant . f* (followed by three dots) *1631*›

Rembrandt has depicted himself dressed as an oriental, with a dog sitting at his feet. But originally the painting looked different. This is clear when we compare a copy of the painting, this time without the dog (**fig. 2**), with an X-radiograph of the present painting (**fig. 1**).

Fig. 1. X-ray of **53**

Fig. 2. Isack Jouderville (?); Copy of **53**, panel 70.4 x 50.2 cm. Private collection.

The copy closely resembles this X-ray image. Apparently the dog was painted later. It is evident from the signature that this alteration must have occurred in the spring of 1633 at the latest. In this signature Rembrandt writes his name in full but still spelled with just a 't' and omitting the 'd'. He only signed this way from late 1632 to the spring of 1633 (see **69**). The date after the signature, 1631, apparently refers to the year of origin of the painting in its first form. The way the work in its first state is painted also indicates this earlier date. This is not the only case of Rembrandt antedating a self-portrait (see *Corpus* IV pp. 139-140).

Fig. 3. Reconstruction of the hypothetic companion-piece of **53**

The pendant of this painting, which has survived only in a reproduction (**fig. 3**), appears to show Rembrandt's future wife Saskia in oriental costume at the time Rembrandt and Saskia were betrothed, viz. 1633. Possibly that was the reason for adding the dog that year. The dog was the symbol of fidelity.

54 Rembrandt, **Minerva in her study**, *c.* 1631, panel 60.5 x 49 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 209; Br. 466; Bauch 253; Gerson 90; Br./Gerson 466; ***Corpus* I A 38**; Tümpel 102 (The attribution seems to me open to doubt); ***Corpus* V p. 174**; see also Berlin 1975 p. 347; Berlin 2006 no. 12.
Inscription: not seen. According to the older literature the vestiges of a monogram became apparent around 1880 just to the right of centre, under an old retouching (Bode 1881; Bode 1883 pp. 388-389).

See *Corpus* I A 38 for a discussion of the many uncertainties surrounding this poorly preserved painting, which, according to the X-radiograph, was painted over an unfinished history piece.

55 Rembrandt, **Bust of an old man with cap and gold chain**, *c.* 1631, panel 59.5 x 51.2 cm. Private collection. HdG 679; Br. 82; Bauch 131; Gerson 48; Br./Gerson 82; Tümpel -; ***Corpus* II addenda pp. 842-846 as A 40a**.
Inscription: on the left level with the shoulder ‹*RHL* (in monogram). *1631*›

See the Note to **56**.

* **56** Rembrandt, **A man wearing a gorget and plumed cap**, *c.* 1631, panel 66 x 50.8 cm. Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum. HdG 673; Br. 79; Bauch 130; Gerson 47; Br./Gerson 79; ***Corpus* I B 4**; Tümpel A 34 (as from the studio of Rembrandt).
Inscription: in the upper right corner above a vaguely visible monogram <*RHL*> an apparently much later hand has inscribed ‹*Rembrandt. / f* ..›

As far as is known, neither Rembrandt's first teacher, Jacob van Swanenburgh, nor his second, Pieter Lastman, painted portraits. The question is then whether Rembrandt ever engaged with this aspect of the art of painting during his time as an apprentice. If not, that might explain why in his first three years as an independent master in Leiden he never – as far as we know – painted a life-size human face apart from the remarkable study in front of the mirror in Indianapolis **19**, which I suspect was Rembrandt's first serious study for the rendering of human skin, considered to be the most difficult skill to master in the art of painting.

Perhaps it was Rembrandt's meeting with Hendrik Uylenburgh in June 1631 that changed Rembrandt's life so drastically in this regard (*Doc.* 1631/4). The meeting took place in Amsterdam in June 1631, probably in connection with the fact that Rembrandt had lent Uylenburgh a thousand guilders – presumably as an investment in the latter's ambitious business venture (*Uylenburgh* pp. 125-127). In the course of this meeting they could also have agreed that Rembrandt would take on the function of portrait painter in Uylenburgh's enterprise.

In that same year – we don't know exactly when, but probably in the latter rather than the earlier part of the year – Rembrandt for the first time began to concentrate on painting life-size bust- and half-length effigies of men (**46**, **55**, **56**, **57**, **58**). These works are usually referred to as *tronies*, an indication which does not necessarily indicate their actual function(s). Three of these are bust-length portraits of an old man, the same model placed in roughly the same pose (**47**, **55** and **56**). It seems remarkable in hindsight that the RRP, during work on *Corpus* I, had no idea what to do with two of them. They both ended up in the B category of 'Paintings Rembrandt's authorship of which cannot be positively either accepted or rejected': one was assigned to that category because it was roughly painted **46**, the other (the present painting) because it was so finely painted! In **55** the same model is again painted in the same pose, but this time with the character of the model's wrinkled skin suggested by a grainy *peinture*. The idea that Rembrandt was experimenting with life-size heads at this time is perhaps corroborated by the fact that under the present painting is hidden the life-size face of a young man (albeit upside down with respect to the eventual painting (**fig. 1**)).

Fig. 1. X-ray of **56**, turned upside down.

57 Rembrandt, **Bust of a young man wearing a plumed cap**, 1631 - *c.* 1635, panel 80.3 x 64.8 cm. Toledo, Museum of Art. HdG 577; Br. 143; Bauch 138; Gerson 52; Br./Gerson 143; ***Corpus* I A 41**; Tümpel A31 (as from Rembrandt's workshop); ***Corpus* II Corrigenda A 41 p. 847**.
Inscription: at the left, towards the bottom ‹*RHL* (in monogram). *1631*›

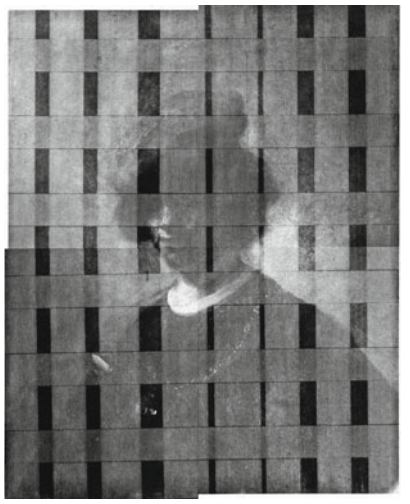


Fig. 1. X-ray of **57**

The function of this painting may well be consistent with the suggestion proposed in the Note to **56**.

The X-radiograph (**fig. 1**) reveals that there is another painting of a young man hidden under this painting. Although of the same kind as one sees in the surface image, almost everything in that underlying painting was changed at a subsequent stage: the originally lighter background was partly overpainted; the clothes round the neck were modified, and a smaller beret was replaced by the large beret with a splendidly painted feather, as the young man now wears.

The painting must have stood in the workshop for some time in more or less the form shown by the X-radiograph. One infers this from the existence of a painting with the same model, in the same lighting, and partly dressed in the same way as in the X-radiograph of the present painting (**fig. 2**).

Fig. 2. Copy after **57** in its first appearance visible in the X-radiograph of **57** (see fig. 1). Formerly Gates Collection.

The painting in its first form seems to be a predecessor of the so-called 'young man's *tronie*', paintings made over the course of Rembrandt's career but usually painted by his pupils, posing for each other in a kind of historicizing costume (see Note **97**). Rembrandt's pupils probably painted these young men's (and other) *tronies* as exercises with the anticipation of their future activity as occasional portrait painters. Rembrandt apparently did the same (see the argument concerning **56**).

In this case he continued elaborating on the painting for some time – as he also did with **53**, although for a different reason. It was suggested in *Corpus* II, p. 847, that the alteration/completion of the present painting may have occurred in the mid-1630s. That certainly remains a possibility, as the monogram and dating 1631 are situated in a place where apparently no later changes were introduced.

58 Rembrandt, **Half-figure of a man wearing a gorget and plumed hat**, *c.* 1631, panel 83.5 x 75.6 cm. Chicago, The Art Institute. HdG 675; Br. 81; Bauch 129; Gerson 46; Br./Gerson 81; ***Corpus* I A 42**; Tümpel 131.
Inscription: below left in the background <*RHL* (in monogram)>

Rembrandt probably painted this masterpiece (like **19**, **55**, **56**, **57**) in preparation for his career as a portrait painter. It demonstrates characteristics of his early Amsterdam portraits, but compared with them it has been realized with a remarkable freedom. As to the panel see Plate **58** and Note **87b**.

59 Rembrandt, **Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts**, 1631, mahogany panel 116 x 87 cm. New York, Frick Collection. HdG 670; Br. 145; Bauch 348; Gerson 53; Br./Gerson 145; ***Corpus* II A 43**; Tümpel 189; see also New York 2011 pp. 31-37; with regard to the biography of the sitter, see *Corpus* II A 43 and Van Eeghen 1977a p. 97.
Inscription: at the upper right ‹*RHL* (in monogram). *1631*›; at the top right corner of the paper held by the sitter <1631>

In Rembrandt's time it was customary that all contracts, rents and work agreements were concluded on two dates of the year, viz. 8 May (Feast of St Michael) and 1 November (All Saints Day). The fact that only two dated portraits by Rembrandt from 1631, this and the following painting **60**, have survived makes it likely that his collaboration with Hendrick Uylenburgh became effective on or immediately after 1 November of that year. From that date forward, he became the portrait painter and head of the relevant workshop in the firm Uylenburgh. In the following year, 1632, together with his assistants he painted at least 20 portraits and a considerable number of portrait-like *tronies* for other functions. One sees in these first two portraits from 1631 that he must have begun his career as a portrait painter with great ambitions. Both sitters are represented in meaningful action. Their hands are worked up in as fine a detail as their faces. These are two strikingly monumental and impressive works.

That is not to say that it was necessarily Rembrandt who determined the size of his portraits. The portrait of Nicolaes Ruts is painted on an exceptionally large and flawless, single piece of mahogany that would undoubtedly have been provided by the sitter himself, as may have been the rule rather than the exception for portraits in the 17th century (see *Corpus* II p. 91 note 3). Later on, when Rembrandt worked on mahogany panels it would seem that they were nearly always paintings that he made on his own initiative. In those cases the planks came from sugar packing cases that usually bore the traces of their previous use, for instance, **142**, **158**, **192**, **193**.

Nicolaes Ruts (or Rutgers) came from the Cologne area (where he was born in 1573). He fled to Amsterdam in 1614, whence he conducted trade with Russia. He died seven years after Rembrandt had painted this masterly portrait. There are no indications of any pendant belonging with this painting.

60 Rembrandt, **Portrait of a man at a writing-desk, possibly Jacob Bruyningh**, 1631, canvas 104.4 x 36.14 cm. St Petersburg, Hermitage. HdG 775; Br. 146; Bauch 349; Gerson 54; Br./Gerson 146; ***Corpus* II A 44**; Tümpel 191; see also *Soviet Museums* no. 3.
Inscription: at the bottom edge, about 15 cm from the right hand side ‹*RHL* (in monogram)*: 1631*›

For a stylistic and iconographic analysis of this painting by Josua Bruyn, see *Corpus* II A 44.

Jaap van der Veen has suggested that the sitter could perhaps be Jacob Bruyningh, given his profession and the fact that Rembrandt had obtained several commissions from his circle. Jacob Bruyningh (1606-1655) was a professional notary who was appointed Amsterdam Town Secretary in 1634. In his estate was listed 'een conterfeytsel van de overledene Bruyningh f 72:-:-', ['a portrait of the deceased Bruyningh 72 guilders'] – a remarkably high valuation for a portrait, one that not many portraitists fetched at that time. (A valuation should not be equated with the original price that was paid for a work of art. In the case of portraits the evaluation was usually much lower.

* **61** Rembrandt, **Portrait of a couple in an interior**, 1632, canvas 131.5 x 109 cm. Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (stolen). HdG 930; Br. 405; Bauch 531; Gerson 130; Br./Gerson 405; ***Corpus* II C 67** (as a work by a member of Rembrandt's workshop, trained elsewhere); Tümpel A117 (as from Rembrandt's workshop); see also Van Eeghen 1977b pp. 68-69.

Fig. 1. X-ray of **61** (detail). The light vertical stripes on the image are an artefact of the process of X-irradiating the painting.

Fig. 2. Detail of 61

Fig. 3. Copy of 53 *c*. 1631/32 before the dog was added.

Fig. 4. Rembrandt, *Man in a short cloak*, *c*. 1630/31. Red chalk (Ben. 45). St Petersburg, The Hermitage Museum.

Fig. 5. Rembrandt, *A Persian*, etching, 1632 (B.152).

Inscription: the signature now visible ‹*Rembrandt.f* . (followed by an oblique stroke and a pair of dots) . *1633.*› is on a relatively recently applied paint layer. Both signature and paint layer appeared dark under the UV lamp. This inscription is in a very dark grey, executed with thin uncertain strokes. The two members of the RRP who studied the painting and the associated documentation in 1970 noted the following: "the suspicion that the later layer of paint hides another signature is confirmed by an infrared photograph, in which one can see broad traces of an *R* followed at some distance by traces of the word *van* and then the clearly apparent name *Ryn*. This signature, which can be filled out to read *RHL* (in monogram) *van Rijn*, is written rhythmically and fluently with a broad brush, and resembles authentic Rembrandt signatures from 1632." The IR photograph published in *Corpus* II, p. 736, however, shows only very faint traces of the underlying signature described above. It would seem that the authors of that report had access to better images on the spot.

In *Corpus* II C 67 this painting was disattributed from Rembrandt and considered to be by a member of Rembrandt's workshop trained elsewhere. The argument leading to this verdict, however, was mainly based on a comparison of the painting with works by Rembrandt from the period between the end of 1632 and 1642. As mentioned above, under the currently visible signature, which is evidently not autograph, lies a <RHL van Rijn> signature, indicating that the painting must have originated in approximately the first *c*. ten months of 1632. (From the end of 1632 through to early 1633 Rembrandt signed his paintings <Rembrant> (see Glossary: Signature).

There are sufficient indications (see *Corpus* II C 67) to assume that the painting was originally considerably larger on the left and that one or more family members may have been portrayed on the missing part. In this context it should also be pointed out that in the X-ray image (**fig. 1**), next to the woman, the figure of a small boy can be discerned, no doubt also a member of the family. He appears to hold in his raised hand a small whip or stick. In addition, where the chair is seen in the surface image (possibly a later addition by another hand) can be seen the reserves of two animals – two dogs or a dog and a cat – apparently fighting. The absence of any clear traces of radio-absorbent details in either of these animals suggests that they were not finished. The nature of the overall contours of the reserved animals – and also those of the man and the woman – conforms to Rembrandt's way of working as revealed by the X-radiographs of his paintings. (For the iconographic interpretation of the sketched animals, see *Corpus* II C 67 p. 735 and note 1 of that entry.)

In the *Corpus* II entry, the present painting is mainly compared with later works by Rembrandt, with life-size figures, such as the *Anatomy lesson* from late 1632 **76**, the *Shipbuilder* of 1633 **89** and even with the *Nightwatch* of 1642 **190**. But given the relatively early dating of this painting, for an understanding of its stylistic characteristics, a better comparison would have been with works of the same or an earlier period and with works of a scale more comparable to the figures in the present painting. For example, with regard to the standing man who is portrayed almost frontally, executed with a rich play of undulating contours, a more appropriate comparison would have been with Rembrandt's self-portrait from 1631 in the Petit Palais (before the dog was added) **53** (**fig. 3**). As well as a similar approach to contour, one also sees in the latter painting a row of buttons along part of that contour (which the author of the entry on the present painting in *Corpus* II remarked as unusual). There is also a similar emphasis on the rather bulging, undulating contours in the red chalk drawing from *c*. 1631, (Ben. 45) in the Hermitage (**fig. 4**), and in the silhouetted figure, also posing frontally, in the etching *The Persian* from 1632 (B. 152) (**fig. 5**). When one takes into consideration these observations, the painting's general pictorial and stylistic features and the observed presence of an earlier applied *RHL van Rijn* signature, one already has sufficient reason to consider a possible re-attribution of the painting to Rembrandt.

It would take us too far in the present context to rehearse all the arguments adduced in *Corpus* II C 67 against an attribution to Rembrandt and discuss their validity one by one. But one specific point deserves comment: the striking connection between the placing and attitude of the sitting woman and those of the woman in the pendant portraits **62a/b**. It is highly probable that the woman in **62b**, which should be considered as largely a workshop product, is based on the woman in the present painting. This idea gains support from the placing of the eyes in the two paintings. In **62b**, the woman's eyes are perspectively placed such that they indicate a higher viewpoint than one would expect, whereas in the present painting their placing is entirely logical. The strong likelihood that the posture of the woman in the present painting served as a model for the workshop piece **62b**, is certainly consistent with the re-attribution of the present painting to Rembrandt (see also *Corpus* V p. 313).

The listing of *A portrait of Jan Pietersz Bruijningh and his wife deceased by Rembrant* in the inventory of Jan Pietersz Bruyningh drawn up on 3 January 1648 (*Doc.* 1648/1) has given rise to the suspicion that the work in question might be the present painting. Jan Pietersz Bruyningh (1599-1646) was a cloth merchant and art lover in Amsterdam. His wife was Hillegont Pieters Moutmaker (1599-1640). They were Mennonites. When the woman died in 1640 she was survived by two daughters – Trijntje, who must have been about seven years old in 1632, and Aeltje, who was then about four. If the painting is indeed a portrait of the married couple Bruyningh-Moutmaker, it is possible that these daughters could have stood on the canvas excised from the left side. But then it would be difficult to understand why they should have been removed from a putative family portrait before 1648, given that Trijntje was still alive in 1649 (which we know from a document that records her baptism).

In short, it is unlikely that the present painting is the same double portrait listed in the inventory of Jan Pietersz Bruyingh. In the commentary in *Doc*. 1648/1 on the relevant document, a similar conclusion was reached although on the basis of a completely different argument: 'the ornamental lace sleeves [of the woman] militate against the modesty required by the Mennonite faith of the Bruyningh-Moutmaker couple.'

62a Rembrandt, **Portrait of a man** (companion piece to **62b**), *c.* 1632, walnut panel 90.8 x 68.5 cm. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum. HdG 785; Br. 163; Bauch 367; Gerson 153; Br./Gerson 163; ***Corpus* II A 45**; Tümpel 198.
Inscription: none

62b Rembrandt and (mainly) workshop, **Portrait of a woman** (companion piece to **62a**), *c.* 1632, walnut panel 90 x 68 cm. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum. HdG 883; Br. 332; Bauch 470; Gerson 154; Br./Gerson 332; ***Corpus* II C 80**; Tümpel 233.
Inscription: none

The sitters in these two paintings have not (so far) been identified.

It is remarkable that neither work is signed. On the basis of a comparison of the execution of the man's portrait with **60** we can be certain that the two paintings originated in Rembrandt's studio. It is also certain that the woman's portrait is the pendant of the man's portrait: both are painted on identical-size walnut panels – a type of support seldom found with 17th-century Dutch paintings. The execution of the face, the hands and the clothes in **62b** suggests that another hand was involved in the production of the woman's portrait. Her posture must have been based on that of the woman in **61** (see also *Corpus* V p. 313).

* **63a** Rembrandt, **Portrait of a man** (companion piece to **63b**), 1632, canvas 112 x 89 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 624; Br. 167; Bauch 360; Gerson 120; Br./Gerson 167; ***Corpus* II C 68;** Tümpel A81 (as studio of Rembrandt); ***Corpus* V pp. 113-114**; see also Grijzenhout 2007; Liedtke 2007 pp. 568-583.
Inscription: in the background on the right ‹*RHL* (in monogram). *van Rijn / 1632*›

* **63b** Rembrandt and (mainly) workshop, **Portrait of a woman** (companion piece to **63a**), 1632, canvas 112.5 x 88.8 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 625; Br. 331; Bauch 459; Gerson 121; Br./Gerson 331 (as painted by another artist); ***Corpus* II C 69**; Tümpel A103 (as studio of Rembrandt); see also Liedtke 2007 pp. 583-584.
Inscription: in the background on the right ‹*RHL* (in monogram, probably followed by a high-set dot) *van Rijn / 1632*›

In recent decades there was fierce controversy over the question of whether or not the two paintings discussed in this note, usually referred to as 'the Beresteyn portraits', should be attributed to Rembrandt. Although a general consensus has since been reached, certain issues at the heart of that discussion need to be revisited here – partly because the major role played by the RRP in that controversy was not always a fortunate one – but mainly because ideas asserted at different stages by the various parties need to be corrected.

It was not that the RRP members were the first to have problems with the attribution of the paintings to Rembrandt; Gerson (Br./Gerson 331) and others had already expressed serious doubts over the authenticity of the portrait of the woman. In *Corpus* II both paintings were included in the C category of 'Paintings whose authorship by Rembrandt cannot be accepted'. The name Isack Jouderville, Rembrandt's moderately gifted Leiden pupil, was frequently mentioned within the RRP as the possible author of (one of) the two paintings.

This putative attribution was indirectly a consequence of my own research on Jouderville's life and my associated attempts to reconstruct his early oeuvre (Van de Wetering 1983; *Corpus* II pp. 76-87). Jouderville's younger years are better documented than those of any other of Rembrandt's pupils. My research was not directly concerned with questions of attribution but rather to investigate the many archival documents, some unpublished, over this Leiden orphan for possible insights into the apprenticeship years of Rembrandt's pupils. In the process I came across indirect, but strong evidence that in 1631 the 18- or 19-year-old Jouderville had followed his teacher Rembrandt to Amsterdam. It can be taken as certain that he remained in Amsterdam from 1631 till early in 1636, with a *pied-à-terre* in Leiden in order not to lose certain rights as a citizen of Leiden (see *Corpus* II pp. 78-82).

In reconstructing Jouderville's oeuvre, I thought to see a clear transition between paintings that originated under the influence of the Leiden Rembrandt and those that gave the impression of having been produced under Rembrandt's tutelage in Amsterdam. During the work on *Corpus* II I had mooted the possibility that 'Mrs. Beresteyn' could have been partly painted by Isack Jouderville. This was still at the time when doubting the authenticity of a Rembrandt was only tolerated if one could present an alternative attribution. It may therefore have been this fixation on alternative attributions that led Bruyn to add to my own statement (without my assent) in *Corpus* II p. 87, the following:

> 'Bearing in mind that the male companion piece of the painting seems to be from the same hand as the female portrait, even that painting, too, might be investigated with the idea of a possible Jouderville attribution'.

Later, to my regret, Bruyn emphatically maintained the attribution of both paintings to Jouderville.

The discussion was further complicated by the fact that art historians such as Walter Liedtke and Christopher Brown found it hard to believe that Rembrandt could have had a workshop with collaborators immediately on his arrival in Amsterdam, and therefore argued that he could not have had one or more advanced pupils/assistants involved in the production of commissioned portraits during the early 1630s.

The most significant argument advanced by the RRP, that there *was* such a workshop, was the fact that there are many Rembrandtesque portraits dated 1632 and 1633 which on stylistic grounds are difficult to attribute to Rembrandt (see *Corpus* II C 57, 58, 59, 77, 79, 81, 82) This was seen in turn by others as a circular argument: these disattributed paintings, e.g. the Pellicorne portraits **77a/b**, should indeed be attributed to Rembrandt, these art historians argued, precisely because such works originated in 1632 and because they manifested characteristics of Rembrandt's personal style (for example, see Liedtke 1996).

What was thus at stake in this discussion was, firstly, the issue of the *criteria* used when the RRP disattributed paintings on the basis of connoisseurship and quality criteria, and secondly the question of the existence of a workshop with more painters under Rembrandt's leadership, painters who may have been involved in the production of portraits and so-called *tronies*.

Looking back on the gradual development of this often fierce debate one sees the warring parties gradually coming closer to each

other and eventually arriving at a consensus: that the man's portrait was wholly or at least largely by Rembrandt and that an assistant must have been involved in the case of the woman; and at the same time the acceptance that in 1632 there was already a Rembrandt workshop (Liedtke 2004).

Under the guild system at the time of Rembrandt's collaboration with Uylenburgh, the painters' workshops were manned by an often changing population of assistants who worked in the style of the master. This was the normal state of affairs (*Corpus* V Chapter III).

For a discussion of the possible identity of the couple portrayed in the 'Beresteyn' paintings, see Liedtke 2007 pp. 568-575, where he gives a plausible explanation for the way these two portraits differ in their relatively formal stiffness from the many much more animated sitters in Rembrandt's other portraits from this period. His attractive hypothesis is that these portraits were intended to fit into an already existing 'dynastic ensemble' of ancestral and family portraits.

There is an interesting detail in the woman's portrait, viz. the woman's left hand, which, given the exceptionally high quality of its execution, leads one to suspect that it must be an intervention by Rembrandt himself. It is useful to recall in this context that, in what was one of the very first paintings Rembrandt produced in the Uylenburgh firm, viz. the portrait of Nicolaes Ruts **59**, he painted the sitter's right hand with the back of the hand parallel to the picture plane. That may seem an easy solution, but in fact it is extremely difficult to give a hand thus shown a convincing plasticity and anatomical quality. He seems to have done the same with the left hand of Mrs. Beresteyn – to brilliant effect – after the hand had initially been painted hanging lower down. Neutron radiographic investigation of the painting showed that, with an eye to this intervention, Rembrandt himself may have added a small table on which her hand could now rest in the corrected position (**fig. 1**).

Fig. 1. Neutron activation autoradiograph of **63b**

64a Rembrandt, **Portrait of a man trimming his quill** (companion piece to **64b**), 1632, canvas 101.5 x 81.5 cm. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 635; Br. 164; Bauch 351; Gerson 111; Br./Gerson 164; ***Corpus* II A 54**; Tümpel 197; see also Kassel 2006 no. 19.
Inscription: on the sheet of paper at the right of the table ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *van Rijn 1632*›

64b Rembrandt (and workshop?), **Portrait of a woman seated** (companion piece to **64a**), 1632, canvas 92 x 71 cm. Vienna, Gemäldegalerie der Akademie der bildenden Künste. HdG 884; Br. 330; Bauch 460; Gerson 128; Br./Gerson 330; ***Corpus* II A 55**; Tümpel 229; see also Vienna 1992 p. 319 ff; Kassel 2006 p. 165.
Inscription: to the right of the shoulder in a grey brown lighter than the background ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *van Rijn / 1632*›

These two paintings hang in different locations. The man's portrait came into the possession of the Elector of Kassel in 1750, while the woman, which came into the possession of Count Lamberg Spitzenstein in Vienna in 1798, was donated in 1821 to the Akademie der bildenden Künste in Vienna. It had already been suggested by Valentiner and others that perhaps the two paintings belonged together, even though they differ in format. Investigation by the RRP of the canvas support, distinguishable in the X-radiographs, confirmed that the paintings do indeed belong together (see *Corpus* II pp. 26 and 31) and that one may therefore speculate that they originally hung together as pendants. Investigation of the cusping in the linen on which the woman is painted clearly shows that strips have been cut from all four sides, further enhancing the probability that the two paintings were pendants.

Against this hypothesis of a pendant pair, the art historian Trnek argued that in his pendants Rembrandt placed his figures against a background such as to give the beholder the impression that the two sitters share the same space. Consequently she claimed, it is scarcely conceivable that Rembrandt would have placed a piece of furniture – in this case a table at which the man sits writing (breaking off to sharpen his pen) – between the two spouses (Vienna 1992 p. 319 ff). However, her argument is open to question. The assumption that the backgrounds in Rembrandt's pendants constitute a continuous space is dubious, if only because the backgrounds of his pendants never seamlessly connect either tonally or in terms of lighting (compare **62a/b**, **63a/b**, **67/68**, **87a/b**, **88a/b**, etc.). In the case of full length pendant portraits **120a/b**, **221a/b**, it is abundantly clear that Trnek's hypothesis is untenable, if only because in both pairs of paintings the floors are incompatible (and in the case of **221a/b**, the furnitures too).

The man was previously identified as the writing-master Lieven Coppenol, of whom Rembrandt made two etched portraits (B. 282 and 283; see also **260**). This identification, proposed as early as the 18th century, was rejected by Bode on the basis of the physiognomy. And in any case, if the present two paintings were indeed pendants the identification of the man as Coppenol becomes impossible, as Coppenol's wife was much older than himself.

65a G. van Honthorst, **Portrait of Prince Frederik Hendrik of Orange** (companion piece to **65b**), 1631, canvas 77 x 60 cm. The Hague, Huis ten Bosch (Dutch Royal Collection).

65b Rembrandt, **Portrait of Amalia van Solms** (companion piece to **65a**), 1632, canvas 69.5 x 54.5 cm. Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André. HdG 612; Br. 99; Bauch 456; Gerson 112; Br./Gerson 99; ***Corpus* II A 61**; Tümpel 228.
Inscription: at the left close to the bottom ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *van Ryn / 1632*›

When the restorer Lutzen Kuiper (at the time still at the Mauritshuis, later at the Rijksmuseum) restored the woman's portrait, thought by Bredius to be a portrait of Saskia, he found that the figure was contained in an illusionistic painted frame, a semi-sculpted oval with rollwork at top and bottom. The relation of the paint-

ing to a portrait of Frederik Hendrik by Gerard van Honthorst in the Royal collection, similarly *en profil* but turned to the right, was evident, since that portrait was surrounded by a similar illusionistic frame. There can be no doubt that the two paintings must have been painted as pendants, and that the woman portrayed was therefore Amalia van Solms. The canvas on which she is painted had evidently been reduced all round. Rembrandt's painting was later replaced by another portrait of Amalia van Solms of the same size and in a similar painted frame, this time also painted by Honthorst. This would explain why the present painting began its odyssey through various collections as early as the 18th century, or even earlier, eventually finishing up in the Paris Musée Jacquemart-André.

66 Rembrandt,
Self-portrait of the artist as a burger. 1632, panel 64.4 x 47.6 cm. Glasgow, Burrell Collection. HdG 573; Br. 17; Bauch 302; Gerson 99; Br./Gerson 17; ***Corpus* II A 58**; Tümpel 161; ***Corpus* IV pp. 199-202**; see also Bascom 1991.
Inscription: in the right background ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *van Ryn / 1632*›

On the group of Rembrandt's self-portraits in fashionable attire painted, etched and drawn in combination with etching from 1631-'33/34 (see *Corpus* IV pp. 4, 139-140, 189, 195, 199-202; *Corpus* IV Addendum I).

67 Rembrandt, **Portrait of Maurits Huygens**, 1632, panel 31.1 x 24.5 cm. Hamburg, Kunsthalle. HdG 654; Br. 161; Bauch 352; Gerson 104; Br./Gerson 161; ***Corpus* II A 57**; Tümpel 193; see also *M/W* cat. 11.
Inscription: at the bottom right in the dark part of the background ‹*RH* (in monogram). *van Rij / 1632*›; the final letter of *Rijn* is missing as a result of a trimming of the panel.

68 Rembrandt, **Portrait of Jacques de Gheyn III**, 1632, panel 29.9 x 24.9 cm. London, Dulwich Picture Gallery. HdG 745; Br. 162; Bauch 353; Gerson 105; Br./Gerson 162; ***Corpus* II A 56**; Tümpel 194; see also *M/W* cat. 12; Bl. cat. 8.
Inscription: in the left upper corner ‹*RH* (in monogram) *van Ryn / 1632*›

Maurits Huygens (1595-1642) was the elder brother of Constantijn Huygens. As secretary to the Council of State, he was more highly regarded in the world of politics and administration than his brother. Like Constantijn, he must have been a close friend of the young Jacques de Gheyn III (1596-1641) (see also **26**). The two portraits discussed here may be seen as proof of that friendship.

The two paintings are shown here as pendants and they undoubtedly belong in some sense with each other – if only because they have the same remarkably small format and originated in the same year. But unlike other paintings presented as pendants in this book, originally they may not have been intended to hang together. In other pendant pairs, the figures as a rule are both placed in light from the same direction, whereas in these two small portraits the light comes from almost opposite directions. Moreover, we know that they were not hung together after they were painted. One might then suppose that these good friends owned each other's portrait; but in fact Maurits Huygens kept his portrait in The Hague while Jacques de Gheyn took his with him to Utrecht, where he would live from 1634 until his death in 1641. We know this because Jacques de Gheyn bequeathed his portrait to Maurits Huygens in his will, drawn up in 1641. Only then did the two paintings become pendants, for Maurits wrote on the reverse side of the portrait of Jacques an inscription which is only partly legible – 'JACOBUS GEINIUS IUN/H...NI IPSIUS/EFFIGIE[M]/EXTREMUM MUNUS MORIENTIS/R/...MO.I E.STE.UN.HABET ISTA SECUNDUM HEU:', and the last line as: 'MORIENTE. NUNC HABET ISTA SECUNDUM HEU'. A tentative translation would read: 'Jacques de Gheyn the Younger/[bequeathed] his own/portrait/[to Huygens: HUYGENIO?] as a last duty when he died./He may rest/...now this [portrait] has its companion-piece [meaning the *Portrait of Maurits Huygens*, **67**] alas.'

☆ **69** Rembrandt, **Self-portrait**, 1632, panel 21.8 x 16.3 cm. Whereabouts unknown. HdG -; Br. -; Bauch -; Gerson -; Br./Gerson -; Tümpel -; ***Corpus* IV pp. 199-206 Addenda p. 609 et seq.**; first published in the dust-jacket of the hardcover edition of *Painter at Work* Amsterdam 1997.
Inscription: on the right background in the wet paint ‹*Rembrant. f* (three dots) / *1632*›

The following account is the story of a discovery with gradually emerging facts and insights. The RRP's first confrontation with this painting in 1977 was in the form of photographs. However, although it had never been published in this version, the existence of the painting had not been entirely unknown, as a copy had already been reproduced by Bredius in 1935 as no. 157 (**fig. 3**). But when the present version was bought for a modest price by the Paris art dealer J. D. Leegenhoek at Sotheby's in 1970, its disfigured condition prevented the painting being recognized as an authentic Rembrandt (**fig. 1**), even though it was seen at the time by several art historians.

The overwhelming opinion within the RRP following that first confrontation was also that the present painting could not be a work by Rembrandt. It was judged rather to be a later hybrid product in which the costume harked back to works from *c.* 1632 and the head was based on later self-portraits. However, when Peter Klein compared the dendrochronological data referring to oak panels with paintings by Rembrandt and his school, he discovered that the panel on which it was painted came from the same tree as the panel used for one of Rembrandt's best-documented works, the (also small, though not as small) portrait of Maurits Huygens **67** which also bears the date 1632.

Klein's report led to a reassessment of the painting. Investigation of the X-radiograph (**fig. 2**) showed a genesis typical of an original invention: in particular the differences in the contours of the (originally larger) collar and the mantle were seen to be significant in this

regard. The dark reserve for the figure left in the radio-absorbent light parts of the background – which, as was usual in the seventeenth century, had been finished first. That reserve differed significantly from the final shape of Rembrandt's torso (shown by the contours of the mantle). These differences demonstrated liberties in the execution of the painting that are incompatible with the work of a copyist. It had to be a prototype which, moreover, betrayed a genesis characteristic of Rembrandt's way of working: he continually changed collars, contours, etc. when painting self-portraits and other portraits. (The hat and the conspicuously small, awkwardly placed hand in the visible surface image of (**fig. 1**) almost at once raised the suspicion that these were the products of later interventions.)

Fig. 1. **69** with overpainted hat and hand.

Fig. 2. X-ray of **69**

Fig. 3. Copy of **69** made after the hat was adapted to more recent fashion (see fig. 1).

Thanks to dendrochronology and X-radiography we now knew that 1. the painting must have originated in Rembrandt's studio; 2. that it was not a copy, and 3. that the characteristics of its genesis were remarkably close to those of authentic works by Rembrandt.

There remained the question of the signature. A signature is usually seen as an indication of the authenticity of a painting and at the time of our first confrontation with the painting, many so-called 'Rembrandts' were suspected of bearing false signatures. At first sight the signature seemed particularly suspicious (**fig. 4**). Signatures from 1632 usually read *RHL* [in monogram] *van Rijn*, whereas this one gave Rembrandt's full (first) name. A second anomaly was that Rembrandt's name in this signature ended with a *t* rather than the usual *dt*. Eventually, however, both features would turn out to be strong arguments in favour of the authenticity of the painting – all the more since the signature was found to be applied to (and in) the wet paint of the background. The X-ray showed indentations where the brush used to write the signature had pushed into the wet paint of the background (**fig. 5**). This was clearly a very strong indication that the painter had applied this signature himself.

Fig. 4. Detail with signature placed in the wet paint of the backgroud.

Fig. 5. Detail of the X-ray corresponding with fig. 4 showing the indentations of the brush into the wet paint while applying the signature.

This signature demanded an explanation: in the first place, the unusual orthography of the name with a *t* instead of *dt*. Rembrandt did not always write his name with dt. In signatures on documents from the 1620s he writes his first name with a *t*. The last known signature on a document written in this way is from 1629. No further document with his signature has been preserved from before 1634. The first document from 1634 with Rembrandt's signature is with *dt*. Apparently somewhere between 1629 and 1634 Rembrandt must have changed the spelling of his first name. In his etchings and paintings we can follow that process more precisely. Most signatures of 1632 are *RHL*-monograms with the addition *van Rijn*. Then there is one etching (B. 38) with the inscription *Rembrant van Rijn*, which must be seen as a transitional stage to the use of just *Rembrant*. The latter type of signature is found on some paintings with the date 1632 (including the *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Tulp* **76** and with some other paintings with the date 1633, among which the *Christ in the Storm* **106**. As most paintings and etchings bearing the date 1633 are signed *Rembrandt*, apparently the painter must have decided later that year to change the spelling of his first name from Rembran*t* to Rembran*dt*. The fact mentioned above that only a few paintings from 1632 bear the Rembran*t* signature, on the other hand, is an indication that it was not until late in 1632 that the painter apparently decided to abandon the use of the *RHL van Rijn* signature. Apart from obviously false Rembran*t* inscriptions found on Rembrandtesque works from all periods, the Rembran*t* signature was apparently used by Rembrandt himself for only a very short time, in the winter of 1632/33.

We could therefore be sure that the present painting stemmed from Rembrandt's studio. The rarity of a Rembran*t* signature (inscribed in the wet paint) in fact added to the likelihood of its authenticity. The conviction was shared by handwriting experts from the Forensic Laboratory of the Dutch Ministery of Justice, who recognized so many familiar features in this signature that they considered it autograph. One now had converging arguments: the specific genesis of this self-portrait and the signature, all the evidence pointing toward Rembrandt's authorship.

Then there was the costume: the small cluster of self-portraits in formal contemporary dress are all from between 1631 and 1633. The restriction of this type of costume in Rembrandt's self-portraits to a specific brief period which overlaps that of the 'unusual' signature added to the likelihood of the painting being an autograph work.

If one takes each of the above arguments on their own, they are open to dispute, but when taken in conjunction they reinforce each other in such a way that the evidence amounts to what, in the field of art history, comes closest to actual proof (see the discussion of the Bayesian approach on p. 65). It should be added that this accumulation of converging arguments renders it unnecessary to employ the type of argument on which connoisseurship must always rely – arguments based on opinions regarding the style and the quality of a painting.

There were, however, two passages in the painting whose puzzling quality had strongly contributed to the negative verdict on the painting that had been held up to 1997: the hand and the hat. In *Corpus* IV pp. 202-204, the reasons were explained for the decision to remove both those parts of the surface painting (as they had been found in 1970) in favour of the underlying (remains of) the original hat and hand/cuff (see Plate **69**).

What then could have been the function of this little painting? There must have been a market for self-portraits of the well-known and highly promising young Rembrandt (see *Corpus* V pp. 132-144). When dealing with **31**-**33** and **36a** it became clear that art-lovers were keen to possess such small self-portraits.

70 Rembrandt, **Portrait of Joris de Caullery**, 1632, canvas on panel 102.5 x 83.8 cm. San Francisco, Fine Arts Museum. HdG 633; Br. 170; Bauch 359; Gerson 124; Br./Gerson 170**;** ***Corpus*** **II A 53**; Tümpel 196.
Inscription: in the background on the right ‹*RHL* (in monogram). *van Ryn / 1632*›

Fig. 1. Detail of **70**

In the first three volumes of *A Corpus*, the paintings are without exception *described* in accurate detail – sometimes to the puzzlement of readers, since, after all, an excellent black-and-white photograph of the painting was reproduced at the beginning of the entry in which, apart from colour, the details are thoroughly legible. But for the authors of the RRP this process of describing proved to be a fruitful discipline through which our attention was drawn to details and characteristics of the painting concerned that would often turn out to be important in the course of further analysis. In the case of the present painting, a patient description (reproduced here from *Corpus* II) is necessary in order to understand and interpret the dress (in particular) and other objects in the painting:

> 'The (standing) sitter is holding a (partly visible) firearm of the type known in the 17th century as a *caliver* (a firearm smaller than a musket); the barrel, wooden stock and ramrod (fitted into a metal sleeve) can be clearly made out to the left of his hand, while to the right there is the projection where the stock becomes the butt. The man's accoutrements, in particular the shiny bandolier from which a large cavalry sword with a cross-hilt hangs on his left hip, marks him out as an officer. Over a velvet doublet, whose purplish-grey sleeves are alone visible, he wears a leather jerkin or buffcoat, intended to be worn under a set of armour although he is wearing only the gorget. (The lacing at the front serves to hold the buffcoat closed, while the strings at the shoulder are used to attach the arm or shoulder-pieces of the cuirass.)'

The elongated object the man holds in his right hand (identified above as a firearm) has given rise to much confusion in the past, because in a 17th-century document tentatively related to the present painting (*Doc.* 1654/9) it is referred to as a *'roer'*, which, given the fact that the sitter was in the Dutch navy – a soldier on a man-of-war – led to the misunderstanding that it was a ship's tiller. There can be no doubt, however, that it is a small type of musket, which at that time was also known as a *roer*.

Another aspect of the painting which at first sight seems remarkable is the lighting of the figure, described in *Corpus* II as follows:

> 'From high up on the left light falls on the sitter's face, his right shoulder, the adjoining upper part of his right arm and chest and the upper part of the caliver; the other parts of his body and the lower parts of the caliver remain in shadow. At the bottom right-hand corner a shadow of the figure is cast on a sparsely-lit wall that serves as the background.'

This was a way of lighting a figure that Rembrandt first used in his self-portrait in the Isabella Gardner Museum **29**. It is seen at its most impressive in the *Man in oriental dress* in New York **84** from 1632, the same year in which the present portrait was painted.

71 Rembrandt, **Portrait of a young man**, 1632, panel 63 x 46 cm. Aachen, Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum. HdG 783; Br. 155; Bauch 355; Gerson 108; Br./Gerson 155; ***Corpus*** **II A 60**; Tümpel A78 (as work from Rembrandt's workshop).
Inscription: in the right background ‹*RHL* (in monogram). *van Ryn / 1632*›

Compared with most of Rembrandt's young man's portraits this one is unusual in that the sitter is turned slightly to the left, which rules out the likelihood that the present painting had a woman's portrait as a pendant. From this one infers that the young man was a bachelor when Rembrandt painted him (see also **115**). It has been suggested that the painting could be a portrait of René Descartes, who was thirty-six in 1632. This is highly unlikely, however: neither the sitter's features nor his apparent age sufficiently correspond to the French philosopher's. For similar (and other) reasons, we can be certain that it is not a portrait of Constantijn Huygens, another suggestion.

It is conceivable that the sitter could be Johan de Caullery, eldest son of Joris de Caullery; portraits by Rembrandt of both father and son are mentioned in the former's will of 1661 (*Doc.* 1661/7). The portrait of Joris de Caullery may be identified as the painting now in San Francisco **70**, which is dated 1632. It may well be, therefore, that the present painting, also dated 1632, is the portrait of Johan referred to in the will. It is difficult to judge whether the two sitters show sufficient facial similarity to support this speculation. If it is correct, the painting would have been executed by Rembrandt in The Hague where, as well as Joris de Caullery, he appears to have portrayed in the same year Jacques de Gheyn III **68**, Maurits Huygens **67** and Princess Amalia van Solms **65b**.

72 Rembrandt, **Portrait of Marten Looten**, 1632, panel 92.8 x 74.9 cm. Los Angeles, County Museum of Art. HdG 659; Br. 166; Bauch 358; Gerson 110; Br./Gerson 166; ***Corpus*** **II A 52**; Tümpel 195.
Inscriptions: incorporated in the writing on the letter held in the sitter's hand <*Marten Looten XI Januar 1632*>. The letter is signed ‹*RHL* (in monogram).›

Marten Looten (1585/86-1649) was a wealthy Amsterdam merchant who, having migrated from his native Bruges, settled in the city and on 7 October 1617 married Cecilia Lups. Born in Dalen in

1594/95, she died in Amsterdam in 1652. Like several of his brothers, he was a Mennonite. His eldest son, also called Marten, died in 1656, and his second son Govert, whose probate inventory lists a work which is probably the present painting, died insolvent in 1678. The latter's son Govert (Amsterdam 1668-1727) returned to wealth, owning an important collection of paintings which included one by Rembrandt. That painting was probably the New York *Man in oriental dress* **84**, which, like the present painting, dates from 1632. Although this work cannot have been inherited from his grandfather via his father, there is the possibility that he inherited it from another member of the family and that it was thus ultimately from the estate of Marten Looten (Bruyn 1986 p. 96).

A review of the fruitless attempts to decipher the other lines on the paper held by Marten Looten can be found in *Corpus* II A 52 p. 197. Although some individual signs seem perfectly legible, most are not. Despite the impression given that the script in the painting is a finished text, the whole is probably no more than a meaningless but convincing imitation of a script, like the texts in the St Petersburg *Man at a writing desk* **60** and the Kassel *Man trimming his quill* **64a**, which are far less distinct.

73 Rembrandt, **Portrait of a 40-year-old man**, 1632, panel 75.6 x 52.1 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 761; Br. 160; Bauch 357; Gerson 122; Br./Gerson 160; ***Corpus* II A 59**; Tümpel A79; see also Liedtke 2007 pp. 550-553.
Inscriptions: ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *van Ryn / 1632.*›; on the left in large unsteady letters <*AET 40*>

74 Rembrandt, **Portrait of a 39-year-old woman**, 1632, panel 74.5 x 55 cm. Nivå, Nivaagaards Malerisamling. HdG 875; Br. 334; Bauch 458; Gerson-; Br./Gerson 334 (an attribution to Rembrandt is not convincing); ***Corpus* II A 62**.
Inscription: in the right background ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *van Ryn / 1632*›

These two oval paintings **73** and **74** are painted on same-sized panels which also originally came from the panel-maker as ovals. This does not often occur with oval portraits, for many oval paintings were originally rectangular. On both paintings, the age of the sitter is written in a similar manner in black paint and both are dated 1632. It is therefore not surprising that some have assumed that these are pendants of a (so far) unidentified couple – Mennonite, perhaps, judging by the costumes. Against this assumption it may be countered that the woman is placed higher in the pictorial plane and portrayed almost to the hip, whereas one would refer to the man's portrait as a bust-piece. In addition, the manner of painting is rather different. The man's portrait displays a *peinture* and use of colour that lend the painting an atmospheric spatial quality whereas the woman is not only executed in a more 'graphic' manner but also more use is made of both ground and underpainting that show through, particularly in the face. This way of painting has perhaps even contributed to doubts as to whether the woman's portrait was in fact executed by Rembrandt himself (Gerson in Br./Gerson 334 and Tümpel, who did not include it in his survey).

Judgment of the woman's portrait is further complicated by the fact that the hand with the prayer-book is a later addition – by another painter, judging by the way it is painted. As a result, the left contour of the woman, which shows through here and there, has been altered locally. However, the difference in the way of painting in the woman's portrait compared with the man's is not in itself a decisive proof that the two paintings are not pendants. We see the same in the portraits of the couple Sijen and Grotewal **119a/b** where the woman was painted almost a year later and where there is also a conspicuous difference in the execution of the two portraits; yet we know for certain that they are pendants.

But there still remains the difference in the placing in the oval setting of **73** and **74** and the resulting difference in scale of the figures in the two paintings. In the end this leads to the conclusion that we are probably not dealing with pendants here and that each of the two paintings may have had its own pendant.

75 Rembrandt, **Portrait of a 62-year-old woman, possibly Aeltje Pietersdr Uylenburgh**, 1632, panel 73.5 x 55 cm. Private collection. HdG 877; Br. 333; Bauch 461; Gerson 127; Br./Gerson 333; ***Corpus* II A 63**; Tümpel A104 (Tümpel did not see the painting and therefore left the question of its attribution open); see also *Uylenburgh* pp. 16, 137-140; Buvelot 2010/11.
Inscriptions: placed unusually high up in the left and right background, level with the top of the skull ‹*RHL* (in monogram, followed by a short, backwards sloping stroke) *van Ryn / 1632*›; on the left, level with this <*AE* (Aetatis in monogram, followed by a similar sloping stroke) *62*> on the right

This painting was for a long time in private ownership in Tel Aviv and was therefore difficult to assess. When two members of the RRP were able to see it in 1978 the painting appeared to be covered by a layer of varnish so thick and yellowed that it was scarcely possible to assess the painting. When this layer was removed in 2008 the work turned out to be one of the finest portraits of Rembrandt' oeuvre from his early period as a portrait painter. Moreover, it was found to be in an excellent state of preservation. The woman's dress, splendidly painted in the finest gradations of black and grey, is in a condition that one rarely encounters in the majority of Rembrandt's portraits, which are often somewhat worn in the dark costumes. The panel has retained its original form and as a result we can be certain that the placing of the woman in its oval frame is exactly as Rembrandt intended. The placing also indicates that this portrait was one of a pair. The pendant, unfortunately, appears to have been lost. Thanks to the archival research of Jaap van der Veen, we are almost certain who the sitters for the portraits were. The woman must be Aeltje Uylenburgh (*c.* 1571-1644), an older cousin of Rembrandt's wife Saskia. She was married to the Calvinist preacher Johannes Sylvius (1564-1638), of whom Rembrandt twice made an etched portrait (B. 266 and B. 288). Aeltje and her husband appear several times in documents concerning Rembrandt and Saskia: Sylvius was involved in their betrothal and in the baptism of two of their children (both of whom died in infancy), and in 1641 Aeltje was a witness at the baptism of Rembrandt's and Saskia's last and only surviving child, Titus.

Aeltje Uylenburgh, born in *c.* 1571, was 62 years old when Rembrandt painted her. There seems to have been very close ties between the two couples. A document discovered by Jaap van der Veen testifies that Rembrandt did paint portraits of Johannes Sylvius and his wife Aeltje. Almost all of Rembrandt's portraits of married couples from his first years in Amsterdam are of young people and are probably wedding portraits. The woman in this portrait is the only older woman among Rembrandt's portraits from 1632/33.

The familial relationship between Rembrandt and Aeltje which the documents reveal would seem to explain the unusual intensity with which Rembrandt worked on this portrait. The sitter's features have been rendered with the greatest attention to physiognomic detail. The way the light touches the various more or less transparent materials of the cap and collar, and the richly differentiated contour enclosing the figure show Rembrandt at his very best in the early Amsterdam period.

76 Rembrandt, **The anatomy lesson of Dr Nicolaes Tulp**, 1632, canvas 169.5 x 216.5 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis. HdG 932; Br. 403; Bauch 530; Gerson 100; Br./Gerson 403; ***Corpus* II A 51**; Tümpel 251; see also De Vries et al. 1978 no. VI; Schupbach 1982.
Inscription: on the paper scroll hanging on the rear wall ‹*Rembrant. f* (followed by a v-shaped mark)*: 1632*›

It should be said at the outset that in spite of its appearance of dramatic unity, it is obvious that the painting is not a record of an actual event: the form of the group portrait was still dictated by its function of commemorating the professional status of the sitters. This is why the situation depicted – the abdomen intact but the arm dissected – does not accord with the normal procedure for an anatomical dissection.

The so-called *Anatomy lesson of Dr. Tulp* refers in a single image to various different spheres: the development during the 17th century of deeper insights in many aspects of human anatomy; the medical historical world, including the history of the Amsterdam Guild of Surgeons; the world of the painter at work; the sphere of 17th-century metaphors of life and mortality – as well as the end of the notorious criminal Aris Kindt whose body (after his execution for armed robbery) was used for this anatomical dissection. It is beyond the compass of this book to explore the richness of this material here; in many respects this has already been elegantly and thoroughly done by Josua Bruyn in the entry in *Corpus* II A 51. Here, the reader's attention is drawn to just three aspects – one concerning an anatomical detail and two that have to do with what must have preoccupied Rembrandt intensely during the pictorial conception and execution of this painting.

As far as the anatomical aspect is concerned, the construction of the tendons of the forearm running toward the fingertips is being pointed out, a construction that many of us are perhaps not aware of and which in the 17th century must have been (quite reasonably) viewed as a miracle. Undoubtedly Rembrandt would have been thoroughly informed with regard to this anatomical detail before he executed this painting. Like a thread through the eye of a needle, the tendons running from the fingertips toward the wrist pass through splits in the tendons that attach to the bones of the second phalanges (see Plate **76** detail). This 'design' allows for the subtle, separate movement of the four fingers – what Dr Tulp does with both hands – while the thumb is able to move independently. That is perhaps an even greater marvel, for the opposable thumb makes it possible to do with *five* fingers precisely what Tulp's right hand is doing.

From a pictorial perspective, there are two developments that need to be described, for they are not only effective in the means by which Rembrandt gives a special quality both to the superbly spatial impression of the painting and the refined organization of the figures within that space, they would also seem to be revolutionary.

As far as the marshalling of the figures is concerned (and one should realize that the sitting figure on the extreme left was not originally planned and had to be added by Rembrandt later), what strikes one is how convincingly the concentrated attention of the listening and watching surgeons is suggested. This is not only a matter of the attitudes of the figures, which suggest a certain action. Rembrandt has also, in a manner that was still unique at that point in the tradition of group portraits, painted the different protagonist emphatically looking in different directions, the corresponding lines of sight directing the beholder's attention in such a way as to convey the sense that a gaze is also an act. It was earlier observed that the man at the top of the pyramid, Frans van Loenen, is looking in the direction of the beholder, and as a result plays a mediating role; the man with the paper has his attention divided between the paper with its illustration of the anatomy of the human arm and what is being displayed by the dissection; the gaze of the man in the foreground (to the right of the man added later) is directed at the anatomical handbook in the bottom right corner, while the three men in the centre are intensely following Dr Tulp's demonstration. The result is a unity in the activities of those represented that can perhaps best be characterized by a 17th-century term *'eenwezigheid'* (unity), a concept that Rembrandt must also have had in mind when composing this exceptionally complex painting (see *Corpus* V p. 63). More than any previous group portrait, the painting achieves a unity of form and content.

But there is also another pictorial means contributing to this impression of unity, and in a manner that will escape many a beholder precisely because, whenever it is correctly applied, it succeeds through its very unobtrusiveness. This effect was known as the *thickness of the air* and was referred to as such by Karel van Mander in connection with atmospheric perspective (*Corpus* V p. 125). Rembrandt was a pioneer in this area. The suggestion of atmospheric perspective, although already known in Classical Antiquity, was once again employed from the late 15th century as a means of suggesting space in a landscape. It is significant that Rembrandt's pupil Samuel van Hoogstraten, in his book on the art of painting, points out that the effects of this atmospheric perspective can also be observed over short distances (*Painter at Work* p. 187). This is the effect which Rembrandt applies to such success in the painting discussed here. One should compare the gradations in whiteness or greyness of the collars, or the differences in the contrast between light and shadow in the faces, depending on the place of the figure in the space. The principal effect achieved by this means is that the depicted forms are situated spatially in a wholly convincing manner without distracting the beholder's attention from, but rather contributing to the unity – the *eenwezigheid* – of what is represented in this painting.

77a Rembrandt and (almost entirely) workshop, **Portraits of Jean Pellicorne and his son Casper** (companion piece to **77b**), 1632, canvas 155 x 123 cm. London, Wallace Collection. HdG 666; Br. 406; Bauch 533; Gerson 176; Br./Gerson 406; ***Corpus* II C 65**; Tümpel A 118 (as from the studio of Rembrandt); see also *Wallace Collection* pp. 291-294 and Brown 2006 pp. 58-60.
Inscription: bottom right ‹*Rembrant. f* ... ›

77b Rembrandt and (in the main parts) workshop, **Portraits of Susanna van Collen and her daughter Anna** (companion piece to **77a**), 1632, canvas 153 x 121 cm. London, Wallace Collection. HdG 667; Br. 407; Bauch 534; Gerson 177; Br./Gerson

407; ***Corpus* II C 66**; Tümpel A 119 (from the studio of Rembrandt).
Inscription: bottom right ‹*Rembrant.f.16..*› probably copied after the signature on **77a**.

In *Corpus* II C 65 and 66 the so-called Pellicorne portraits were disattributed from Rembrandt and classified as works by unknown others in Rembrandt's workshop. The present author is in many respects in agreement with this disattribution, but that does not necessarily mean that the works as a whole should be ignored in this book. An important reason for including them after all is that the portrait of Jean and his son Casper is signed and that handwriting experts considered this signature to be authentic. The dating after the signature on this painting has been lost as a result of the canvas having been cropped. The related signature on the pendant was probably copied after this authentic signature, for it was often the case with pendant portraits that only one of the two paintings was signed by the master. From the single, genuine signature, one assumes that Rembrandt considered these two works as his own products, even though they were largely executed by assistants. In this respect he would have been following the normal 17th-century workshop convention.

In this context it is interesting that the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* also bears the inscription <*Rembrant* (with a t)*.f:1632*>, from which one concludes that both this painting and the Pellicorne portraits were painted during the last month(s) of that year, or very soon afterwards, as this type of signature only occurs on paintings originating during the winter months 1632/33. One can imagine that Rembrandt himself was wholly occupied with the labour-intensive *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* and that a commission in the same period for portraits of the family Pellicorne was left (entirely or in part) to assistants.

One cannot but wonder whether the compositions of the two Pellicorne portraits were in fact designed by Rembrandt. Given the fact that he usually allowed more space above his figures it could be that both paintings have been cropped above.

In 2006 Christopher Brown published a spirited defence of the authenticity of the two paintings, whilst adding "with some studio assistance in the draperies, which was standard practice among portrait painters throughout Europe" (Brown 2006 pp. 58-60). Brown gave no arguments to underpin his judgment, merely appealing to the impression that the present portraits, having been cleaned of their yellowed varnish "emerged as being as impressive as the Elison portraits in Boston" **121a/b**. But it is precisely the comparison with other full-size group portraits which makes one realize how schematic the execution of the four faces in the two present paintings is, how impoverished the rendering of the glassy-looking flesh. Apart from the right hand of the man, which may have been executed by Rembrandt, the other hands are peculiar in shape, position and anatomy. The same holds for the man's legs, which are clearly of unequal length. The right leg does not appear to articulate with the hip and, with regard to the position of the right knee in relation to the other knee, is also a failure in terms of anatomy and three-dimensionality. One may infer from the latter that not only the faces but also the design of the paintings as a whole cannot or can only partially have been from Rembrandt's hand. The remarkably odd placing and spatial positioning of the furniture in **77a** contribute to this impression.

Yet Rembrandt seems to have contributed more to the production of these paintings than the mere addition of his signature to the man's portrait. It is certainly possible that he intervened in the execution of the skirts of the woman and her daughter. The footstove with its lightly undulating contours also seems to be from his hand, which could indicate that he wanted to change the fall of the skirt whilst working on a convincing rendering of this garment's sumptuous material. The same could be true for the lights on the girl's raised outer skirt.

It is true that these are no more than 'connoisseurial' observations regarding the differences in the nature and quality of the painting hand and the designing mind that are evident in the creation of these paintings. But faced with questions over the authenticity and attribution of portraits, because of the unpredictability and at the same time the great technical similarity in seventeenth-century workshop practice when it came to portraiture, one often has to resort to connoisseurial judgments.

Nevertheless, Brown's generalizing comments regarding the question of authenticity in relation to these two portraits demonstrate the need for a more differentiated approach to these problems. The above attempt at such an approach is offered in anticipation of that time when these monumental works become available for a far more thorough investigation than has hitherto been possible.

78 Rembrandt, **Bust of a young woman**, 1632, panel 60.6 x 45 cm. Private collection. HdG 699; Br. 89; Bauch 452; Gerson 115; Br./Gerson 89; ***Corpus* II A 50**; Tümpel 227.
Inscription: in the right background ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *van Rijn / 1632*›

In the probate inventory of Lambert Jacobsz, the Friesian painter and business relation of Uylenburgh and Rembrandt, drawn up in 1639, is listed '*a small tronie of an oriental woman, the likeness of Uylenburgh's wife, after Rembrandt*' (Straat 1925). There is a good chance that this refers to a copy or free variant after either the painting discussed here or the one reproduced in **79**. These paintings are now referred to as *tronies*, because they do not have the characteristics expected of a portrait. It is then all the more remarkable that the woman who sat as a model for such a *tronie* is actually named in this inventory. It should be pointed out here that Uylenburgh and Lambert Jacobsz must have been good friends. There was evidently a market for the *tronies* for which actual individuals had posed, but as well as saleable products they can also be seen as exercises for trainee painters. When one compares the present painting with a painting after the same model in Chapel Hill, North Carolina (**fig. 1**), one cannot avoid the impression that the master and one of his pupils/assistants must have simultaneously painted the same model (in the role of an oriental princess). With such a form of simultaneous working during one and the same session, one imagines that this could have been a lesson for the trainee painter, just as one sees with certain drawings made during a single session after the same model (Los Angeles 2009 no. 41) (see also **157**). One should also bear in mind that a painter's training may

Fig. 1. Tronie by a pupil after the same model as **78**, **79** and **80**

have involved more than merely copying the master's work; perhaps it also allowed him to be present while the master was actually working and (consciously or unconsciously) to imitate his actions. In the light of recent neurophysiological insights into the function of mirror neurons, this approach to learning in the historical workshops deserves more attention (see Freedberg/Gallese 2007).

* **79** Rembrandt, **Bust of a young woman wearing a plumed cap**, 1632, canvas glued to panel 60.6 x 45 cm. Private collection. HdG 697; Br. 84; Bauch 451; Gerson 114; Br./Gerson 84; ***Corpus* II C 61** (as an old imitation, probably done outside Rembrandt's circle); reattributed in ***Corpus* IV Corrigenda II C 61**; Tümpel 148.
Inscription: bottom right ‹*RHL* (in monogram). *van R(ijn) / 163(2)*›

This painting was originally disattributed from Rembrandt by the RRP. As a result of renewed investigation, however, it has been re-attributed to him. A report on this research is given in *Corpus* IV Corrigenda II C 61.

In connection with the re-attribution, it is important to realize that, contrary to what one expects with a painting of this format, this painting is done on linen which was subsequently glued to an oak panel at a later stage (as also happened with **70**). However, on the basis of the cusping of the canvas and other observations, it is probable that the present painting was originally considerably larger. This in turn would explain why it was painted on canvas. Judging by the X-ray image (published in *Corpus* IV p. 631), it is possible that the woman stretched out her left arm and leant on a staff.

80 Rembrandt, **Half-figure of a young woman in profile with a fan**, 1632, canvas 72.5 x 54.8 cm. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum. HdG 698; Br. 85; Bauch 455; Gerson 118; Br./Gerson 85; ***Corpus* II A 49**; Tümpel A55; see also Stockholm 2005 no. 415.
Inscription: at the right in the background ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *van Rijn. / 1632*›

Fig. 1. W. de Leeuw, etching after **80** reproduced in reverse.

The model who posed for this painting may well be the same as the model for **78** and **79** – possibly Maria van Eyck, the wife of Hendrick Uylenburgh. One infers from a reproduction print by W. de Leeuw that the painting has been cropped on all four sides (**fig. 1**).

* **81** Rembrandt, **Bearded old man**, 1632, 66.9 x 50.7 cm. Cambridge Mass., Fogg Art Museum. HdG 417; Br. 147; Bauch A8 (as by Jacob Backer and Rembrandt); Gerson -; Br./Gerson 147 (as by Lievens); Tümpel –; ***Corpus* III p. 24** (as 'from Rembrandt's workshop'); see also *R. in America* cat. 14, p. 106 and 181.
Inscription: in the right background ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *van Rijn 1632*›

This painting bears one of the best preserved genuine Rembrandt signatures from 1632. Despite this, a strange confusion has long surrounded its attribution.

No doubts had been expressed in the older literature over the attribution to Rembrandt, until Jakob Rosenberg and Seymour Slive questioned whether Rembrandt had actually painted it. Because of what they describe as the picture's 'delicate silvery touch', they thought they could see Lievens' hand in the work. The widely held idea that the man who served as a model for the present painting was the same man who posed for some of Jan Lievens' *tronies* of old bearded men should not be taken as definitive. When one compares closely the man in the present painting with the model he most closely resembles from Lievens' *tronies* (see Sumowski *Gemälde* 1234, 1251), one notes significantly different facial features, most specifically in the length and shape of the nose. The indent between forehead and bridge of the nose is also clearly different. The part of the cheek between the eye-socket and the cheek fold is much less broad and voluminous in the present painting than in Sumowski 1234 and 1251, while Lievens' other old bearded models have even more differing physiognomic characteristics (see e.g. Sumowski *Gemälde* 1240, 1243, 1263, 1269, 1270, 1277, 1278).

Bauch wondered whether Jacob Backer might have collaborated with Rembrandt on the work, while Gerson agreed with Slive and tended toward an attribution to Lievens. Sumowski thought that it could have been the work of one of Rembrandt's earliest Amsterdam pupils who was familiar with the work of Lievens (Sumowski *Gemälde* IV 1919); while in his chapter on Rembrandt's studio practice and studio production in *Corpus* III Bruyn discussed it as a work from Rembrandt's workshop (p. 24).

Most authors failed to specify the reasons for their disatttribution from Rembrandt. Of course, an old man's *tronie* with a large beard and with a greyish hue does remind one of Lievens, although he usually introduced long, wavy scratches in beards to suggest individual hairs. These are lacking here. More significantly, with Lievens one does not find a *peinture* like that in the present painting. It is true that the supple way in which the present painting was painted is somewhat similar to the manner of Jacob Backer, but the differences from Backer's juicy manner of applying predominantly opaque paint are far greater.

When confronted for the first time with the painting in 2010 and subsequently in 2011 I was convinced that an attribution to Rembrandt was fully justified. One should point out that, along with the consistency of the execution in the portraits of 1632, there is a high degree of variability of execution in Rembrandt's other works from that year. We see the same kind of differentiation in execution that we are familiar with in the oil sketches and *tronies* from 1630 and '31, or in Rembrandt's etchings and drawings from 1630 to 1632.

My arguments for attributing the painting to Rembrandt are of various kinds – in part, from a comparison with certain drawings and etchings which also suggests a surprising possibility for the dating of the painting, but also from arguments relating to specific technical aspects of execution and to certain pictorial characteristics that are frequently found in paintings by Rembrandt.

Fig. 1. Rembrandt, *Seated old man*, *c.* 1631, 14.4 x 14.6 cm. Ben. 38.

Fig. 2. Rembrandt, *Bust of an old man*, 1631, etching 6.8 x 6.6 cm. B. 315 (reproduced in reverse).

For instance, the interplay of drawing and painting, which one finds frequently with Rembrandt's paintings, can be seen in this work; for example in the eyes, in the way the hair is indicated and in the boundaries between light and dark such as, for instance, in the fold of the cheek. Another technical argument in favour of an attribution to Rembrandt is the way the underpainting and the ground show through or are left visible in many places. In these places, specifically in the old man's clothes, can be seen the loose *peinture* characteristic of Rembrandt and often evident in his more concisely executed paintings. One finds such passages in the mouth and in the transition from light to dark in the forehead, and in the hair where it passes into the background. Traces of the underpainting can also be seen in the shadowed half of the face with the eye drawn in it. Another conspicuously Rembrandtesque feature is the refined colouring of the skin which contributes to the convincing rendering of the plasticity of the face. Removal of the old varnish would do better justice to the force of the undulating contours, characteristic of Rembrandt, in the old man's trunk.

At first sight it seems strange that there is an almost total absence of any impasto in the face. This is all the more remarkable when one compares the present painting with the heads of the other *tronies* of life-size male figures from 1632, **82**, **83**, **84**. This comparison brings out the unusual execution of the hair and beard in the present work, which is regular, fluent and graphic. If one looks for a comparable rendering of bearded old men among Rembrandt's works, the most striking similarities of execution are found in an etching such as B. 315 (**fig. 2**) or the drawing Ben. 38 (**fig. 1**). Those works were undoubtedly also made using the same model, and both are usually dated to 1631. That, of course, raises the question of whether the present painting could also have been painted in that year and, as often happened, was only signed and dated when it was subsequently sold (see the Notes to **4**, **8**, **111**)

* **82** Rembrandt, **Study of an old man with a gold chain**, 1632, panel 59 x 46.5 cm. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 373; Br. 152; Bauch 146; Gerson 109; Br./Gerson 152; ***Corpus* II C 53**; Tümpel A36 (as by a pupil of Rembrandt); ***Corpus* IV Corrigenda II C 53**; see also Schnackenburg 2001/02 pp. 92-121; Kassel 2006 no. 15.
Inscription: in the right background ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *van Ryn / 1632*›

The drastic changes of status that this painting has endured over the past 45 years can be read as a summary of the differences in approach to the problems of attribution that bedevilled Rembrandt's oeuvre in that period. For Gerson, a marked and spontaneous brushwork, and an old pedigree, were important criteria of authenticity. He summarized his opinion of this painting in 1969 as follows:

> 'Powerfully painted and in a good state of preservation. The X-rays show underpainting as expressive and rich as the surface handling. The picture can be traced back to the collection of Valerius de Roever's father.' (Br./Gerson 152).

At the time that Gerson published this opinion, the founders of the RRP had already completed their exploratory visit to Kassel in 1967 and had returned with a negative view that Bruyn articulated during the Chicago symposium as follows:

> 'the total impression is that of a strong exaggeration of one aspect of Rembrandt's usual technique. With regard to brush strokes as well as to the choice of colors, all economy has vanished.' (J. Bruyn in *Chigago Symp. 1969* p. 38)

In *Corpus* II C 53 (p. 652), the *peinture* of the present painting is compared with that in the Stockholm *Apostle Peter* **83** and the New York *Man in Oriental Costume* **84**, on the tacit assumption that Rembrandt's brushwork would not differ in similar passages (like specific details in faces).

The idea that this might be an oil sketch was rejected by Bruyn during the Chicago conference on the basis of another too strong *a priori* preconception concerning Rembrandt's technique, viz.

> 'that one would expect in a seventeenth-century sketch the extensive use of translucent glazes, particularly ochres, through which the ground shows.' (*Chigago Symp. 1969* p. 30).

Following the publication of the RRP's verdict there was no further discussion of **82**. I remained, however, intrigued by the problem of the RRP's categorical rejection of paintings with loose brushwork that had in the past been attributed to Rembrandt (see Chapter I pp. 40-47 and the Notes to **35** and **44**).

Inspired by Emmens' art theoretical approach to Rembrandt (Emmens 1964) and Eddy de Jongh's remarks on the *Portrait of Jan Six* (De Jongh 1985 p. 233), I thought that perhaps the problem attached to such paintings might better be approached from an art theoretical perspective rather than a dogmatic insistence that the 'hand' of the painter is the expression of individual temperament – the view which the RRP founders had brought to bear in their disattribution of the present painting. My alternative attempts in this area were first published in 1991 (E. van de Wetering in *Master/Workshop* pp.12-38).

Bernhard Schnackenburg, working on the catalogue of the Kassel collection and confronted with the problems associated with the present painting, pursued the same line of thinking. In the same period, Philip Sohm published his book *Pittoresco, Marco Boschini, his critics, and their critiques of painterly brushwork in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Italy*, 1991. It was Schnackenburg's attention to the so-called 'rough manner' in connection with the present painting which would eventually lead to our joint exhibition *The Mystery of the Young Rembrandt* in Kassel and Amsterdam in 2001-2002. His exemplary article, 'Young Rembrandt's 'rough manner'; a painting style and its sources' appeared in the catalogue of that exhibition. Like Schnackenburg, I too am convinced that this painting is an autograph Rembrandt and should be considered as a masterly study that would play a major role in the genesis of the 1632 *St Peter* in Stockholm **83** and the *'Noble Slav'* **84** from the same year.

The following observation contributed to that conviction: in the present painting the head of the figure is not shown completely frontally as in **83** and **84** but slightly three quarters turned. The same phenomenon, where the head in a presumed sketch after the life is slightly turned with respect to the definitive work, in which the figure is painted strictly frontally, is seen with **271**/**272** and **296**/**297b**.

83 Rembrandt, **The apostle Peter**, 1632, canvas 81.3 x 66.2 cm. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum. HdG 181; Br. 609; Bauch 139; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 609 (as a contemporary copy); ***Corpus* II A 46**; Tümpel -; see also Bl. cat. 7; Stockholm no. 416.
Inscription: in the background level with the shoulder ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *Ry / 1632*›

Gerson thought he was dealing with a copy of a lost original. Study of the painting using X-radiography, however, has shown that its genesis is such as to exclude the possibility that it is a copy.

In the catalogue of the National Museum in Stockholm it is claimed that **83** was probably purchased directly from Rembrandt himself by Carel van Cracauw, an agent of the Dutch admiralty in Helsingør (Stockholm 2005 p. 405). Given the signature and other characteristics described in *Corpus* II A 46, there is no reason to doubt the painting's authenticity. One may well assume, however, that given its poor condition it was originally a much more attractive painting.

84 Rembrandt, **Knee-length figure of a man in oriental dress ('The Noble Slav')**, 1632, canvas 152.7 x 111.1 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 349; Br. 169; Bauch 141; Gerson 103; Br./Gerson 169; Tümpel 132; ***Corpus* II A 48**; see also *M/W* cat. 9; Liedtke 2007 no. 142.
Inscription: at the extreme lower right ‹*RHL* (in monogram). *van Rijn / 1632*›

The question that strikes one on seeing this impressive and superbly executed painting is: what could have been its function? Did such an imposing painting, found in the possession of descendants of Marten Looten, originate as a result of a commission (*Corpus* II p. 96)?

The fact that the *Portait of Marten Looten* **72** was also painted in 1632 raises a question to which Josua Bruyn suggested an answer in his essay 'Patrons and early owners' in *Corpus* II (pp. 91-98). Bruyn found evidence of other cases (see **129**, **131**) where similarly ambitious paintings had come into the possession of individuals who had had their portraits painted by Rembrandt. Did these sitters commission the making of such a painting, which originated in the same year as the relevant portrait (or pair of portraits)? Or were these works made by Rembrandt on his own initiative, which the portrait sitters subsequently purchased after seeing them in his studio? One can well imagine that a work such as this painting, with Rembrandt's adventurous handling of light and shadow and with a built-in dark 'repoussoir' (an invention probably developed by himself and first used in his *Self-portrait* in Boston from 1629 **29**) would have attracted an interested art-lover, which Marten Looten appears to have been.

* **85** Rembrandt, **A scholar near a window (a study in 'kamerlicht')**, 1631, panel 60.8 x 47.3 cm. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum. HdG 186; Br. 430; Bauch 135; Gerson 26; Br./Gerson 430; ***Corpus* I C 17** (as a copy after a lost original); Tümpel K 1 (as by an unknown artist after Rembrandt); see also Stockholm 2005 no. 423.
Inscription: at the bottom of the sheet of paper above the old man's head ‹*Rembrant.f v .1631*›

Fig. 1. Pieter de Bailliu, engraving after **85** reproduced in reverse.

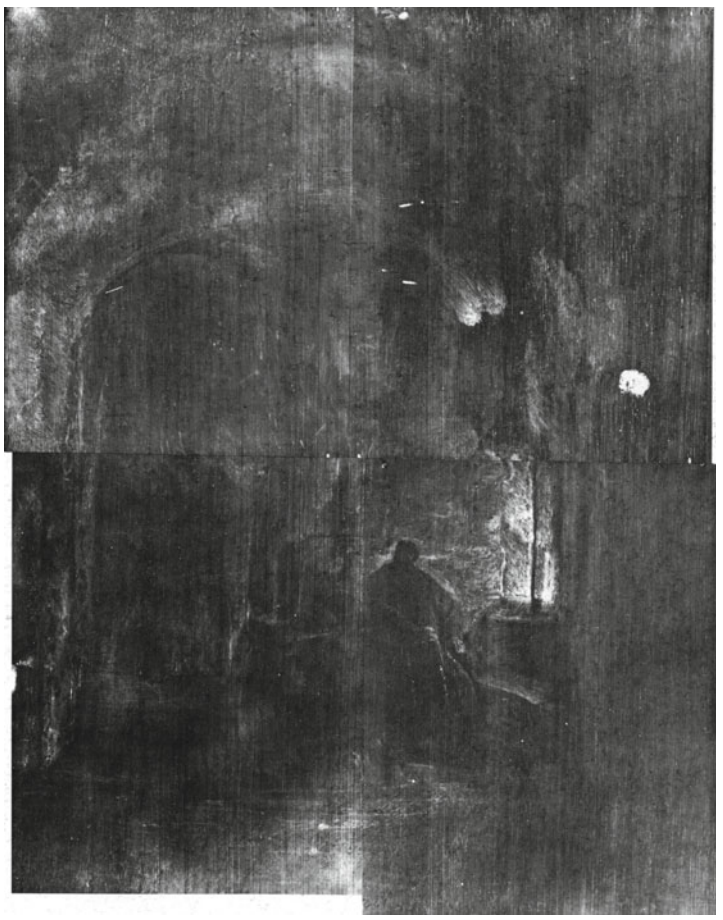


Fig. 2. X-radiograph of **85**

In *Corpus* I C 17 this painting was disattributed from Rembrandt and dealt with as a copy after a lost original. That such an original might have existed was inferred from the fact that there is an early reproduction print with this image by Pieter de Bailliu (1613-after 1660), on which Rembrandt is acknowledged as the author of the original painting (**fig. 1**). The disattribution of the present painting in *Corpus* I was based on the following observation:

> '[confronting the painting with for instance Rembrandt's *Jeremiah* **39**]... there is a manner of painting that, both in the uncertainty with which many lines are set down and in the patchily and indistinctly painted areas, is lacking in firmness and suggestion of form ...' (*Corpus* V p. 547 and 551).

Presented below are the arguments that justify a re-attribution of the painting. During work on the entry in *Corpus* I C 17 there were no available dendrochronological data relating to the panel. These data have since been presented in *Corpus* IV p. 653 and Stockholm 2005 p. 421. First, the misunderstanding in the latter catalogue, to the effect that 'the panel consist of two oak boards joined horizontally' must be corrected: the presumed 'join' was in fact the join between the two pairs of X-radiographs from which the radiographic image was composed (**fig. 2**). The grain of the panel, con-

sisting of two planks joined by a vertical seam, also runs vertically. The oak of the panel comes from the Baltic region, like most of Rembrandt's panels. Dendrochronology further determined a felling date between 1622 and 1632, with an earliest possible use date of 1624, the most plausible date being *c.* 1630. The idea suggested by the RRP and subsequently adopted by Tümpel, that this is a copy after a lost prototype, is not supported by these data.

Doubts concerning the authenticity of the painting as a genuine Rembrandt were amplified by a specific difference between the painting and Pieter de Bailliu's print (**fig. 1**). In the original *Corpus* I entry (p. 551) it was argued that, in the print,

> 'one sees that the table extends further away from the window, so that the outline of the rug hanging down from it touches that of the door in the rear wall; as a result, the central pedestal of the table (of which only two claw feet are visible) comes under the centre point of the table, which it does not do in the painting. The strange thing is then that this shape for the table was on the evidence of the X-ray left in reserve in the painting, while there is no sign of it having been executed in paint. This removes the possibility of the etching having been done directly from no. C 17, and makes it likely that both are based on a common prototype. The painter of the putative copy (the present painting) must at a late stage have allowed himself a certain amount of liberty vis-à-vis the original, though without carrying matters through properly where the construction of the table was concerned.'

However, this suggested reconstruction of the genesis of **85** loses its cogency when one takes into account the worn and retouched condition of the painting.

Another factor behind the RRP's rejection of the traditional attribution of the painting to Rembrandt was the signature. The painting is inscribed <*Rembrant f v 1631*>. Rembrandt did not sign with his first name in 1631. Moreover at the time of our investigations we took it for granted that Rembrandt's own signatures as a rule were written with a <*dt*>. We now know more about the changes in Rembrandt's way of signing his works up to 1633, and we also know a case – precisely from this period – where Rembrandt subsequently antedated a painting to agree with the year of its actual origin whilst writing his name in a manner appropriate to the year in which he introduced his signature. This is the *Self-portrait as an oriental with dog* **53**. The signatures <*Rembrant. f v 1631.*> on both that painting and the present painting show striking similarities, not only with each other but also with a painting dated 1633 that is definitely not antedated **100**. The presence of this signature on the present painting, its rarity together with the striking correspondence with that on **53**, as well as the traces of wear that they manifest, exclude the possibility that we are dealing here with a much later addition. The evidence rather argues strongly in favour of an attribution to Rembrandt.

There is another reason for reviewing the attribution question in relation to this painting. This has to do with the young Rembrandt's concern with the '*gronden*', the basic aspects of painting as discussed in *Corpus* V Ch. I (see also pp. 68/69 in the present book).

In his Leiden period Rembrandt must have become increasingly interested in what his pupil Samuel van Hoogstraten – and probably Rembrandt himself – would refer to as *kamerlicht* or 'room light' (see *Corpus* V pp. 76-78). If this painting did originate in 1631, it could have been Rembrandt's first attempt to explore light and shadow in a space into which daylight is admitted by a visible window.

But if we are now so strongly inclined to think that the present painting is after all from Rembrandt's hand, how could the negative judgment of the painting's quality (quoted above) have weighed so heavily as to lead to a disattribution earlier? A possible explanation for this is that the scale of the elements of this image and their pictorial role in the painting may have caused confusion. This becomes clear when one compares it with the *Jeremiah* **39**, also from 1631, as was done in the entry on the present painting in *Corpus* I C 17, but then with very different results. The difference in scale between the two old men in these two paintings is so great that comparisons between the two are misleading except in one respect: the large predominantly transparently painted space round the old man in the present painting may be compared with the transparent passages in the background behind Jeremiah. These parts where the ground and underpainting show through manifest a similar

> 'uncertainty with which (the) lines are set down and .... the patchily and indistinctly painted areas ... are lacking in firmness and suggestion'

(as the execution of the present painting is described in *Corpus* I C 17, see above). These same phenomena, perhaps the result of the material and consequently optical aging of such transparently executed passages, are also apparent in the *Jeremiah* **39**, a work that must unquestionably have been painted by Rembrandt himself.

86 Rembrandt, **Interior with a window and a winding staircase** (a study in 'kamerlicht'), 1632, panel 28.2 x 34.4 cm. Paris, Louvre. HdG 233; Br. 431; Bauch 156; Gerson 91; Br./Gerson 431; ***Corpus* II C 51** (as a painting from Rembrandt's circle or workshop); Tümpel 120; see also Clarke 1990; Foucart 2009 p. 213. Inscription: at the bottom left ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *van Rijn 1632*›

Fig. 1. P.L. Surugue, etching after **86**, 1754, reproduced in reverse.

After **85** the present work seems to be Rembrandt's next attempt at painting an interior room lit from a visible window, the so called *kamerlicht*, 'room light' (see *Corpus* V pp. 76-78). In *Corpus* II C 51 the painting was not accepted as an autograph Rembrandt, but judged rather to be a work from his circle or workshop. This disattribution was based on the argument that

> 'although the painting shows clearly Rembrandtesque features (in the handling of chiaroscuro and the rendering of wood and stonework) and motifs (especially the figure of the old man), it nevertheless differs from Rembrandt's work in its execution (which is equally broad in the figures and their surroundings) and interpretation.'

Fig. 2. Infrared image of **86**

In this latter respect the verdict continues:

'the interior is allowed to dominate the three mutually-unrelated figures' (*Corpus* II p. 644).

This judgment, however, rests on a number of questionable assumptions:

a. that in a painting by Rembrandt the execution of figures, as regards the broadness of the brushwork, would as a rule be different, "from the execution of their surroundings,"
b. that with Rembrandt the interior never dominates the figures, and
c. that Rembrandt himself would halfway the stairs never show the three figures (there is a third figure standing half way the stairs in the shadow) as mutually unrelated. For the third figure, difficult to discern under the very thick, yellowed layer of varnish, see a reproduction print of **86** (**fig. 1**).

With regard to a: it should be realized that this is, for Rembrandt, a relatively small painting in which the figure of the old man is minutely depicted (*c.* 9 cm in height) in a complex, highly detailed interior. In Rembrandt's drawing on which the figure is based (**fig. 3**), the figure is twice as large and with the advantage of chalk could be much more graphically executed.

Fig. 3. Ben. 41.

The assumptions b and c are connected and take it for granted that the painting's *raison d'être* must be a 'story' with three interacting protagonists. But if our hypothesis is correct – i.e. that this is a study in 'room light' – it need be no objection that 'the interior (and the play of light in it) is allowed to dominate the three mutually-unrelated figures'. The figures in this painting could be compared with the 'staffage' in a landscape. They are probably added to give life and scale to the setting. The arguments against attributing the painting to Rembrandt thus largely lose their force.

As mentioned above, the paint layer is covered with an extremely thick, yellowed layer of varnish, which makes it difficult to get any clear insight into its pictorial characteristics. However, infrared photography (**fig. 2**) provides sufficient insight into its graphic execution and some of its painterly quality to raise afresh the possibility of its authenticity.

A further cogent argument in favour of the attribution to Rembrandt is provided by the way in which the problem of the 'room light' has been explored in this painting (see above). In the earlier attempt **85**, apart from the figure at the table the incoming light straightforwardly illuminates those elements that define the interior space, the walls and the floor. In the present painting a complex form, a spiral staircase, is also exposed to the 'room light'. Moreover, a second light source is introduced to the right, a fire which illuminates a woman attending it. This is all executed with great authority and astonishing insight into the complex effects of two types of light in an interior space. The controlled manner in which relations of light and shadow were investigated, and the specific quality with which all this has been executed, unquestionably argues in favour of Rembrandt's authorship. The proximity to **85** is another strong argument for an attribution to Rembrandt.

One finds occasional renderings of rooms with a visible window throughout Rembrandt's oeuvre (**151**, **273**, **266**; B. 105, 273, 275, 285; Ben. 516). They must have been admired for the power of the illusion of daylight that Rembrandt achieved – but at what cost. It was Vermeer who found ways to avoid the gloominess of such day-lit interiors, the price paid by Rembrandt to achieve this illusion.

When seen in the context of Rembrandt's investigations of 'room light', the present painting appears to stand out as an early, very complex, experiment in this area. Once this is taken together with its unusual qualities, it can no longer be seriously considered the work of a pupil or follower as was suggested in the *Corpus* II entry.

* **87a** Rembrandt, **Portrait of a man** (companion piece to **87b**), 1632, panel 63.5 x 47.3 cm. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum. HdG 733; Br. 159; Bauch 354; Gerson 119; Br./Gerson 159; ***Corpus* II C 70** (as from Rembrandt's workshop); Tümpel 192.
Inscription**:** right, in the background above the shoulder ‹*RHL* (in monogram) *van Rijn. / 1632*› visible in the infrared image, superimposed on this signature ‹*Rembrant. f*›. The original date 1632 was not covered.

* **87b** Rembrandt, **Portrait of a woman** (companion piece to **87a**), 1633, panel 63 x 48 cm. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum. HdG 846; Br. 338; Bauch 465; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 338 (as being painted by an assistant); ***Corpus* II C 71** (as from Rembrandt's workshop); Tümpel A 108 (as from Rembrandt's workshop).
Inscription: right, in the background above the shoulder ‹*Rembrandt. f: / .1633.*›

These two portraits were disattributed from Rembrandt in *Corpus* II because of the 'highly detailed and smooth execution', which was seen as incompatible with the idea of Rembrandt's manner of painting to which the RRP was committed at the time. Initially the paintings were even considered by some members of the RRP to be later imitations; but this was eventually ruled out by the fact that the middle plank from the panel of the woman came from the same tree as a plank from the panel of **58**. Moreover, the working of the lace in the woman's cap is closely comparable with the way we believe Rembrandt painted lace (*Corpus* II pp. 62-76) and the same holds for the millstone collar. This case teaches us that the execution of faces could vary from one portrait to another – probably in part determined by the speed with which a portrait was painted to meet the demand of the commissioning patron. One should compare **117a/b** and **118b** which, in contrast to this couple, were apparently painted in considerable haste, and the loose execution apparently accepted by the commissioning patron. Conversely, one can also imagine that other sitters made certain demands of their own regarding the execution of their portraits.

On closer examination of X-radiographs of the two paintings (*Corpus* II p. 761 and p. 769) it appears that not only is there no basis for Gerson's and Tümpel's suggestion that the woman was painted by a different hand than the man; but also that in various other ways (e.g. the reserve for the woman in the background and the temperament in the execution as a whole) these X-radiographic images argue for an attribution of both paintings to the same hand, that of Rembrandt. The signature on the woman's portrait would appear to be a later addition. In all probability only one of the pendants was signed, as was often the case (see e.g. **77a/b**, **120a/b** and **121a/b**).

88a Rembrandt and (perhaps) workshop, **Portrait of a man rising from a chair** (companion piece to **88b**), 1633, canvas 124 x 98.5 cm. Cincinnati, Taft Museum of Art. HdG 736; Br. 172; Bauch 366; Gerson 140; Br./Gerson 172; ***Corpus* II A 78**; Tümpel 200.
Inscription: at the right, about 31 cm from the bottom edge ‹*Rembrandt. f / 1633.*›

88b Rembrandt, **Portrait of a woman with a fan** (companion piece to **88a**), 1633, canvas 126.2 x 100.5 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 881; Br. 341; Bauch 469; Gerson 141; Br./Gerson 341; ***Corpus* II A 79**; Tümpel 232; see also *Art and Autoradiography* pp. 37-41; Liedtke 2007 pp. 589-596.
Inscription: lower left ‹*Rembrand. f v . / 1633.*›

Fig. 1. Neutron activation image of **88** showing the presence of mercury (a constituent of vermilion) in the woman's mouth and of phosphorus (a constituent of bone-black) in the woman's dress and also in the underpainting.

The woman's portrait in this pair of pendants is one of Rembrandt's finest early portraits of women known to us. The frontally depicted face is of exceptional subtlety in its *modelé*. The same applies to the manner in which the differentiated folds of her skirt are painted and the lace of her collar and cuffs. The way in which her right hand is partly shadowed by the forward-held fan is particularly inventive, although the ageing of the paint layer has perhaps rendered the spatial effect less striking than Rembrandt originally intended.

The man's attitude and movement in the woman's direction is such an engaging invention that there has never been any doubt as to the authenticity of either painting. Nevertheless, the question must be asked whether the man was executed in its entirety by Rembrandt. The face has something schematic about it, and is markedly less subtly executed than the face of the woman, also frontally depicted. The collar and the lace of the cuffs similarly lack some subtlety, or suppleness, compared with those of the woman. Perhaps an assistant was involved in the painting of the man, at least as far as the execution was concerned. Rembrandt succeeds in communicating to the beholder the intimacy of the couple's relationship by making the woman lean slightly toward her young husband. To support her in this position he moved the chair's armrest, vaguely visible in the neutron activation image, a little higher so as to support her elbow (**fig. 1**). In its original position this armrest was on a level with the woman's left hand resting on the opposite armrest. Rather than also moving that hand and armrest he solved the problem by adding a small table and having the woman's hand rest on it. This is an example of how technical images can sometimes give us a glimpse of Rembrandt's empathic sensitivity both to his sitters and to the beholders of his works.

89 Rembrandt, **Portrait of the shipbuilder Jan Rijcksen and his wife Griet Jans**, 1633, canvas 111 x 166 cm. London, Royal Collection. HdG 933; Br. 408; Bauch 532; Gerson 139; Br./Gerson 408; ***Corpus* II A 77**; Tümpel 252; see also White 1982 (rev.) no. 160.
Inscription: on the sheet of paper on the table ‹*Rembrandt. f : / 1633.*›

Fig. 1. J.P. de Frey, etching after **89**, 1800. Made before the painting was cropped along the top.

According to a reproduction print from 1800, the painting discussed here originally extended further at the top (**fig. 1**). This demonstrates all the more how important Rembrandt must have felt it to give ample space above his figures. In the case of the couple portrayed here, it would appear that, whether consciously or unconsciously, Rembrandt took into account the possibility that the man might stand up from his sitting position.

90 Rembrandt and workshop, **Portrait of the minister Johannes Wtenbogaert**, 1633, canvas 123 x 105 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. HdG 726; Br. 173; Bauch 361; Gerson 137; Br./Gerson 173; ***Corpus* II A 80**; Tümpel 2001.
Inscriptions: at the right above the book ‹*Rembrandt. ft : / 1633*›. In the left background <*AE* (in monogram) *T* (followed by three dots arranged as a triangle) *76*>

The identification of the sitter as the Remonstrant leader Johannes Wtenbogaert is beyond dispute, and has never been in doubt since it was advanced by Hofstede de Groot. The resemblance to other portraits of the frequently-portrayed cleric is evident.

Johannes Wtenbogaert (Uytenbogaert), who was born on 11 December 1557 at Utrecht and died on 4 September 1644 in The Hague, was in his time a widely known and respected personality. He was a minister in Utrecht and, from 1591 on, in The Hague, where he was the confidant and adviser of the Grand Pensionary

Johan van Oldenbarnevelt. He became the court preacher of Prince Maurits, and tutor to the young Prince Frederik Hendrik. His open support of the cause of the Remonstrants – the less-strict branch of Dutch Protestantism – brought him into disfavour, and he fled to Antwerp, Paris and Rouen. In 1626, when the political tide had turned, he returned to The Hague.

This is one of Rembrandt's best documented portraits, because the sitter kept a concise diary during his stay in Amsterdam in 1633. On 13 April he noted: '*Wtgeschildert van Rembrant, voor Abr. Anthonissen*' (Painted by Rembrandt for Abraham Anthonissen) (*Doc.* 1633/2). Abraham Anthonisz Recht (1588-1664) was a wealthy merchant in Amsterdam who, as a devout follower of the Remonstrants, was an admirer and friend of Wtenbogaert. The note in the sitter's diary implies that Wtenbogaert posed for Rembrandt for no longer than a single day. In such a short time it would have been possible to sketch the figure, paint the background and finish the head. There is a surviving document relating to the painter Isack Jouderville from which it appears that sitters would leave their collar with the painter to be painted later (*Corpus* II p. 62 note 147). A collar like van Wtenbogaert's is extraordinarily complicated, not only its form but more especially in the complex play of incident light, influenced by the somewhat translucent material and with the added complexity of light reflected within the folds of material. This part is so complex in fact that it probably could not be painted in a day.

Given the apparent weaknesses in the execution of the hands, Rembrandt must have left the painting of these parts to an assistant in the sitter's absence.

91 Rembrandt and/or workshop?, **Portrait of a man**, 1633, canvas 128.5 x 100.5 cm. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie HdG 657; Br. 171; Bauch 363; Gerson 138; Br./Gerson 171; ***Corpus* II A 81**; Tümpel 199; see also Kassel 2006 no. 7 pp.102-107.
Inscription: bottom left ‹*Rembrandt / f* (followed by three dots) / *1633.*›

This painting raises several questions, none of them fully resolved.

In the first place there is the identity of the sitter. Ever since the mid-18th century, tradition has had it that this is the Dutch poet Jan Harmensz Krul (1602-1644), who was famous in Rembrandt's time. There is an engraved portrait of this poet known from 1634 (see Kassel 2006 p.105). Admittedly the man in the present painting displays some likeness to that portrait, but insufficient to be certain that it is the same person.

There are indications that the portrait could originally have been full-length: the canvas lacks cusping along the bottom edge, while the darker zone in the bottom right corner was painted later. Moreover, the detailed architectural elements to the left of the sitter are unusual for a knee-length portrayal (see **168**, **248a**). Whatever the case, it is hardly likely that a poet would have himself portrayed in such a monumental portrait (compare **250**).

Handwriting experts found it unlikely that the signature wedged between the man's left contour and the left side of the painting was applied by Rembrandt himself. This may suggest that it could have been copied from the missing piece of canvas.

The question of whether the painting is entirely from Rembrandt's hand cannot at this stage be answered, but I myself find it difficult to regard the collar, the cuffs and the man's hanging hand as autograph work by Rembrandt. The execution of the face is also problematic. It shows a peculiarly sculptural way of modelling and a manner of detailing that is unusual for Rembrandt (see *Corpus* II A81 fig. 3).

92 Rembrandt, **Portrait of a man wearing a red doublet**, 1633, panel 63.5 x 50.5 cm. Private collection. HdG -; Br. 176; Bauch 364; Gerson 151 (who had not seen the painting); Br./Gerson 176; Tümpel A 83 (as from Rembrandt's workshop); ***Corpus* IV Addendum 4**.
Inscription: in light brown on the right ‹Rembrandt . ft / 1633.›

This painting was purchased in 1954 by Amon G. Carter (1879-1955), the prominent collector of American art, shortly before his death. For decades the painting remained hanging unnoticed in the house of his widow. It resurfaced in 1994. A detailed description of its facture and the arguments for judging it to be an autograph work by Rembrandt can be found in *Corpus* IV Addendum 4 (pp. 640-645).

On Plate **92** places are to be found – mainly below right – where the ground is visible with remains of the dark underpainting on it. There are indications that the oval form of the image in this painting was painted on a rectangular panel in the same way that can still be seen with **122**. For a discussion of the costume and hairstyle of the sitter, see *Corpus* IV p. 645.

93 Rembrandt, **Portrait of a young woman**, 1633, panel 63.5 x 47.5 cm. Houston, The Museum of Fine Arts. HdG 873; Br. 340; Bauch 475; Gerson 146; Br./Gerson 340; ***Corpus* II A 84** and **pp. 63-64**; Tümpel 231.
Inscription: at the left above the shoulder ‹*Rembrandt. f / 1633.*›

The idea that **93** could be the pendant of **92** was first mooted by Valentiner. However, his sole reason for suggesting this was the fact that they are both painted panels which, in their present condition, have the same size. Otherwise there is no clear evidence for it.

94 Rembrandt, **Portrait of Saskia smiling**, 1633, panel 52.5 x 44.5 cm. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 608; Br. 97; Bauch 474; Gerson 134; Br./Gerson 97; ***Corpus* II A 76**; Tümpel 181; see also Broos 2012.
Inscription: in the left background, next to the breast, in grey ‹*Rembrandt. f* [t] / *1633*›

We are fortunate to have a portrait of Saskia intended as such, the very fine silver point drawing in Berlin which, like the present painting, also originated in 1633, (see the Plate to the left of **94**). From this drawing we know the most characteristic features of her physiognomy: her attractively small, rather wide-set eyes with the narrow upper eyelids and the slightly bulging lower lids, the small mouth, the narrow chin rounded at the tip, giving her a somewhat pointed face, and a slight double chin. All these facial characteristics are also seen in the young woman in the present painting and, in as far as they can be compared, also in

the profile portrait in Kassel **95**. We find the same features in the *Flora* in St. Petersburg **125**, in the woman sitting on Rembrandt's lap in the *Prodigal son* **135** and later in etched portraits and sketches like B. 19, 342, 347, 359, 365, 367 and the Dresden *Flora* **181**.

However, the woman who posed for the *tronie* from the Rijksmuseum **98**, incorrectly identified as Saskia, or for the woman in the *Flora* in London **138** is of a significantly different type, the type of woman we often see in Rembrandt's single-figure history pieces or allegories. That is a somewhat plump type of face that apparently answered to a 17th-century ideal of beauty, for we find that type also in works of Rubens and other painters.

As with Rembrandt's *Laughing Self-portrait* from *c.* 1628 **18** the facial expression in the present painting is not only convincingly rendered, but the affect illustrated is infectious – merry in the 1628 self-portrait **18**, happy and engaging in the present painting. In both paintings, as later with the *Self-portrait as the laughing Zeuxis* **302**, the transitoriness of such a fleeting moment is enlivened – surely deliberately – by the spontaneity of the brushwork.

Quite a bit has been sawn from the panel (consisting of three planks) on which the work under discussion here is painted. The most drastic effect this has had on the painting is that the young woman portrayed is now tilted several degrees to the left (which, incidentally, has rather enlivened her charming expression). Furthermore, the panel has at some time been sawn to an octagonal shape and at the same time a strip has been sawn from the top, with the result that the tip of the feather is now missing. Apparently this occurred in order to fit the painting into the rebate of a frame with a fairly round oval opening. Subsequently the panel was restored to a rectangular form. As so often with paintings treated in this fashion, the present painting has been somewhat deformed; yet it remains one of the most attractive paintings from Rembrandt's early Amsterdam years.

Fig. 1. Copy after **95**. Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerpen.

Fig. 2. Reconstruction of the original size of the painting in fig. 1 (see also **269** fig. 1).

95 Rembrandt, **Half-length portrait of Saskia van Uylenburgh**, *c.* 1633-1642, panel 99.5 x 78.8 cm. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 607; Br. 101; Bauch 489; Gerson 175; Br./Gerson 101; ***Corpus* II A 85**; Tümpel 182; see also Kassel 2006 no. 17.
Inscription: none

This painting is listed several times of the various probate inventories of the collection of the Landgrave Wilhelm VIII of Hessen-Kassel that were drawn up between 1705 and 1775. Of these, the description from 1775 is the most detailed. The measurements given there, when converted, are *c.* 128 x 104 cm and the painting is described as rounded above. This description differs markedly from the painting in its present form. Since *c.* 1810 it has been rectangular and measures 99.5 x 78.5 cm, i.e. *c.* 30 cm less in height and 26 cm less wide than the format indicated in 1775. Later changes in format are often found with paintings by Rembrandt, but in the present case this is highly significant information, not only for the present painting itself (henceforward referred to as the Kassel version), but also for the importance this portrait seems to have had for Rembrandt, and for our understanding of two other paintings referred to below whose existence is closely tied to the present painting (**fig. 1** and **269**).

During the preparation of the 2006 Kassel exhibition, the panel of the Kassel version **95** and its material history were investigated by the museum's restorers. They concluded that the painting could never have been much larger than it is today. It was therefore suggested by Gregor Weber that the 1775 measurements (mentioned above) perhaps referred to the painting in its frame, which could have been half-round above (Kassel 2006 p. 151). However, that conclusion is incompatible with the evidence of a free copy of the painting that is now in Antwerp (**fig. 1**). That copy, which is rectangular, measures 112 cm in height and 89 cm in width, i.e. 12.5 cm higher and almost 20 cm wider than the Kassel version in its present form. During X-radiographic investigation of the Antwerp copy, traces were found in the right top corner which unmistakably indicate that it was originally rounded above and must then have had a format which would have approximated the original format of the present painting as recorded in 1775 (**fig. 2**). On this basis, we may assert that the Kassel version has been substantially reduced in size with regard to the originally much larger painting, which was rounded above as described in the 1775 inventory.

This may seem to be a rather pointless juggling of facts but in this case it leads to the insight that this portrait of Rembrandt's young wife Saskia was probably an unusually ambitious project.

The further history of the painting after 1633 only serves to corroborate the impression that for Rembrandt this was apparently a highly personal project. Rembrandt may have worked on the portrait, with intermissions, up to 1642 and there were probably meaningful alterations introduced after Saskia's death. He changed the flowers that Saskia had initially held in her hand into what very much looks like a branch of rosemary. In the 17th century rosemary was seen as a sign of conjugal fidelity but it also stood for remembrance of someone deceased (*Corpus* II p. 437).

The further vicissitudes of the painting are just as intriguing as those during the first ten years of its existence. This history will be dealt with in the Note regarding the so-called *Flora* in the Metropolitan Museum **269**, which was painted around 1660. In that Note, the Antwerp copy will also be discussed in greater depth. Neither of these two replicas, either the one in Antwerp or the one in New York, was an exact copy after the Kassel version.

96 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait with gold chain**, 1633, panel 61 x 48.1 cm. Paris, Louvre. HdG 566; Br. 18; Bauch 303; Gerson 129; Br./Gerson 18; ***Corpus* II A 71**; Tümpel 162; see also Foucart 1982 p. 32; *R. Self* no. 35; ***Corpus* IV pp. 206-208**; Foucart 2009 p. 213.

Inscription: in the right background ‹*Rembrandt. f / .1633.*›

See the Note to **97**.

97 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait with beret and gold chain**, 1633, panel 70.4 x 54 cm. Paris, Louvre. HdG 567; Br. 19; Bauch 305; Gerson 142; Br./Gerson 19; ***Corpus* II A 72**; Tümpel 163; see also *R. Self* cat. 36; ***Corpus* IV pp. 206-217** and Foucart 2009, p. 213.
Inscription: in the shaded part of the right background ‹*Rembrandt. / f 1633*›

In 1633 Rembrandt must have decided to portray himself no longer in contemporary fashionable attire as in **66** and **69** but in costume that is more or less historical, at first rather vaguely but from 1639 onward more accurately so. One could speculate that this decision was connected with a problem that seems to have been in the air at the time, viz. the problem generated by the extremely rapid changes in contemporary fashion. This meant that one's appearance very soon became outdated, after a while perhaps even faintly ridiculous (see *Corpus* IV p. 204 Notes 287 and 288).

In this context, the work of Emilie Gordenker (in relation to Anthony van Dyck) on the tendency in (self) portraits toward the adoption of a more timeless costume, is highly relevant (Gordenker 2001 pp. 22-25 and 60). If one includes Rembrandt's 'hidden' self-portraits (*Corpus* IV pp. 140/141) and accepts the proposed dating of these works to between 1633 and 1635, then Rembrandt must have worked on a considerable number of painted self-portraits in antiquated dress during these three years. This remarkable level of production of self-portraits may well be correlated with Rembrandt's rapidly growing fame. However, the fact that some of these paintings were re-worked suggests that there had been an *over*production: it would seem that the 'sell-by date' of a self-portrait was limited because after a certain time it would no longer reflect an adequate likeness of its famous maker. In order to maintain their saleability such surplus self-portraits therefore needed to be re-worked (see Van de Wetering 2002/03 and *Corpus* IV p. 139).

98 Rembrandt, **Bust of a young woman**, 1633, panel 65 x 49 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. HdG 606; Br. 94; Bauch 473; Gerson 132; Br./Gerson 94; ***Corpus* II A 75**; Tümpel 180.
Inscription: below right in the background ‹*Rembrandt. ft. 1633*›

Ben Broos, in his book devoted to Saskia van Uylenburgh, (erroneously) reverts to the traditional identification of the present painting as a portrait of Saskia (Broos 2012 p. 106). See the Note to **94**.

99 Rembrandt and pupil (?), **Man in oriental costume**, *c.* 1633/1634, canvas 98 x 74 cm. Washington, National Gallery. HdG 351; Br. 180; Bauch 170; Gerson 182; Br./Gerson 180; ***Corpus* II B 8**; Tümpel A 38 (as a work from Rembrandt's workshop); see also Wheelock 1995 pp. 215-221.
Inscription: in the left background ‹*mbrandt.ft.*›. The <*Re*> of Rembrandt's name is missing because a canvas strip has been cut off.

This painting is evidently unfinished, even though it is signed. The clothes and the hands of the depicted Oriental are only roughly indicated with loose brushwork, while the face and remarkably colourful turban are worked out in great detail. There is another reason why the painting in its present state probably does not conform to the original intentions of its author. The almost total lack of cusping in the fabric of the linen support suggests that the painting was perhaps originally considerably larger, possibly even as monumental as the *Man in Oriental Costume ('The noble slav')* in the Metropolitan Museum **84**, which is *c.* 55 cm higher and 40 cm wider.

The boundary between the completed part and the unfinished part runs more or less horizontally across the figure's bust. Wheelock therefore suggested that the image was sketched by Rembrandt and that a pupil – possibly Govaert Flinck? – began the working out. But then the problem arises of how to explain the presence of a Rembrandt signature (in the left background in the finished part). Could this be one of those unfinished paintings which Rembrandt had accomplished to his own satisfaction and signed only when, perhaps, an art-lover wanted to purchase it? (On the *non-finito* with Rembrandt see *Painter at Work* p. 164 and *Corpus* V pp. 238-239.)

100 Rembrandt, **A young woman (Esther? Judith?) at her toilet**, 1633, canvas 110.5 x 94.3 cm. Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada. HdG 311; Br. 494; Bauch 9; Gerson 58; Br./Gerson 494; ***Corpus* II A 64**; Tümpel 8.
Inscription: ‹*Rembrant . f 1633 (?)*›

This painting most probably refers to a passage from the Old Testament Apocryphal Book of Judith: the city is besieged and all access to water has been cut off. Judith, a rich, beautiful and devout widow promises to carry out an exceptional deed to save the city. She prays to God to bless the work she is about to undertake.

> **Judith 10: 1-4** 'When Judith had ceased crying out to the God of Israel, and had ended all these words, she rose from where she lay prostrate and called her maid and went down into the house where she lived on sabbaths and on her feast days; and she removed the sackcloth which she had been wearing, and took off her widow's garments, and bathed her body with water, and anointed herself with precious ointment, and combed her hair and put on a tiara, and arrayed herself in her gayest apparel, which she used to wear while her husband Manasseh was living. And she put sandals on her feet, and put on her anklets and bracelets and rings, and her earrings and all her ornaments, and made herself very beautiful, to entice the eyes of all men who might see her.'

Although in many respects this painting closely resembles Rembrandt's paintings from his final years in Leiden, its relatively large format and broad treatment of large areas are representative of a new type in his oeuvre. The last figure of the date on the painting is obscure, but it has to be dated 1632/33, as the signature is written with a *t* rather than *dt.* There has been uncertainty over the subject, but if one accepts that the very richly dressed woman is a biblical figure together with her aged serving-woman, the most likely candidate is Judith. There is, however, no known iconographical tradition for this subject.

In the inventory of the widow of Captain Aldert Mathijsz drawn up in Amsterdam in 1682, a 'painting by Rembrandt of Queen Hester' was valued at 30 guilders (HdG *Urk.*, no. 355); it is of course impossible to check whether this mention relates to **100**.

101 Rembrandt, **Bellona**, 1633, canvas 127 x 97.5 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 196; Br. 467; Bauch 257; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 467 (not by Rembrandt); ***Corpus* II A 70**; Tümpel 103; see also Liedtke 2007 pp. 596-604.
Inscription: at the lower left ‹*Rembrandt f: / 1633*›

There has been a certain resistance among Rembrandt experts to the recognition of this *Bellona* as a work by Rembrandt. Gerson felt that

> 'the picture is too dull in expression and design and too awkwardly composed to be by Rembrandt.'

Privately, I have always compared the paintwork of the skirt and other parts with the decoration of a fairground puppet booth, and it has been suggested that Rembrandt might have had a bad Monday when he painted it.

The dissatisfaction with which it is widely regarded might be explained if it was painted as an occasional commission (for other such cases see **26** or **124**). If this is the case, it could be an allegorical work referring to peace and war and with a political or institutional background. Thus, Liedtke has suggested that it might have been commissioned by

> 'one of the princes, palaces, an army headquarters, a civic guard house, or the house of anyone with patriotic views; as well as artistic sophistication.'

The suggestion that this could be a work of artistic sophistication is surprising: not one of the pictorial problems that occupied Rembrandt's mind at this time is in evidence here – the disposition of light and shadow, composition, the plastic and spatial function of the contours such as one sees in the *Man in oriental costume* from the year before **84**, a work which Liedtke, surprisingly, mentions in the same breath as this painting.

102 Rembrandt, **Daniel refuses to worship the idol Baal/Bel**, 1633, panel 23.4 x 30.1 cm. Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum. HdG 50; Br. 491; Bauch 11; Gerson 59; Br./Gerson 491; ***Corpus* II A 67**; Tümpel 7; see also Tümpel 1967 no. 21.
Inscription: to the right beneath the table ‹*Rembrant f 1633*›

Daniel 14: 1-22 [quoted from the Catholic Bible] 'When King Astyages joined his ancestors, Cyrus of Persia succeeded him. Daniel was very close to the king, who respected him more than any of his other friends. Now, in Babylon there was an idol called Bel, to which twelve bushels of the finest flour, forty sheep and six measures of wine were offered every day. The king venerated this idol and used to go and worship it every day. Daniel, however, worshipped his own God. 'Why do you not worship Bel?' the king asked Daniel. 'I do not worship idols made by human hand,' Daniel replied, 'I worship the living God who made heaven and earth and who is lord over all living creatures.' 'Do you not believe, then,' said the king, 'that Bel is a living god? Can you not see how much he eats and drinks each day?' Daniel laughed. 'Your Majesty,' he said, 'do not be taken in; he is clay inside, and bronze outside, and has never eaten or drunk anything.' This made the king angry; he summoned his priests, 'Tell me who eats all this food,' he said, 'or die. Prove to me that Bel really eats it, and I will have Daniel put to death for blaspheming him.'
Daniel said to the king, 'Let it be as you say.' There were seventy of these priests, to say nothing of their wives and children. The king went to the temple of Bel, taking Daniel with him. The priests of Bel said to him, 'We shall now go out, and you, Your Majesty, will lay out the meal and mix the wine and set it out. Then, lock the door and seal it with your personal seal. If, when you return in the morning, you do not find that everything has been eaten by Bel, let us be put to death; otherwise let Daniel, that slanderer!' They were thinking – hence their confidence – of a secret entrance which they had made under the table, and by which they came in regularly and took the offerings away. When the priests had gone and the king had set out the food for Bel, Daniel made his servants bring ashes and spread them all over the temple floor, with no other witness than the king. They then left the building, shut the door and, sealing it with the king's seal, went away. That night, as usual, the priests came with their wives and children; they ate and drank everything. The king was up very early next morning, and Daniel with him. 'Daniel,' said the king, 'are the seals intact?' 'They are intact, Your Majesty,' he replied. The king then opened the door and, taking one look at the table, exclaimed, 'You are great, O Bel! There is no deception in you!' But Daniel laughed; and, restraining the king from going in any further, he said, 'Look at the floor and take note whose footmarks these are!' 'I can see the footmarks of men, of women and of children,' said the king, and angrily ordered the priests to be arrested, with their wives and children. They then showed him the secret door through which they used to come and take what was on the table. The king had them put to death and handed Bel over to Daniel who destroyed both the idol and its temple.'

This may be the first detective story in the history of mankind. During the course of his research on the iconographic tradition of this painting, Hans van de Waal came across a series of prints with the story of Daniel after designs by Maerten van Heemskerck (Hollstein X pp. 534-543). Rembrandt must have known these prints and used one or two of them (**fig. 1**), according to Tümpel – as the starting point for this small painting (Tümpel 1967 no. 21). The reference in an inventory from 1650 to '*A small painting of Daniel by Rembrandt in a black frame*' (*Doc.* 1650/1) probably refers to this painting. As with other biblical histories that Rembrandt illustrated around 1633, this story is about the strength of faith in the invisible God of the Old and the New Testament (see also **105**, **127**).

Fig. 1. Ph. Galle (?) after Maerten van Heemskerck. *Daniel refuses to worship the idol Baal/Bel.* Engraving.

103 Rembrandt, **Bust of an old man** (grisaille), 1633, paper stuck to panel 10.6 x 7.2 cm. Private collection. HdG 369; Br. 183; Bauch 153; Gerson 136; Br./Gerson 183; ***Corpus* II A 74**; Tümpel 134; Bl. cat. 9.
Inscription: at the upper left ‹*Rembrandt*› and at the upper right ‹.*1633.*›

In *Corpus* II A 74 it is suggested that this tiny painting on paper could have been taken from its original context, originally having been part of, for example, an *Album Amicorum*, comparable with Rembrandt's drawing of almost the same size with the motto '*A pious mind places honor above wealth. Rembrandt Amsterdam'. 1634* in Burchard Grossman's Album (*Doc.* 1634/6) (**fig. 1**). In view of the fact that the present small grisaille is painted on paper and displays a signature and date that are clearly placed in the overall lay-out of the image, this would still seem to be the most likely explanation for the existence of this minimal work.

Fig. 1. (see text Note **103**)

For this kind of contribution to such an album, see also *Doc.* 1661/3.

104 Rembrandt, **Bust of a man in oriental dress**, 1633, panel 85.8 x 63.8 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek. HdG 348; Br. 178; Bauch 155; Gerson 152; Br./Gerson 178; ***Corpus* II A 73**; Tümpel 133.
Inscription: in the left background ‹*Rembrandt. f. /. 1633*›

As explained in *Corpus* II A 73, the choice of the subject for a painting such as this was almost certainly a product of a general fascination of the time with the Orient. It offered the painter a marvelous opportunity to paint ornamental jewelry and rich materials. For the same reason there would undoubtedly have been a market for them. But Rembrandt, who during this period mainly devoted his time to painting portraits of the Dutch bourgeoisie in their (anything but colourful) Sunday best, and small-scale history pieces *en grisaille*, would have seen the opportunity to paint a life-size Oriental figure (as also in the case of **98**) as an investment in the future. He may have already entertained the ambition to paint life-size history pieces in a subsequent stage of his career – which in fact he did immediately after leaving Uylenburgh in 1635 (cf. **140**, **143**, **148**).

105 Rembrandt, **Christ in the storm on the Lake of Galilee**, 1633, canvas 160 x 128 cm. Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (stolen). HdG 103; Br. 547; Bauch 58; Gerson 60; Br./Gerson 547; ***Corpus* II A 68**; Tümpel 45; ***Corpus* V p. 183.**
Inscription: along the upper edge of the rudder ‹*Rembrant. f / 1633*›

Jesus is followed by crowds seeking to be healed.

> **Matthew 8: 18** and **Matthew 8: 23-26** 'And when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave a command to depart to the other side." ... 'Now when He got into a boat, His disciples followed Him. And suddenly a great tempest arose on the sea, so that the boat was covered with the waves. But He was asleep. Then His disciples came to *Him* and awoke Him, saying, "Lord, save us! We are perishing!" But He said to them, "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" Then He arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm.'
> (See also Mark 4: 35-40 and Luke 8: 22-25)

If this painting is considered together with the three paintings reproduced in **49**, **50**, **130**, **130A** from the period 1631-'34, they appear to constitute a category in themselves of Landscapes/Seascapes, in which

> *'it is advisable to know the story [the history that you are going to paint] in advance-according to the Holy* Writ [the Bible] or the poets [Classical mythology], *as it suits you – the better to adapt your landscape to it'* (KvM *Grondt* Cap. 8:41; see also *Corpus* V p. 82).

Seen in this perspective, this painting also fits the pattern of Rembrandt's exploration of the 'basic aspects of the art of painting (the *Gronden*) to which he devoted his years in Leiden and to a more limited extent in the early Amsterdam years (*Corpus* V Chapter I and II).

Of course, it is not only the stormy seascape which is mastered here but also the use of '*bevriende kleuren*' (related colours/tones) (see the Note to **27**). It was Rembrandt's development of this principle of 'related colours' that lent such pictorial power to his *Judas repentant* **23** the *Two old men disputing* **27** and his *Self-portrait* in Boston **29**, where the choice of colours of costumes is combined in such a way that this light effect is given a more powerful charge (see also **148**).

In this painting, as in the *Christ with his disciples in the garden of Gethsemane* **111** and in the *Incredulity of Thomas* in Moscow **127** the disciples are shown in all their faint-heartedness. This is hardly likely to be by chance. While these last two works seem to have been painted in a Mennonite context, we can be less certain with the present painting: we do not know who might have commissioned it. But given Rembrandt's immersion in Mennonite circles during this period, it is a reasonable speculation that this painting originated in the same context (see also the Note to **107**).

106 Rembrandt, **The Raising of the Cross** (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik, see p. 178) 1633, canvas 95.7 x 72.2 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek. HdG 130; Br. 548; Bauch 57; Gerson 64; Br./Gerson 548; ***Corpus* II A 69**; Tümpel 46; ***Corpus* V pp. 176-185**; see also *M/W* cat. 13.
Inscription: none

> **Matthew 27: 37-43** 'And they put up over His head the accusation written against Him: THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS. Then two robbers were crucified with Him, one on the right and another on the left. And those who passed by blasphemed Him, wagging their heads and saying, "You who destroy the temple and build *it* in three days, save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross." Likewise the chief priests also, mocking with the scribes and elders, said, "He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He is the King of Israel, let Him now come down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now if He will have Him; for He said, 'I am the Son of God.'" '

Tümpel, writing about the inclusion of a clearly recognizable Rembrandt in the raising of the cross, comments: 'In the painting *The raising of the Cross*, in accordance with the theology of the time Rembrandt depicted himself as one of the crucifixion squad raising the Cross' (Tümpel p. 136). But one can also put this in another context. Arnold Houbraken writes about the incorporation of the self-portraits of artists in history pieces: '*certainly, when their* [the artists'] *own likenesses were observed in the old Historical paintings, for the erudite art-lovers ... this was most gratifying*' (Houbraken II pp. 178-179).

If one accepts that Rembrandt's Passion series should be seen as part of Frederik Hendrik's art collection rather than as a set of devotional pieces, Houbraken's remark is perhaps more relevant here than Tümpel's. However, one should also keep in mind the tendency in the 17th century to read multiple meanings into one and the same image.

107 Rembrandt, **The Descent from the Cross** (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik, see p. 178) 1632/1633, panel 89.6 x 65 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek. HdG 134; Br. 550; Bauch 56; Gerson 65; Br./Gerson 550; ***Corpus* II A 65**; Tümpel 47; ***Corpus* V pp. 176-185**.
Inscription: none

The events on Golgotha are so crucial to Christian doctrine and yet there is no unambiguous text to be found in the New Testament which covers the entire narrative import of a painting like the one discussed here. The visual tradition concerning these events that gradually developed has been partly determined by legends, such as the fainting of Mary, Jesus' mother, that are not in fact found in the Bible. The text which comes closest as a description of the events depicted here is found in:

> **Luke 23: 49-53** 'But all His acquaintances, and the women who followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance, watching these things. Now behold, there was a man named Joseph, a council member, a good and just man. He had not consented to their decision and deed. He was from Arimathea, a city of the Jews, who himself was also waiting for the kingdom of God. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then he took it down, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a tomb that was hewn out of the rock, where no one had ever lain before.'

The creation of the *Passion* series for Frederik Hendrik would drag on for fifteen years, no doubt much longer than was originally estimated (after **106** and **107** came **145** in 1636, **162** and **163** in 1639, **211a** and **211b** in 1646). However, that project soon branched off into another, exceptionally ambitious – not to say megalomanic – project for a series of monumental prints. Only two of these were actually executed (**fig. 3** and **112** (fig. 1)) while we know of certainly four, possibly even six or seven, grisailles made in preparation for prints which, although planned, were never executed (see below).

This derivative project may have had its origin in the present painting. In this *Descent from the Cross*, as with the *Christ on the Cross* **52**, Rembrandt was emulating Rubens. As his reference point he took Vorsterman's print after Rubens' *Descent from the Cross* in Antwerp cathedral (**fig. 1**). Rubens' heroic pathos was fundamentally transformed by Rembrandt into a powerful realism that evokes in the viewer a deep sense of involvement in Christ's suffering.

Fig. 1. L. Vorsterman, enraving after P.P. Rubens *The Descent from the Cross.*

Early in 1633 a reproduction print after the painting was made by J.G. van Vliet. Some details may have been executed or corrected by Rembrandt himself. It seems that during the process of etching that plate, the acid bite was a disaster (**fig. 2**) and so, in the same year, Van Vliet (and Rembrandt) returned to the intended reproduction print a second time, working on a new plate which turned out very well (**fig. 3**) (*R. Printmaker* cat. 22-23).

Fig. 2. J.G. van Vliet and Rembrandt, *The Descent from the Cross*, 1633, etching, B. 81 (first plate). Miscarried due to a fault in the etching process.

Fig. 3. J.G. van Vliet and Rembrandt, *The Descent from the Cross*, etching, 1633, B. 81 (second plate).

Whereas Rembrandt had applied his signature to the first (miscarried) plate (**fig. 2**) with his name only, he now added to his signature the words *cum pryvlo* (*pryvilegio)*, clear evidence of Rembrandt's ambition with this powerful 'invention'. In the third state of the print, which probably appeared in the same year, the following text was engraved after Rembrandt's *cum pryvlo: 'Amstelodami Hendrickus Ulenburgensis Excudebat'* (Hendrick Uylenburgh from Amsterdam is the publisher [of this print]). It would therefore seem that Rembrandt and Uylenburgh together had great plans for this print or that it was the launch of a major project for more prints whose copyright had to be safeguarded (Van de Wetering 2000/01).

It is significant in this context that the miscarried print (**fig. 2**), like the painting of the *Descent from the Cross* **107** after which it was copied, was half-round above, whereas the newly made print was rectangular (**fig. 3**). This is important because in 1634 Rembrandt made a grisaille – the *Ecce Homo* **112** – which resulted in a print (**112** fig. 1). This print has the same format as the second, rectangular print after the *Descent from the Cross* (**fig. 3**). As both prints are very large, their thematic relationship eventually raised the surmise that they were intended as pendants or possibly as the beginning of a series. This surmise was strengthened by the fact, mentioned above, that in the same period a number of almost equally large grisailles were produced. (These were to a greater or lesser extent cut down in size by later hands: **108**, **109**, **111**, **112** and in one case enlarged by Rembrandt himself **110**). The grisailles **113** and **114** probably also belong to this group, as well as a lost *Washing of Feet* (see Bredius 1910b).

108 Rembrandt, **Joseph telling his dreams** (grisaille), *c.* 1634, paper stuck on card 55.8 x 39.7 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. HdG 14; Br. 504; Bauch 19; Gerson 86; Br./Gerson 504; ***Corpus* II A 66**; Tümpel 16; ***Corpus* V pp. 176-185**.
Inscription: At the bottom on the extreme right, in brown paint ‹*R*[..]*brandt. f :163*[.]›

> **Genesis 37: 1-11** 'Now Jacob dwelt in the land where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. This is the history of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brothers. And the lad was with the sons of Bilhah and the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to his father. Now Israel [Jacob] loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age. Also he made him a tunic of many colors. But when

his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him. Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more. So he said to them, "Please hear this dream which I have dreamed: There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf." And his brothers said to him, "Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words. Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me." So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?" And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind.'

During the Rembrandt Research Project's work on the third Volume of *A Corpus*, the idea that the grisailles mentioned in the Note to **107** were indeed part of a separate, large-scale project-in-the-making for a Passion series, a project that had branched off from the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik, came to seem increasingly obvious. There remained, however, an obstacle to this idea: among these grisailles there was one scene from the Old Testament. It was for this reason that the grisailles referred to were long considered (also by the RRP during the work on the second Volume of *A Corpus*) to be separate paintings in their own right, albeit of the existing grisaille type of painting. Only during the work on Volume III did it dawn on us that there must be some connection between these works (see *Corpus* III pp. 79-80). The fact that they were executed on paper or loose scraps of canvas added to the growing insight that they were not paintings in their own right. The fact that both the *Ecce Homo* print **112** (fig. 1) and the print after the *Descent from the Cross* **107** (fig. 3) were generally attributed to Rembrandt had also helped to obscure the nature of this connection. Only when Royalton-Kisch demonstrated that these two etchings were largely executed by Van Vliet (Royalton-Kisch 1984) did it become clear that they were not entirely independent works, but were essentially part of a Passion series of prints, to be executed by a professional printmaker (with help of Rembrandt) on the basis of designs by Rembrandt.

The case became all the stronger when it was realized that the scene with *Joseph telling his dreams* **108** could be incorporated in this context: even though it comes from the Old Testament, this scene is entirely compatible with a Passion series. Albrecht Dürer's so called Small Passion, after all, begins with two scenes from the Old Testament, the *Fall of Man*, and the *Expulsion from Paradise*, the very cause of Christ's redemption of mankind from original sin through his death and resurrection. The story of Joseph was considered one of the most striking prefigurations of the Life and Passion of Christ, in which Joseph's brothers were not only the jealous band who originally wanted to kill Joseph (the Jewish priests) but also those, (prefigurating Christs disciples), who later knelt in supplication before him when he was Governor of Egypt. The story of Joseph was of special significance to the Mennonite Brotherhood to which Hendrick Uylenburgh belonged, because the brethren identified strongly with the band of Christ's disciples.

The following is quoted from Shelley Perlove's essay in *Pursuit of Faith* (Perlove 2010 pp.18-22): 'The Mennonite Brotherhood was a Dutch Anabaptist movement, named after its 16th-century Friesian founder Menno Simonsz. (*c.* 1496-1561). Like all (Ana)baptists, the Mennonites of the 17th century (also known as *Doopsgezinden*, the People of Baptism) rejected infant baptism, basing their membership on the confession and baptism of adult converts. Their community was a loose network of congregations without hierarchy or clerical authority; they rejected any such intermediary in their relationship to God. In fact, Mennonites strongly identified with Christ's disciples, in imitation of whom they would meet in small groups for prayer, the confession of sins, to sermonize, and to enact their rituals of the breaking of bread and the washing of each other's feet. This apostolic model was the bedrock of their community and church, to whose purity they were committed as well as to ethical purity in their conduct in the world.

In the Calvinist Republic of the 17th century, Mennonites were a tolerated minority. Rather like the Jews or Catholics, they were allowed to practice their religion as long as it was done discretely, in hidden churches. They were not admitted to the professions or guilds. Many became wealthy merchants. Conspicuously many of the portraits of wealthy Amsterdam citizens whose portraits Rembrandt painted whilst working with Uylenburgh, himself a Mennonite, were members of this community. Rembrandt was not himself a Mennonite. The idea that he was seems to have originated with Bernhard Keil (1624-1687), a Danish artist in Rembrandt's studio, who during his stay in Italy between 1651 and 1687 erroneously told the Italian art-lover and admirer of Rembrandt etchings Filippo Baldinucci that the Dutch painter was a member of this group' (see also the Note to **110**).

* **109** Rembrandt, **The adoration of the Magi** (grisaille), *c.* 1633, oil on paper pasted on canvas 44.8 x 39.1 cm. St. Petersburg, Hermitage. HdG -; Br. -; Bauch -; Gerson -; Br./Gerson -; ***Corpus* II C 46** (as an old copy, perhaps done in Rembrandt's studio)**;** Tümpel –; ***Corpus* V pp. 176-185 esp. p. 180-181**; see also Linnik 1969; *Soviet Museums* no. 4.

Inscription: at the lower centre beneath the turban ‹*Rembrandt. f 1632.*› no doubt added by a later hand

Matthew 2: 9-11 'When they [the Magi from the East] heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshipped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.'

This grisaille on paper, which was recognized only in 1969 as a possible Rembrandt (Linnik 1969), should also be seen in the context of preparations for the planned series (see the Note to **107**). Previously, the Rembrandt Research Project had not accepted this gri-

Fig. 1. X-ray of **109**

saille as an autograph work by Rembrandt (see *Corpus* II C 46). When *Corpus* II was published, the possibility of a close connection between the various grisailles from the 1630's had not yet been realized.

The genesis of this painting typifies Rembrandt's way of working. Passages that were originally lighter were toned down, such as parts of the foreground terrain, and in the background behind a few silhouetted figures in the middle ground (see **fig. 1**). Probably with the same end in view, i.e. to reduce the number of lit passages for the sake of a more concentrated lighting, a darkly clad page was added behind the kneeling Magus.

The different phases of this genesis, evidence of a creative process suggestive of Rembrandt, were already known to the members of the original Rembrandt Research Project. Today these observations regarding the work's genesis weigh heavily in favour of an attribution to Rembrandt, but at the time of work on Volume II the execution in places was deemed by Bruyn and Levie to be unsatisfactory and this was judged to weigh more heavily against the attribution. If we are to gain further insight into the painting's execution and pictorial qualities the distorting layer of varnish and local overpainting will first have to be removed. The radical changes during the genesis of this work and the probability, verging on certainty, that the work must be seen in the context of the incomplete series of prints with episodes from the life and Passion of Christ (see **108** - **114**) are strong arguments in favour of its attribution to Rembrandt.

110 Rembrandt, **John the Baptist preaching** (grisaille), *c.* 1633/1634, canvas (enlarged) stuck on panel 62.7 x 81.1 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 97; Br. 555; Bauch 63; Gerson 71; Br./Gerson 555; Tümpel 52; ***Corpus* III A 106**; ***Corpus* V pp. 176-185**; see also *M/W* cat. 20; Van de Wetering 2000/01.
Inscription: none

The preaching of John the Baptist is related in the Gospels of Mark, Matthew and Luke.

> **Mark 1: 4-8** 'John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair and with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And he preached, saying, "There comes One after me who is mightier than I, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to stoop down and loose. I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."'

See also Matthew 3: 1-8, 11-12 and Luke 3: 2-6, 15-16. Judging from the various costumes and attributes on display, all nations appear to be represented in the crowd. The painting depicts the moment before the 30 year-old Christ appeared and was baptized by John in the River Jordan.

In the Anabaptist interpretation of adult baptism, the person to be baptized was, in their own terminology, '*announcing through external baptism by water another, far higher baptism, that of the conversion, improvement, the inward baptism of the heart, the baptism in Christ ... a baptism of heart and mind.*' Anabaptists therefore opposed the baptism of children too young to be able to affirm their conversion. Menno Simonsz (1496-1561), founder of the Mennonite movement, was remarkably explicit about the position of children in this context, writing that Christ and the apostles '*... teach that this new birth happens through God's word ... which word is not for deaf, simple and foolish children.*' In the margin to this passage is written: '*Infantes non regenerantur*' (children are not reborn).

Looking at the painting with this in mind one is struck by the fact that in all the small scenes with some ten children, which may at first seem to be innocent vignettes, the children are in fact being silly or naughty, while God's word passes them by. They are sleeping, crying or fighting, while below right a girl adorns a baby with a wreath, a boy is shown fishing (a symbol of indolence), a small child is defaecating. On the far left a child on its mother's lap, together with two heathens on the extreme left, are watching scenes of dogs copulating and fighting.

No artist observed children so intently or depicted them with such care as Rembrandt did, not only in many drawings but also in this painting. Nevertheless, it is hard to believe that he sympathized with the Mennonite view of baptism, since his own children were baptized soon after they were born.

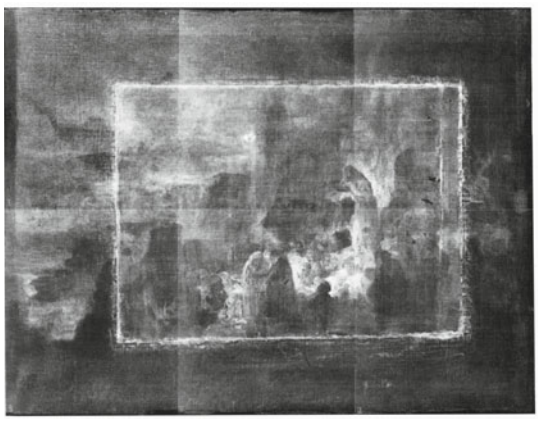


Fig. 1. X-ray of **110**

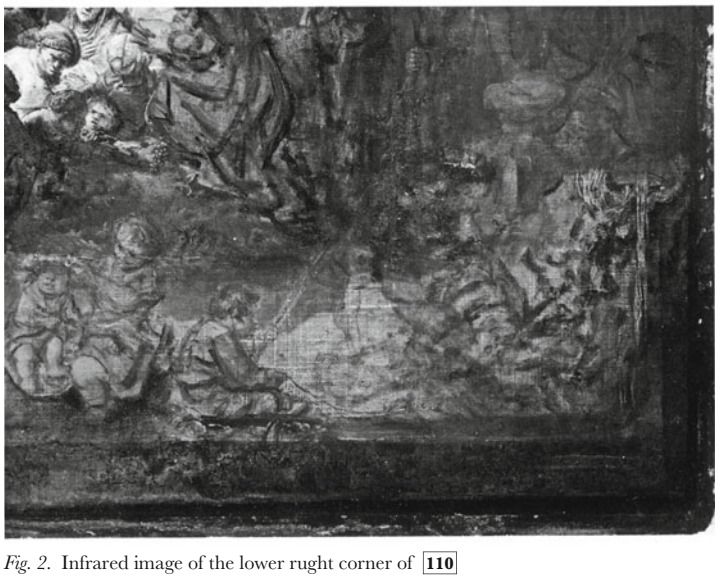


Fig. 2. Infrared image of the lower rught corner of **110**

This painting was long covered by a thick, discolouring layer of varnish, which was only removed in 2005. In its cleaned state, it proves to be one of the most brilliant of Rembrandt's early paintings, one that attracted attention in his own time, even though it was no more than a grisaille (Houbraken I p. 261). Unusually, Rembrandt himself enlarged this grisaille around 1640 (**fig. 1**) and even painted a frame round it (**fig. 2**). He also made a drawing for a larger frame (**fig. 3**). Does this mean that when the project for the etched Passion

Fig. 3. Ben. 969.

series failed, he then decided to sell it as a painting in its own right? It appears for the first time in 1658 in the collection of Jan Six (*Doc.* 1658/18), but it is unlikely that it was Six who requested that it should be enlarged in this way. There are just as many (if not more) stupid, lazy, silly, naughty, dirty children (and dogs) painted on the added piece from *c.* 1640 as on the central part, which was painted around 1634 in the Mennonite context. Does that perhaps suggest that an earlier purchasing client was a Mennonite who wanted to give extra emphasis to this aspect?

111 Rembrandt, **Christ and his disciples in Gethsemane**, 1634, grisaille in pen and brown ink with brown and other washes and red and black chalk on paper 35.7 x 48.8 cm. Haarlem, Teyler Museum. Ben. 89; see also Plomp 1997.

Luke 22: 39-41 'Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him. When He came to the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed' (see also Matthew 26: 36 and Mark 14: 32).

The uncommonly large scale of the figures and the remarkably refined distinctions of tonal relations within this work, which are rather unusual compared to the manner of working in the vast majority of Rembrandt's drawings, have always puzzled specialists in the field of Rembrandt drawings. Benesch, for instance, suggested that he had made it in preparation for a painting (Benesch no. 89). My own suggestion is that it is a grisaille, this time not executed with oil paint but with a variety of drawing materials in preparation for a print (to be executed by a specialized printmaker) which would have been one of the series of large prints with the Life and Passion of Jesus that has been tentatively reconstructed here (see the Notes to **107** and **108** and p. 178).

The image of Christ surrounded by all his disciples (apart from Judas) in the Garden of Gethsemane is extremely rare. In this context, it is interesting that the episode of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane is treated differently in each of the three New Testament Gospels in which it is related. The accounts in Matthew and Mark both agree that Jesus said to the assembled disciples "Sit here while I pray" and that three disciples then accompanied him to the garden, where they several times fell asleep while Jesus prayed in agony to God. This scene was twice later illustrated by Rembrandt (B. 75 and Ben. 899).

In neither Matthew nor Mark does Jesus address all the disciples with a more specific message, as he appears to do in the drawing, but he does so in Luke when he says 'Pray, lest you fall into temptation'. In the drawing, signs of human weakness are already visible: one of the disciples has fallen asleep while Jesus is speaking, while another disciple in the left foreground turns away from Jesus to hide a yawn.

The fact that Luke's version was chosen for this grisaille, showing Christ with all his disciples rather than only three, is consistent with my hypothesis that the series of planned etching had a Mennonite bias. The Mennonite brethren, who professed their faith without the intermediary of a priest or pastor, identified themselves with Christ's disciples in a dual sense: not only because the latter had been chosen for their belief, but also because they had remained weak and vulnerable to temptation.

The drawing is signed by Rembrandt and dated 1634, which is rare with his drawings. This inscription was perhaps added at the request of a collector who wanted to acquire the work after the collapse of the project for the Passion series in large prints.

At the same time that the signature and date were applied a fence was sketched – apparently to suggest the closed nature of the garden. In my investigation of the drawing I found evidence that strips had been cut from the right and bottom sides of the paper. On the right strip, probably, was the missing eleventh disciple.

112 Rembrandt, **Ecce Homo** (grisaille), 1634, oil paint on paper stuck on canvas 54.5 x 44.5 cm. London, National Gallery. HdG 128; Br. 546; Bauch 62; Gerson 72; Br./Gerson 546; ***Corpus* II A 89**; Tümpel 50; ***Corpus* V pp. 176-185**; see also Royalton-Kisch 1984; Brown 1991 pp. 346-349; *M/W* cat. 15; *Art in the Making II* no. 4.
Inscription: on the right, below the face of the clock ‹*Rembrandt. f . / 1634*›

John 19: 4-9 'Pilate then went out again, and said to them, "Behold, I am bringing Him out to you, that you may know that I find no fault in Him." Then Jesus came out, wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe. And *Pilate* said to them, "Behold the Man!" Therefore, when the chief priests and officers saw Him, they cried out, saying, "Crucify *Him,* crucify *Him!*" Pilate said to them, "You take Him and crucify *Him,* for I find no fault in Him." The Jews answered him, "We have a law, and according to our law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God." Therefore, when Pilate heard that saying, he was the more afraid, and went again into the Praetorium, and said to Jesus, "Where are You from?"' But when Pilate interrogates him, Jesus does not answer.'

John 19: 12-16 'From then on Pilate sought to release Him, but the Jews cried out, saying, "If you let this Man go, you are not Caesar's friend. Whoever makes himself a king speaks against Caesar. When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he brought Jesus out and sat down in the judgment seat in a place that is called *The* Pavement, but in Hebrew, Gabbatha. Now it was the Preparation Day of the Passover, and about the sixth hour. And he said to the Jews, "Behold your King!" But they cried out, "Away with *Him,* away with *Him!* Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar!" Then he delivered Him to them to be crucified. So they took Jesus and led *Him* away.'

Fig. 1. Rembrandt and J.G. van Vliet, *Ecce Homo*, etching and burin, 1636, B. 77.

This is the only grisaille from the intended Passion series that was physically used for the execution of one of the planned etchings (**fig. 1**). The etching has the same format as this grisaille and the indentations in the paint, caused by the tracing of the grisaille on to the etching plate, are easily visible in the relief of the paint.

113 Rembrandt, **The Lamentation** (grisaille), *c.* 1633/1634, paper on canvas; enlarged by another hand on a panel measuring 31.9 x 26.7 cm. London, National Gallery. HdG 136; Br. 565; Bauch 69; Gerson 89; Br./Gerson 565; Tümpel 62; ***Corpus* III A 107**; see also Brown 1991 pp. 321-328; *Art in the Making II* no. 7.
Inscription: none

The scene as depicted here does not correspond to any specific Biblical text, but is based on an old iconographic tradition. Rembrandt has additionally worked in narrative elements that refer to other moments in the Passion story. Some of the changes he made could be described as an increasing amplification of the central theme by adding motifs that represented other episodes in the Passion story whilst still observing the classical dramatic unity of time, space and action.

For my detailed analysis of the genesis, iconography and narrative structure of this grisaille, see *Corpus* III A 107.

Fig. 1. The painting **113** in its present form.

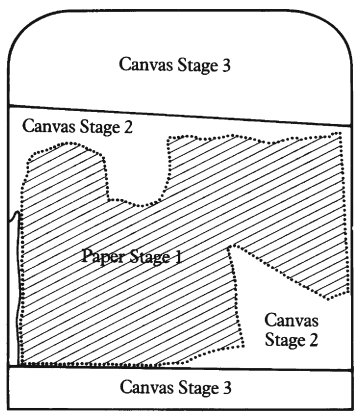


Fig. 2. Diagram showing the original paper and the canvas pieces mounted on the oak panel.

Together with the *Entombment* **114** this is one of two considerably smaller grisailles, which may also be related to the putative Passion series discussed above. In favour of this suggestion one could cite the fact that they are grisailles; that they represent moments in the Passion that would fit into the series proposed in the commentary of **107**; and that they seem to have originated in the same period as the other grisailles. Moreover, this *Lamentation* in its first form was on paper (see **figs. 1** and **2**), and must have been cropped by Rembrandt himself. We don't know how large that paper was originally, and thus on what scale the work was conceived. Rembrandt apparently experienced major difficulties with the completion of this work (see *Corpus* III A 107). Simultaneously with the present grisaille he worked on a similar design (**fig. 3**). These two designs (**113** and **fig. 3**) are of the same size as two of Rembrandt's most ambitious etchings from that period: the *Good Samaritan* from 1633 (B. 98) and the *Angel appearing to the shepherds* from 1634 (B. 44). Rembrandt could have continued working on the present work and **fig. 3** with another series in mind.

Fig. 3. Rembrandt, *The Lamentation*, drawing, London, British Museum.

(For a further discussion of this connection, see *Corpus* V p. 193)

114 Rembrandt, **The Entombment** (grisaille), *c.* 1633/1634, panel 32.1 x 40.3 cm. Glasgow, Hunterian Museum. HdG 139; Br. 554; Bauch 74; Gerson 217; Br./Gerson 554; Tümpel 59; ***Corpus* III A 105**; ***Corpus* IV pp. 176-185**; see also Black 2012.
Inscription: none

John 19: 38-42 'After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave *him* permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus. And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds. Then they took the body of Jesus, and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury. Now in the place where He was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid. So there they laid Jesus, because of the Jews' Preparation *Day*, for the tomb was nearby'

Since the entombment of Christ took place after dark it could be that in this grisaille Rembrandt, always frugal with his painting materials, only worked out the bottom half of the design for the intended print. Although the etching was never realized, Rembrandt did subsequently develop the invention of the present grisaille – with a certain freedom – in the *Entombment* for the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik **162**. In the same way, and also in 1639, he would work out the *Joseph telling his dream* **108** in the etching B. 37. For the possibility that this grisaille, like **113**, was produced with another series in mind see the Note to **113**.

* **115** Rembrandt, **Portrait of a young bachelor**, 1634, panel 70 x 52 cm. St. Petersburg, Hermitage. HdG 777; Br. 196; Bauch 371; Gerson 166; Br./Gerson 196; ***Corpus* II C 78** (as from Rembrandt's studio); Tümpel A 87 (as from Rembrandt's studio); see also *Soviet Museums* no. 6.
Inscription: in the right background above the shoulder ‹*Rembrandt ft. 1634*›

When in 2006 I had the opportunity to investigate this painting under favourable conditions I came to the conclusion that apart from the collar, which seems to have been painted by a studio assistant, the other parts of the painting are from the hand of Rembrandt himself. The painting has here been given the title *Portrait of a bachelor* because the position of the torso, turned to the left, rules out the possibility that there could have been a pendant woman's portrait. This refutes the suggestion proposed in *Soviet Museums* no. 6 that the *Portrait of a woman* in Edinburgh (Br. 345) could be the companion piece of the present painting.

116 Rembrandt, **Portrait of an 83-year-old woman (possibly Aechje Claesdr, mother of Dirck Jansz Pesser)**, 1634, panel 68.7 x 53.8 cm. London, National Gallery. HdG 856; Br. 343; Bauch 476; Gerson 156; Br./Gerson 343; ***Corpus* II A 104**; Tümpel 234; see also Brown 1991, pp. 341-343; *Art in the Making II* no. 3.
Inscriptions: in the right background ‹*Rembrandt.ft / 1634*›, in the left background <*AE.* (in monogram) *SVE.* (the last two letters in monogram) *83*>

For the possible identification of the sitter, see Dudok van Heel 1992; Dudok van Heel 1994 p. 337. If Dudok van Heel's identification of the woman portrayed here is correct, this painting, together with **117a/b**, could have originated during Rembrandt's trip to Rotterdam (*Doc.* 1634/7).

117a Rembrandt, **Portrait of Dirck Jansz Pesser** (companion piece to **117b**), 1634, panel 71 x 53 cm. Los Angeles County Museum of Art. HdG 739; Br. 194; Bauch 374; Gerson 168; Br./Gerson 194; ***Corpus* II A 102**; Tümpel 203.
Inscription: to the right next to the body in the cast shadow ‹*Rembrandt.ft. / 1634.*›

117b Rembrandt, **Portrait of Haesje Jacobsdr van Cleyburg** (companion piece to **117a**), 1634, panel 71 x 53 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. HdG 882; Br. 354; Bauch 492; Gerson 169; Br./Gerson 354; ***Corpus* II A 103**; Tümpel 239; see also *Painter at Work*, pp. 169-173.
Inscription: to the right in the cast shadow on the background ‹*Rembran.. / f. 163(4)*›

For the identification of this couple, see *Corpus* II A 102.

The brewer Dirck Jansz Pesser (1587-1651) lived with his wife, Haesje van Cleyburg (1547-1641) in Rotterdam. He was probably an art lover, as the probate inventory of their only daughter lists a large and important collection of paintings including '*Een Parcelsus, een Half Figuur door Rembrandt*' ['A Paracelsus, a half-figure by Rembrandt'] (*Corpus* II p. 97), possibly **131**.

On 22 July 1634 Rembrandt was in Rotterdam in connection with the signing of a deed giving power of attorney to his brother-in-law Gerrit van Loo (*Doc.* 1634/7). It has been surmised that during his stay in Rotterdam he also painted these two (or three) portraits **116** and **117a/b**. All three are executed with remarkable speed and seem to be entirely from his own hand, which is consistent with the idea that they were not painted in the Amsterdam studio.

118a Rembrandt and mainly workshop, **Portrait of a man in a broad-brimmed hat** (companion piece to **118b**), 1634, oval panel 70 x 53.4 cm. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts. HdG 732; Br. 197; Bauch 369; Gerson 159; Br./Gerson 197; ***Corpus* II C 72** (as by an unknown workshop companion); Tümpel A87 (as from Rembrandt's workshop).
Inscription: In the lower right background in black paint <*Rembrandt. f./1634.*>

* **118b** Rembrandt, **Portrait of a woman** (companion piece to **118a**), 1634, oval panel 69.8 x 53.7 cm. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts. HdG 848; Br. 346; Bauch 482; Gerson 160; Br./Gerson 346; ***Corpus* II C 73** (as by an unknown workshop companion); Tümpel A111 (as from Rembrandt's workshop).
Inscription: at the right above the shoulder ‹*Rembrandt f/1634*›

In *Corpus* II C 72 and 73 these two paintings were both disattributed from Rembrandt and attributed to one and the same anonymous workshop assistant. However, the present author was long convinced that the woman is from Rembrandt's hand, and the opportunity for further analysis of the two paintings in November 2011 provided clearer evidence for this position.

The two paintings have been of the same provenance as long as is known. The oak panels both consist of three planks. The left-hand plank of both panels derived from the same tree. In the woman's portrait, the way the left contour of her dress kinks sharply to the left below, and the way the bow on her waistband is cut off, strongly suggest that this painting (and therefore also its counterpart) was originally rectangular.

A remarkable feature of the woman's portrait is the unusually high tempo with which it must have been executed. In the 'Morellian' investigation of lace in *Corpus* II (pp. 62-76, esp. p. 71) it was doubted whether this lace, executed in great haste, could have been painted by Rembrandt. Closer examination of the original, however, showed that despite the shorthand rendering of the collar as a whole, the complex build-up of layers and the different degrees of transparency of the layers of the collar are suggested in an exceptionally refined and effective manner.

In every way the woman's portrait is an unusually well thought-out painting, executed with sovereign ease. Since the manner of execution indicates that it took place under considerable pressure of time, the command of execution is quite remarkable. This special quality is above all evident in the assuredness with which the build up, lighting and expression of the woman's face have been realized. The swiftness of execution is again underlined by the unusual extent to which scratching has been used as a means of indicating the hair. The course of these scratchings shows a motor pattern that is characteristic for Rembrandt. In this context, compare the closely related characteristics of the scratching in the hair of the *Lighting study in the mirror* **20** and the 1629 etched *Self-portrait with the double needle* (B. 96) (Bauch 1962b pp. 321-332).

The part of the collar turned toward the light is done in greyish tones as though that part was not catching the full light. The toning down of that part has mainly to do with atmospheric perspective – what was known in the 17th century as the 'thickness of the air'. Samuel van Hoogstraten wrote of the influence of the 'thickness of the air' in limited depth within a painting (SvH pp. 264; *Painter at Work* pp. 187-188). Rembrandt had already used this effect in a refined way in the *Anatomy Lesson of Dr Tulp* **75**. It seems to have been applied here because the woman is sitting with her right shoulder turned slightly toward the beholder. The light intensity is stronger on this side such that the three-dimensionality of the uppermost layer of lace is brought out – and even further enhanced by the use of impasto in the lobes along the lace border. This is a striking example of the '*kenlijkheid*' also discussed by Samuel van Hoogstraten, but first used in practice by Rembrandt: that is, a roughening of the paint locally to make the passage concerned appear to advance in the pictorial space (SvH pp. 306-309; *Painter at Work* pp. 182-186).

The way the toned-down, left part of the collar is juxtaposed with the light, liver-grey colour of the background is of interest; one feels there must have been a discussion in Rembrandt's workshop over 'related colours' here. Such a well-chosen combination of different juxtaposed colours enhances the intensity of the light in the painting, giving the painting an extra refinement (see on related colours/tones the Note to **105**). Also of interest is the way in which just below this the swell of the sleeve with its sensitive little undulations creates a space-suggestive contrast between the figure and the lit part of the background.

When one compares the quality of the execution in the two portraits the difference is so conspicuous that there can scarcely be any

doubt that the man was entirely executed by a different hand from the woman. (For the purpose of this comparison one assumes that the man's portrait is in reasonably good condition and only locally slightly retouched, as one is given to believe by the technical images produced by the conservation laboratory of the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.) This difference is evident in the poor *modelé* of the lit side of the man's face. A comparison of his eyes with those of the woman is equally telling, as is also a comparison of the man's portrait with other men's portraits from the same period – such as the portraits of Pieter Sijen in Passadena from 1633 **119a** or that of Dirck Pesser in Los Angeles from 1634 **117a**. For example, comparing the man's eye on the lit side, which is in good condition, with the same eye in the portrait of Dirck Pesser makes it immediately clear that the present portrait is the work of a relatively undeveloped talent, a painter who has only a limited command of Rembrandt's prescriptions for portrait-painting (see *Painter at Work* pp. 170-172). With regard to the reflection on the eye, the position of the light on the iris is illogical, while the reflection on the edge of the iris is clumsily executed. Concerning the man's collar, the way this encircles – or fails to encircle – the neck on the left is very awkward. Moreover, the play of light, chance and space that is so typical of Rembrandt's portraits with similar collars (see for instance **63a**, **69**, **76**, **133a**) is wholly lacking. (On the question of why, with pendant portraits, different painters could be involved, see p. 119).

119a Rembrandt, **Portrait of a 41-year-old man, possibly Pieter Sijen** (companion piece to **119b**), 1633, panel 69.3 x 54.8 cm. Pasadena, Norton Simon Museum. HdG 769; Br. 177; Bauch 365; Gerson 149; Br./Gerson 177; ***Corpus* II A 86** ; Tümpel A 84 (as from the studio of Rembrandt).
Inscriptions: in the right background ‹*Rembrandt. f. 1633*›, on the left in brown on the dark grey of the background <*AET 41.*>

119b Rembrandt, **Portrait of a 40-year-old woman, possibly Marretje Cornelisdr van Grotewal** (companion piece to **119a**), 1634, panel 69 x 55 cm. Louisville, Speed Art Museum. HdG 874; Br. 344; Bauch 480; Gerson 150; Br./Gerson 344; ***Corpus* II A 87**; Tümpel A 109 (as from the studio of Rembrandt).
Inscriptions: on the right at half height ‹*Rembrandt. f / 1634.*›, on the left now difficult to make out <*AE....S 40*>

For the identification of the sitters, see Van der Veen 2003 pp. 46-60. Pieter Sijen (*c.* 1592-1652) was a merchant and a Mennonite business relation of Hendrick Uylenburgh (*Uylenburgh* pp. 144-145, 186-188). It is interesting that the two portraits were painted with a gap of about a year between them, which may explain the differences in the *peinture* of the skin (compare the details of Plates **119a** and **119b**. Nevertheless, on grounds of the overall quality of both paintings there can be no question about the fact that both are from the same hand, that of Rembrandt. Jaap van der Veen's archival research provides valuable circumstantial evidence in favour of these attributions (Uylenburgh p. 144).

120a Rembrandt, **Portrait of Marten Soolmans** (companion piece to **120b**), 1634, canvas 207 x 132.5 cm. Paris, Private collection. HdG 637; Br. 199; Bauch 373; Gerson 164; Br./Gerson 199; ***Corpus* II A 100**; Tümpel 202; see also Van Eeghen 1956; De Winkel pp. 63-67.
Inscription: on the step on the left ‹*Rembrandt.f.* (followed by three dots in a triangular pattern) *1634*›

120b Rembrandt, **Portrait of Oopjen Coppit** (companion piece to **120a**), 1634, canvas 207 x 132 cm. Paris, Private collection. HdG 638; Br. 342; Bauch 478; Gerson 165; Br./Gerson 342; ***Corpus* II A 101**; Tümpel 236.
Inscription: ‹none›

In 1798, when both paintings left the possession of the Daey family in Alkmaar, they were known as portraits of Willem Daey and his wife. They were later thought to be of Captain Maerten Daey and his first wife Machteld van Doorn, and were always referred to as such in the literature until, in 1956, Van Eeghen demonstrated that this identification was based on a misunderstanding. In 1634 Maerten Daey and his first wife were living not in Amsterdam but in Brazil. On his death in 1659, his inventory mentions not only two portraits of Daey and his first wife, but also the portraits of his second wife Oopjen Coppit and her first husband Marten Soolmans. It is highly probable that **120a/b** are identical with these latter portraits. Marten Soolmans (1613-1641) was born in Amsterdam, and came from a well-to-do Antwerp family. After a period of study in Leiden, he married Oopjen (Obrecht) Coppit (1611-1689) in 1633.

The portraits have always stayed together. It is therefore all the more remarkable that in Corpus II the condition of the woman's portrait was judged to be wholly different from that of the man. For the latter, the report reads: 'The condition appears on the whole very good'. For the woman's portrait: 'Badly flattened. The head, neck and collar have been severely overcleaned and partially restored as have the hands to a lesser extent.'

With regard to the flesh tones, perhaps the team members who studied the painting (J.B. and S.H.L.) did not take into account the possibility that the painter deliberately rendered the woman's face with strong reflections from the white of the collar, differently from the man's, and also that he has in general differentiated between male and female skin (see, in this context, *Corpus* IV pp. 307-311). With regard to the lace collars in the two paintings, it may well be that the difference in tone of the interstices in the two collars led to the conclusion that they differ in condition. However, it should be borne in mind that the woman is wearing a double-layered collar, and that consequently the interstices in the lace of the top layer are seen much lighter in places than in the case of a single layer of lace against a black costume – as in the man's collar – where the interstices are mostly shown black (see *Corpus* II pp. 64-76).

121a Rembrandt, **Portrait of the minister Johannes Elison** (companion piece to **121b**), 1634, canvas 173 x 123 cm. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts. HdG 645; Br. 200; Bauch 372; Gerson 162; Br./Gerson 200; ***Corpus* II A 98**; Tümpel 204; see also De Winkel 2005 pp. 55-57; *R. in America* no. 18.
Inscription: at the lower right ‹*Rembrandt.f* (followed by an abbreviation resembling an exclamation mark) *.1634.*›

121b Rembrandt, **Portrait of Maria Bockenolle** (companion piece to **121a**), 1634, canvas 174.5 x 123 cm. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts. HdG 646; Br. 347; Bauch 477; Gerson 163; Br./Gerson 347; ***Corpus* II A 99**; Tümpel 235.
Inscription: in the lower right corner ‹*Rembrandt. ft. 1634*› the signature on the woman's portrait appears to be copied after that on its pendant.

The identification of the two sitters was the result of ingenious detective work by Cornelis Hofstede de Groot in 1901 and Wijnman in 1934 and '56, summarized in *Corpus* II (pp. 537-539).

Johannes Elison and his wife lived in Norwich in England, where he was a minister in the Dutch Reformed Church. In 1634 they visited their son Johannes jr. in Amsterdam, who took the opportunity to have Rembrandt paint his parents' portraits. The paintings remained in Amsterdam until 1677, when they were taken to Norwich on passing by inheritance to Johannes jr.'s surviving brothers and sisters. In 1860 the two portraits were sold from the family estate and subsequently changed hands further. In 1956, almost 100 years later, they were acquired by the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. For an account of the fact that the woman is wearing a hat, see De Winkel 2005 (pp. 55-57).

* **122** Rembrandt, **Oval selfportrait with shaded eyes**, 1634, panel 70.8 x 55.2 cm. Private collection. HdG -; Br. -; Bauch -; Gerson -; Br./Gerson -; Tümpel -; ***Corpus* IV *Addendum* 2 and pp. 132-144, esp. 139-141**; see also Van de Wetering 2002/03; and the Note to **123** .
Inscription: in the right background <*Rembrandt:f./1634*>

In 1994-95 we had the opportunity to carry out investigations on a painting that seemed to be a self-portrait by Rembrandt (**fig. 3**). In view of the manner of painting in crucial areas, however, an attribution to Rembrandt seemed highly questionable. It was clear from photographs provided by the owner that since 1930, when the painting was still in its 'original' state (**fig. 1**), it had gone through several transformations before it was shown to us. A peculiar and seemingly Polish headgear had been removed in order to reveal a beret (**fig. 2**). In the next stage, the long hair was partially removed to reveal much shorter hair (**fig. 3**). The former owner of the painting, a French painter-restorer, had apparently noticed that the headgear, the hair and also the turned up points of the moustache were later additions. These additions had obscured the fact that the painting originally looked much more like a Rembrandt self-portrait from the early Amsterdam period than one could have guessed from this rather odd figure in Polish costume. The collector Frits Lugt, to whom the painting was shown in the 1960s, judged that the case deserved serious consideration. No doubt the convincing Rembrandt signature and the date 1634 inscribed while the paint of the background was still wet added weight to the case.

The X-radiograph made of the painting showed that the drastic interventions by the painter/restorer had some justification: the lead white-containing background had originally followed the contours that were revealed once the additions were removed (see *Corpus* IV p. 617).

Fig. 1. Photograph of **122** taken in *c.* 1935.

During our further investigations it gradually became clear that the painting was still partially overpainted: the lit eye and the entire costume, including the chain, appeared not to have belonged to the original painting (**fig. 3**). These overpaintings, however, appeared to be very old. Cross-sections showed that there was no layer of varnish or dirt between the underlying image and those layers that we suspected were overpaintings. There were other indications that these overpaintings had been applied quite soon after the painting in its first version was completed. For instance, scratch marks applied in the lengthened hair had left traces in the paint of the earlier version of the hair, indicating that the original paint not been fully hardened when the overpaintings were added. Although the consistency of the paint in the added parts pointed to Rembrandt's studio, the manner of painting of these overpaintings indicated that they were not from Rembrandt's own hand.

Fig. 2. Photograph of **122** taken in or after 1966.

After long deliberation we advised the owner to consider further removal of the overpaintings. We were, of course, aware of the ethical dilemma of removing such old overpaintings, particularly once we began to suspect that they had been applied in Rembrandt's studio. However, since the earlier removal of most of the additions (the Polish cap, the elongated hair and the extensions to the moustache) had already left the painting in a hybrid state, we thought it defensible to remove those overpaintings that

Fig. 3. Photograph of **122** taken in *c.* 1980 showing the painting before investigation and restoration 1999-2002.

still remained. The delicate and remarkably Rembrandt-like execution of the areas that were not hidden by overpainting – particularly the nose, the mouth and the chin – made it very tempting to reveal more of the original painting.

The restoration was carried out by Martin Bijl, former chief restorer of the Rijksmuseum, in consultation with members of the Rembrandt Research Project. During the process it gradually became clear that the painting now being revealed was an autograph self-portrait by Rembrandt. The aim of the drastic overpaintings must have been to change the painting from a self-portrait into a *tronie*. The fact that this extraordinary metamorphosis seemed to have taken place in Rembrandt's studio, and presumably with his consent – and possibly even according to his own wishes, naturally required an explanation. The hypothesis we developed was in line with the theory for the *raison d'être* of Rembrandt's self-portraits that I advanced in my essay in the 1999 catalogue for the exhibition *Rembrandt By Himself* (*R. Self* pp. 8-37). That theory – implying that Rembrandt's self-portraits were intended for sale to art-lovers – was developed as a rebuttal of the widespread, anachronistic idea that Rembrandt's many self-portraits reflected an unusual fixation with his own features as a means of self-discovery: a kind of proto-Freudian obsession with self-identity.

We have found three more cases of partly overpainted early self-portraits by Rembrandt: **146**, **170** and **189**. These overpaintings seemed to have been executed either by Rembrandt himself or by other painters in his studio. In each of the four cases, the underlying or partially covered self-portrait originated in roughly the same period – between *c.* 1633 and 1635 (see *Corpus* IV pp. 139-141). Our hypothesis is that the overpaintings were carried out because at that period the supply of Rembrandt's self-portraits had outstripped demand, and that the surplus of unsold self-portraits had been in stock too long: they had lost their saleability, perhaps because art lovers were less interested in self-portraits that no longer matched so well the physiognomy of the now older, famous Rembrandt.

light falls function in turn as (tertiary) light sources (see **122**).

In the present painting these nuances will only become apparent with the removal of the many darkened retouches and a varnish that is yellowed and slightly powdered by surface decay. What is already certain is that the exuberant play of the contours of Rembrandt's hairstyle, and the latent dynamic in his posture, make this painting one of his most adventurous, daring essays in this regard. Perhaps this explains why Rembrandt had his self-portrait from the same year **122** – which is in this respect less successful – changed into a *tronie*?

Fig. 1. Portrait of Rembrandt. Engraving from Arnold Houbraken's *De Groote Schouburgh*, Vol. I. The Hague 1718.

123 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait with a cap and fur-trimmed cloak**, 1634, panel 58.3 x 47.5 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 526; Br. 21; Bauch 308; Gerson 158; Br./Gerson 21; ***Corpus* II A 96**; Tümpel 164; see also Berlin 1975 no. 810.
Inscription: in dark paint in the area of cast shadow at the lower right ‹*R...brandt.f / 1634*›

Rembrandt's abundant, bushy hairstyle, particularly around the temples and the eyes, meant that his headgear (a large beret in **29**, for example, and in the present painting) tended to partly shadow his face. But Rembrandt in most of his paintings deliberately pursued such a play of light and shadow. Throughout virtually his entire oeuvre from 1628/29 onward, the cast shadow became an essential part of his pictorial language (*Corpus* V p. 59).

Concerning the self-portraits with shaded eyes, Chapman suggested that this was a reference to the melancholy temperament (Chapman 1990 pp. 29-33), a suggestion that has been rejected, correctly in my view, by both Eddy de Jongh and Martin Royalton-Kisch (De Jongh 1991 p. 13-14; Royalton-Kisch 1991). One may speculate that the partial shadowing of his face such as one finds in most of his self-portraits was considered (possibly also by himself) as his attribute, like the beret (**fig. 1**) (see also Note **134**). Rembrandt paid particular attention to a specific aspect of his half-shadowed face, viz. the complicated play of reflected light in these shadow passages. Only on closer scrutiny does one realize that Rembrandt here used his right cheekbone and nose as 'reflectors' of light which they cast into the shadow. As a result, the eye sockets became the site of a complex exchange of reflected light, such that those parts of the skin on which this reflected

124 Rembrandt, **Cupid blowing a soap bubble**, 1634, canvas 75 x 92.6 cm. Vienna, Liechtenstein Museum. HdG -; Br. 470; Bauch 157 (as possibly with help of a pupil (G. Flinck)); Gerson -; Br./Gerson 470 (as by G. Flinck); **Corpus II A 91**; Tümpel -.
Inscription: at the lower right, near the tip of the bow ‹*Rembrandt. / f* (followed by three dots in a triangular pattern) *1634*›

This painting has a Vanitas motif in the form of blowing bubbles ('homo bulla'), linked with a putto clearly recognizable as Cupid. It would seem these elements were first combined as an emblem by Daniel Heinsius under the motto *Bulla favor* ('favour is a bubble'): the impermanence and uncertainty of love is compared to that of a soap bubble.

The painting was first published as a work by Rembrandt by Valentiner in 1923, when it was owned by a Russian private collector in Berlin. It subsequently attracted relatively little attention. Sumowski regarded it as a pupil's work, possibly by Bol. Bauch thought that a pupil might have had a share in the execution and suggested Flinck as the assistant. Gerson, on the other hand, attributed the painting to Flinck without reservation. Since none of these authors gave reasons for their doubt or rejection, it is hard to know what their opinions were based on. It may have been the somewhat unusual use of colour, or perhaps the subject-matter, which is rather uncommon in Rembrandt's work. Or it may be that, as in the case of Gerson's

equally unjustified rejection of the New York *Bellona* **101**, the *Cupid* simply did not fit with his mental image of Rembrandt's oeuvre. The work shows no trace of being painted by more than one hand (as Bauch believed). Tümpel also omitted the painting from his Rembrandt monograph of 1986, perhaps following Gerson.

I still share the view defended in *Corpus* II A 91: that although not an impressive work, it fits perfectly into a well-defined group of Rembrandt's paintings **101**, **125**, **128**, **137** and **139**. The fact that Isack Jouderville made a print after the painting during his period in Amsterdam as an assistant of Rembrandt supports this attribution (see *Corpus* II p. 485), as does also the discovery that Rembrandt used pieces of canvas taken from the probably unpainted lower part of the original canvas support for **124** during his work on two grisailles for the printed Passion series **110** and **113** (see *Corpus* II p. 27). As to the possible commission, see Note **101**.

Fig. 1. Etching attr. to I. Jourderville (B. 132; reproduced in reverse).

125 Rembrandt, **Flora**, 1634, canvas 125 x 101 cm. St. Petersburg, Hermitage. HdG 206; Br. 102; Bauch 258; Gerson 92; Br./Gerson 102; ***Corpus* II A 93**; Tümpel 104; see also *Soviet Museums* no. 7.
Inscription: in the left background below the hand holding the staff ‹*Rembrandt / f ..34*›

Flora was the Roman goddess of all that flowered, and thus also of youth, of the enjoyment of life and of female fertility. Her symbol is blossom.

In *Corpus* II pp. 499-500 Jacques Vis, the author of the entry concerning this painting, noted that

> 'Rembrandt's figure (in the present painting) shows a remarkable resemblance to a late-gothic type, such as we find represented, for instance, in the wife of Giovanni Arnolfini in Jan van Eyck's painting of 1434 now in London (**fig. 1**). The inclined head and the posture, with protruding abdomen on which the left hand gathers up the train of her garment, in both cases form an almost identical pattern. Though Rembrandt has invested this pattern with a baroque sense of bulk, it is still evident in the relief-like character of his figure (....). Although Rembrandt did not often use a late-gothic prototype for the pose of a figure, this example does not stand totally alone in his work (Schmidt Degener 1906).'

Fig. 1. Jan van Eyck, *Portrait of Giovanni Arnolfini and his wife* (detail), 1434, panel. London, National Gallery.

Given the physiognomy of the woman portrayed, the possibility cannot be excluded that this *Flora* was painted with direct reference to Rembrandt's young wife Saskia. In the context of another *Flora* by Rembrandt, Tümpel pointed out that for Rembrandt the primary significance of Flora would have been her association with fertility. That painting, the *Flora* in London **138**, may well have been painted in the context of Saskia's pregnancy with Rumbartus, her first documented child. Yet when one thinks that 18 months elapsed between the marriage of Rembrandt and Saskia on 22 June 1634 and Rumbartus' birth on 15 December 1635, it is perfectly possible that there could have been an earlier pregnancy before that of Rumbartus. The present *Flora* could then have been painted in connection with that putative pregnancy. The decision to represent this Flora with the abdomen prominently pushed forward – whether or not it is related to the late Gothic style – would thus be explained (for an analysis of Saskia's physiognomic features see Note **94**).

* **126** Rembrandt, **The Descent from the Cross**, 1634, canvas 159.3 x 116.4 cm. St. Petersburg, Hermitage. HdG 135; Br. 551; Bauch 59; Gerson 66; Br./Gerson 551; ***Corpus* II C 49** (as a work produced in Rembrandt's studio, presumably during the early 1640s); Tümpel 48 (who was not fully convinced of its authenticity); ***Corpus* V p. 191** (which forms the basis for the following); see also *Soviet Museums* no. 9.
Inscription: at the bottom slightly to the left of centre ‹*Rembrandt.f.1634*›

For the iconography of the painting, see Note **107**.

As in cases like **35**, **44**, **173** the entry in *Corpus* II dealing with the present painting can be seen as another demonstration of the unfortunate consequences that may ensue when, in the assessment of a painting, priority is given to connoisseurship based exclusively on stylistic considerations. The summary of the relevant text (*Corpus* II C 49 p. 630) reads:

> 'Although based, in respect of various motifs, on Rembrandt's *Descent from the Cross* of 1632/33 **107**, this painting must because of its style be looked on as by a different hand. It appears to have been produced in Rembrandt's studio, presumably in the early 1640's, although the exceptional type of canvas used recurs in a work of 1634 **125** and would therefore suggest an earlier date. The lack of homogeneity in the execution tempts one to think of participation by more than one hand but an attribution to a single pupil (who remains to be identified) is more likely.'

With slight exaggeration, one might say that Rembrandt was here being told by the Rembrandt Research Project how he could *not* paint in 1634, while a (still) unidentified pupil in *c.* 1640 *could*. And this is asserted against several compelling, objective arguments that make an attribution of the painting to Rembrandt virtually incontestable (see the marked paragraphs below).

Firstly, it should be stated that in many respects the painting is strikingly different from the *Descent from the Cross* **107**, a work which Rembrandt painted in 1632/33 – i.e. a year or at the most two years earlier – in the context of a prestigious commission from the Stadholder, Frederik Hendrik, for a Passion series (see the Note to **107**). The difference between the two paintings is so great that it is indeed

difficult to imagine that they were the product of the same artistic mind or hand. But we have already observed this when comparing Rembrandt's Leiden *History piece* **7** with his *Judas repentant* **23**, painted only two or three years apart. The difference between the *Descent from the Cross* for Frederik Hendrik **107** and the present painting could be seen as simply the different fruits of the same questing mind; but in the 1980's when the RRP removed the present painting from Rembrandt's oeuvre the thinking about style and the evolution of style was still dominated by the idea of a correspondence between a painter's unique character and his equally unique style. In Max Friedländer's words:

> 'we derive our courage to proceed to the determination of authorship – whether to go by intuition or by analysis and 'objective' criteria – from a belief that creative individuality has an unchangeable core.' (Friedländer 1946 p. 200).

That idea, however, proved to be very much a product of its time and, as in the case of Rembrandt, led to a number of unwarranted disattributions (see pp. 40-47 in the present book). Indeed, progress in our understanding of such stylistic differences was only made after a re-evaluation of the criteria then employed by the RRP, essentially by investigating 17th-century ideas about painting (*Corpus* V Ch. I) (see the Note to **33**-**35**) and giving the more concrete, objective evidence its due weight in the assessment of each work. In the present case, such evidence was already known and mentioned in the relevant entry in Volume II. Restating this evidence:

– we have here a large painting with Rembrandtesque characteristics which bears a Rembrandt signature and date 1634;

– the canvas on which it is painted, with a very high degree of probability, comes from the same bolt of linen as a painting that also bears the date 1634, the *Flora* **125** (which coincidentally also hangs in St. Petersburg);

– the X-radiographs of the *Descent from the Cross* show that the genesis of this painting was just as eventful as with many paintings that are unhesitatingly attributed to Rembrandt, for instance **23**, **49**, **88b**, **128**. Moreover, the traces of this lively genesis, in some cases revealing radical pentimenti, correlate with those aspects of the art of painting that especially engaged Rembrandt's mind: ordonnance and the treatment of light (see *Corpus* V Ch. I). Both in the arranging of the figures and in the extent and the detail of the relations between light and shadow, as well as in the eventual definition of the forms, the painter has confidently intervened with a bold hand and altered his work in a way that is typical of Rembrandt (*Corpus* II p. 621);

– that there are several pieces of evidence which together indicate that the present painting must have remained in Rembrandt's house for a long time, probably from the time of its creation in 1634 until 1656. Firstly, Heinrich Jansen (1625-1667), a German pupil of Rembrandt between 1645 and 1648, must have copied it and taken the copy back with him to his home town of Flensburg. Since 1650 this copy hung as an epitaph in St Mary's Church in Sønderborg (Sumowski *Gemälde* II no. 934). Secondly, there is a free variant of the present painting in the Washington National Gallery (**fig. 1**) with figures larger in scale painted in Rembrandt's style from after *c*. 1650, apparently by a pupil (Wheelock 1995 pp. 300-309).

Fig. 1. Fragment of a large-scale copy after **126**, early 1650s, canvas 142 x 111 cm. Washington, National Gallery.

– The fact that copies / variants were made after the present painting is already in itself a strong argument in favour of attributing that painting to Rembrandt, for such 'satellites' were as a rule produced after prototypes by the master. It should be recalled here that the genesis of the present painting is such that it cannot possibly be a copy.

– *A descent from the cross, large by Rembrandt, with a beautiful gold frame* listed in the inventory of Rembrandt's possessions, drawn up in 1656 (*Doc.* 1656/12 no. 37), can hardly be other than the painting after which Heinrich Jansen and the anonymous author of the Washington painting mentioned above made their copies/variants.

– There are strong indications that the art dealer Johannes de Renialme bought several works by Rembrandt at the 1656 sale. In the inventory of De Renialme's estate after his own death in 1657 there is an entry for a '*Descent from the Cross by Rembrandt*' which is so highly valued (400 guilders) that one may infer that at that time there was no doubt that the painting was an autograph Rembrandt (*Doc.* 1657/2 no. 301).

The arguments provided by this range of evidence converge overwhelmingly in favour of a re-attribution of the Hermitage *Descent from the Cross* to Rembrandt. (On this Bayesian approach to the relation of multiple forms of evidence to outcomes see the glossery). And even if one were to insist still on stylistic consistency as the ultimate criterion, when the painter's hand and the relation between the application of the paint and the created illusion in this painting are closely compared with such characteristics in two equally ambitious paintings on canvas from 1634 and '35 (which hang in the same room of the Hermitage **125** and **136** and may therefore be studied simultaneously), any doubt on (micro) stylistic grounds over the attribution of the St. Petersburg *Descent from the Cross* to Rembrandt instantly vanishes.

127 Rembrandt, **The incredulity of Thomas**, 1634, panel 53 x 50 cm. Moscow, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts. HdG 148; Br. 552; Bauch 60; Gerson 67; Br./Gerson 552; ***Corpus* II A 90**; Tümpel 49; see also Van Eeghen 1953; Mossel pp. 51-69.
Inscription: at the lower left ‹*Rembrandt. f 1634*›

John 20: 19-29 'Then, the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, "We have seen the Lord." So he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe." And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, "Peace to you!" Then He said to Thomas, "Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing." And Thomas answered and said to

Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."'

It is seldom the case that we know whether a particular history piece by Rembrandt was painted on commission, or for whom. However, it seems highly likely that he painted *The incredulity of Thomas* for the Mennonite merchant and art-lover Ameldonck Leeuw (Van Eeghen 1953). Alexander Mossel made an iconological study of the different interpretations of this episode as it was told in St John's Gospel. What follows are the most relevant quotes from this study concerning the present painting:

'In Rembrandt's *The incredulity of Thomas* from 1634 Christ and Thomas are shown surrounded by Mary, Mary Magdalene and ten disciples. Christ, who is the sole source of light in this painting, has lifted his robe to reveal the wound in his side. Thomas recoils and raises his hands in a gesture of amazement and recognition. It is the moment when he speaks the words 'My Lord and my God', to which Christ answers, 'Because you have seen me you have believed. Blessed are they who have not seen me and yet have believed.' [...] John has turned away and is half lying against a piece of furniture, his eyes closed. He is not asleep, for later on he will record what happened. Behind him another disciple bends in his direction with folded hands and downcast eyes. In contrast to the other disciples these are the ones who believe without seeing and do not wish to see the wound in Christ's side, the physical proof that Christ has arisen.' [...]. 'The scene depicted here had a special significance for Mennonites: when they undergo adult baptism, they write a personal confession of faith and take Thomas' words 'My Lord and my God' as the first Christian confession. Mennonites also emphasize the divine nature of Christ; both the light radiating from Christ and Thomas' words witness to this' (Mossel pp. 64-65).

128 Rembrandt, **Sophonisba receiving the poisoned cup**, 1634, canvas 142 x 153 cm. Madrid, Prado. HdG 223; Br. 468; Bauch 101; Gerson 69; Br./Gerson 468; ***Corpus* II A 94**; Tümpel 97.
Inscription: ‹*Rembrant / f* (followed by three dots in a triangular pattern) *1634*›. The signature on the arm of the chair, which one would expect in 1634 to be written with *dt* appears to be written with a *t* , evidently because during the placing of the signature there was insufficient space for the forename (with *dt*) that Rembrandt had adopted in 1633 (see also Note **134**).

The question repeatedly raised in the art historical literature over this painting is: who is this woman who is being offered a costly goblet: is it Sophonisba or Artemisia? Sophonisba, queen of Numidia was a figure from Roman history (Livy Book 30, chapter 5) who was forced to drink poison. Artemisia, the wife of King Mausolus was the driving force behind the building of the original Mausoleum. She had decided to make her own body a living tomb for her deceased husband and for this purpose drank the finely ground ash of Mausoleus' incinerated body, dissolved in liquid. Tümpel opted for Artemisia, whereas the vote in *Corpus* II A 94 went to Sophonisba. For the pictorial tradition between the 15th and 18th century of both themes, see Tümpel no. 97.

Fig. 1. X-ray of **128**

For any further discussion, however, one needs to take account of the X-radiograph of the whole painting included as an Addendum in *Corpus* III (p. 775), which shows that originally it looked rather different (**fig. 1**). In the background of the painting, in the place of the old woman now visible at the paint surface, there was a much more complex scene which is difficult to specify, with a life-size figure, possibly an old woman holding a mirror, and other even more enigmatic forms to the left of the main figure and in the place where the girl is now offering the goblet. For a more detailed reading of this X-radiograph, see *Corpus* III (pp. 774-776).

I am convinced that both the figure now in the background and also the main figure's gold chain, worked up in detail, were executed by painters other than Rembrandt.

129 Rembrandt, **A scholar, seated at a table with books**, 1634, canvas 145 x 134 cm. Prague, Národní Gallery. HdG 236; Br. 432; Bauch 162; Gerson 93; Br./Gerson 432; ***Corpus* II A 95**; Tümpel 135.
Inscription: at the bottom left in a damaged area ‹*Rembrandt.ft. / 1634.*›

It is not clear what the subject of this painting is. On the basis of a comparison of the headgear (a tall cap wound round by a sash whose end hangs down) with that of one of the Priests or Pharisees in the *Judas repentant* **23**, Tümpel suspected that the scene in the present painting could be a biblical scribe working at his book-covered table. Bruyn on the other hand thought it could be the painting listed in the inventory of Maria Pesser (a daughter of the sitters of **117a/b**) and her husband as *'A Paracelsus, a half Figure, by Rembrant'*. See *Corpus* II p. 97 no. 4, where Bruyn wrote:

'From the relatively high price one may assume that this was quite

a large piece. This work cannot be identified with certainty, but one possibility is the Prague *Scholar* **131**, which, like the portraits of Dirck Pesser and his wife, is dated 1634 and may well have been inherited from them.'

For other instances where patrons who commissioned portraits are also found to have owned another Rembrandt painting executed in the same year as the portraits see **84** and **129**.

Paracelsus, whose actual name was Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim (born Einsiedeln (Switzerland) 1493 or 1494 – died Salzburg 24 September 1541) was a famous but controversial physician, chemist and theologian who also practised alchemy and astrology.

130 Rembrandt, **Diana bathing with her nymphs, with the stories of Actaeon and Callisto**, 1634, canvas 73.5 x 93.5 cm. Anholt, Museum Wasserburg. HdG 200; Br. 472; Bauch 103; Gerson 61; Br./Gerson 472; ***Corpus* II A 92**; Tümpel 99; Ovid: *Metamorphoses II*, 409 et seq. and III, 138 et seq; *M/W* cat. 16.
Inscription: on the bank below the Callisto group ‹*Rembrandt./ ft.1634*›

Surprise has been expressed that Rembrandt, in his *Diana bathing with her nymphs with the stories of Actaeon and Callisto*, should have incorporated two different episodes from the story of Diana in a single painting. The most obvious explanation is that Rembrandt needed several scenes with many figures in order to develop his ideas about the relation between the figures and the space in which they appeared. Thus, later in the *Night Watch* he would add a further 13 figures to the 19 portrayed, and in the *Hundred guilder print* he would incorporate four episodes from the Gospel of St. Matthew in order to accomplish once again this daring feat of bringing together dozens of figures in a coherent though freely developed composition.

In the *Diana* painting the spacious placing of the groups of nymphs with several clusters of bodies also enabled Rembrandt to allow chance to play a role in the organization of these crowds, thus contributing to the realism of these scenes (see also p. 119).

* **130A** Rembrandt, **The flight into Egypt**, 1634, panel 52 x 40.1 cm, two planks. Private collection. HdG -; Br. -; Bauch 61; Gerson 68; Br./Gerson 552A; ***Corpus* II C 47** (as by a Rembrandt pupil (Ferdinand Bol ?)).
Inscription: below Joseph's feet <*Rembrandt.f.1634*> (see fig.1)
This scene is from the New Testament Gospel of **St Matthew 2: 13-15** (see the Note to Plate **13**.

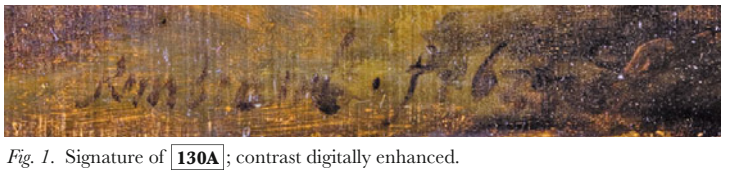


Fig. 1. Signature of **130A**; contrast digitally enhanced.

Fig. 2. IRR image of **130A**

Probably the earliest known record of this painting is from the catalogue of the Dr. Robert Bragge sale, London 22 Jan. 1755, no. 51, where a *Flight into Egypt by Moon-light* was auctioned.

Two members of the RRP, Bruyn and Levie, were able to investigate the painting at the home of its then owner in London in 1971. Their judgment summed up in the *Summary* of II C 47 reads:

'Although in its manner of painting no. C 47 shows a certain resemblance to Rembrandt's work, especially that from around 1634-1638, the rather ineffective treatment of essential passages indicates that this should be attributed not to his hand but rather to that of a pupil (Ferdinand Bol?). (…) A dating in the later 1630s or early 1640s seems the most likely.'

It should be said that the investigators in 1971 were not able to decipher the dating.

The most important results of our recent investigation of the painting and further art historical research, which argue for an attribution to Rembrandt are as follows:

1. The wood of the oak panel, which comprises two planks derives (like most of Rembrandt's oak panels) from the Baltic region. On the basis of dendrochronological data the work could have been painted in or after 1634.
2. A reliable signature <*Rembrandt.f:.1634*> was introduced on a yellow ground partially covered by a transparent, brown underpainting, evidently immediately after the origin of the painting (see **fig. 1**).
3. According to the IR reflectographic image (fig. 2) changes (partly scratched in the wet paint of the first sketch) were introduced in the region of the donkey's hindquarters at an early stage during the creation of the painting. This suggests that originally the figure of Joseph could have been placed there (in this connection, see also point 4). This surmise is supported by the visible indication in the paint relief of a rather slack lead that runs from the donkey's head to the traces of this earlier figure of Joseph. The complexity of the painting's genesis that one infers from these observations rule out the idea that it could have been a copy. Moreover, this genesis points to Rembrandt as the author, in as much as one encounters this kind of exploratory approach in so many of his paintings.

There are arguments of another kind that also favour an attribution to Rembrandt:

4. The original placing of Joseph near the hindquarters the donkey, together with the combination of moonlight and lamplight in this nocturnal scene lead one to suspect that this painting, like the *Nocturnal landscape with the Holy Family* in Dublin **214**, painted 13 years later, originated in emulation of Adam Elsheimer's *Flight into Egypt from* 1609 (see **214** fig. 1). It was relatively recently discovered that Elsheimer's painting was in the Northern Netherlands during Rembrandt's lifetime and that he, Rembrandt, could thus have seen and studied it (Baumstark/ Dekiert e.a. cat. no. 3). One conspicuous difference between the conceptions of the two painters is that with Rembrandt the fugitive Holy Family is placed *in* the wood with much attention paid to the highly detailed and subtly differentiated colouration of the foliage. Elsheimer placed the family in front of the wood, which is silhouetted as a dark coulisse *behind* the figures. Rembrandt evidently sought a more realistic alternative to Elsheimer's rendering of the pictorial space and the wood.

One may assume from what is so far known of the work by Rembrandt's pupils that they based their free variants, the so-called 'satellites', exclusively on the work of their master (see Chapter 2, fig. 3), whereas Rembrandt, in a considerable number of cases, tried to emulate works by his great predecessors (see for instance **9**, **10**, **49**, **52**, **107**, **160**, **194** and **265**). Seen from this perspective, it would seem more reasonable to attribute the painting to Rembrandt himself rather than to one of his pupils. Now that we are certain that the painting originated in 1634, we can be equally certain that Bol cannot have painted it, as he only joined Rembrandt's workshop in 1636/37.

5. If one compares the landscape in this painting with that in the Diana painting from the same year **130** one cannot help remarking the striking correspondence (apart from the chosen time of day/night) of the wood between the two works. I have elsewhere (*Corpus* V, Chapter I; see also pp. 68/69 of this book) explored in depth Rembrandt's systematic investigation of the '*gronden*' (the basic aspects of painting) by means of his many small-scale paintings. In that context, the present painting may be counted among those works in which *the landscape* is of central concern together with different kinds of light and light reflection. Seen in this way, and in relation to the similarities in the rendering of the wood in the two paintings, one wonders whether **130A** in a sense was Rembrandt's nocturnal version of **130** (Cf. the detail of Plate **130** on p. 212 and Plate **130A**).

131 Rembrandt, **The Holy Family**, *c.* 1634, canvas 195 x 132 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek. HdG 92; Br. 544; Bauch 53; Gerson 63; Br./Gerson 544; ***Corpus* II A 88**; Tümpel 51; see also *M/W* cat. 14.
Inscription: at the lower right in a worn area ‹*Rembrandt f 163*›. The last cipher of the date is missing.

A variety of mutually supporting arguments make it likely that the painting originated in or around 1634. In his chapter 'Patrons and early owners' in *Corpus* II (p. 96), Bruyn argued that
'[on] the death of her second husband, Oopjen Coppit, whose portrait together with that of her first husband Marten Soolmans was done by Rembrandt in 1634 **120a/b**, owned *a painting of Joseph and Mary*. Although this work cannot be identified with certainty, it is tempting to think that it was this *Holy Family*, which can also be dated 1634, and that the purchase of this painting was in some way connected with the commissioning of the portraits of the couple.'
Bruyn's suggestion is supported by several cases that he discusses in detail in that same chapter, in which sitters of portraits by Rembrandt also purchased from him another, often monumental, painting – apparently in the same year in which they had themselves portrayed (see also **84** and **129**.

In the course of my own research on the role that human proportions played in Rembrandt's work, it became evident that he gave the babies he drew and etched in and around 1635 (Ben. 401-403 and B. 125) the head:body length ratio of 1:4. In all probability he was following the example of Albrecht Dürer in his *Description of human proportions*. Dürer's book was published in its Dutch translation in 1622 and was used by Rembrandt in other connections. The Christ child in the present painting, however, has a head:body length ratio of 1:5, as recommended by Karel van Mander which could confirm that the *Holy Family* discussed here originated earlier than 1635 (see on Rembrandt and human proportions *Corpus* V pp. 35-48).

132a Rembrandt and workshop, **Portrait of Philips Lucasz** (companion piece to **132b**), 1635, panel 79.5 x 58.9 cm. London, National Gallery. HdG 660; Br. 202; Bauch 376; Gerson 178; Br./Gerson 202; Tümpel 205; ***Corpus* III A 115**; see also London 1991 no. 850 pp. 343-346; *Art in the Making II*, no. 5.
Inscription: in the background to the right <*Rembrandt / 1635*>

132b Rembrandt and mainly workshop, **Portrait of Petronella Buys** (companion piece to **132a**), 1635, panel 78.8 x 65.3 cm. Whereabouts unknown. HdG 661; Br. 349; Bauch ; Gerson 179; Br./Gerson 349; Tümpel 37; ***Corpus* III C 111**.
Inscription: on the left above the shoulder ‹*Rembrandt f: 1635*›

There are only a few dated portraits from 1635. Where pairs of pendants were involved, these were to a greater or lesser extent executed by assistants. This may be one of several indications that Rembrandt's working relation with Hendrik Uylenburgh came to an end in early 1635, possibly on the first of the two generally accepted annual contract dates, the 8th of May (for more on this, see Note **59**.

In Philips Lucasz's head the bold but controlled brushwork creates a powerful suggestion of plasticity and depth. The crude execution of the collar suggests that an assistant may have painted this, although the authors of *Art in the Making II* suggest that it may have been painted in haste by Rembrandt himself. The companion-piece **132b** seems to be entirely painted by an assistant (see *Corpus* III C 111).

Philips Lucasz (i.e. Philips, Lucas' son) was born in the final years of the 16th century in Middelburg, Zeeland. In 1625 he became the East India Company's Chief Trader (Opperkoopman) and from 1628 to 1631 governor of Amboina (in the Moluccas). In 1631 he was Commissioner Extraordinary of the Indies, where he married Petronella Buys (1605-1670) **132b** before returning to the Netherlands as commander of a return convoy on 20 December 1633 (probably together with his wife). Philps Lucasz wears a 4- or 5-row gold chain over his right shoulder; the East India Company used to make a gift of this kind to commanders of its returning convoys when they docked safely.

In September 1640 he was given command of a convoy to Ceylon, and died at sea on 5 March 1641. His wife travelled back to the Netherlands with the return convoy of that year, and was remarried in January 1646 to Jean Cardon, several times burgomaster of Vlissingen (Flushing) in Zeeland.

133a Rembrandt and/or workshop, **Portrait of a man in a slouch hat and bandoleer** (companion piece to **133b**), 1635, transferred from panel to canvas 78.5 x 65.7 cm. Sakura, Kawamura Memorial Museum of Art. HdG 730; Br. 201; Bauch 375; Gerson 180; Br./Gerson 201; Tümpel A88 (as from Rembrandt's workshop); ***Corpus* III C 104** (as from Rembrandt's workshop).
Inscription: in the right background by the bottom tip of the collar ‹*Rembrandt f. 1635*›

133b Rembrandt and mainly workshop, **Portrait of a young woman** (companion piece to **133a**), 1635, panel 78 x 65 cm. Cleveland, Museum of Art. HdG 846; Br. 350; Bauch 485; Gerson 181; Br./Gerson 350; Tümpel 238; ***Corpus* III C 105** (as from Rembrandt's workshop).
Inscription: in the right background above the shoulder ‹*Rembrandt. f. / 1635*›

In *Corpus* III both paintings were disattributed from Rembrandt and instead attributed to the assistant then considered to be the author of **118a** and **118b**. As may be inferred from the relevant commentary accompanying **118b**, my personal view regarding the attribution of the pendant woman's portrait of these two Boston ovals has been radically changed following recent investigation. In my opinion, that painting is a swiftly executed original by Rembrandt that differs significantly from **133b** in both quality and style. Given the anatomical structure and physiognomy of the face, **133b** must have been executed by a rather incompetent assistant. The same holds for the collar.

At first glance, the idea that the two man's portraits **118a** and **133a** were produced by the same painter seems plausible, but the execution of the two faces cannot be compared because of the poor condition of **133a**. That painting has undergone a transfer from panel to canvas, as a result of which the face has suffered so badly that in its present condition it cannot be usefully compared with a face in any other painting. Paint that contains mainly lead white, however, as in the collar of **133a**, is relatively resistant to maltreatment. Consequently this part of the painting can be compared with other collars. The best comparison is perhaps with the collar of **118a** because that was painted not more than a year earlier. When the two collars are compared, it is conspicuous that the one in **133a** is significantly more freely painted and in a manner more successfully suggestive of space and plasticity. As we have noted earlier with respect to pairs of pendants, one of them is usually painted entirely or at least for the most part by the master. In the present case, the fact that the woman **133b** seems to have been painted by an assistant therefore makes it more likely that the man **133a** was painted wholly or partly by the master. Restoration accompanied by technical investigation may provide more insight into this matter.

* **134** Rembrandt (and workshop?), **Self-portrait**, 1635, poplar panel 90.5 x 71.8 cm. Buckland Abbey National Trust. HdG 584; Br. 25; Bauch 309; Gerson 171 (possibly Govaert Flinck); Br./Gerson 25 (possibly Govaert Flinck); Tümpel A64 (as by a pupil of Rembrandt (Govaert Flinck?)); ***Corpus* III C 92** (as a work from Rembrandt's workshop); ***Corpus* IV Corrigenda III C 92 p. 604** and **pp. 232-238** (presenting circumstantial evidence for an attribution to Rembrandt).

Inscription: at the lower right background ‹*Rembrant / f* (followed by three dots in a triangular pattern) *1635*›

After 1969 this painting gradually disappeared from the Rembrandt canon. Whereas Bauch had still accepted it as a work by Rembrandt, Gerson suggested Govaert Flinck as its possible author on the basis of a comparison with the *Young man with a sword* in Raleigh (N.C.) (*Rembrandt in America* no. 24), even though no other expert on seventeenth century Dutch painting has seen the latter as a work by Flinck. Moreover, the execution of the Raleigh painting differs so radically from the present work that the two paintings cannot possibly be from the same hand; the only thing they have in common is that both subjects wear the same type of short velvet cloak.

In 1989 in *A Corpus* vol. III the RRP also judged that the present painting is not an autograph Rembrandt, referring to:

> 'differences from Rembrandt's style, especially in the partly very careful though plastically ineffective painting (in the face) and partly coarse and scarcely suggestive treatment (of the clothing).' (*Corpus* III C 92 p. 596)

Gerson's disattribution in his revision of Bredius' survey from 1969 was not accepted by Sumowski (*Neue Beiträge* p. 99). Sumowski not only censured Gerson for ignoring the signature (see **fig. 7**), whose authenticity he found no reason to doubt, he also accused him of ignoring the originality of the conception of the painting, which he (Sumowski) described as 'an impressive, unsympathetic self-interpretation by Rembrandt'. Slatkes also defended the attribution to Rembrandt by referring to the etching B. 23, suggesting that the present painting was perhaps begun as a self-portrait and subsequently recast as a kind of *tronie* (Slatkes 1992 no. 251).

It should be said that the conception of the painting alone is sufficiently original, with evident characteristics of a self-portrait, to make it difficult to pass it off to a pupil. As a rule pupils do not depart so radically from the current ideas of their master – 'current' being 1635, the date on the painting. The only self-portrait from that period accepted as such in 1989 (when *Corpus* III appeared) was the one in Berlin from 1634 **123**. Other self-portraits from that time had either not yet been discovered **122** or had at that time been (erroneously) disattributed by the RRP **154**.

Could the present work be a copy after a lost original by Rembrandt himself? That is not possible, as X-radiography shows the painting to have undergone a rather complicated genesis (**fig. 1**). The trunk, the hat and the coiffure were in the first layout differently reserved in the background. Moreover, there are indications that Rembrandt's left arm was originally held before his chest.

Apart from the fact that we are therefore dealing with a prototype there is considerable (circumstantial) evidence that this unusual painting must have played a significant role both within and beyond Rembrandt's workshop.

1. The gradual transformation of one of the figures in the background of the *Ecce Homo* grisaille **112** and the related etching (B. 77) (**figs. 2-4**), seen in the different stages from 1634 through to 1636, can only be understood if one sees this figure as a self-portrait by Rembrandt worked into that monumental print. The figure in its final appearance (**fig. 4**) shows striking similarities with the present painting: he wears a beret with two dif-

Fig. 1. X-ray of **134**

Fig. 2. Detail of plate **112**.

Fig. 3. Detail of etching B 77[I] (reproduced in reverse).

Fig. 4. Detail of etching B 77[II] (reproduced in reverse).

ferently curved feathers, and has a partly shadowed face and long hair. The placing of the figure at the back of the depicted crowd and the fact that his gaze is directed at the beholder supports the idea that this figure was intended to be a self-portrait in Rembrandt's composition modelled on the present painting (see in that context the Note to **106**).

2. One finds a drawing after the present painting reproduced in a *vanitas* still life by the Leiden painter Abraham Susenier (*c.* 1620-after 1666) (**fig. 5**).

3. Given the unusually puffy face and the incidence of the shadow across it, it seems likely that Arnold Houbraken based his portrait of Rembrandt in his *Grote Schouburg Vol. I* on the present painting (**fig. 6**) (see also Note **123** fig. 1).

4. The *Self-portrait with shadowed eyes* from 1634 **122** and the other self-portrait from that year **123** alert one to a similarly rich play with shadows and reflections in the eye sockets in the present painting.

5. Analysis of a cross-section of a paint sample taken from the signature (**figs. 7** and **8**) shows that the paint of the signature and

Fig. 5. Abraham Susenier, *Vanitas still-life with a portrait of Rembrandt, a sculpture, a skull, feathers, an overturned roemer and a portfolio of drawings, c.* 1669/72, canvas 59.7 x 73.7 cm. Kingston. Agnes Etherington Art Centre, gift of Alfred and Isabel Bader.

that of the background are so closely merging that one can be certain that the signature was applied imediately on completion of the painting. Together with the other arguments presented above, this is a further strong argument in favour of the attribution of the painting to Rembrandt. It is remarkable, however, that the <d> is missing from Rembrandt's name (see **fig. 7**). (In this connection, see the lemma 'signature' in the Glossary). A possible explanation for this could be that the inscription is squeezed into the triangular space between the right contour

Fig. 6. Detail of **123** fig. 1 (tilted to the left).

Fig. 6. Signature of **134**

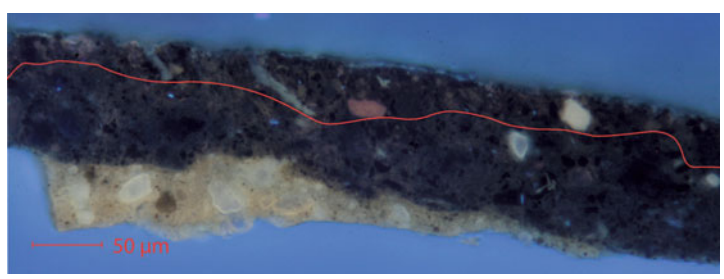


Fig. 7. Cross-section of a sample taken in the signature. The red line indicates the boundary between the paint of the background and the paint of the signature. Microscopic examination shows that the latters contains more black pigment particles.

of the figure and the right-hand edge of the panel. For a similar reason Rembrandt's *Sophonisba* is also signed <Rembrant> (see the Note to **128**).

The unusually mechanical execution of the barbs of the feathers could perhaps indicate that these parts of the painting were done by an assistant in Rembrandt's workshop.

135 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait as the prodigal son in the tavern**, *c.* 1635, canvas 161 x 131 cm. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 334; Br. 30; Bauch 535; Gerson 79; Br./Gerson 30; Tümpel 54; ***Corpus* III A 111**; ***Corpus* IV pp. 217-232**; see also Mayer Meintschel 1970/71.
Inscription: in the left background level with the peacock's crown ‹*Rembrant ƒ*› added later by another hand.

Fig. 1. Rembrandt or pupil. *The Prodigal Son in the tavern*, pen and wash, 17.7 x 21 cm. Ben. 529. Frankfurt a. M. Städelsches Kunstinstitut.

In a discussion with the Scribes and Pharisees Jesus tells a parable to give a sense of God's redeeming love for sinners:

> **Luke 15: 11-21** 'Then He said: "A certain man had two sons. And the younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the portion of goods that falls to me.' So he divided to them his livelihood. And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living. But when he had spent all, there arose a severe famine in that land, and he began to be in want. Then he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. And he would gladly have filled his stomach with the pods that the swine ate, and no one gave him anything. "But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants." And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son."'

This painting was for a long time seen as proof of the conjugal and domestic happiness of Rembrandt and his young wife Saskia. But the (partially visible) dark, flat object hanging on the wall to the left, which was found in all 17th-century taverns, had been overlooked. It is in fact the board on which the server in a tavern noted the drinks that still had to be paid for. Correspondences between the painting and a drawing attributed to Rembrandt (**fig. 1**) had already raised the suspicion that the painting actually depicts a scene from the biblical story of the Prodigal Son, who squandered his father's inheritance on high living. This suspicion was confirmed when it was discovered on an X-radiograph of the painting (**fig. 2**) that between (and above) the Prodigal Son and the woman on his lap there is a smiling, scantily clad woman. This woman is shown frontally and plays a lute whose neck points to the right. A similar grouping of figures is seen in **fig. 1**. In that drawing a serving maid is sketched in the background keeping the tally of drinks on a blackboard, a standard element in the iconographic tradition of the Prodigal Son.

Fig. 2. X-ray of **135**

On the X-radiograph one can also make out clearly defined dark zones that are the 'shadows' of the framework on which the originally larger painting was stretched. They are visible because in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, paintings on canvas were sometimes preserved by smearing lead-containing paint on the reverse side of the linen. This paint shows up light on the X-ray image, but because the linen beneath the lathes of the stretcher could not be reached with the brush, these zones stand out darker. A reconstruction of the original format of the painting (see **fig. 3**) demonstrates that the painting was originally much larger with full-length figures. Indeed, it must have been a painting that was comparable in format and ambition with the *Blinding of Samson* **148**.

The question is whether (and if so why) Rembrandt was giving himself and, as it would seem, his wife Saskia the most important roles in this scene. The prodigal son of the parable was evidently a favourite metaphor for the person incapable of mastering his passions: the

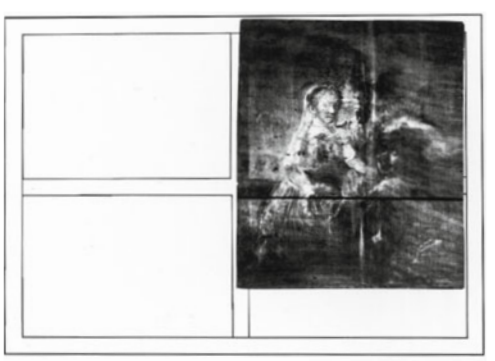


Fig. 3. Reconstruction of **135**

Fig. 4. Title page of the play *Heden Daeghsche Verlooren Soon* (A Contemporary Prodigal Son) by Willem Dircksz Hooft, 1630.

playwright Willem Dirksz Hooft (1594-1658) wrote a play called '*Hedendaeghsche Verlooren Soon*' (A Contemporary Prodigal Son), performed in 1630 at the 'Amsterdamsche Academi', whose title page (**fig. 4**) shows the scene in the tavern with figures in contemporary dress.

Tümpel, analysing the iconography of the Dresden painting in his 1968 article on Rembrandt's iconography, lends support to the idea that Rembrandt intentionally represented himself and Saskia in the painting as sinners. Tümpel refers not only to the fact that, according to Van Mander, Albrecht Dürer had depicted himself as the Prodigal Son in his copper engraving *The Prodigal Son as Swineherd*, he also found indications in the theology of Rembrandt's time that marriage was associated with the human passions. This could explain why Rembrandt has given Saskia's features to the sinful woman on his lap – and his own to the prodigal son (*Corpus* IV p. 228). The painting must have already been reduced to its present format by 1754, possibly because it had been seriously damaged. Thorough investigation during a future conservation treatment will perhaps provide deeper insight into the painting's complex material history.

136 Rembrandt, **Abraham's sacrifice**, 1635, canvas 193.5 x 132.8 cm. St. Petersburg, Hermitage. HdG 9; Br. 498; Bauch 13; Gerson 74; Br./Gerson 498; Tümpel; ***Corpus* III A 108**; see also *Soviet Museums* no. 10; *M/W* cat. 21; Dekiert 2004.
Inscription: at the lower left ‹*Rembrandt. f. 1635.*›

Genesis 22: 1-13 'Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, "Abraham!" And he said, "Here I am." Then He said, "Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you." So Abraham rose early in the morning and saddled his donkey, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son; and he split the wood for the burnt offering, and arose and went to the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted his eyes and saw the place afar off. And Abraham said to his young men, "Stay here with the donkey; the lad and I will go yonder and worship, and we will come back to you." So Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering and laid it on Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and the two of them went together. But Isaac spoke to Abraham his father and said, "My father!" And he said, "Here I am, my son." Then he said, "Look, the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?" And Abraham said, "My son, God will provide for Himself the lamb for a burnt offering." So the two of them went together. Then they came to the place of which God had told him. And Abraham built an altar there and placed the wood in order; and he bound Isaac his son and laid him on the altar, upon the wood. And Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. But the Angel of the LORD called to him from heaven and said, "Abraham, Abraham!" So he said, "Here I am." And He said, "Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me." Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son.'

In many cases we can to some extent follow the way Rembrandt's ideas about a painting changed as he worked by analysing the X-radiographic image of the painting concerned, but in the case of the present painting this is not possible. An adhesive containing lead white that was used in transferring the painting to a new canvas obscures the detail in an X-radiograph, rendering it virtually illegible. However, we do get an idea of Rembrandt's changing ideas about this painting *after* it was finished. Not long afterwards he made a drawing with roughly the same subject, but where part of the image is radically different (**fig. 1**). Unlike the present painting, where the angel descends from the left to prevent Abraham sacrificing his son, in the drawing he approaches from behind, creating a compact and, as it were, spiral configuration of the three figures which Rembrandt evidently found more satisfying. But rather than change the paint-

▶ *Fig. 2.* Variant of **136** painted by one of Rembrandt's pupils, basing himself on figs. 1 and 2, Canvas 195 x 132 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek.

Fig. 1. Rembrandt, design for fig. 2, red and black chalk, wash and white body colour, 19.4 x 14.6 cm. Londen, The British Museum.

ing, and thereby sacrificing the brilliantly painted angel in its present form he had one of his pupils paint a partial copy in which (by means of a tracing technique) Abraham and Isaac were almost literally copied but allowed for a new angel to be painted, more or less the same as the angel in the drawing. Moreover, Rembrandt had his pupil add the ram which, as related in the Book of Genesis, Abraham was to sacrifice instead of Isaac. That painting is in the collection of the Alte Pinakothek in Munich (**fig. 2**).

Along the bottom edge of the Munich version an inscription was added with a brush and oil paint. This inscription, which has generated much discussion among art historians, reads: *'Rembrandt. verandert. En overgeschildert. 1636'* (Rembrandt. changed. and *overgeschildert.* 1636). The inscription seems not to have been added by Rembrandt himself but probably by the maker of the painting. The problem lies with the word '*overgeschildert*'. This has often been interpreted as 'the (perhaps local) application of new paint layers (over an existing image)'. But the prefix 'over' with a Dutch verb usually means (also in modern Dutch) 'afresh' (or 'over again'). The inscription should therefore be read as: '[This invention by] Rembrandt was changed and painted afresh in 1636'.

Partly because of this inscription, but also because of the spontaneous execution of the Munich version, which is in fact even more broadly executed than the original, it was long assumed that this new version was also from Rembrandt's hand (see e.g. Haak 1969 p. 126-127). A close comparison of the two paintings, however, reveals the significantly inferior quality of the second version in several respects. In his rendering of various details, the painter of this second version betrays such a lack of understanding of a great many pictorial aspects that it is inconceivable that Rembrandt could have painted this changed version himself. It must have been a pupil who, although he had the original in front of him, did not have the intention of copying this prototype stroke for stroke and was therefore able to set to work with greater spontaneity (see also Note **20**).

137 Rembrandt, **The rape of Ganymede**, 1635, canvas 177 x 130 cm. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 207; Br. 471; Bauch 102; Gerson 73; Br./Gerson 471; Tümpel 98; ***Corpus* III A 113**; see also *M/W* art. 24; Dresden 2006.
Inscription: on the topmost fold of Ganymede's overgarment ‹*Rembrandt. ft / 1635*›

Ovid *Metamorphoses* Bk 10 verse 155 ff. 'The king of the gods once burned with love for Phrygian Ganymede, and to win him Jupiter chose to be something other than he was. Yet he did not deign to transform himself into any other bird, than that eagle, that could carry his lightning bolts. Straightaway, he beat the air with deceitful wings, and stole the Trojan boy, who still handles the mixing cups, and against Juno's will pours out Jove's nectar.' (trans. A.S. Kline)

According to the classical myth Ganymede was a beautiful boy. So why did Rembrandt choose this story in order to make what at first sight seems a rather ridiculous painting? It was long thought that he had intended it as a parody of classical and classicising renaissance art.

In 1604 Karel van Mander, the writer on painting whom Rembrandt must have consulted a great deal, wrote in his *Elucidation of Ovid's Metamorphoses*:

> *'Ganymede represents the human soul that is least defiled by the bodily impurity of depraved lusts!'*

In Rembrandt's time the pure soul was actually represented by a naked baby. For this reason, at this time babies who died prematurely were sometimes portrayed as a naked child carried away by an eagle (**fig. 1**). The fact that the child in Rembrandt's painting is clutching a bunch of cherries in his hand as a symbol of purity serves to reinforce the symbolism. But here Rembrandt also depicts the shock of the child as drastically as the events seen in the *Abraham's Sacrifice* **136** and the *Blinding of Samson* **148**, both painted around the same time.

Fig. 1. N. Maes, *Child on an eagle*, canvas, 66 x 56 cm. Private collection.

138 Rembrandt, **Flora**, 1635, canvas 123.5 x 97.5 cm. London, National Gallery. HdG 205; Br. 103; Bauch 261; Gerson 96; Br./Gerson 103; Tümpel 105; ***Corpus* III A 112**; see also *M/W* cat. 23; Brown 1991 no. 4930 pp. 353-358; *Art in the Making II* no. 6.
Inscription: at the lower left, to the right of the staff, worn and only partly legible ‹*Rem*(b).*a.../1635*›

Fig. 1. X-ray of **138**

The painting in its first form, now only visible in the X-radiograph (**fig. 1**), shows a moment from the Apocryphal Book of Judith, where Judith cuts off the head of the enemy army commander Holofernes while he is asleep. (For the story leading up to this moment, see the Note to **100**.)

> **Judith 13: 9-10** 'after a moment she went out, and gave Holofernes' head to her maid, who placed it in her food bag.'

Fig. 2. P.P. Rubens, *Judith with the head of Holofernes*, *c.* 1617. Oil on panel 120 x 111 cm. Brunswick, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum.

This painting underwent a remarkable transformation at Rembrandt's own hands. While initially it showed one of the most grisly scenes from the Old Testament (**fig. 1** and **2**) Rembrandt subsequently changed this image fundamentally. He painted out Judith's hand with the sword and the old woman with the sack at the right of the image and converted the painting into a *Flora* holding a staff entwined with greenery in her right hand and flowers in her outstretched left hand.

Fig. 3. Anonymous pupil from Rembrandt's workshop, copy after **138**. Drawing with washes 21.9 x 17.3 cm. London, The British Museum.

However, he changed neither the face (with facial expression) nor the clothes.

The transformed painting is an example of one of those works that were faithfully copied by pupils in drawings (**fig. 3**). This was probably an exercise in making a copy of a large painting on a smaller scale than the prototype, whilst at the same time converting colours into tones with a view to the so-called *houding*, i.e. that complex of pictorial means used to suggest space through the right choice of tonal values and of colours. These copies are valuable documents in establishing how many details have been lost in the dark passages of the paintings concerned (see also **148** and Van de Wetering 1999).

139 Rembrandt, 1635, **Minerva**, canvas 137 x 116 cm. Private collection. HdG -; Br. 469; Bauch 259; Gerson 94; Br./Gerson 469; Tümpel 106; ***Corpus* III A 114**.
Inscription: in the left background above the armrest of the chair ‹*Rembrandt. f. / 1635*›

With a painting like this we tend to concentrate first of all on its iconography and its cultural-historical reference. When the subject is a woman, it would seem that there inevitably follows an involuntary judgment of her beauty. In the case of this painting there have always been serious doubts on this point, forgetting in the process that such a plump face with expressionless calf-eyes seems to have represented a kind of ideal of beauty in Rembrandt's day (see also the Note to **94**).

These doubts have led to the painting changing hands from one owner to another regularly since it emerged from a private collection in 1965 where it had been for decades. Apparently it was the face that failed to inspire a sufficiently possessive love. Even the Dutch museums, whose collections lacked such a monumental painting from this period, declined to find the modest sum needed to purchase it at an auction in Paris in 1975, and so it disappeared to Japan – only to return to the west again subsequently.

Yet it is certainly a remarkable painting with regard to the rendering of light, deep shadow and strongly reflected light, as on Minerva's right hand. It is through such reflected light that albeit unconsciously we register the unusual intensity of the direct light suggested by Rembrandt in this painting.

140 Rembrandt, **Samson threatening his father in law**, *c.* 1635, canvas 159 x 131 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 31; Br. 499; Bauch 14; Gerson 78; Br./Gerson 499; Tümpel 10; ***Corpus* III A 109**; see also Berlin 1975 p. 337-338; Berlin 2006 pp. 278-281.
Inscription: close to the right-hand edge, on a horizontal ledge in the pilaster ‹*Rembrandt.ft.163*(.)›

The incident shown is from the Old Testament story of Samson. To the astonishment of his parents, Samson had chosen a Philistine woman as his wife. After the wedding (see **160**) he departed for some time, leaving his wife behind.

> **Judges 15: 1-3** 'After a while, in the time of wheat harvest, it happened that Samson visited his wife with a young goat. And he said, "Let me go in to my wife, into her room." But her father would not permit him to go in. Her father said, "I really thought that you thoroughly hated her; therefore I gave her to your companion. Is not her younger sister better than she? Please, take her instead." And Samson said to them, "This time I shall be blameless regarding the Philistines if I harm them!" '

For a discussion of the original size of this painting, see the text below Plates **140** and **140a**. In the entry dealing with **140** and **140a** which I contributed to the catalogue of the Berlin exhibition *Rembrandt. Genie auf der Suche* (Berlin 2006 pp. 278-281), I tentatively raised the possibility that the piece added to **140a** with the young Moors and the kid was painted by Rembrandt himself. I now see, however, that there is no possibility of that, but I do consider it likely that the design of that part of the composition was Rembrandt's invention and also that the Berlin original must have been enlarged at some time. The fact that fragments of the Moors are seen on the Berlin version, together with traces of red paint above the face of the left boy precisely where there is a red beret in the copy, strongly suggests as much.

* **141** Rembrandt, **Bust of a man in oriental dress**, 1635, panel 72 x 54.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. HdG 353; Br. 206; Bauch 163; Gerson 170; Br./Gerson 206; Tümpel 136; ***Corpus* III C 101** (as being produced in Rembrandt's workshop).
Inscription: in the right background ‹*Rembrandt. fl. / 1635*›

In *Corpus* III C 101 this painting was disattributed from Rembrandt. The RRP's opinion was summarized as follows:

> 'Alongside an almost excessively illusionistic treatment of the turban there is, in the head, a handling of chiaroscuro that especially in the shadow passages produces a singularly flat effect. This comes about mainly through the turbid, opaque shadow tints, where Rembrandt was able to create a richer luminosity by using translucent paints and by letting the ground show through. Exaggerated accents like, in particular, the crescent-shaped light mark in the eye on the left do not help create a convincing effect. In the lower part of the figure and in the background, too, the contrasts between light and shade lack any really convincing plasticity or effect of depth. Other than in the meticulously-done turban the brushwork is relatively incoherent, and in the cloak is even so confused that no impression at all is given of the material.' (*Corpus* III p. 644)

What happened here, as so often in the three early Volumes of the *Corpus*, is that the painting was judged too strictly against a preconceived notion of how Rembrandt would have painted such a work. The judgment moreover was influenced by the condition of the painting and – among other factors – by an excessively rigid comparison with the New York *Noble Slav* **84**, painted three years earlier, and other figures in oriental dress painted in the first half of the 1630s, all of which are significantly different from each other (see below). Over the last decades, however, we have repeatedly had to acknowledge the demonstrable fact that Rembrandt did not apply routine stylistic and technical formulae. Rather he observed reality and applied his tools with a fresh interest each time he began to paint – albeit within the limits of his pictorial notions and developed skills]. Thus, in his study of this apparently Middle Eastern model he appears to have concentrated on particular characteristics of the skin and the eyes. Comparison with the face of the *Noble Slav* is therefore pointless, since in that painting (on canvas) he evidently used 'a Dutch head' as a model (Huygens/Heesakkers 1987 p. 88).

Fig. 1. X-ray of **141**.

Various facts and observations forced us to reconsider this disattribution. Firstly, handwriting experts from the Forensic Laboratory of the Dutch Ministry of Justice have concluded with reasonable certainty that the signature on the painting was placed by Rembrandt himself (verbal communication). Secondly, in addition to the panel of the autograph Braunschweig *Landscape* **177**, dendrochronological analysis has identified two more panels from the same tree with paintings by Rembrandt: the panel of the Berlin *Self-portrait* of 1634 **123**, and the *Self-portrait* in the Wallace Collection of *c.* 1637 **154**.

Neither piece of evidence, of course, in itself proves that the present painting was by Rembrandt. For example, Rembrandt could have signed the work of a pupil or an assistant, since we know that he augmented his income by selling the works of his pupils (Sandrart/Peltzer p. 203). To date, however, there has been no proof that he *signed* those works; in fact, perhaps apart from some portraits there is much that speaks against this suggestion. As to the panel, Rembrandt bought batches of panels (which sometimes turn out to have come from the same tree). It is perfectly possible that somebody else from the studio could have used one of such a batch to work on: we know that the masters provided the materials for their pupils (*Corpus* II p. 52-56). In short, the new facts do not *prove* Rembrandt's authorship; but they do increase its likelihood and therefore prompted a reassessment of the painting. There was an additional reason for such a reassessment: the painting had been cleaned and restored since the publication of *Corpus* III.

This reconsideration of the authorship of the present painting is primarily based on further analysis of the genesis and the execution of the work. To begin with, comparison of the X-radiograph with the paint surface reveals a number of changes during the work's genesis which indicate that we are certainly not dealing here with a copy (**fig. 1**). A large string of pearls originally hung over the shoulder and chest on a garment that appears to have been originally a lighter coloured fur cape. These pearls and the fur cape were later covered by a brownish, simpler garment. We often find Rembrandt changing costumes. Where such toning-down interventions are seen in works that are unquestionably by Rembrandt they appear to have been introduced in order to enhance indirectly the effect of other lit parts in the painting, in this case probably of the turban. Arnold Houbraken (1660-1719), who knew several of Rembrandt's pupils, referred to this particular type of intervention by Rembrandt in his own works when he reports that the latter *'is said to have tanned over (overpainted with brownish paint) a beautiful Cleopatra in order to give full effect to a single pearl.*' (Houbraken I 259). The left contour of the cape originally followed a different course from the present contour.

As to the execution of the painting, the relevant text in *Corpus* III dwells on the almost excessively illusionistic treatment of the turban compared to his other turbans. But Rembrandt's turbans all differ from one another in their construction and the way the material is rendered. Comparison with Rembrandt works with a similar subject-matter – the New York Man in oriental costume of 1632 **84**, the Munich Bust of a man in oriental dress of 1633 **104**, the Prague Scholar of 1634 **131**, the Chatsworth Man in oriental costume of *c.* 1639 **164** or the figure of Belshazzar in the London Belshazzar's feast of *c.* 1635 **143** – makes it clear how different Rembrandt's rendering of a turban can be (see also **99**, **212**). Again Houbraken gives us a glimpse into Rembrandt's studio by relating that Rembrandt *'could spend a day or two by arranging a turban to his taste*'. Apparently his turbans were meticulously painted from life, each time afresh. In the present painting the turban was apparently of a silken fabric with its own specific sheen and fine pattern of folds. A final argument against the original rejection of the painting was found in the 'hand', the brushwork in its freely varied relation to the forms that are being rendered.

Following the Bayesian approach it is clear that when the range of different arguments are taken into account, they converge with enhanced probability on the conclusion that we are dealing here with an autograph work by Rembrandt.

* **142** Rembrandt, **Bust of a bearded old man in fanciful costume**, 1635, mahogany panel 72.5 x 62.1 cm. London, Royal collection. HdG 387; Br. 207; Bauch 166; Gerson 172 (as doubtful attribution); Br./Gerson 207 (as doubtful attribution); ***Corpus* III C 102** (as from Rembrandt's circle or workshop); Tümpel -; see also Klein 1988; *Jewish R.* p. 84; White 1982 (rev.), no. 167.

Inscription: on the left beside the shoulder in a fairly dark grey, placed in the unhardened paint of the left background ‹*Rembrandt/f.1635*›

The authenticity of this painting was first questioned by Gerson in Br/Gerson 207. Apart from doubting the genuineness of the signature, he was concerned about various material aspects:

> 'The dark parts of the surface are covered with strange cracks. The panel which originally may have been used for another purpose (see the metal bands on the back) is of foreign wood. The paint is rather thick and unarticulated'.

It is clear from Gerson's text that when he wrote these comments he had no knowledge of Rembrandt's occasional use of South- and Middle-American mahogany with its unusual patterns of undulating splits (see for example **180**, **192**, **193**). Nor was he apparently aware of the fact that such panels, which often displayed peculiar traces of tooling (as does the mahogany panel of **213**, for instance), had previously been used for making packing cases for the importation of Middle-American sugar cones (Klein 1988). On the reverse side of the present panel was attached a (recently removed) strip of metal (**fig. 1**). On the basis of Gerson's arguments, Christopher White rejected the painting in his catalogue of the Dutch pictures in the British Royal Collection 1982 (White 1982 cat. no. 167). Tümpel and Slatkes also subsequently omitted the painting from their surveys of Rembrandt's paintings. As so often, Gerson's expressions of doubt thus had again led to a general rejection of the authenticity of a painting.

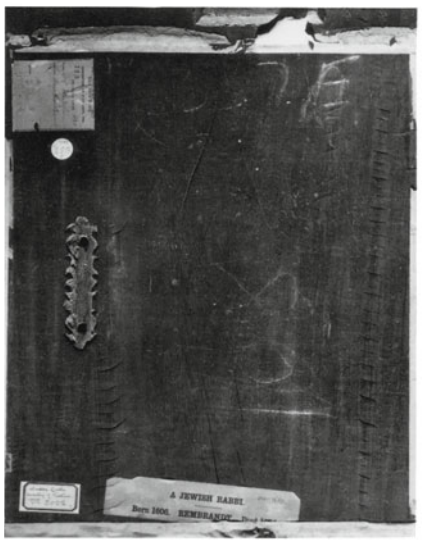


Fig. 1. Back of panel of **142**

The RRP also disattributed the present painting in *Corpus* III C 102, even though various Rembrandtesque qualities in the work were acknowledged in the relevant entry. Decisive for the disattribution, however, was the nature of the contours and the way the brushwork in the background in places follows the contour of the figure, arguments that in retrospect are not particularly convincing. On the signature <*Rembrandt / f.1635*> it was alleged that this

> 'does not impress one as being authentic'. 'The letters and the figures are obviously uncertain in their placing, and in the date particular unusually widely spaced. The form shows sometimes clear discrepancies from that in authentic Rembrandt signatures; the *b*, for instance, has a curve extending far to the right in the upper part of the shaft, and the *a* is much wider and rounder than in known Rembrandt signatures.' (*Corpus* III p. 649)

On closer examination, it is evident that the signature and dating were set on the not fully dried paint of the very freely, and in places thinly painted background. The dark paint of the signature thus mixed with the light grey paint of the background such that the hairs of the brush caused local scratches in the paint with the result that the yellow ground was here and there exposed. This is probably the source of the impression that the letters 'are obviously uncertain in their placing', whereas in fact this inscription was applied with a firm hand.

The fact that the signature was set very soon after the painting's completion is highly significant for the attribution. After all, if such a signature is rejected the painting as a whole has to be seen as a forgery, unless of course Rembrandt signed the work of a pupil. But there are too many other characteristics that argue for the work's authenticity. The fact that the *b* has a curving stem is not unusual for Rembrandt. In setting his signatures, precisely when it comes to the *b*, he lapsed into the Gothic script which he used in daily life, while in other cases his *b* was in italic, the script he used as a rule for signing his paintings. One must bear in mind that Rembrandt's signatures are not routinely placed handwritten signatures in the modern sense. They are inscriptions similar to those he also placed in mirror image on his etchings.

Both Gerson and the RRP considered the way the paint was applied in the present painting to be anomalous, in Gerson's words, 'thick and unarticulated'. But one could better describe it as a very free, relatively broad manner of painting with strong differences in the consistency and thickness of the paint. The remarkably free *peinture* in this painting is readily explicable. In and around 1635 Rembrandt was primarily engaged in painting large-scale history pieces. The large scale on which he often worked during this period required a much freer and broader *peinture* in general. This *peinture* could well have influenced his way of working in paintings of a smaller format, such as the present painting and e.g. **134**, **146**, **147**, **154**, **155**. These works moreover were not only painted with broader brushwork but, it would seem, also faster, which may explain why in the present painting the background was still not fully dried when the signature was added.

With the above in mind, the present author is convinced that there is no feature of this painting that argues against an attribution to Rembrandt. Exceptional qualities such as the apt manner in which the man's skullcap, including the hanging tassels, have been painted, drawing with the brush, the nature of the scratchings in the pectoral, the powerful way light and shadow in the face are alternated, and the *peinture* of the background similarly argue for the painting's authenticity.

The nature of the image and the fact that the figure is placed in an illusionistic oval frame with cursorily indicated rebates, demand further explanation. The radiographic image of the (entire) painting suggests that this painted frame was not planned in advance and may be a later addition.

The *raison d'être* of this painting is enigmatic. It has been thought that the sitter was a Jewish rabbi (White 1982), although research conducted for the 2006 exhibition held in the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam (see *Jewish' R. The myth unravelled*, p. 84) lent no support to this suggestion. If it is not a Jewish costume Rembrandt must have intended to depict some other so far unidentified costume. The thin shawl worn under a skullcap exists nowhere else in Rembrandt's works.

143 Rembrandt, **Belshazzar's feast**, *c.* 1635, canvas 167.6 x 209.2 cm. London, National Gallery. HdG 52; Br. 497; Bauch 21; Gerson 77; Br./Gerson 497; Tümpel 11; ***Corpus* III A 110**; see also *M/W* cat. 22; Brown 1991 pp. 362-364; *Art in the Making II* no. 8.
Inscription: on the far right, above the shoulder of the woman furthest to the right ‹*Rembrand* (.) / *163*(?)›

> **Daniel 5: 1-7** 'Belshazzar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his lords, and drank wine in the presence of the thousand. While he tasted the wine, Belshazzar gave the command to bring the gold and silver vessels which his father Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple which *had been* in Jerusalem, that the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines might drink from them. Then they brought the gold vessels that had been taken from the temple of the house of God which *had been* in Jerusalem; and

the king and his lords, his wives, and his concubines drank from them. They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold and silver, bronze and iron, wood and stone. In the same hour the fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote. Then the king's countenance changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his hips were loosened and his knees knocked against each other.'

The anti-clockwise tilt of the present painting (corrected in plate **143**) could be established by observations on the direction of the threads of the canvas and correspondingly the gradual diminishing of the depth of the cusps at the edges of the canvas, but also by the way the wine spills from the beaker of the woman dressed in red, and the fact that the table edge is no longer horizontal (see *Painter at Work* p. 127 or *Corpus* III p. 132). One may wonder whether the condition or format of the work was not perhaps altered in Rembrandt's studio (either by others or even by Rembrandt himself) to enhance the effect of the image, by making Belshazzar recoil further backward in horror (see however *Corpus* III p. 133 fig. 7).

144 Rembrandt, **Susanna bathing**, 1636, panel 47.2 x 38.6 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis. HdG 57; Br. 505; Bauch 18; Gerson 84; Br./Gerson 505; Tümpel 14; ***Corpus* III A 117**; see also *M/W* cat. 25; Bl. cat. 10; Sluijter 2006 pp. 113-131; Noble/Van Loon 2005.
Inscription: at the lower right; partly a later addition ‹*Rembr*[ant] *f / f 163*[6?]›

Two important elders of the Jewish community in Babylon discovered that they both desired Susanna, the wife of Joachim. They decided to trap her while she was bathing and force her into sex with them.

Daniel 13: 15-18 'One day, while they were waiting for the right moment, she entered as usual, with two maids only, wanting to bathe in the garden, for the weather was warm. Nobody else was there except the two elders, who had hidden themselves and were watching her. "Bring me oil and soap," she said to the maids, "and shut the garden gates while I bathe." They did as she said; they shut the garden gates and left by the side gate to fetch what she had ordered, unaware that the elders were hidden inside.'

Rembrandt has so successfully hidden the elders in the shrubbery that they are quite difficult to make out. One can just see a face in profile in the bushes on the right just above the level of Susanna's forehead, while immediately to the left of that profile a light, curved feather held in a shiny holder is visible, the top of the almost invisible turban of the second elder (**fig. 1**).

Fig. 1. Detail. The elders hidden in the shrubbery.

As far as is known, after the *Andromeda* from *c.* 1630 **41** this is the second time that Rembrandt painted a female nude. The present painting forms the starting point for a much more ambitious Susanna scene, begun in *c.* 1638 (see opposite Plate **158**) and completed in 1647 **213**.

145 Rembrandt, **The Ascension** (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik, see p. 178), 1636, canvas 93 x 68.7 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek. HdG 149; Br. 557; Bauch 64; Gerson 80; Br./Gerson 557; Tümpel 53; ***Corpus* III A 118**.
Inscription: at the bottom edge, right of centre ‹*Remb(...)dt f (.)636*›

Luke 24: 50-52 'And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy'

When Rembrandt had this painting delivered to Constantijn Huygens in 1636, he wrote in an accompanying letter that the *Entombment* **162** and the *Resurrection* **163** – the two pieces belonging to the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik that were only delivered three years later – were already more than half-finished (*Doc.* 1636/1 and 2). In a second letter (*Doc.* 1636/2) Rembrandt announced that he would be coming to The Hague to see 'how the picture [the present painting] *fits with the rest*' [these being **106** and **107**. The remark shows just how much Rembrandt tried to make the series form a homogenous ensemble, which again explains why **145**, **162** and **163** appear as *Fremdkörper* among the other works from the periods in

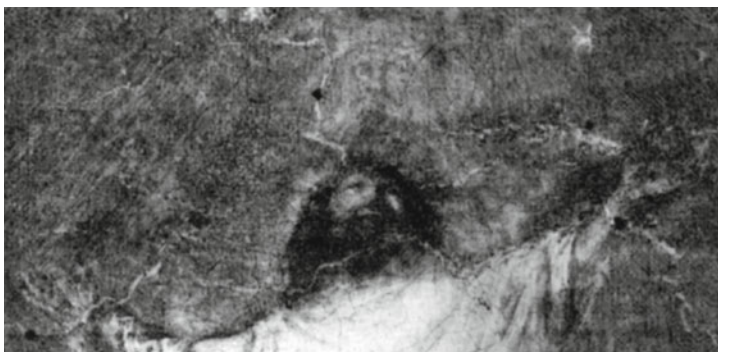


Fig. 1. X-ray of **145** (detail).

which they were made. It also explains why, in the work on the Passion series, Rembrandt continued to make use of a style of ordonnance and treatment of light that he had already outgrown after 1632/33 and which, as Bruyn suggests in his entry on the present painting (*Corpus* III A 118), refers back to the *Simeon in the Temple* from 1631 **47**. However, in his work on the last two pieces **211a/b**) that he would deliver for the series only in 1646, Rembrandt dropped this formula entirely (see the chronological survey of the series on p. 179).

According to the X-radiographs of the *Ascension* discussed here Rembrandt had initially painted the head and shoulders of God the Father above Jesus' head (**fig. 1**). Who knows what theological discussions, and with whom, led him to paint out God.

* **146** Rembrandt, **Self-portrait transformed into a '*tronie*'**, *c.* 1633-1636, panel 56 x 47 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 525; Br. 23; Bauch 304; Gerson 133; Br./Gerson 23; Tümpel A65 (as a studio work); ***Corpus* II C 56** (as by Govaert Flinck).
Inscription: none

Fig. 1. X-ray of **146**

This may originally have been one of those self-portraits from his time with Uylenburgh when there was an overproduction of self-portraits by Rembrandt (see Note to **122**). Some of these unsold pieces were later either wholly (as with **189**) or partly (with **122**, the present painting (**fig. 1**) and **170**) overpainted by himself or by workshop assistants to give them a new destination. In *Corpus* II (C 56) the present painting was still claimed as a work by Rembrandt's pupil and assistant Govaert Flinck. In *Corpus* IV (p. 603) I expressed my own conviction that the painting in its first form (without the beret or shadow over the eye) was an autograph self-portrait by Rembrandt, executed in the rough manner. At that time I hesitated over the question of whether the painting had been transformed at a later stage, into a *tronie* of a German landsknecht, by an assistant or by Rembrandt himself. After further stylistic analysis of the painting I have come to the conclusion that Rembrandt was himself responsible for both stages.

147 Rembrandt, **The standard-bearer**, 1636, canvas 118.8 x 96.8 cm. Private collection. HdG 270; Br. 433; Bauch 171; Gerson 95; Br./Gerson 433; Tümpel 138; ***Corpus* III A 120**; see also *M/W I* no. 26.
Inscription: at the bottom left ‹*Rembrandt f / 1636*›

This painting, remarkably frequently copied, cannot be considered as a portrait, nor as a self-portrait in any real sense (even though the facial features of the subject do resemble those of Rembrandt, who may well have posed for this figure in the mirror (see also the commentary to **155**).

We are dealing rather with a popular type of image that goes back to a 16th-century tradition. These images, typically seen in prints by Dürer (B. 87), Lucas van Leyden (B. 140) and Goltzius (B. 217, 218, 125), depict ensigns (standard-bearers) as 'types' of courage and contempt of death, as inscriptions on Goltzius' prints suggest. As summarized by Tümpel in his 1986 monograph no. 138:

> 'In Rembrandt's time ensigns were symbolic figures. They ranked third highest in the company after the Captain and Lieutenant. They bore the banner (the standard, or ensign) as the symbol of the company. Because it was vital that this sign of honour should not fall into the hands of the enemy during combat, and as they were at the same time unarmed, ensigns were at great risk and always had to be unmarried.'

Rembrandt increased the allure of his standard-bearer by depicting him slightly from below. A further means of enhancing the suggestion of space in the image is Rembrandt's use of atmospheric perspective over a short distance (see the commentary with **75**). See, for example, the tonal attenuation of the folds of the flag to the left of the shoulder.

148 Rembrandt, **The blinding of Samson**, 1636, canvas 205 x 272 cm. Frankfurt am Main, Städelsches Kunstinstitut. HdG 33; Br. 501; Bauch 15; Gerson 76; Br./Gerson 501; Tümpel 12; ***Corpus* III A 116**.
Inscription: at the bottom slightly to the left of center ‹*Rembrandt.f.1636.*›

The events involving Samson and Delilah that would lead to the blinding of Samson are related in the Note to **37**.

> **Judges 16: 19-21** 'Then she lulled him to sleep on her knees, and called for a man and had him shave off the seven locks of his head. Then she began to torment him, and his strength left him. And she said, "The Philistines are upon you, Samson!" So he awoke from his sleep, and said, "I will go out as before, at other times, and shake myself free!" But he did not know that the LORD had departed from him. Then the Philistines took him and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza. They bound him with bronze fetters, and he ground at the mill in the prison.'

Fig. 1. X-ray of **148** (detail).

Fig. 2. Drawn copy after **148**, 23 x 40 cm. Whereabouts unknown.

Thanks to the X-radiograph of this painting (**fig. 1**) and also the existence of a detailed drawing after the painting (**fig. 2**) of the type described in Note **138**, we know that after the drawing was made Rembrandt must have been dissatisfied with the foreshortening of the arm of the soldier who is gouging out Samson's eyes and therefore altered the position and foreshortening of that arm.

149 Rembrandt, **Danae**, 1636-*c.*1643, canvas 185 x 203 cm. St. Petersburg, Hermitage. HdG 197; Br. 474; Bauch 104; Gerson 270; Br./Gerson 474; Tümpel 100; ***Corpus* III A 119**; ***Corpus* V p. 282**; see also *Soviet Museums* no. 17.
Inscription: close to the bottom edge 21 cm from the left hand side ‹*Remb(...)f 1(..)6*› It is quite possible that the present inscription was copied from an original one when the surrounding canvas was trimmed down (see below).

After mutilation and restaurantion

Akrisios of Argos locked his daughter Danae in a dungeon to avoid the fulfilment of a prophecy that he would die at the hands of a son of his daughter. But Zeus, once he desired a female mortal, had no trouble in reaching her and in this case he visited Danae in a golden ray of light. She conceived and bore a son, Perseus, who after many adventures including the decapitation of the Gorgon Medusa and using her head to petrify various enemies, he accidentally killed his grandfather during some funeral games by striking his foot with a discus.

For the changes of format and the reconstruction of the original appearance of this painting see the text and images under Plate **149**.

The large surviving piece of the original was still one of the most beautiful paintings ever when in 1985 it was sprayed with a corrosive liquid by a maniac. Despite attempts at restoration, the surface was so badly mutilated that the painting is today a mere shadow of itself. We have been able to include a reproduction of the painting from the time before the surface was irreparably damaged (see Plate **149** and the Plate opposite **194**).

It may be inferred that Rembrandt painted this work on his own initiative and not for a commission. Research shows that having first been completed in 1636 the painting must have been re-worked around 1643 (see the image opposite Plate **194**). Thirteen years later it was probably still in the artist's possession (*Doc.* 1656/12 no. 347).

A further fact supports the idea that this capital work was made by Rembrandt on his own initiative: the Danae in its original form, together with the same-sized *Blinding of Samson* **148**, are the only two paintings with the same measurements as a painting that Rembrandt wanted to donate as a 'business gift' to Constantijn Huygens (*Doc.* 1639/2). It would appear that Huygens was unwilling to accept the gift, whichever of the two it may have been. Neither are recorded in Huygens' possession.

150 Rembrandt, **The angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family**, 1637, panel 66 x 52 cm. Paris, Louvre. HdG 70; Br. 503; Bauch 17; Gerson 81; Br./Gerson 503; Tümpel 15; ***Corpus* III A 121**; ***Corpus* V pp. 277-288**; see also Foucart 2009 p. 212.
Inscription: at the lower left on the stone bench ‹*Rembrandt./f* (followed by three dots arranged as a triangle) *1637*›

From the Apocryphal Book of Tobit: the companion who accompanied Tobias, son of Tobit, on a long journey reveals himself and tells them how, commanded by God, he has always helped the family. He continues:

> **Tobit 12: 14-21** '"So now God sent me to heal you and your daughter-in-law Sarah (see **194**). I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels who present the prayers of the saints and enter into the presence of the glory of the Holy One." They were both alarmed; and they fell upon their faces, for they were afraid. But he said to them, "Do not be afraid; you will be safe. But praise God for ever. For I did not come as a favour on my part, but by the will of our God. Therefore praise him forever. All these days I merely appeared to you and did not eat or drink, but you were seeing a vision. And now give thanks to God, for I am ascending to him who sent me. Write in a book everything that has happened." Then they stood up; but they saw him no more.'

In his book on the art of painting, Rembrandt's pupil Samuel van Hoogstraten relays advice that he must have acquired from Rembrandt during his training. For instance:

> *'Now that one has in mind a single figure, or many together, one must take care that one only shows a momentary movement, which principally expresses the action of the story; ….'.* (SvH pp. 116-118)

Clarifying this further, Van Hoogstraten then adds:

> '*Here what is above all required is that the actions or movements of the bodies correspond with the excitement of the emotions, even where almost stationary situations are depicted …'.*

The way different parts of the body play their roles in this can vary: for instance, the different positions of the head, or the multiplicity of gestures that can be made by the hands. Van Hoogstraten says that

> *'As far as the hands are concerned, all the deeds or actions are principally worked out by these, indeed the same movements are almost comparable to normal speech. They desire and promise, they demand, they deny, they display joy, sorrow, regret, recognition, fear and horror* : [...]'. (*Corpus* V p. 51)

This advice may alert the present-day beholder to the differentiation of attitudes and gestures that bring to life this episode from the Book of Tobit.

* **151** Rembrandt, **The parable of the labourers in the vineyard**, 1637, panel 31 x 42 cm. St. Petersburg Hermitage. HdG 116; Br. 558; Bauch 65; Gerson 83; Br./Gerson 558; Tümpel 55; ***Corpus* III C 88** (as a copy after a lost original); ***Corpus* V p. 206-207**; see *Soviet Museums* no. 11; Ulmann 2007.
Inscription: at the bottom right ‹*Rembrandt. f:. 1637*›

> **Matthew 20: 1-16** 'For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. Now when he had agreed with the laborers for a denarius a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace, and said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right I will give you.' So they went. Again he went out about the sixth and the ninth hour, and did likewise. And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, 'Why have you been standing here idle all day?' They said to him, 'Because no one hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right

you will receive.' "So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, 'Call the laborers and give them *their* wages, beginning with the last to the first.' And when those came who *were hired* about the eleventh hour, they each received a denarius. But when the first came, they supposed that they would receive more; and they likewise received each a denarius. And when they had received *it,* they complained against the landowner, saying, 'These last *men* have worked *only* one hour, and you made them equal to us who have borne the burden and the heat of the day.' But he answered one of them and said, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong. Did you not agree with me for a denarius? Take *what is* yours and go your way. I wish to give to this last man *the same* as to you. Is it not lawful for me to do what I wish with my own things? Or is your eye evil because I am good?' So the last will be first, and the first last. For many are called, but few chosen.' (See also Mark 10:31 and Luke13:30)

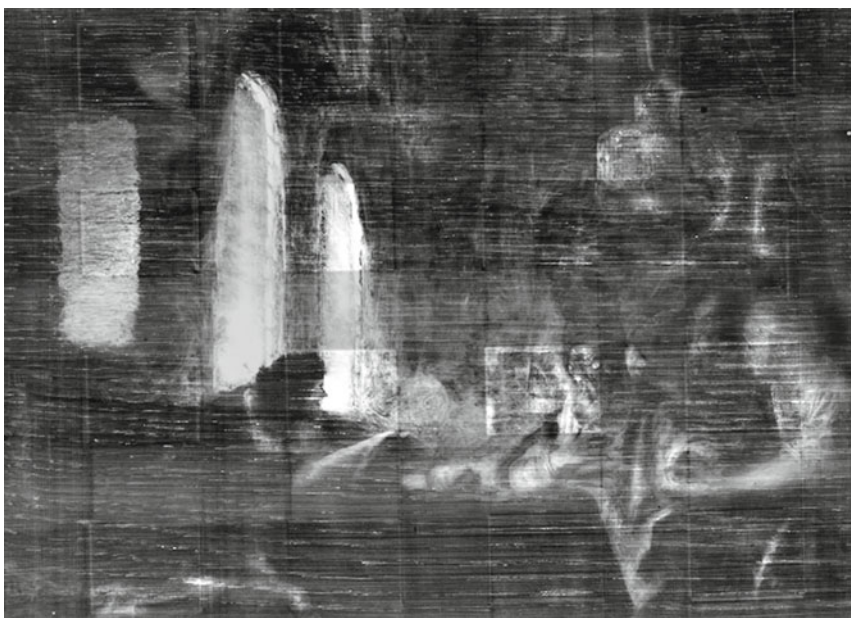


Fig. 1. X-ray of **151** (enlarged detail).

In 1969, shortly after the beginning of the RRP, the paintings attributed to Rembrandt in the Hermitage were studied by two members of the RRP team. Among these works was the present painting, which was judged to be a copy of a lost Rembrandt original on the basis of an alleged lack of quality and the existence of various other old versions. The summarized opinion in *Corpus* III C 88 is here quoted in part:

> 'While the approach to the subject and the lively way the story is portrayed undeniably carry the stamp of Rembrandt, a certain unevenness in execution prompts doubt about the painting being autograph. An overemphatic definition of form in the foreground areas is difficult to reconcile with a rather uncertain and poorly articulated rendering of the mid-ground figures. The organization of space is not really effectively supported by the chiaroscuro. A larger copy of mediocre quality [in an English private collection], like the present work bearing the date 1637, confirms that there must have been a lost original in which Rembrandt's intentions as to form, chiaroscuro and spatial effect were more clearly realised. The Leningrad painting was most probably done in Rembrandt's studio in 1637, the same year as the presumed original from which it was copied must have been produced.'

Fig. 2. Infra-red reflectograph of **151** (detail).

The painting's condition probably influenced this opinion more than was then realized. The paint surface is disfigured by serious deterioration in crucial parts, such as the group of figures to the right of the scene around the table. This condition, as well as disturbing overpaintings that were not recognized as such at the time, certainly played a role in the disattribution of the painting by the RRP.

I too was originally convinced that this painting could not be by Rembrandt. Shortly before I saw it for the first time in 1983 I had been working closely on *The Concord of the State* in Rotterdam, probably also from 1637, in connection with the latter's restoration **153**. I did not find in the present painting the same assured, yet free and confident control of the lead white-containing paint as it flowed from the brush in the more linear details that I had come to know and appreciate in *The Concord*.

Since then the original views of the RRP team and the arguments supporting these views have been critically examined, and in September 2006 the painting was re-investigated by the present author. The recently produced infrared photograph of the painting (**fig. 2**) and a more legible X-radiographic image resulting from digitalization (**figs. 1**) turned out to be of great benefit in that the two images allowed one to read the painting's genesis and condition in more detail. This later examination of the painting forced me to conclude that the earlier opinion of the RRP should be revoked.

At the earlier examination, a comparison of the picture with the X-radiograph had been complicated by the cradling. The digitally restored X-ray image revealed the following pentimenti (i.e. changes introduced during the working process) in the St Petersburg version:

– 1. A rectangular radio-absorbent shape at the left of the present two windows may indicate that a different window was originally intended in the small wall at the left of the room. Now that we have a deeper understanding of Rembrandt's involvement with '*kamerlicht*' (roomlight, see **85** and **86**) it is clear just how important the choice of the right size of the visible window or windows must have been for him (cf. **173** fig. 1 and **266** fig. 1).

Fig. 3. Rembrandt, *Abraham casting out Hagar and Ishmael*, 1637, etching, plate image 12.5 x 9.5 cm (B. 30) (detail).

– 2. Above the table between the master of the vineyard and his scribe is a radio-absorbent light, round, underlying shape which can also be seen in the paint relief.
– 3. The suggestion of light in the master's lap and a triangular reserved space in this area point to a significant change in this passage; and
– 4. The master's right lower arm held across his chest was originally entirely visible. From this it is clear that the surface of the table was later painted over this lower arm.

During my examination of the painting in 2006 it transpired that pentimenti 3 and 4 are part of a complex of interventions effecting changes in the perspectival construction of the pictorial space. Apparently the painter intended to lower the horizon, i.e. the visual focus of the beholder leaving the earlier course of the lead strips of the windows intact.

Taken together, these changes indicate a reconsideration of the composition which is incompatible with this being a copy; the present painting should therefore be accepted as Rembrandt's prototype of other existing versions (see *Corpus* III p. 574; Ulmann 2007).

There are other additional arguments for re-attributing the work to Rembrandt. Certain details are much more clearly seen in the infrared reflectograph than in the painting in its present condition, in particular the details that are drawn with the brush in a dark colour (**fig. 2**). These details lie on the paint surface of the picture and thus cannot possibly be seen as parts of an underdrawing. The way these details are drawn, especially in the group of the four labourers in discussion, suggests Rembrandt's hand. It demonstrates his profound understanding of details, as for example in the bag of the worker seen from the back, the shoes and other details indicated in drawing. Rembrandt's etchings from the same period show a comparable style of draughtsmanship (**fig. 3**).

On the difficulties inherent in reading the often confusing technical images e.g. X-radiographs, infrared photographs and neutron activation images, see p. 65**.**

* **152** Rembrandt, **River landscape with ruins**, *c.* 1637-*c.* 1645, panel 67 x 87.5 cm. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 944; Br. 454; Bauch 554; Gerson 344; Br./Gerson 454; Tümpel 265; ***Corpus* III B 12**; see also Schneider 1990 pp. 206-211; Kassel 2006 p. 251; *R. Landscapes* pp. 111-119.
Inscription: at the extreme right ‹*Rembrandt*›

Fig. 1. X-ray of **152**

The attribution, dating and genesis of this painting have given rise to a great deal of discussion in the past. In *Corpus* III two clearly distinct phases in the painting's genesis were identified. The mill and the boat in the lower-right corner of the composition belong to the first phase. As shown by the X-radiograph and an analysis of a paint sample and its stratification, the painting must have been already largely finished in that phase. The manner in which the mill and boat are painted is strongly reminiscent of the graphic execution of (certain details) of paintings from 1637/38, such as **150**, **151**, **153** and **158**. This dating is supported by dendrochronological data. The painting is done on an oak panel that came from the same tree as the *Concord of the State* from 1637 **153** and the *Man in Polish costume* from the same year **155**.

Analysis of the X-radiograph (**fig. 1**) shows that the other parts of the painting are superimposed over most of the first phase (but not the passages mentioned above).These overpaintings were in *Corpus* III attributed to Ferdinand Bol and dated to around 1655 (or even considerably later).

My own thinking about this attribution problem was significantly

influenced by my earlier preoccupation with Rembrandt's landscapes from the mid-1640s (in the context of my re-attribution of *The Mill* **206**). I also approached the problem in the awareness that large parts of the painting in its first state, such as the sky and the high mountains in the background of the underlying landscape, had to be overpainted with opaque paint (whether or not containing lead white) in order to adapt the painting to the new conception. For this reason, the translucent brownish passages showing through that are so characteristic of Rembrandt's paintings on panel are not seen in the upper part of this work. But one does find them in the earlier painted mountains above the mill that were not covered and in the aqueduct generally indicated in browns, with its row of arches resembling the aqueduct in the Paris *Landscape with a Castle* **205**. One is also reminded of the fantastic architecture in **205** by the remarkable edifices with open arches along the left-hand ridge of hills in the present painting. For the rest, it would be risky to take the Paris *Landscape* as a touch-stone by which to judge the second phase of the present painting, since that painting is unfinished, whereas the present painting should rather be considered as a partially superimposed painting.

With regard to the attribution of the overpainting in *Corpus* III to Ferdinand Bol, it must be said that Bol's hand is not unambiguously recognizable in this second phase of the present painting. Moreover, it would seem highly unlikely that Bol, who must have been a Rembrandt expert and admirer (see *Doc.* 1644/4; 1660/15; Blankert 1982 p. 77; see also *Corpus* V pp. 276-282 and *Corpus* V 9), would overpaint and thereby radically alter one of his former master's paintings so long after his tutelage. According to the X-radiograph the painting must have been already well advanced or even finished before it was altered so radically. The alternative, that Rembrandt himself carried out this intervention, seems rather more obvious. It was precisely in the 1640s that Rembrandt fundamentally changed paintings that he had begun – or in the first instance wholly or largely finished – in the thirties, overpainting large parts of the first version, for example the *Danae* **149** and the Berlin *Susanna* **213** (and opposite **158**).

In the context of the discussion over the two-stage genesis of the present painting it is important to bear in mind that in its early phase it was probably painted earlier than the 1638 landscape in Krakow **159**, which is usually considered to be the first of Rembrandt's landscapes. Rembrandt may have provisionally put the present painting aside as a pioneering work with problems, taking it up only later to resolve them.

153 Rembrandt, **The Concord of the State** (**grisaille serving as a design for a political print that was never realized**), *c.* 1637, panel 74.6 x 101 cm. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen. HdG 227; Br. 476; Bauch 105; Gerson 206; Br./Gerson 476; Tümpel 116; ***Corpus* III A 135**; see also Kempers 2000; Van de Wetering 2000/01 pp. 56-57.
Inscription: at the bottom right in a strip that was painted only in a late stage of the work ‹*Rembrandt.f. 164*› This inscription is difficult to accept as authentic.

On the same occasion that Rembrandt showed his *excehomo in 't graaeuw* (*Ecce Homo in grisaille* **112**) to the clerk inventorising his possessions in 1656 (*Doc.* 1656/12), the two men also listed another work with a title no doubt provided by Rembrandt – *De eendragt van 't lant* (The Concord of the State) (*Doc.* 1656/12 no. 106).

Since John Smith first pointed out in his 1836 *catalogue raisonné* of Rembrandt's paintings that that work may well be this large grisaille now in Rotterdam, the identification has never been challenged. This monochrome oil-sketch, detailed in some parts, remarkably cursorily executed in others, has been the topic of much debate as to its function and precise meaning. Bram Kempers has amassed overwhelming evidence to demonstrate that the pictorial language and political symbols employed in this painting show a strong affinity with the political prints and pamphlets that appeared during the Dutch-Spanish war (Kempers 2000).

The commission for this sketch must be related to the complicated political situation in the United Provinces between 1637 and 1641. Kempers convincingly shows that the commissioning patron must have been a member of the Orangeist party (possibly Maurits Huygens?) who provided the iconographic programme for the exhortation embodied in the grisaille, to unite at that stage of the war against Spain which had begun in 1568 and would finally end in 1648. The warning was in particular aimed at the Amsterdam regents, represented in the right foreground, who for commercial reasons wanted to settle the conflict prematurely.

The iconography of this grisaille is entirely consonant with its being a design for a print and not for any other purpose. This conclusion is supported by the fact that the great variety in the 'finish' of the sketch is comparable with that of the oil-sketch for the *Ecce Homo* and the other grisailles dealt with in **108** - **114**. A possible objection to this suggestion is the unusually large size of the present work. The print, were it to reproduce the grisaille on the same scale, would have measured some 65 x 100 cm, which is much larger than any standard size of paper in this period. Yet composite prints requiring two or more plates, printed on two or more sheets of paper which were then almost seamlessly glued together, were not exceptional in Rembrandt's day.

Along the top and bottom of the panel, which measures 74.6 x 102 cm, strips of *c.* 5 to 6 cm wide remained unpainted until Rembrandt extended the image to the edges at a later stage. The fact that the design did not originally cover the entire surface of the panel will prove significant in the discussion concerning the oil-sketch for the *Large Coppenol* (see **260**).

The signature and date of 164- (the last digit is cut away) on the present painting seem to be added by another hand. On stylistic grounds and in view of the dendrochronological data it is more likely that the painting originated in the late 1630s, which would certainly fit the political situation for which it is thought to have been designed. On these grounds Kempers considers the year 1637 the most probable date of its production.

* **154** Rembrandt, **Self-portrait**, *c.* 1637, panel 64 x 49 cm. London, Wallace Collection. HdG 559; Br. 27; Bauch 315; Gerson 237 (with doubt, Flinck?); Br./Gerson 27 (with doubt, Flinck?); Tümpel A 68 (as painted by a pupil); ***Corpus* III C 96 p. 604** (as not authentic, probably done in Rembrandt's workshop); ***Corpus* IV pp. 238-242** and **p. 604** (as an authentic work); see also *Wallace Collection* IV p. 287.
Inscription: in the shadow cast by the figure on the wall ‹*Rembrandt / f[.]*›

Present condition.

Judging by Rembrandt's ageing physiognomy and the manner of painting, the present self-portrait must have originated during the

Fig. 1. X-ray of **154** (detail) showing elements of a woman's costume (a girdle and a bow), compare **120b**.

second half of the 1630s. Its authenticity was first queried by Gerson (1968 no. 237) and it was subsequently removed from Rembrandt's autograph oeuvre by Tümpel. It was also disattributed from Rembrandt by the RRP in *Corpus* Vol. III (C 96). That negative judgement was primarily based on a comparison with the Paris *Self-portrait in a cap* from 1633 (see **97**), despite the fact that a far closer kinship with the Washington *Man in Polish costume* from 1637 was acknowledged **155**.

It can be safely assumed that this painting must have originated in Rembrandt's workshop, since the panel on which it was painted came from the same tree as the panel of the Berlin *Self-portrait* **123**. Moreover, it was painted over an unfinished portrait of a woman: like so many of Rembrandt's self-portraits either painted by himself or, exceptionally in the case of copies or free variants, by members of his studio (see *Corpus* IV 10, 11 and 12), the present painting is superimposed over another (**fig. 1**).

It should be noted that the present-day shape of the truncated panel makes the head sit, as it were, most unhappily trapped within the semicircular, apse-shaped border, which has a very unfortunate effect on the work's appearance as a whole. The high placing, not only of the figure of Rembrandt, but also of the underlying woman (one of whose eyes, revealed by infra-red reflectography, lies even higher than the eyes of the self-portrait painted over it (see *Corpus* III C 96 fig. 4), suggests that the original panel must have been taller and consequently also wider. The original undoubtedly rectangular panel must have measured *c.* 75 x 55 cm (see *Corpus* III pp. 238 and 604).

Further, one should note that the placing of the ear, along with the nose and the line of the mouth (which slopes downward on both sides) indicate the painter's original intention of representing the head as seen slightly from below. This accounts for the apparently low crown of Rembrandt's skull, which may at first sight seem rather disfiguring. It should also be noted, however, that the head of *The Standard-bearer* **147**, which shows various similarities with the painting under discussion, is also represented from a low viewpoint with the same consequence for the rendering of the face in its relation to the top of the head.

As is normally the case with superimposed paintings, the genesis of the painting under discussion is difficult to read in the X-radiograph. However, those parts of the reserve of the figure of Rembrandt that are legible in the radio-absorbent background show correspondences with the reserves in paintings attributed to Rembrandt himself. They are characterized by a blurring of the rather simplified contours defining the figure (or other elements) by the radio-absorbent paint of the background or of other forms (see *Corpus* III pp. 186 and 43)

The most pressing argument in favour of a revision of the attribution, however, derives from the *peinture* in the face. The apparently casual manner in which the eyes are painted, with the contours of the irises deliberately left blurred by the way the whites of the eyes have been painted, is very similar to Rembrandt's way of working in the Washington *Man in Polish costume* **155** and the *Standard-bearer* **147**. This is also true of the way in which, in areas of shadow, the light caught by occasionally projecting facial features is indicated. Comparisons of these paintings demonstrate so many correspondences of technique, vision and temperament that it would be difficult to imagine that this self-portrait could have been painted by anyone other than the author of the other two paintings cited here.

155 Rembrandt, **Man in Russian costume**, 1637, panel 96.7 x 66.1 cm. Washington, National Gallery of Art. HdG 271; Br. 211; Bauch 174; Gerson 186; Br./Gerson 211; Tümpel 137; ***Corpus* III A 122**; see also Wheelock 1995 pp. 222-225. Inscription: above right ‹*Rembrandt.f* (followed by three dots in a triangle) / *1637*›

Arthur Wheelock has described and convincingly rejected the various attempts made in the past to see this painting as the portrait of a Polish dignitary – and even to identify the subject. Like the authors of the *Corpus* Vol. III, he comes to the conclusion that this painting should be assigned to the category of *tronies*. But since Rembrandt must have used models (including himself in front of the mirror) for such paintings and etchings, the question arises as to whether he used himself as a model in this painting (see also *Corpus* IV pp. 189-190. With *tronies*, the use of a model was surely not in the first place a matter of the likeness-as-identity, but more probably in order for the artist to have before him a person who served as a point of contact with reality while he painted the transitions from light to shadow, from skin to hair, for the construction of eyes and nose and the very complex passage of mouth, chin and neck. We should not therefore compare this painting with Rembrandt's self-portraits painted as such. Nevertheless, there are several facial characteristics of this *tronie* that are specific to Rembrandt's own physiognomy: the vertical crease above the nose, slightly asymmetrically placed to the left, and the horizontal furrow under it where Rembrandt would increasingly develop similar wrinkles with age (see for instance **273** and **274**); the folds of skin in the eye-socket, above the eyelids, and the nose with its bulbous end – all these features of Rembrandt's physiognomy have caused commentators to ask whether Rembrandt was looking in the mirror when he painted this *tronie* of a non-existent Pole, as well as the *Standard-bearer* from the previous year **147**.

Figures from the East like the one in the present painting must have been popular as wall decoration. But if this is indeed an arbitrarily chosen fantasy figure, the intriguing question remains as to why Rembrandt devoted his full creative energies to such a painting. It is evident from the X-radiograph and the colour differences visible in the background that he introduced radical changes along the right contour of the face, as a result of which the face was made smaller; the position of the thumb is changed, while in the first design the course of the right contour of the trunk was also different. This persistent effort to ensure that the end result was satisfying to him personally would appear to have been a driving force throughout his life. It would also explain perhaps Rembrandt's constant development as an artist, which one can follow merely by leafing through the Plates in this book from **1**-**324**.

* **156** Rembrandt, **Portrait of the preacher Eleazar Swalmius**, 1637, canvas 132 x 109 cm. Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten. HdG 722; Br. 213; Bauch 380; Gerson-; Br./Gerson 213 (as too tame for Rembrandt); Tümpel -; ***Corpus* III p. 689** (as circle of Rembrandt).
Inscription: in the right background ‹*Rembrandt f. 1637*›

The portrait of the Amsterdam Calvinist minister Eleazer Swalmius, dated 1637, was effectively consigned to oblivion in 1969, when Horst Gerson expressed serious doubts as to its authenticity. His concerns were compounded by the fact that he thought the Rembrandt signature to the right of Swalmius had been applied by a later hand. Gerson suggested that Rembrandt's pupil Govaert Flinck might have been the author of the portrait. Govaert Flinck trained with Rembrandt around 1633-35 and in 1636 succeeded him as the portrait painter in Hendrick Uylenburgh's business.

At the time when Gerson judged the painting, and for many years afterwards, it was covered with a thick layer of varnish that had darkened irregularly and showed blanching patches at its surface. This made it extremely difficult to assess the painting and was one of the reasons – in addition to the fact that Gerson had already rejected it (see p. 21) – that the Rembrandt Research Project did not include the work in their catalogue of Rembrandt's paintings.

In 2008 the conservation workshop of the Antwerp Museum removed the layers of varnish. To everyone's surprise the portrait emerged in perfect condition with no traces of earlier cleaning or restorations. This is extremely unusual for a canvas of this age and large size. The signature also proved to be original and likewise in perfect condition. It was applied to an area of the background which had been so thinly painted that it could mistakenly be deemed to be 'abraded'. When a signature is added with marked strokes of black paint on such a background and is also well preserved, it appears at first sight to have been added much later or overpainted. However the signature is so very similar to Rembrandt's signature on his only other portrait-like painting from the same period, the undisputed *Man in Polish costume* in the National Gallery in Washington **155**, that its authenticity can scarcely be questioned.

Rembrandt's portrait of Eleazer Swalmius, painted with great élan, portrays the minister gesturing animatedly in the generous pictorial space. The head, turned towards the viewer with a benevolent look, is masterfully rendered. The billowing outlines of the dark clothes are characteristic of Rembrandt's manner, as is the cursory yet extremely effective way he added subdued highlights to the fabric. It is typical of Rembrandt's use of the atmospheric perspective over a short distance (due to 'the thickness of the air') that he painted the part of the narrow ruff disappearing behind the ear in a more muted way than the rest of it.

* **157** Rembrandt, **Bust of a man with plumed cap**, *c.* 1637, panel 62.5 x 47 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis. HdG 545; Br. 24; Bauch 311; Gerson 189; Br./Gerson 24; Tümpel 165; ***Corpus* III C 98** (as by an unknown artist in Rembrandt's immediate circle; see also De Vries et al. 1978 no. VII.
Inscription: partly in the shadow cast by the figure ‹*Rembrandt. f.*›

Despite the argumentation in *Corpus* III C 98 in support of a disattribution of the painting – a line of reasoning to which I fully subscribed at the time – I have since come to believe that this work can better be seen as an autograph work by Rembrandt. The combination of painting and drawing with the brush that is so conspicuous in this painting is characteristic of many of Rembrandt's works – particularly in the latter half of the 1630s. This relation can differ markedly from one painting to another. In this painting it is an energetic and efficient way of drawing which so dominates the work that it could be considered a sketch.

Fig. 1. Tronie of a young man with gorget and plumed baret. Panel, 62 x 46 cm. Detroit, The Detroit Institute of Arts.

Fig. 2. Detail of **157**

Fig. 3. Detail of fig. 1.

One can imagine various situations in which such a work could have originated. One possibility, based on the striking similarity between the figure in the present painting and the sitter for a *tronie* now in Detroit (**fig. 1**), is that it could have emerged from the workshop practice in which *tronies* of various characters were produced by pupils portraying each other or other models in historicising dress – a way of practising portrait painting. Certainly the Detroit painting could have resulted from such an exercise. It is also conceivable that Rembrandt himself participated in such a session (**fig. 2** and **3**). We know further examples of such situations (see **78** (fig. 1); Schatborn in Los Angeles 2009 no. 41-43; *R. Printmaker* no. 51)

158 Rembrandt, **The risen Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene**, 1638, panel 61 x 49.5 cm. London, Royal Collection. HdG 142; Br. 559; Bauch 66; Gerson 82; Br./Gerson 559; Tümpel 56; ***Corpus* III A 124**; see also White 1982 (rev.), no. 161; *M/W* cat. 27.
Inscription: in brown paint on the right part of the tomb ‹*Rembrandt ft / 1638*›

Mary Magdalene was the first, early on the Monday morning after Jesus' entombment, to discover that the stone before Christ's tomb had been rolled aside.

> **John 20: 11-17** 'But Mary stood outside by the tomb weeping, and as she wept she stooped down *and looked* into the tomb. And she saw two angels in white sitting, one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. Then they said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "Because they have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid Him." Now when she had said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing *there*, and did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" She, supposing Him to be the gardener, said to Him, "Sir, if You have carried Him away, tell me where You have laid Him, and I will take Him away." Jesus said to her, "Mary!" She turned and said to Him, "Rabboni!" (which is to say, Teacher). Jesus said to her, "Do not touch Me, for I have not yet ascended to My Father; but go to My brethren and say to them, 'I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and *to* My God and your God.'" '

Further back, two other women are seen from behind leaving the garden. The one on the right wearing an exotic flat hat holds open a gate. (The Gospel text referred to above does not mention these women. Luke 24:10 speaks of Joanna and Mary the mother of James, while Mark 16:1 names the latter and Salome. Matthew 28:1 mentions in addition to Mary Magdalena only 'the other Mary'.) In the distance lies Jerusalem with the Temple, recognizable by the pillars Boaz and Jachin standing free of the facade. The figures of four men are seen on a bridge or viaduct. These could be the soldiers who had been guarding the tomb and had returned in shock to the city after the resurrection (see **163**) to tell the High Priests what had happened (Matthew 28:11).

In its detailed execution this painting gives a faithful account of the biblical story. The profuse detail in which the setting of these events is mapped out may be seen as a striking example of Rembrandt's approach to history painting, which for a brief period around 1638/39 dominated Rembrandt's production (*Corpus* V pp. 208-211; compare **151**, the drawn copy after **213** (opposite Plate **158**) before that painting was completed, **160** and a number of etchings B. 37, 28, 99, 281, 49). In this context, a comparison with Rembrandt's strikingly different painting with the meeting of Jesus and Mary Magdalene from *c.* 1650 **219** is telling.

159 Rembrandt, **Landscape with the Good Samaritan**, 1638, panel 46.5 x 66 cm. Cracow, Muzeum Narodowe. HdG 109; Br. 442; Bauch 545; Gerson 199; Br./Gerson 442; Tümpel 258; ***Corpus* III A 125**; see also Bruyn 1987b.
Inscription: at the bottom right ‹*Rembrandt. f. 1638*›

The relevant Biblical text relating the scene incorporated in this landscape is quoted in Note **42**.

In *Masters of 17th-century Dutch landscape painting* (ed. Peter Sutton, Boston 1987) Josua Bruyn attempted to relate recent iconological issues in the study of 17th-century Dutch painting to the art of landscape painting (Bruyn 1987b). In *Corpus* III (pp. 167-168) he wrote the following iconological analysis of the present painting:

'It is noteworthy how closely Rembrandt follows a 16th-centrury Flemish scheme in his landscape composition, with a higher part with trees on the right, and a valley on the left bounded in the distance by a town and mountains. This type occurs frequently from Pieter Breugel onwards. [...] The biblical episode is, as a subordinate though significant feature, also in line with this tradition, and in this context the parable of the Good Samaritan was a not uncommon motif. The dramatic lighting that Rembrandt applied to this compositional scheme seems to heighten the meaning that landscape must often have had, in the 16th and well into the 17th century, as an image of a sinful and dangerous world. Thus, in Rembrandt the Good Samaritan – as an image of love for one's fellow man – is shown in an ominous world bustling with human activity various examples of which are recognizable as illustrations of man's sinfulness and vanity. The hunter firing his gun upwards (i.e. at a bird) represents the game of love (see E. de Jongh in: *Simiolus* 3, 1968-69, pp. 22-74, esp. 35ff), and the couple (the woman wearing a large cap like that often used with a Vanitas connotation, cf. **94** and **95**) seen here at the roadside but in, for example, the etching of *The three trees* (B. 212) hidden in the undergrowth, stand of course for the lust that results from idleness. The fisherman sitting to the left of centre, in the valley, likewise represents idleness (cf. the material compiled in the catalogue for the exhibition *Tot lering en vermaak*, Amsterdam 1976, pp. 219-221); the motif occurs again, clearly with the same meaning, in the Berlin *Landscape with a seven-arched bridge* (*Corpus* III C 118/Br 445) and in a number of landscape etchings by Rembrandt. Battered trees in the foreground and the river with its waterfall signify the transience of life. The Samaritan must therefore be seen in this context as the Christian soul who has to traverse a world of sin and vanity in order to achieve ultimate salvation. The latter we recognize in the distant city, the 'future city' sought by man (cf. Hebrews 13: 14; this text is quoted, among many others, in connexion with the image of the pilgrimage of life in, for instance, a print of 1599 by Jacob Matham after Karel van Mander, Hollst. X, p. 233 no. 344). This interpretation is supported by the windmills that form part of the city and which may be taken to signify the Christian's hope of salvation (cf. H.J. Raupp in: Jahrbuch der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen in Baden-Wurttemberg 17, 1980, pp. 85-110, esp. 89-90, 94-95, 97). The bridge one has to cross before reaching the city may be seen as, in the words of Jan Luyken, an 'overgang van dezer aarde,/Tot in het zalig Hemelrijk' (a crossing-over from this world to the blessed realm of heaven), and by the same metaphor, the coach approaching the bridge would, provided it be driven carefully, carry the soul to eternity (J. Luyken, *De Bykorf des Gemoeds*, Amsterdam 1711, pp. 10 and 82 respectively). Not only the compositional type but also the symbolism of Rembrandt's picture is closely linked with the landscape type practised in Flanders during the 16th century and by Flemish emigrants in Holland in the late 16th and early 17th centuries.'

Bruyn's interpretation (above) of the different elements of the image naturally raise the question of the work's *raison d'être* – both for its author and for whoever eventually acquired or beheld it.

One of the readers of a draft of this Note asked: Why quote Bruyn so extensively? It is largely known in the scholarly world that Bruyn went overboard here: at the end of his College Art Association address in New York, Simon Schama objected that Bruyn's explanation was "iconography run amok". My first reaction is to concur. I tend to defend the proposition that in the 17th century there was already a conception of painting that borders on the 19th- and 20th-century idea of 'art for art's sake'. Rembrandt's pupil Samuel van Hoogstraten wrote in his book on painting:

> *'I dare to to assert that an honest practitioner of the Art of Painting who practices it solely for itself and for its virtuous nature, would truly be unjustly scorned'* (SvH p. 348).

On the other hand, there was the obvious tendency in Rembrandt's time and before, to a degree almost unimaginable for us, to experience the real world (whether painted or not) as an infinite source of metaphors and symbols (see also Renger in *Sprache der Bilder*).

160 Rembrandt, **The wedding of Samson**, 1638, canvas 126 x 175 cm. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 30; Br. 507; Bauch 20; Gerson 85; Br./Gerson 507; Tümpel 17; ***Corpus* III A 123**; ***Corpus* V pp. 208-209**.
Inscription: at the lower centre ‹*Rembrandt. f. 1638.*›

Samson had chosen a Philistine bride.

> **Judges 14: 8-14 '**After some time, when he returned to get her, he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion [which he had killed earlier]. And behold, a swarm of bees and honey *were* in the carcass of the lion. He took some of it in his hands and went along, eating. When he came to his father and mother, he gave *some* to them, and they also ate. But he did not tell them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion. So his father went down to the woman. And Samson gave a feast there, for young men used to do so. And it happened, when they saw him, that they brought thirty companions to be with him. Then Samson said to them, "Let me pose a riddle to you. If you can correctly solve and explain it to me within the seven days of the feast, then I will give you thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothing. But if you cannot explain *it* to me, then you shall give me thirty linen garments and thirty changes of clothing." And they said to him, "Pose your riddle, that we may hear it." So he said to them: "Out of the eater came something to eat, And out of the strong came something sweet."

This is one of the very few paintings in which this scene has ever been depicted (Tümpel 1986 no. 17) and therefore it may have been considered of negligible theological or iconographic significance. Nonetheless, the painting has figured prominently in the Rembrandt literature: it was highly praised in Philips Angel's *Praise of the art of painting* (*Lof der schilderkonst*) from 1642. Angel praised it for a specific quality: the presumed historical accuracy with which Rembrandt has represented the scene. The demand for such accuracy implicitly played a prominent role among the 'basic aspects of the art of painting' [*gronden*], as is clear from Samuel van Hoogstraten's book on the *Art of Painting* (see SvH especially the Fourth Book).

There are also other *gronden* whose practise is carried to the highest level in this painting. The variety of affects is astonishing, while the matching diversity in human postures is equally impressive. Moreover, Rembrandt gives his figures – especially Samson, of course – appropriate proportions. The various protagonists are rendered as individuals, and furthermore the figures are dressed by Rembrandt in a great variety of costumes with different materials and fashions; the ordonnance is spatially convincing and highly varied; the execution controlled and deft; the role of light shrewdly thought out and subtly effected.

In short, from the perspective of the application of the *gronden*, this painting can be seen as the quintessential Rembrandt. In his book *Rembrandt & the Italian Renaissance*, Kenneth Clark suggested that it was Rembrandt's answer to Leonardo's *Last Supper*. Certainly, it also depicts a large table around which are seated, or standing, a varied company of some fifteen figures evidently emotionally moved in different ways. If Clark is right – and there is much to support the idea – then the confrontation of Rembrandt's painting with the print after Leonardo's mural, which Rembrandt possessed and studied carefully (**fig. 1**), affords an excellent opportunity to grasp more clearly Rembrandt's pictorial and narrative ideas in the period around 1638.

Fig. 1. Anonymus Italian print after the *Last Supper* by Leonardo da Vinci.

161 Rembrandt, **Woman with a mirror** (**oil sketch**), *c.* 1638, mahogany and oak panel 23.9 x 32.5 cm (without later additions along top and bottom). St. Petersburg, Hermitage, HdG 325; Br. 387; Bauch 272; Gerson 279; Br./Gerson 387; Tümpel 151; ***Corpus* V p. 204**; see also *Doc.* 1656/12 no. 39; Martin 1921 p. 33; *Soviet Museums* no. 24; White 2082 (rev.) no. 27.
Inscription: on the casket ‹*Rembrandt f. 1657*› by a later hand and with a mistaken date

Fig. 1. **161** with later additions.

Fig. 2. X-ray of **161**, see fig. 1.

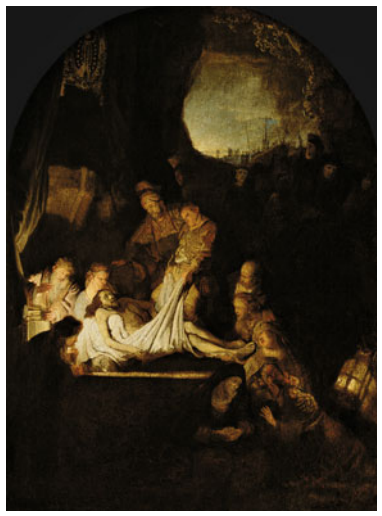
Considerable confusion has surrounded this small and exquisite painting, in the first place because it bears a signature and the date 1654, which were certainly added by a later hand, while on the basis of style and other arguments (see below) it must have been painted some 19 years earlier. The second reason for confusion is that the construction of the panel has still not been adequately investigated. In its present condition this panel consists of four small horizontal 'planks', the top- and bottom-most of which are unquestionably later additions (**fig. 1**). They must have been added and painted after the 17th century (**fig. 2**) – undoubtedly in order to give the painting a vertical format, which it was apparently thought to suit the image better. In Plate **161** these additions have been digitally removed. The original image was painted on an unusually small panel comprising two horizontally joined strips of wood, one of oak, the other mahogany. The composition of the original panel is sufficient in itself to indicate that we are dealing here with a sketch and not, as suggested by Martin, a small (but originally larger) painting. Glück suggested that this is the painting listed in Rembrandt's 1656 inventory (*Doc.* 1656/12 no. 39) as '*A courtesan beautifying herself by the same* [Rembrandt]'. This could support the idea that this

Fig. 3. F. Bol, '*Rembrandt and his wife, Saskia*', *c.* 1640, canvas 154 x 199 cm. London, Royal Collection (see White (rev.) no. 27).

was conceived as a sketch, since Rembrandt's inventory of 1656 shows that he had kept several of his painted sketches (*Doc.* 1656/12 nos. 59, 79, 88, 91, 106 **153**, 111 **114**, 121 **112**, 326 **217**).

The gesture and affect of the woman in this little painting are almost playfully realized, yet at the same time with great concentration and an extraordinary control of form, light and reflected light. This may be one of those oil studies that Rembrandt sometimes made for his history pieces. It appears that he made these studies particularly when the lighting of one of the figures was too complex to realize directly in the intended painting. Corroborative evidence that this sketch was painted before 1640 comes from the fact that the same image recurs almost exactly in an early painting by Ferdinand Bol which, on stylistic grounds, can be dated to *c.* 1640 (**fig. 3**).

162 Rembrandt, **The Entombment** (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik, see p. 178), 1635-1639, canvas 92.6 x 68.9 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek. HdG 140; Br. 560; Bauch 68; Gerson 87; Br./Gerson 560; Tümpel 57; ***Corpus* III A 126**; see also Black 2012.
Inscription: none



Having recounted how Jesus died on the cross Matthew's Gospel continues:

> **Matthew 27: 55-61** 'And many women who followed Jesus from Galilee, ministering to Him, were there looking on from afar, among whom were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's sons. Now when evening had come, there came a rich man from Arimathea, named Joseph, who himself had also become a disciple of Jesus. This man went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be given to him. Then Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock; and he rolled a large stone against the door of the tomb, and departed. And Mary Magdalene was there, and the other Mary, sitting opposite the tomb.'

This painting and **163** were delivered by Rembrandt in 1639 to Constantijn Huygens as a further extension of the *Passion series* for Frederik Hendrik. Rembrandt was concerned that these paintings should match the series already begun in 1631 or 1632/33 (See Note **145**).

A grisaille with a related representation of the tomb **114** is usually considered to be a sketch made in preparation for **162** (Black 2012). It would seem more obvious to situate the grisaille in the context of the aborted project of Rembrandt and Uylenburgh described in Note **107**. The case is in this regard comparable with the *Joseph telling his dreams* in grisaille **108** and Rembrandt's etching of a few years later (B. 37) with the same subject, in which elements of the grisaille are incorporated (without necessarily implying that the grisaille was made as a preparatory study for the etching).

163 Rembrandt, **The Resurrection** (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik, see p. 178), 1639, canvas 92.9 x 67 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek. HdG 141; Br. 561; Bauch 67; Gerson 88; Br./Gerson 561; Tümpel 58; ***Corpus* III A 127**.
Inscription: low down, and left of centre ‹*Rembr.*[.]*t 163[.]*›

After describing the deposition of Christ in the tomb Matthew continues the narrative:

> **Matthew 27: 62-66**; **28: 1-6** 'On the next day, which followed the Day of Preparation, the chief priests and Pharisees gathered together to Pilate, saying, "Sir, we remember, while He was still alive, how that deceiver said, 'After three days I will rise.' Therefore command that the tomb be made secure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night and steal Him *away*, and say to the people, 'He has risen from the dead.' So the last deception will be worse than the first."
> Pilate said to them, "You have a guard; go your way, make *it* as secure as you know how." So they went and made the tomb secure, sealing the stone and setting the guard. Now after the Sabbath, as the first *day* of the week began to dawn, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the tomb. And behold, there was a great earthquake; for an angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door and sat on it. His countenance was like lightning, and his clothing as white as snow. [4] And the guards shook for fear of him, and became like dead *men*. But the angel answered and said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you seek Jesus who was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay.'

162 and **163** are the two paintings of which Rembrandt wrote on 12 January 1639: "*in these two I have tried to achieve the greatest and most natural effect of movement.*' (*Doc.* 1639/2).

164 Rembrandt, **King Uzziah stricken with leprosy**, *c.* 1639/1640, poplar panel 102.8 x 78.8 cm. Chatsworth. HdG 346; Br. 179; Bauch 164; Gerson 70; Br./Gerson 179; Tümpel 77 and p. 187; ***Corpus* III A 128**; see also *M/W* cat. 28.
Inscription: at the far left some 15 cm from the lower edge ‹*Rembran / f 163[9?]*›

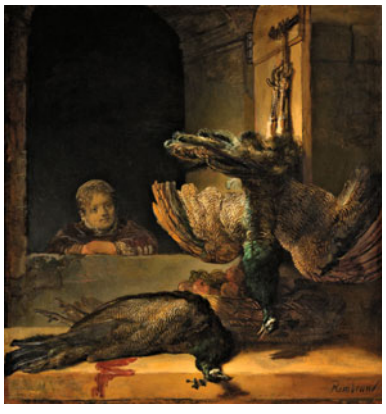
Different authors have held different views on the date, whose last cipher could be read as either a 3, 5 or 9. Bredius, Bauch, Gerson and Tümpel read the date as 1635. In *Corpus* III preference was given to 1639. Now we know that the panel is of poplar wood. At the end of the 1630s Rembrandt apparently acquired and would use a batch of such panels (see **164**, **167**, **171**, **184a/b**, **185**, **186**), which, as far as is known, were hardly ever used by other painters in the Netherlands. Given these facts it is almost certain that the present painting was painted around 1640. It should be remarked, however, that the Buckland Abbey *Self-portrait* **134**, dated 1635, is also painted on a poplar panel.

Identification of the subject also presents something of a problem. In the 18th century the painting was regarded as that of a rabbi, a title later replaced by the more neutral description of 'an oriental'. Valentiner included the column and snake in his interpretation and thought this could be an *aesculapius*, and that the man was Paracelsus, the Renaissance physician, astrologer, and general occultist. Others thought that the column and snake were the brass serpent set on a pole by Moses (Numbers 21: 8-9), and saw the man portrayed as either Moses or his brother Aaron, although both of these patriarchs are normally shown in rather different dress. The only interpretation that takes account not only of the pillar and snake but also of the old man's diseased skin was provided by Robert Eisler in 1948. According to Eisler, the painting relates to the Biblical account of Hezekiah, king of Judah, who did that which was right in the sight of the Lord and

> 'removed the high places, brake the images and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it ...' (2 Kings 18: 4).

Eisler coupled this account with that of a much later event from 2 Chronicles 26: 16-20, which tells how Uzziah the king, emboldened by his victories, entered the part of the Temple reserved for the priests and sought to burn incense at the altar of incense. When Uzziah threatened the priests who called on him to stop he was immediately struck with leprosy – according to Flavius Josephus (Book IX) by a shaft of sunlight shining through a crack in the roof of the Temple. This interpretation does provide a satisfactory explanation of the diseased skin of the sitter, and of his rich garb.' (see further *Corpus* III p. 294).

165 Rembrandt, **Two dead peacocks and a girl**, *c.* 1639, canvas 145 x 135.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. HdG 968; Br. 456; Bauch 558; Gerson 98; Br./Gerson 456; Tümpel 121; ***Corpus* III A 134**; see also *M/W* cat. 30.
Inscription: at the lower right ‹*Rembrandt*› (only a small black spot remains of the badly damaged *t.*)



166 Rembrandt, **A dead bittern**, 1639, panel 120.7 x 88.3 cm. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 283; Br. 31; Bauch 312; Gerson 191; Br./Gerson 31; Tümpel 167; ***Corpus* III A 133**; see also De Jongh 1968/69.
Inscription: on the wooden bracket ‹*Rembrandt.ft. 1639*›
For the Note on this painting see **165**.

It seems likely that Rembrandt's painting with two dead peacocks originated in *c.* 1639, the same year as a *Bittern after the life* **166**, listed in Rembrandt's inventory (*Doc.* 1656/12 no. 166).

Art historians have speculated without managing to convince each other over the possible symbolic meaning or social-cultural background that might provide a key to the *raison d'être* of these two paintings. The suggestion that there could have been here some coherent pictorial project involving the problems of paintings birds and bird feathers has, as far as I am aware, never been proposed in these discussions.

For a history painter, familiarity and experience with painting birds, especially the wings of birds, was by no means superfluous. One only has to look at the eagle in Rembrandt's *Ganymede* **137**, the angel in the *Abraham's sacrifice* (no. 136) and all the other angelic wings that Rembrandt had painted up until 1639 (see **10**, **124**, **145**, **150**, **163**). When one examines more closely the anatomy of wings and the structure of their plumage in such paintings, one has to admit that Rembrandt's rendering of these details was rather schematic.

This might seem a trivial issue until one considers it in the context of my hypothesis of Rembrandt's systematic exploration of the so-called '*Gronden*' discussed on pp. 68/69. Among these basic aspects of the art of painting was the representation of animals (*Corpus* V pp. 89-97). Particularly in his Leiden and early Amsterdam period, in paintings and etchings and occasionally in drawings, Rembrandt frequently depicted dogs, horses, donkeys, cows, elephants and lions, sheep etc.. One cannot but be struck by his studied attention to the anatomical build, carriage and different attitudes of these animals, but until the work on these two paintings, birds do not seem to have entered Rembrandt's consideration. Where birds' wings had to be painted for angels or a Cupid (see **10**, **124**, **137**, **145**, **149**, **150**, **163**) Rembrandt made do with relatively cursorily indicated basic forms, two-dimensional indications of the wing's shapes and feathers. For the head of the eagle in the *Ganymede* from 1635 **137** he would certainly have studied the structure of a raptor's head, but that seems to have been an exceptional case. Only in the two paintings dealt with here would he achieve the three-dimensionality with light and shadow that are so conspicuous in these two paintings – most of all in the bittern. Having taken time out, as it were, to practise painting birds, there appears to have been little opportunity to apply what he had learned apart from the marvellously characterized peacock family which originated shortly afterwards in the *Visitation* from 1640 **174**. When the need to represent bird's wings arose on later occasions (**198**, **208**, **268**, **272**) it is evident that not only had Rembrandt's insight into the skeletal anatomy of the wing advanced, but also the arsenal of pictorial means for rendering the plumage in its structured yet loose patterning.

In this connection it is interesting to note that, having painted countless rather schematically executed feathers on berets and other headgear between 1626 and 1639, on the rare occasions when he subsequently painted such single feathers after 1639 (**234**, **248b**, **303**) Rembrandt paid much more attention to the combination of structure and looseness that is so characteristic of a large bird's plumage. The proposed self-imposed study project of 1639 may very well have been the cause of that.

Whereas the square painting of the peacocks may be seen in the tradition of 16th-century kitchen pieces (*Corpus* III p. 339) and perhaps ended up on the kitchen mantelpiece of a collector, the *Bittern after the life* remained with Rembrandt until 1656, only coming on to the market with the auction compelled by his bankruptcy (*Doc.* 1656/12 no. 348).

In the titles usually given to these paintings, such as 'Child with dead peacocks' and 'Self-portrait with a dead bittern' or 'Two dead peacocks and a girl' or 'A dead bittern held high by a hunter' (in *Corpus* III) the human extras are always mentioned, as well as the fact that the animals are dead, whereas Rembrandt asks the clerk with whom he is drawing up the inventory of his possessions to write: *'Een pitoor nae 't leven, van Rembrandt'* [A bittern after life]. One assumes that the human figures were only necessary to support the *trompe l'oeil* setting of the paintings and to indicate the scale of the birds depicted.

167 Rembrandt, **Portrait of a man holding a hat**, *c.* 1640, poplar panel 81.4 x 71.4 cm. Los Angeles, Armand Hammer Museum. HdG 751; Br. -; Bauch 379; Gerson -; Br./Gerson -; Tümpel -; ***Corpus* III A 130**; see also Bl. cat. 12; in the present Volume Note **190** and p. 10 (Ch. I).
Inscription: at the bottom right next to the hat-brim ‹*Rembrandt*›

This painting is cropped on all sides. The support belongs to the batch of poplar panels that Rembrandt used between 1639 and 1641 (see Note **164**), the average size of these panels being 105 x 80 cm. Recognized as a Rembrandt by Bode, Valentiner, Hofstede de Groot, Rosenberg and Bauch, it was omitted by Bredius, Gerson, Schwartz and Tümpel from their respective surveys of Rembrandt's paintings, all of whom evidently disagreed with the attribution. Several passages from *Corpus* III A 130 throw light on the art historical problems that are clearly raised by this unusual painting:

> 'It does, in fact, differ in composition and use of colour from Rembrandt's other portraits from the 1630s, which in general offer a summary modelling of the sitters black costume and focus attention mainly on the face and to a lesser degree on the hands (when these are visible). [...]. The distribution of detail and modelling in the present painting (uncommon in a Rembrandt portrait) may be seen as an outcome of the commission – in that the choice of costume was that of the sitter – and of the spatial composition the artist employed. Bearing in mind that the colour and the material of the costume are not in line with Amsterdam fashion of the time, one tends to assume that the sitter is perhaps a foreign aristocrat rather than someone from the Amsterdam burgher class [see, however, below]; the (otherwise totally unfounded) notion that he is Prince Frederik Hendrik of Orange thus becomes understandable. [...] The portrait's composition and sitter's pose are not entirely unique among the work of Rembrandt and his followers, and the connections that can be shown confirm to some extent the dating suggested for the painting. As Schmidt Degener pointed out, the musketeer on the extreme left in the *Night Watch* **190** – on a strip now cut off, and known to us only from copies – had a similar pose in right profile, holding a hat in one hand in front of the body (**fig. 1**). One can assume that Rembrandt was already busy working on the *Night Watch* in *c.* 1640, and that the present work was produced in the same period. An even closer similarity than that of the figure just mentioned is offered by a *Portrait of a man* dated 1641 by Govaert Flinck (private collection) (Von Moltke 1965 no. 308; Sumowski *Gemälde* II no. 697). It is evident that this portrait is based directly on the present painting not only from the composition but also from details such as the curling sleeve-cuff and the crack in the rear wall.' (**fig. 2**).

As to the similarly clad and positioned figure on the far left of the *Night Watch* before the painting was cropped (**fig. 1**), Bas Dudok van Heel has suggested that this was Jan Brughman (1614-1652), an extremely wealthy citizen of Amsterdam – according to Dudok van Heel, 'part of Amsterdam's *jeunesse dorée*' (Dudok van Heel 2009 pp. 64-65). On that basis, one might assume that the man in the present painting had himself portrayed in an affected fashion current at that time. One may even wonder whether this was in fact also Jan Brughman posing in the same manner for both paintings.

Fig. 1. Detail of the copy of *The Night Watch* painted by Gerrit Lundens in *c.* 1648.

Fig. 2. G. Flinck, *Portrait of a man*, 1641, panel 91.5 x 73.5 cm. Private Collection.

168 Rembrandt, **Portrait of a man standing, possibly Andries de Graeff,** 1639, canvas 200 x 124.2 cm. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 535; Br. 216; Bauch 384; Gerson 192; Br./Gerson 216; Tümpel 206; ***Corpus* III A 129**; see also Dudok van Heel 1969a; *M/W* cat. 29; Kassel 2006 pp. 195 -201.
Inscription: at the bottom left ‹*Rembrandt f* (followed by a V-shaped abbreviation symbol) . *1639.*›

Dudok van Heel advanced the proposition that this painting might be identified with the work which was the subject of a disagreement in *c.* 1642 between Andries de Graeff (1611-1679) and Rembrandt: *a painting or likeness that the aforesaid van Rhijn painted for the aforementioned gentleman*. As Hendrick Uylenburgh testified in 1659, it was eventually decided by a group of arbiters (including Hendrick Uylenburgh himself) that De Graeff should pay Rembrandt 500 guilders (*Doc.* 1659/21).

The De Graeffs were one of the leading families of Amsterdam; Andries' older brother Cornelis may perhaps have played a more prominent role, but Andries too served a number of functions and was burgomaster several times between 1657 and 1671. A full-length portrait would fit in well with the price owed to Rembrandt as well as with the family's social and financial standing.'

It has been suggested that the glove lying on the ground could have a symbolic significance relating to marriage. Taking a cue from the fact that Maarten Soolmans, in his wedding portrait which is also painted life-size **120a**, appears to offer his glove to his wife Oopjen Coppit, so here the glove of the unmarried Andries de Graeff lying on the ground could mean: *who will pick it up?* (Kassel 2006 p. 198; Dudok van Heel 2002 p. 54).

In *Corpus* III (p. 303) Bruyn rejected the identification of the sitter as Andries de Graeff, citing the markedly different physiognomy in the present painting from existing later portraits of Andries de Graeff. As an alternative he suggested the Amsterdam patrician Cornelis Witsen. According to Weber, these differences of physiognomy are explicable as the result of old overpaintings in the face, particularly along the sitter's nose, that were not removed during the restoration of the painting in 1989/90 (Kassel 2006, p. 200).

169 Rembrandt, **Portrait of Aletta Adriaensdr**, 1639, panel 64.7 x 55.3 cm. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen on loan from The Willem Van der Vorm Foundation, HdG 619; Br. 355; Bauch 497; Gerson 193; Br./Gerson 355; Tümpel 240; ***Corpus* III A 132**.
Inscription: at the bottom left ‹*Rembrandt / 1639*›

The subject of this portrait was the mother of Maria Trip **184b** and the sister-in-law of Jacob Trip **297a**. For further discussion of the identification and significance of the sitter see *Corpus* III A 132 p. 327.

170 Rembrandt and workshop?, **Self-portrait**, *c.* 1640, panel 80.5 x 62.8 cm. Paris, Louvre. HdG 568; Br. 29; Bauch 310; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 29 (as possibly Flinck); Tümpel -; ***Corpus* III B 10**; ***Corpus* IV pp. 245-249 *Corrigenda* III B 10**; see also Foucart 2009 p. 214.
Inscription: on the right on the balustrade ‹*Rembrandt f. / 1637*› no doubt by a later hand.

Fig. 1. X-ray of **170**

In *Corpus* III B 10, the question of whether this portrait could be from Rembrandt's hand was left undecided. It is now clearer that the painting has had a more complex genesis than was assumed there (see *Corpus* IV p. 248, p. 254 and below). It is painted over an underlying history piece, whether completed or not, possibly depicting *Christ and the woman of Samaria* (*Corpus* III p. 499 and p. 503) (**fig. 1**). We believe that several stages can be distinguished in the genesis of the self-portrait itself (see *Corpus* IV p. 141). As it is now visible it bears the spurious date 1637, inscribed together with an imitated signature by a later hand. On the basis of Rembrandt's physiognomy it seems to have been painted around 1640. However, the X-radiograph suggests the possibility that Rembrandt painted an earlier version of the self-portrait over the history piece not long after the latter had been rejected in *c.* 1634. The reserve for the head with the shorter hair together with the trunk, which appears to be less massive than in the painting's present-day form, suggests an origin around 1634. We believe that the original self-portrait was altered (in part by another hand) to reflect Rembrandt's appearance between 1640 and '42; and if my suggested reconstruction of the painting's genesis is correct, the modification of the head and collar would have been executed by Rembrandt himself (see also *Corpus* IV pp. 139-141 and figs. 79-81).

The reason for adding the architectural background, and the period when that occurred, remain obscure. It may well have happened after Rembrandt's death, but this conjecture can only be tested by means of a more extensive investigation, preferable during a conservation or restoration treatment.

* **171** Rembrandt, **Bust of a young woman**, *c.* 1640, poplar panel 60.5 x 49 cm. Washington, National Gallery, Widener Collection. HdG 615; Br. 96; Bauch 488; Gerson 174; Br./Gerson 96; Tümpel 183; ***Corpus* III C 103** (as possibly painted in Rembrandt's workshop about 1640); see also Wheelock 1995 pp. 210-215.
Inscription: none

The disattribution of this painting by the majority of the older members of the RRP was for me one of the breaking points with their approach toward problems of authenticity. Their disattribution was primarily based on a comparison of the face in the present work with that in the portrait of *Saskia as Flora* in Dresden **181**.

> 'The Dresden *Saskia as Flora* of 1641 (no. A 142) in particular offers similarities in both motif and treatment. The plasticity and three-dimensional effect achieved there are however so much stronger than the rather flat appearance of no. C 103 [the present painting] that this cannot be attributed to Rembrandt. It must have been done about 1640 by a pupil in his workshop.'

I had the following dissenting opinion (with minor adaptations to the present context) added at the end of the relevant commentary in *Corpus* III C 103 (p. 655):

> 'E.v.d.W. believes for a number of reasons that the Rembrandt attribution can be maintained. He gives less weight to the differences in execution, just described, from the Dresden *Saskia as Flora* **181** than to a number of affinities of various kinds to other autograph works produced around 1640. The painting is certainly unusual, but thought has to be given to the fact that from the later 1630s on Rembrandt's production of paintings time and again includes nonce-works that cannot, as with previous works, be compared point-by-point with others from the same or the preceding period. The defence of this painting rests on features relating to the kind of brushwork, the lighting and spatial effect and singularities in the formal character.
>
> Where the brushwork is concerned, it is in particular the veil and collar that provide support; the brushwork is decisive, with a penchant for strokes with a firm start and finish. It is typical of these brushstrokes, and of Rembrandt's style, that the strokes are wider than the material being rendered requires, with occasionally – as at the edge of the veil – a subtle linear treatment, at places where the brush is again wielded with great sureness of touch. The relationship between the paint and the illusion being aimed at is such that the paint is clearly apparent with all its chance features, although with a clear rhythmic application, while at the same time there are subtleties achieved in the rendering – e.g. in depicting the veil folded back over the forehead, or the saw-tooth edge of the collar pressed down and folding over below the chin. From one passage to the next – hair, cloth, the metal of the chain, and the skin – the brushwork is matched to the depiction of the material, yet without sacrificing any of its own essence. The seemingly unusual brushstrokes in the lit part of the cheek, visible in relief and running with the fall of light, are in fact not unique to this case – a comparable treatment is to be found in the yellow girl seen in the *Night Watch* **190**.
>
> This set of characteristics of the brushwork can be observed in various of Rembrandt's works of quite different kinds – de-

tails in a landscape such as the *Landscape with a stone bridge* in Amsterdam **175**, as well as in still-life passages like the accessories in the Berlin *Anslo* portrait **183**, the Amsterdam *Two dead peacocks* **165**, the Dresden *Dead bittern* **166** or certain parts of the *Night Watch*.

Where the lighting is concerned, the quality is hard to describe accurately; the wealth of effects and sureness with which they are obtained are impressive. Not only are the force and credibility of the fall of light on the face and collar most convincing; the relationship between the subtlety of the suggested reflection of light on the chin and the right hand outline of the collar, and the casual ease with which this suggestion is achieved, are typical of Rembrandt. Uncommon as a task for the artist is the rendering of the light on the veil and at the same time the creation of the suggestion that the light is passing through the veil and falling on the hair and part of the cheek and collar. The veil seems in a number of ways to be the main focus of the painting; at all events it plays a major role in suggesting depth. This interpretation could serve to explain the notable simplification of the head. In this respect, comparison with the *Dead bittern* **166** is irresistible: there too one finds prominent a rich and subtly lit veil-like form in the outspread wing on the left, seeming to reach out to the front of the picture, as opposed to the simplified rendering of the figure which is mostly in shadow. The present work also shares with the male figure in the *Dead bittern* the singular organization of the costume, built up from simple triangles, by the bottom edge of the panting. The folded-back edge of the veil and tilted-over saw-tooth edge of the collar, mentioned earlier, are moreover in their effect and execution similar to subtle and spatially effective solutions employed in the *Night Watch* – notably in the sashes of Banning Cocq and Ruytenburg.

In addition to the arguments rehearsed above, this author believes that it is precisely the exceptional nature of the solution essayed in this *tronie* in terms of placing, tilt and lighting of the head which says that this is not the work of one of Rembrandt's workshop companions, but a concept of his own, unreflected in any of the studio works known to us.'

The examples adduced above for comparison with the present painting are all chosen from the period 1638-40, because I am convinced that this work, painted on a poplar panel, originated in the same period (see Note **164**). I cannot therefore agree with Wheelock's suggestion that work on this painting began in 1634 and continued until the end of the 1630s (Wheelock 1995 p. 213).

* **172** Rembrandt, **Self-portrait**, *c.* 1639, panel 63 x 50.1 cm. Pasadena, Norton Simon Museum of Art. HdG 576; Br. 32; Bauch 313; Gerson 229; Br./Gerson 32; Tümpel 166; ***Corpus* III C 97**; ***Corpus* IV *Corrigenda* III C 97 pp. 605-608**.

Inscription: in the right background at shoulder level ‹*Remb…t f / 163(.)*› In the literature there has been uncertainty over the dating of this work, partly due to the poor condition of the inscription, located to the right in the background at the level of Rembrandt's shoulder (**fig. 1**). This inscription consists chiefly of small dots of paint with which the remains of the possibly original signature and date were retouched. Of the original signature there remain only parts of the <*Remb*>, and the (un-retouched) <*t*>. The year <*163.*> seems to be solely constituted by retouches which may cover remnants of an earlier inscription. The condition of that part of the inscription seems to be so bad, however, that it leaves room for speculation about the possibility that the third digit could have been a 4. A number of authors have therefore proposed dating the painting to the early '40s. I prefer a dating to the end of the 1630s. In Vol. III (p. 621 *Signature*) we suggested that the last digit might have been an 8, but it could equally well have been a 9. We prefer a dating of this self-portrait in or near 1639.

In the context of earlier doubts as to the authenticity of this painting (see *Corpus* III C 97), it is important to point out that the Pasadena painting belongs to the less frequently occurring type of self-portrait where Rembrandt is represented with forehead exposed, whereas in the majority of Rembrandt's self-portraits the forehead is largely hidden beneath a hat of some kind and more or less concealed by the shadow cast by such headgear. It is characteristic of the self-portraits of this type that the highest light is shifted from the cheekbone and nose to the skull. As a result, the proportions of the face as a whole – as also for instance in the Florence *Self-portrait* from 1669 **322** – seem rather different from those in the other, more common type of self-portraits of Rembrandt. The overall high quality of the present painting on the one hand, and the more 'compressed' proportions of the features on the other, together with the (apparently) strong colours, led to the suggestion in Vol. III that an attribution to Carel Fabritius deserved consideration.

Only in 2004 was it possible to gain insight into the state of preservation of this painting. During these investigations it was found that the head and the immediate surrounding area had been abraded, possibly by repeated selective cleaning in the past, with the result that the contours and internal definition had been disturbed.

If one ignores the disfigurations resulting from the painting's turbulent history, there remains an image which, in style and quality, shows significant affinities with paintings that we are convinced come from Rembrandt's own hand. The subtle differentiation in the course of the contours of the torso, for instance, with an angular element indicating the collar or some other detail of the apparel, exhibits a refinement characteristic of Rembrandt around 1640 (see for instance **179**). As a result of the painter's tendency to leave the ground exposed or visible through the transparently applied brownish paint of the first tonal sketch, the painting seems to have been released in a somewhat 'unfinished' state. But more importantly, the differentiation in the brushwork in these 'open' areas reminds one strongly of Rembrandt. The same holds for a certain linearity in parts of the painting, partly correlated with the sketchy nature of particularly the attire and the exposed part of the hand. One encounters this rather graphic approach in paintings by Rembrandt from the late 1630's (see also Note **157**) – related to a preference for simple triangular forms on which the composition rests, as it were (cf. for example **166**, **168**, **171**).

The stylistic and technical characteristics of the Pasadena *Self-portrait* described here and discussed in *Corpus* IV *Corrigenda* III C 97, when taken together, argue strongly in favour of the (re)attribution of this painting to Rembrandt. The painting was cleaned and restored in 2012. Plate **172** shows it after restoration.

Fig. 1. Signature and date of the overcleaned and artly retouched signature of **172**.

* **173** Rembrandt, **The Holy Family with St Anne**, 1640, panel 40.6 x 34 cm. Paris, Louvre. HdG 93; Br. 563; Bauch 71; Gerson 205; Br./Gerson 563; Tümpel 61; ***Corpus* III C 87** (as not by Rembrandt); see also Foucart 2009 p. 217.
Inscription: along the lower edge ‹*Rembrandt f 1640*›

Fig. 1. X-ray of **173**, showing an earlier window.

Fig. 2. Infrared photograph of **173**

In the first three volumes of *A Corpus* the argumentation at times veered toward an almost legalistic rhetoric, in which Bruyn's brilliant articulacy was decisive. It was often difficult to assess such arguments for or against the attribution of a painting independent of the force of conviction with which the case was presented. This difficulty was compounded, moreover, by the fact that the texts contained exhaustive verbal descriptions of visual characteristics of the relevant painting that one could scarcely verify with one's own eyes, certainly not in the years before the publication of *Corpus* III (1989) when reliable colour reproduction was not yet widely available. In the case of the present painting the colour Plate on p. 562 was only added when the manuscript was already at the proof stage. Nor was it realized that certain *a priori* assumptions had played a role in arriving at judgments of authenticity – the disattribution of the *Holy Family with Anna* **173** being a case in point.

This relatively small painting has always been one of Rembrandt's best-loved works. In France, on the basis of an erroneous early interpretation of the image as a domestic genre scene, it was called *Le Ménage du menuisier* [The carpenter's household]. For many, and especially for the staff at the Louvre, the disattribution in *Corpus* III came as an unpleasant surprise. Nevertheless the text in the *Corpus* seemed so convincing that J. Foucart subsequently entered the painting in his catalogue of Flemish and Dutch paintings in the Louvre (Foucart 2009 p. 217) as a work painted by Rembrandt and a pupil.

It may be useful to quote here the crucial passage from *Corpus* III p. 561. The text first of all points out that the painting is obscured by such a thick coat of yellowed varnish that any judgment of it is extremely difficult. Despite this, Bruyn continues as follows:

> 'It is however possible, on the basis of the clearly legible passages with the fully or half-lit parts of the figures and their surroundings, to get a reasonably good idea of the manner of painting. Taken broadly, this gives a very Rembrandtesque impression, especially when one allows for the fact that the areas done mainly in browns show in the infrared photograph a more animated degree of detail than one finds in the painting today (see **fig. 2**). In the easily legible passages of the strongly-lit areas one is struck by the extreme care devoted to gradating the reflexions of light, half-shadows, cast shadows and highlights, in particular in the closely-knit group of the two women and the child and in their surroundings. Differentiation of this kind is wholly in keeping with Rembrandt's handling of light, seen in works such as, for instance, the 1632/33 *Descent from the Cross* in Munich **107** and the 1637 *Angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family* in Paris **150** or the 1640 *Visitation* in Detroit **174**. A close examination of these last two works in particular makes one

aware of substantial differences both in the function of the brushwork and in the significance of the colouring. In the *Angel leaving Tobit* and the *Visitation* the brushstroke has an active, graphic function combined with a modelling purpose; it has a strong rhythm of its own which it never needs to relinquish in order to evoke a convincing suggestion of form, and it owes much of its attractiveness to this relative autonomy. The range of colours is kept very limited – strong contrasts occur only in the highest light, and even then they are in the form of piquant highlights used to mark a clear distinction either between light and shade or between warmth and coolness. In this *Holy family*, on the other hand, the brushstroke, very fine and often repeated in the lit areas, carefully builds up the modelling of the form; the result is consequently a little fuzzy, and lacks both the directness of method and succinctness of *peinture* effect that marks Rembrandt's style in his history paintings from the years around 1640. This applies to the flesh areas – the relatively poorly articulated hands, for example – and to the draperies. In this respect Joseph's white jacket is characteristic, with numerous mostly parallel strokes giving a rather uninteresting pattern of folds. The colour, too, has features untypical of Rembrandt, for instance in the juxtaposing of colours of equal tonal value such as the blue of Mary's dress (itself unusual in Rembrandt) and the red of the blanket on which the infant is lying.'

Bruyn's conclusion from the above reads:

'Given these differences, which despite the similarity with Rembrandt's work point to an unmistakeably different artistic temperament, an attribution to him is unacceptable and one has rather to think of a painter from his immediate circle.'

It should be pointed out that the scale of the figures in the present painting is considerably smaller than those in **150** and that in the latter painting, as in **174**, we are presented with outdoor scenes whereas the present painting is an interior. At the time when this text was written there was still no awareness that Rembrandt's early paintings (among which all three works mentioned by Bruyn can be counted) were explorations or demonstrations of one or more of the *grounds* – the foundations of the art of painting (see *Corpus* V Chapter I): in the case of the present painting of *'room light'* (*Corpus* V pp. 76-78) combined with sunlight (*Corpus* V p. 156). With the *Visitation* **174**, the main concern would have been the compositional significance of '*sprong*' (*Corpus* V p. 62-63). In the *Angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family* **150** it would have been the comportment and affects of human figures.

To the argument quoted above, Bruyn added that:

'The signature on the painting is no counter-argument to this – so far as it can be read, it is unconvincing, and the date of 1640 too is thus not a reliable indication.'

In *Corpus* III C 87 the signature is characterized as follows:

'So far as can be clearly made out, the letters are shaped rather round and broad, especially the *a* and *d*, and lack spontaneity. They are unconvincing enough not to count as evidence of authenticity'

Fig. 3. F. Bol, *The Annuntiation*, drawing (mixed media), 31.2 x 40.2 cm. Veste Coburg.

But what this fails to mention is that the letters are only 3 to 4 mm high and are applied near the bottom edge of the painting with a brush. Under such conditions any spontaneity or regularity in the placing of a row of letters and ciphers with a brush would scarcely have been possible. One also finds such small-lettered signatures at the bottom edge of the painting in e.g. **8**, **13**, **86**, **102**, **127**, **159**, **207**, **265** and **266** and also in such etchings as (in chronological order, B. 81, 44, 97, 69, 49, 92, 98, 82, 212, 168 etc.). And in any case, a more important consideration is whether the painting bears a signature and date that have aged with the paint layer and thus cannot be so easily dismissed as a false inscription. (In this connection see Glossary (signature).)

The reader has no means of resisting the rhetorical skill with which, in the passage quoted above, differences in *peinture* are assessed, enabling the author of the painting to be identified as someone with a temperament clearly different from Rembrandt's. In 1989 I too was convinced by Bruyn's arguments and subsequently forgot the painting almost entirely, having accepted that it had been convincingly removed from Rembrandt's oeuvre.

I now realize that the most important of all the *a priori* assumptions behind Bruyn's argument concerns an anachronistic conception of *peinture*: he refers to a 'relative autonomy of the brushstroke and its strong rhythm of its own' in the two paintings **150** and **174**, selected for comparison with the present painting, as typifying Rembrandt. This passage relies on a 20th-century conception, influenced by expressionism, that the artist's handling of brush and paint is in the first place determined by the artistic individuality of the painter. But when one turns to Samuel van Hoogstraten's book on the art of painting, which more probably reflects Rembrandt's ideas on this point, one has to conclude that Rembrandt would have thought very differently (*Corpus* V pp. 113-123 esp. pp. 122-123):

'Thus, in order to depict most freely and gracefully the diversity of things in a mannerly fashion, each according to its own nature, the hand and the brush must be subservient to the eye'.

The *peinture* was thus more or less adapted to the material to be rendered.

In the case of the present painting, a comparison of the relatively smooth *peinture* in the rendering of the naked body of the infant Jesus lit by the sun, and the breast and hand of Mary with the *peinture* of unspecified elements in the other two paintings (referred to as touchstones above) is therefore dubious. But when the flesh parts lit by the sun in the present painting are compared with the head and neck of the Virgin lit by sunlight in the *Visitation* the correspondences in the brushwork and handling of paint are striking. The same goes for the drapery of Joseph's shirt hanging from his shoulder compared with the white drapery of the skirt of the disappearing angel, even though this is shown in movement. The crux here is not the 'relative autonomy of the brushstroke and its strong rhythm of its own' (as Bruyn formulated it) but the rendering of the texture of materials in which a 'thing' is depicted 'according to its own nature' and whereby 'the hand and the brush must be subservient to the eye' as was written by Hoogstraten.

One can infer from the genesis of the wall with the window that in the present painting Rembrandt must have been engaged in an exercise or demonstration in which '*room light*' was combined with incoming sunlight. Such a visible window was obligatory for paintings (and etchings) with *'room light'* (see *Corpus* V pp. 76-78). The X-radiograph shows that in the first, smaller version the window was placed deeper in the pictorial space (**fig. 1**). The alterations in that part of the painting are far-reaching; direct sunlight now falls through the opened bottom part of a much larger window while the large upper part of that window with its leaded panes

Fig. 4. F. Bol, *The Holy Family*, drawing (mixed media), 18.1 x 20.7 cm. London, The British Museum.

is shaded by foliage, which filters the light so that the rest of the room can only be seen in subdued light. When the consequences of these changes are analysed it becomes clear just how important the management of the light in this painting must have been for Rembrandt.

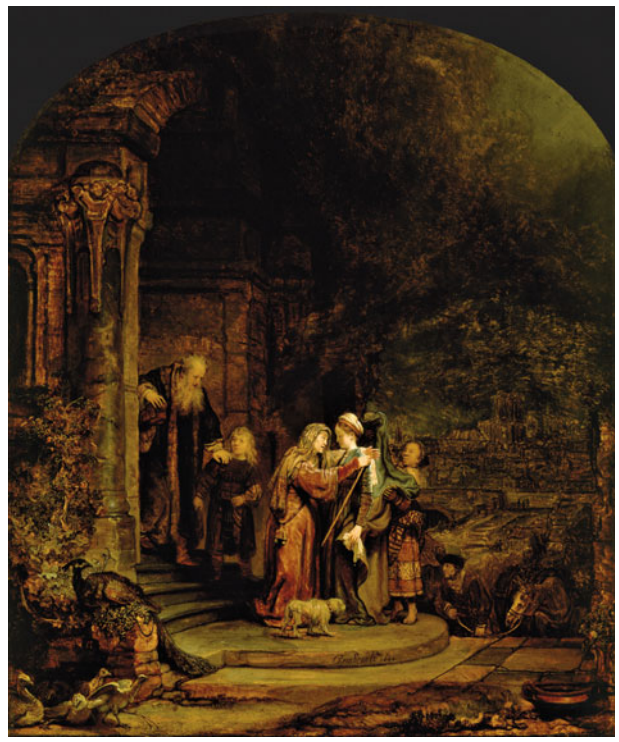
The latter half of Bruyn's argument consists of an investigation of the possibility that the painting could be by Ferdinand Bol., who was a pupil of Rembrandt between 1636 and *c.* '42. Once the painting had been disattributed from Rembrandt the most obvious alternative was that Bol had painted it, as he had made a number of drawings and etchings in this period with related subjects and challenges concerning the play of the light, in two of which a visible window is shown in a similar manner (**figs. 3** and **4**). Bruyn, however, argued that there are insufficient grounds to attribute the present painting to Bol because Bol's earliest works, painted in the style of Rembrandt, were stylistically diverse. And yet Bruyn maintained his disattribution from Rembrandt on the ground of its *peinture*. Bol's remarkably large (31.2 x 40.2 cm) drawing with an Annunciation in the Veste Coburg collection (**fig. 3**) is roughly the same size as the present painting (40.6 x 34 cm). The correspondences between that drawing and the present painting suggest the possibility that Bol, as in the case of fig. 3, could well have based that drawing on the Louvre painting, which, in the light of our insight into the 'satellite' phenomenon, can be seen as additional evidence for the attribution of the latter (the present painting) to Rembrandt. Our understanding of the 'satellites' – those frequently encountered free variants by pupils on prototypes, of the master – had at that stage of the RRP (1989) not yet been developed, see p. 56 (see also Copenhagen 2006 pp. 106-122 and *Corpus* V Chapters III and IV) where it is demonstrated that the occurrence of one or more satellites can serve as an argument for the attribution of the prototype to Rembrandt.)

Bruyn did not neglect to mention that the infrared photograph of the painting revealed that the room in which the Holy Family is depicted is 'described' in remarkable detail (**fig. 2**) with sketchily applied small lines and washes in brown paint, characteristic of Rembrandt; but this observation was not seen as evidence in favour of an attribution of the painting to Rembrandt. There is actually a significant correspondence between this part of the painting and Rembrandt's drawing of the interior of the 'Sael' with the box-bed in the Foundation Custodia (**fig. 5**).

Taking the evidence of X-radiography and infrared photography together with the relevant art-theoretical considerations, and given the exceptional sophistication of the painting in all those aspects mentioned above, I can see no obstacle to the re-admission of this small, delicate work into Rembrandt's oeuvre. When the painting is cleaned, the extent to which Rembrandt's hand and mind are evident in this painting will undoubtedly become clearer. At present, the evidence for this is already strong.

Fig. 5. Rembrandt, depiction of the 'Sael' the main room of his house with a box bed in the background, *c.* 1640. Drawing with washes 14.3 x 17.6 cm. Foundation Custodia, coll. Frits Lugt, Paris.

174 Rembrandt, **The Visitation**, 1640, panel 56.6 x 47.8 cm. Detroit, Detroit Institute of Arts. HdG 74; Br. 562; Bauch 70; Gerson 203; Br./Gerson 562; Tümpel 60; ***Corpus* III A 138**; Detroit 2004, p. 72.
Inscription: on the front of the step where the encounter takes place ‹*Rembrandt. 1640.*›



When the angel Gabriel brings the message to Mary that she is to be the mother of Jesus, the son of God, Gabriel adds:

> **Luke I: 36-44** 'Now indeed, Elizabeth your relative has also conceived a son in her old age; and this is now the sixth month for her who was called barren. For with God nothing will be impossible."' Elizabeth and her similarly aged husband Zacharias would be the parents of John the Baptist. 'Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed *are* you among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of your womb! But why *is* this *granted* to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.'

What strikes one in this work are the different levels of the stage on which the scene is enacted. Undoubtedly, this feature was introduced deliberately with an eye to the ordonnance (*Corpus* V pp. 53-64). We have to bear in mind that in the course of this year 1640 Rembrandt had begun his work on the *Night Watch*. Samuel van Hoogstraten, in his analysis of the ordonnance of the *Night Watch*, used the term '*sprong*'. Perhaps the word '*sprong*' is derived from the Dutch word '*verspringen*' [*changing level*]. According to Van Hoogstraten, '*sprong*' is the quality in a narrative painting or group portrait deriving from variety in the placing of the figures: the figures depicted in such a scene should be '*grouped in a manner attractive to the eye*' and one should '*give the figures a 'sprong'*

> *that is pleasing [to the eye], such that, whether high or low, together they* [*the figures and other elements of the composition*] *create a 'shape' that is attractive to the eye, and there appears an interplay between them resulting from their diversity.'* (*Corpus* V p. 62 and 214/215).

In the phrase *'whether high or low'* this definition touches on what it is that makes the '*sprong*' in the *Night Watch* so successful: that is, just as in the present scene **174** the play with different levels of the 'stage' on which a scene is enacted. But then it must be added that Rembrandt also used another kind of *verspringen* in order to give diversity to the grouping of his figures, viz. the introduction of children, animals or bowed figures, whenever the scene concerned gave occasion.

175 Rembrandt, **Landscape with a stone bridge**, *c.* 1638/1640, panel 29.5 x 42.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. HdG 939; Br. 440; Bauch 543; Gerson 196; Br./Gerson 440; Tümpel 260; ***Corpus* III A 136**; see also Schneider 1990 pp. 169-171; *M/W* cat. 11; Bl. cat. 11; Kassel/Leiden no. 3 and pp. 64-75.
Inscription: none

Rembrandt was no landscapist but when one examines his production in this area, including the etchings and drawings, one might almost think that he was. What stands out is that these works originated in clusters, even though these clusters are not always precisely delimited in time. After the three painted landscapes with mythological scenes: **49**, **50**, **130** produced between 1631 and '34, the next cluster falls between 1637 and *c.* 1640: **152** (first version), **159**, **175**, **176**. It is interesting that in the five following years (from 1641 to *c.* 1645) he mainly produced etched landscapes, all of them relatively large and ambitious: B. 209, 212, 225, 226, 228, 233, as if the artist decided here to follow a new policy of disseminating his ideas in this field. In the same period he produced dozens of drawn landscapes, rural scenes with farms and views of the city. There then follows a group of five painted landscapes, only two of which are dated – one in 1646 **207** and one in 1647 **214**. It is no more than a hypothesis that the other three of this group originated somewhere around 1645: **152** (the left and top superimposed part), **205**, **206**.

The group of painted landscapes that are dealt with here, those from 1637 to *c.* 1640, have a wholly different character from the first group from 1631 to 1634 and the later ones. They show wide vistas, while dramatic skies play a prominent role.

176 Rembrandt, **Mountain landscape with approaching storm**, *c.* 1640, panel 52 x 72 cm. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum. HdG 942; Br. 441; Bauch 547; Gerson 200; Br./Gerson 441; Tümpel 259; ***Corpus* III A 137**; see also Schneider 1990 no. 3; Kassel/Leiden pp. 54-63.
Inscription: on the lower right on the plank of a fence ‹*Rembrandt.f.*›
See the Note to **175**.

177a Rembrandt, **Portrait of Herman Doomer** (companion piece to **177b**), 1640, panel 75 x 55.3 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 642; Br. 217; Bauch 385; Gerson 230; Br./Gerson 217; Tümpel 207; ***Corpus* III A 140**; see also Liedtke 2007 pp. 604-612.
Inscription: at the lower right in the shadow cast by the figure ‹*Rembrandt / f 1640*›

177b Rembrandt, **Portrait of Baertje Martens** (companion piece to **177a**), *c.* 1640, panel 75.1 x 55.9 cm. St. Petersburg, Hermitage. HdG 643; Br. 357; Bauch 500; Gerson 231; Br./Gerson 357; Tümpel 242; ***Corpus* III A 141**; see also *Soviet Museums* no. 12.
Inscription: at the lower left ‹*Rbrandt / f.*›

Research by I.H. van Eeghen has provided several facts about the life of Herman Doomer and Baertje Martens. Doomer came from Anrath in Germany and was 23 years old when, in Amsterdam in 1618, he married Baertje Martens, one-year-younger than himself and born in the town of Naarden. He gave his occupation as worker in ebony – a specialist trade, since handling this wood demands particular skills.

It is quite likely that Herman Doomer made frames for Rembrandt and that a friendship developed between the two – all the more likely since Herman's son Lambert (1624-1700) became a pupil of Rembrandt around *c.* 1640.

These two portraits **177a** and **177b** were mentioned in the successive wills of Baertje Martens, drawn up in Amsterdam and dated 15 July 1654, 23 May 1662 and 3 September 1668 (*Doc.* 1654/13, 1662/3 and 1668/7 respectively). A fourth and final will dated 30 June 1677 has not survived. The mention in the 1662 will reads:

> *'that her son Lambert Doomer shall take and keep the portraits of her, the testatrix, and of her husband, made by Rembrandt van Rijn, provided that he shall supply each of his brothers and sisters with copies thereof at his expense.'*

(See the Note to **304** with remarks on Rembrandt's portraits of friends and for private use.)

* **178** Rembrandt, **Self-portrait**, *c.* 1640, panel 72.2 x 58.3 cm. Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza. HdG 565; Br. 36; Bauch 317; Gerson 240; Br./Gerson 36 (as probably not by the master, nor from the period); Tümpel -; ***Corpus* IV 2** and **Chapter III pp. 245-251**.
Inscription: none

The plank on which Rembrandt painted this self-portrait was originally larger on all sides (see *Corpus* IV p. 365). It was sawn from an oak trunk at its maximum diameter, which explains why the vertical zone of wood in the middle of the plank – the heart wood – was sensitive under the many climatic changes to which the painting had been exposed in the course of an eventful history. This has led to considerable loss of paint and consequently numerous restorations of the face as well as extensive overpaintings of the background, the beret and the black clothing. The unfinished hand which emerged during the course of a restoration between *c.* 1835 and 1935 belongs to the very first layout of the painting and was subsequently painted out, most probably by Rembrandt himself (**fig. 1**). Marieke de Winkel pointed out that the costume refers to an illustrious predecessor in the middle of the fifteenth century: in particular, Rembrandt may have had in mind Dieric Bouts, who was by origin a Northern Netherlandish painter, referred to by Karel van Mander in his 'Lives' as Dirk van Haarlem (**fig. 2**) (De Winkel 2006 p. 186).

Fig. 1. Etched copy of **178** (1790-1870), produced around 1835/40 by J.N. Muxel.

Fig. 2. H. Cock, *Dieric Bouts*, engraving.

An inscription with the signature and dating of this self-portrait has probably been lost during the course of the painting's turbulent material history. The usual date of 1643 attributed to this painting rests on the long accepted – although demonstrably incorrect – assumption that it was the pendant to the so-called *Posthumous portrait of Saskia* in Berlin, dated 1643 **193**. This dating can also be rejected on the basis of the physiognomic evidence. The chin is not so filled out and the sag of the cheeks not so marked as in the *Self-portrait* from 1642 **189**, suggesting an earlier date for the present painting. Whereas Gerson doubted the attribution to Rembrandt and Tümpel and Gaskell (Gaskell 1990 p. 138) rejected it, the present author, on the basis of several lines of mutually reinforcing evidence argued in *Corpus* IV 2, is convinced that the painting is a work by Rembrandt.

179 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait**, 1640, canvas 93 x 80 cm. London, National Gallery. HdG 550; Br. 34; Bauch 316; Gerson 238; Br./Gerson 34; Tümpel 168; ***Corpus* III A 139**; ***Corpus* IV pp. 245-249**; see also *M/W* cat. 32; Bl. cat. 13; *Art in the making* II no. 9.
Inscription: at the bottom right of the sill ‹*Rembrandt f 1640*›; below the name, there is the word *Conterfeycel*

There is reason to suppose that this superb *Self-portrait* should be included in the category of 'living' *trompe l'oeil* paintings which Rembrandt painted around 1640 (cf. **166**, **168**, **186**, **187a/b** and possibly **190**).

* **180** Rembrandt and workshop or a later hand, **Portrait of a woman, possibly Anna Wijmer**, 1641, mahogany panel [Brosimum sp] 99.5 x 81.5 cm. Amsterdam, Six Foundation. HdG 728; Br. 358; Bauch 500 (Tafel 499); Gerson 235; Br./Gerson 358; Tümpel A112 (as from Rembrandt's workshop?); ***Corpus* III C 113** (as from Rembrandt's workshop).
Inscription: at the lower left above the overpainted table ‹*Rembrandt / .f 1641*›

Prior to the RRP, this painting had always been considered a work by Rembrandt on the basis of the signature *Rembrandt /. f 1641*, although Gerson and Tümpel expressed a certain hesitation. However, in *Corpus* III C 113 it was removed from Rembrandt's autograph oeuvre and instead it was suggested that it could have been from the hand of one of Rembrandt's pupils, possibly Ferdinand Bol. This disattribution was heavily swayed by the locally weak and atypical execution of the costume, the chair and parts of the hands.

Once the uppermost varnish layers had been removed from the painting in *c.* 1995 however, investigators of the RRP began to suspect that the essential parts of the portrait had indeed been painted by Rembrandt and the rest by a pupil/assistant. During a restoration by Laurent Sozzani in 2013/14 it became clear that the painting is the final result of a complicated genesis. The fact that the skirt now lying over the lap below right originally had a vertical straight contour constituted a strong indication that the woman was originally depicted standing. Signs of tooling at the bottom on the reverse side of the panel indicate that the painting was once larger below. Further evidence for this is that her right hand in its present position seems to have rested on a descending banister, much as Maria Trip rests her hand on a banister in **184b**. It is clear that a lower table was initially placed there: judging by a paint sample this table was covered with a red cloth. It is difficult to understand precisely how the hand could have related to the table unless the arm was initially shown hanging down behind the table, again in a comparable manner to Maria Trip's right arm. The stair banister was then replaced by the right arm of an armchair on which the woman's right hand now rests, but it is not clear whether these alterations were executed by Rembrandt himself or, more probably, by someone from his studio.

For the problems involved in the identification of the sitter, see *Corpus* III C 113.

181 Rembrandt, **Saskia as Flora**, 1641, panel 98.5 x 82.5 cm. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 609; Br. 108; Bauch 264; Gerson 226; Br./Gerson 108; Tümpel 107; ***Corpus* III A 142**.
Inscription: at the bottom left by the edge of the painting with the first four letters barely or no longer legible ‹....*randt. f 1641*›

Fig. 1. Titian, *Flora*, canvas 79 x 63 cm. *c.* 1515. Florence, Uffizi.

Fig. 2. Anonymous after Rembrandt?, pen drawing 11.1 x 6.2 cm. Munich.

There would seem to be sufficient similarities of physiognomy between the woman depicted here and in **94** to justify the painting's current title. Saskia's face seems to have become fuller, no doubt as a result of a series of pregnancies over the intervening eight years. It is quite possible, as Tümpel suggested, that Saskia was pregnant when the painting was done, this time with Titus, who was baptized on 22 September 1641. Having her stretch out her right hand with a bouquet of flowers suggests that Rembrandt may have been inspired by a painting of Flora by Titian (now in the Uffizi) which at that time could be seen in Amsterdam, in the Reynst collection (**fig. 1**). One can see in the relief of the paint surface that Saskia originally wore a rather tall cap, which also appears to be documented in a drawing possibly made after the present painting (**fig. 2**).

☆ **182** Rembrandt,
Oil study of a woman lit obliquely from behind, *c.* 1640, panel 46.5 x 37.5 cm. Private collection. HdG -; Br. -; Bauch -; Gerson -; Br./Gerson-; Tümpel -; see also Valentiner 1921 p. 13; *Quest* pp. 179-207 esp. 186-196.
Inscription: none

Valentiner published this painting as a newly discovered work by Rembrandt and considered it to be a portrait of Rembrandt's mother from *c.* 1630 (Valentiner 1921 p. 13) (**fig. 1**). Not long after that it disappeared entirely from view until 2003, when it resurfaced and was shown to us. In the course of a subsequent investigation and restoration in 2003-2005 it was found that the painting had been transformed in the 18th century into a 'portrait' by enlarging the format and giving the woman a fur collar (**fig. 2**).

Consequently, the material history of this painting has been fairly dramatic. To begin with, the originally smaller panel was extensively enlarged by later hands – along the left edge with a strip of *c.* 2 cm wide, at the bottom a strip of 7.3 cm, and in order to make the panel rectangular the spandrels of the rounded top were filled and the top cropped. In connection with this modification of the support, the greater part of the background and the lower part of the dress were overpainted.

Now that these interventions have been undone by the restorer Martin Bijl in consultation with members of the RRP, the interpretation of the painting's original function has changed radically. Because of the lighting, as a result of which the woman's face is largely in shadow, it was already difficult to entertain the idea that this could be a formal portrait painted as a commission. Rather, it would seem to be a study. Further evidence for this conclusion, revealed by the restoration, is that the painting is in places rather cursorily executed. As in the Amsterdam study for *in the mirror* **20** and the *Lighting study of an old man* **285**, the light falls on the figure obliquely from behind. The cap on the contrary catches the full light, as does part of the ear, painted in much detail, and the neck and jaw. (For the possible function of the painting see the text below Plates **182/3**.

Dendrochronological examination conducted by Dr. Peter Klein confirmed that the oak panel on which it is painted was taken from the same tree as the panel for the *Self-portrait à la toque* from 1633 **97** and the so-called *Portrait of Willem Burggraaff* in Dresden (Bredius 175), a portrait that was likewise produced in Rembrandt's workshop in 1633. The panel on which the *Landscape* in the Wallace Collection was painted (Bredius 451) also derives from the same tree. That landscape is considered to be a work by one of Rembrandt's former pupils, possibly Govaert Flinck, which, given its affinities with Rembrandt's landscapes from between 1638 and *c.* '40, must have originated around 1640.

The woman posing for this study must have been someone from a lower class, quite possibly one of Rembrandt's household servants. The impression of domesticity and casualness is partly created by the woman's exposed dark *oorijzer* (a metal brace, part of the head gear of a Dutch woman to hold the bonnet in place) clasped to her cheek (**fig. 4**). From a number of works with women wearing similar bonnets, one can infer that the bonnet's side-flap, folded up above the ear in the present painting, was normally folded down and stretched over the ends of the *oorijzer*, with only the decorated buttons remaining visible. There is another painting in which an almost identical *oorijzer* can be seen, with the point of such a bonnet raised in identical fashion. This is a painting by Philips Koninck, in which a young girl, clearly shown as a servant-girl, is busy with some domestic task (**fig. 3**). Quite a number of such *oorijzers*, or fragments of

Fig. 1. Reproduction of **182** as published in Valentiner's *Wiedergefundene Gemälde*, 1921.

Fig. 2. **182** before restauration.

Fig. 3. Ph. Koninck, *Servant girl*, St Petersburg, Hermitage.

Fig. 4. Brass 'oorijzer'.

them, have been found during excavations in Amsterdam, often in old cesspits. In every case they turn out to be made of brass. The relatively wide metal band, always with some simple decorations at the ends, was bent backwards above the ear to run as a thinner, springier band beneath the bonnet, around the back of the head below the obligatory hair knot, to the other ear. Where the *oorijzer* was bent at the temples, there were elongated holes through which ran a ribbon that passed under the front of the bonnet. The *oorijzers* worn by well-to-do women who sat for Rembrandt, such as Mrs. Anslo **183** and Catharina Hoogsaet **258** were probably made of silver or gold and expensively decorated with a pearl or a gold button.

183 Rembrandt, **Portrait of Cornelis Anslo and his wife Aeltje Schouten**, 1641, canvas 176 x 210 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 620; Br. 409; Bauch 536; Gerson 234; Br./Gerson 409; Tümpel 253; ***Corpus* III A 143**; see also Berlin 1975 pp. 351-352; *M/W* cat. 33.
Inscription: ‹*Rembrandt. f* (followed by a colon with a third dot alongside the upper one) *1641*›

Cornelis Claesz Anslo (Amsterdam 1592-1646) came from a family of cloth merchants. Besides trading in cloth he was a preacher in the Waterland Mennonite community. In 1615/16 he set up in the Egelantiersstraat in Amsterdam an almshouse for destitute older women, the Anslohofje. In 1611 Cornelis married Aeltje Gerritsdr Schouten (d. 1657). It was long assumed that this portrait had hung in the Anslo Almshouse, a belief which may have been the source of the idea that the woman represented an inhabitant of the almshouse. However, I.H. Van Eeghen has shown conclusively that the double portrait never hung in the Anslo Almshouse. In the almshouse record book from 1767 Cornelis van der Vliet stated that he owned the painting, which had come to him by inheritance (Van Eeghen 1969).

184a Mainly executed by a member of Rembrandt's workshop, **Portrait of a man** (**Balthasar Coymans?**) (companion piece to **184b**), 1641 (?), poplar panel 106 x 79 cm. Private collection. HdG 747; Br. 222; Bauch 390; Gerson 246; Br./Gerson 222; Tümpel A91; ***Corpus* III C 110** (as from Rembrandt's workshop).
Inscription: at the bottom right ‹*Remb(r) / f.164(1)*›

184b Rembrandt with a contribution by the painter of 184a, **Portrait of a woman** (**Maria Trip?**) (companion piece to **184a**), 1641 (?), poplar panel 107 x 82 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum (on loan). HdG 845; Br. 356; Bauch 498; Gerson 194; Br./Gerson 356; Tümpel 241; ***Corpus* III A 131**.
Inscription: at the bottom left ‹*Rembrandt f / 1639*› : the script, the unusual placing of the date and the fact that this inscription is on a restored patch are grounds for denying its authenticity.

The reason for suggesting in this Note that **184a** and **184b** are pendants is in the first place that the two portraits are painted on equally large poplar panels, a type of wood not used customarily for panels in Dutch portrait studios (see Note **164**). Rembrandt alone must have had a batch of some ten such panels at his disposal around 1640. However, the handling of the paint in the execution of details of the faces of the sitters and the various materials of their dress differs so markedly between the two paintings that two painters must certainly have been involved in the execution of this commission.

The woman is largely painted by Rembrandt. The way her skin is painted, the delicate translucency of the layered collar, the differentiated execution of the folded fan in her left hand and the suggestion of depth by the evocation of the 'thickness of the air' between her left and right arms banish all doubt as to the authenticity of this painting – except for one specific part of her dress: the singular band round her middle and an intricately embroidered element over the waist in front, decorated with three rosettes. Rembrandt would certainly have found a more efficient way of rendering such a costume component (as he did, for example, with the ribbon tied in a bow round the handle of the fan). The painter of this article of decoration has rendered it by 'embroidering' in turn with infinitely repeated dabs of the brush in a manner wholly atypical of Rembrandt. One sees such a similar approach to repetitive decorative elements in the dress of the companion piece: one cannot avoid the impression that the same assistant who painted the man's dress also painted the ensemble of decorative bands and bows in the woman's outfit. When we were able to study the two paintings side-by-side on several occasions, this impression became only stronger, entirely in accord with our growing conviction that the two paintings were originally conceived and executed as pendants.

A remarkable aspect of this case is that one can hardly imagine that the second painter had been trained by Rembrandt. It may well have been a journeying – possibly even foreign – craftsman from an entirely different artistic milieu, trying unsuccessfully to adapt to Rembrandt's style. The execution of the face and hair also suggests this. But that does not exclude the possibility that Rembrandt played an active role in the creation of the man's portrait. In the X-radiograph and the series of neutron activation radiographs made of this painting, one observes the first design of the painting, whose boldness can be called Rembrandtesque (**fig. 1** and **2**).

If these paintings are pendants and the woman is indeed Maria Trip, the dating of her portrait has to be revised. At present it bears the non-autograph inscription with the date <1639>. But in 1639

Fig. 1. X-ray of **184**

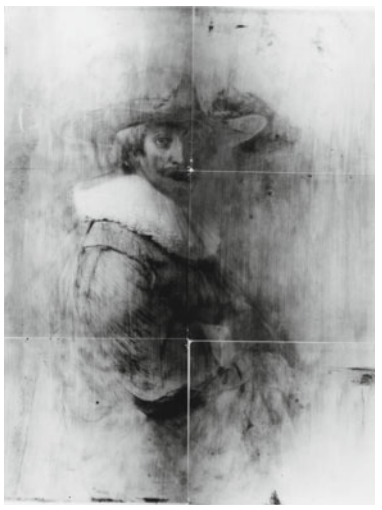


Fig. 2. Autoradiograph of **184**

☆ **185** Rembrandt, **A scholar at a writing desk**, 1641, poplar panel 104 x 76 cm. Warsaw, Royal Castle. HdG 239; Br. 219; Bauch 176; Gerson 225; Br./Gerson 219; Tümpel -; see also Ziemba 1990; Van de Wetering 2008b.
Inscription: on the shadow side of the writing-desk ‹*Rembrandt. f. 1641*›

☆ **186** Rembrandt, **Girl in fanciful costume in a picture frame**, 1641, poplar panel 104 x 76 cm. Warsaw, Royal Castle. HdG 331; Br. 359; Bauch 265; Gerson 224 (as not by Rembrandt); Br./Gerson 359; Tümpel -; see also Ziemba 1990; Van de Wetering 2008b pp. 87-90 for a discussion concerning the painting's attribution.
Inscription: in the lower left corner ‹*Rembrandt. f. 1641*›

Maria Trip was not married; she married in 1641. The date on the man's portrait, in as far as it is legible, corresponds with the latter date of 1641. In *Corpus* III C 110, however, the authenticity of the inscription <*Remb(r) / f.164(1)*> on the man's portrait was evaluated as follows:

> 'At the bottom right in black, incomplete through being cut off <*Remb(r) / f.164(1)*>. The *r* and *1* shown in parentheses are only partially present, and the reading of these is thus to some extent conjectural. The script is very uncertain, and does not make an impression of authenticity.'

The judgment of the inscription on the woman's portrait is more emphatically negative. According to *Corpus* III p. 316-318

> 'the letters of the inscription <*Rembrandt f / 1639*> are spiky in shape and the *R* hardly legible, while the date is diagonally below the *f* to the right. The script, the unusual placing of the date and the fact that this inscription is on a restored patch are grounds for denying its authenticity.'

The dates on the two paintings thus give no basis for certainty over their year of origin and cannot therefore play any useful role in identifying the sitters. The fact that they are both painted on poplar wood panels, however, makes it highly probable that that they were painted around 1640.

It is widely accepted that the woman could well be Maria Trip and in this context it is worth quoting the summary of the entry from *Corpus* III p. 320, which explains how this putative identification was arrived at.

> 'Identification of the sitter is due to I.H. van Eeghen, who worked from the assumption that a rich and socially-prominent young woman should be sought among the forebears of the earliest known owner of the portrait, Hendrik Maurits van Weede of Utrecht (1737-1796). The sole candidate was Maria Trip, baptized in the Amsterdam Oude Kerk on 6 January 1619. [...] Maria Trip was married in 1641 to Balthasar Coymans and, after his death in 1657, remarried in 1661 to Pieter Ruysch, lord of Wayestein, from Utrecht. She died on 14 October 1683.'

On the basis of the above, there are two options: if the two paintings are pendants and the woman portrayed is Maria Trip, then the earliest possible date of origin is 1641, since she was married in that year; in which case the man is identified as Balthasar Coymans; but if the portrait of the woman was indeed painted in 1639, and given the very high probability that the two paintings are pendants, it would mean that we are dealing with an unidentified couple.

In this context, however, it is important to point out that in 1639 Rembrandt painted a portrait of Maria's mother Aletta Adriaensdr **169**, the widow of Elias Trip (1570-1636). Many years later, in 1661, he was to paint the portraits of Elias's younger brother Jacob Trip and his wife Margaretha de Geer **297a/b**. The fact that these other members of Maria Trip's family had themselves portrayed by Rembrandt (see also **306**) can be seen as support for the first option.

In Bredius' survey these two paintings were described as belonging to the collection of Count Lanckoronski in Vienna, but during the Second World War they disappeared and for decades their fate remained unknown. It was feared that both paintings had been lost in the war. It was therefore a major surprise when, in the early nineties, they resurfaced in Warsaw. It turned out that the Nazis had 'confiscated' the paintings during the war and that immediately after the war they had been taken to the central depot for spoils of war in Munich. From there the paintings were returned to one of the descendants of the Lanckoronski family, who decided not to take them back to Poland, the ancestral home of the Lanckoronskis, fearing that such a private possession would be similarly confiscated by the communist regime there. For this reason the paintings remained in a Swiss bank safe for decades, only reappearing once the communist regime had fallen. Because both works had been in the collection of the Polish King Stanislaus Augustus between 1770 and 1815, Carolina Lanckoronski, an art historian and the last surviving descendant of the family, donated the paintings to the Royal Castle in Warsaw. The relevant inventory numbers added in red oil paint in the upper left corner of both paintings have been preserved.

The paintings were also together before 1770. One may therefore assume that they were for a long time thought to be pendants (in 1769 they were described in the inventory of the Comte de Kamke as 'La Juive fiancée' and 'Le Père de la fiancée reglant sa dote'). It is therefore a fair assumption that the paintings had remained together ever since they were both painted in 1641. That is not to say, however, that they necessarily *have* to be considered as pendants, even though they are now of the same size and both painted on poplar panels. On the basis of the way the girl's painted frame is cropped on the sides and the top, it would seem that that painting was originally larger. One may speculate that perhaps the two paintings originally were of different sizes and were subsequently matched to each other. But the main reason for doubting that Rembrandt conceived and painted them as pendants is the way the figures are placed in the images: this is essentially different in the two

paintings. The girl stands in the opening of the frame of a painting while the man sits at a table bearing a writing-desk. The painting with the girl is obviously a *trompe l' oeil* whereas the other one is not evidently so, even though the edge of the table and the front edge of the writing-desk are parallel to the image plane.

There are further arguments against the idea that they were intended as pendants. The man behind a table sits whereas the girl stands. When one considers the proportions of the girl one can assume that the floor she is standing on must be higher than the imaginary floor on which the man's chair appears to rest. Moreover, in view of the pictorial tradition of thinking or writing scholars, it is scarcely conceivable that such a character type would be represented together with a young girl. In addition, the painting with the scholar is conspicuously worked up in more detail, is more graphic in execution and in certain respects is richer in its detailing than the painting with the girl. Compare, for example, the chain and other shiny elements in the attire of the two figures and the folding of their clothes.

The observation above concerning the proportions of the girl is also one of the reasons for thinking that the girl is younger than one at first tends to assume. This is not a young woman, as one might well infer from the description (quoted above) in the inventory of the Comte de Kamke, but rather a child, perhaps no older than 10, which accounts for the smoothness and softness of the face, a characteristic that differs significantly from the physiognomy of the servant girls in Plates **200** and **220** – even though all three manifest a similar relation between the eyes and the face as a whole.

If the Lanckoronski paintings are not pendants, several of the differences mentioned above in the execution of the two paintings become explicable. But if, on the other hand, one maintains the traditional assumption that they *are* pendants, it is understandable that it would have been suggested from time to time that the two paintings are from two different hands.

There cannot be the slightest doubt that the painting of the scholar is an autograph work by Rembrandt; whereas in the case of the girl doubts on that score have been expressed. Horst Gerson, who had seen neither painting but only the available photographs, remarked of the girl: 'to judge from photographs, the attribution to Rembrandt is not sound' (Gerson 1968 no 224). Going further, after the return of the two paintings to Warsaw, the Polish art historian Antoni Ziemba devoted an article to them (Ziemba 1990) titled 'Two paintings of the Lanckoronski collection: Rembrandt and Bol'; while Walter Liedtke suggested during the 2006 Rembrandt symposium in Berlin that the painting of the girl might be the work of Samuel van Hoogstraten (which, given the dating of the painting, is impossible (see Van de Wetering 2008b p. 88).

If one accepts that the two Lanckoronski paintings are not pendants, the question of the attribution of the girl does need reconsidering. The obvious suggestion is that it could be the work of a pupil. Several of Rembrandt's pupils, after leaving his studio or even during their period of training, engaged in the production of *trompe l'oeil* paintings. They must have taken their inspiration from Rembrandt's activities in this area after *c.* 1639 (*Corpus* IV pp. 245-247). The problem of the attribution in the case of the girl comes down to the question of whether it concerns a prototype by Rembrandt or an imitation by a pupil – as implied by Ziemba and by Liedtke in their respective attributions to Bol and Van Hoogstraten.

Christopher Brown also opted for the latter by pointing out that there are clear differences in execution between the Lanckoronski girl and the *trompe l' oeil* portrait of Agatha Bas (**187b**), which is in some respects closely related and is also dated 1641 (Brown 2007). However, it is by no means obvious that the Lanckoronski girl was painted *after* the *Agatha Bas*. It could have been painted beforehand and could have inspired the family Bambeeck/Bas when they commissioned their portraits with Rembrandt to choose the formula of a *trompe l'oeil* in the painting frame. The fact that this formula was used much more sophisticated in the conception of their portraits could thus serve as an argument that the Lanckoronski girl might have been a prototype rather than an imitation. Of course, the argument can be reversed, but there is a further reason for persisting with the possibility that the Lanckoronski girl is a prototype rather than work from a student. That is, the painting is in one respect a highly exceptional case since two artistic lines in Rembrandt's implicit ideas about painting come together in a surprising way: on the one hand there is his thinking about the possibilities of the *trompe l'oeil* with living figures, and on the other hand the almost obsessive attention that Rembrandt seems to have paid in this period to the artistic problems of depicting movement (Van de Wetering in *Quest* pp. 108-115).

If one pays close attention one sees that the girl is shown, in an unusually subtle way, moving. She is expressly depicted in motion and appears to be moving forwards. While her left hand rests on the frame, the thumb of her right hand touches the shiny wood (and is reflected in it), while the other four fingers of that hand are suspended above the frame and seem about to grasp it; the shadow cast by the side of the frame on the hand enhances this effect. The material of the girl's right sleeve is shown to be in motion by a series of parallel long, curved scratches in the wet paint; her earring is swinging, as often occurs when Rembrandt renders a female figure in motion. The girl's body and shoulders are slightly turned to the left, which supports the impression that the figure is advancing her right side towards the frame. This invention, which accords with Rembrandt's concern with the representation of movement precisely in the period around 1640, is unique. It does not occur in the works with single *trompe l'oeil* figures by Rembrand's former pupils that are related to this painting – apart perhaps in the *Kitchen maid* in Chicago, where the hand is also free of the bottom door, but then in an unconvincing manner. Evidently the aspect of movement in the Warsaw painting was not so important that it was taken up in this short-lived pictorial tradition.

Of course, this would not in itself be sufficient to propose an attribution to Rembrandt if it were the only argument. But there are more. The mere fact that the girl is painted on one of the batch of poplar planks that Rembrandt used in this period adds weight to the scales (see Note **164**). Similarly supportive is the fact that it is painted over an unfinished portrait of a woman with a large millstone collar (dark, rounded shapes showing through in the left background between the girl's beret and her hair and on the right above the beret reveal the forms of the collar and head of the woman, who is more readily visible in the X-radiograph); we know that this sort of palimpsest with Rembrandt mainly occurs with self-portraits and studies of various kinds. Another argument for an attribution to Rembrandt that may be added to the above is that the girl's frock is so cursorily executed (dark sketch lines show through that have nothing to do with either the underlying incomplete portrait or with the painting that is now visible) that it may be counted as unfinished. The completed parts, such as the hands and the face demonstrate in their execution a singular control that is typical of Rembrandt (cf. for example, the hands in **184b** and **195** and the faces in **177b** and **184b**). The work is signed by Rembrandt and investigation of a paint cross-section through the signature has shown that it was signed shortly after the painting was done. This suggests that, even if the work served as a study of this complex movement motif, there may have been a potential purchaser who was interested in it but expected the work to be signed. It would not be the only study by Rembrandt where this happened (probably also in **4**, **8**, **111** etc.). The technique used to suggest the texture of the material of the frock shows direct affinity with that in the much further worked-out dress of the *Saskia as Flora*, also from 1641 **181**, and the likewise sketchily executed clothes of the militia *schutter* loading his musket in the foreground of the *Night Watch* **190**. Finally, it should also be remarked that there is a same-sized copy of the *Young girl* which is unquestionably of 17th-century origin and most probably executed in Rembrandt's studio (Copenhagen 2006 no. 57). Such copies usually constitute a significant indication that the prototype after which the copy is made is a work by the master.

The arguments presented here for the attribution of the Warsaw *Young girl* to Rembrandt converge in such a way that for this writer there is a fairly high probability that indeed we are dealing with an autograph work by Rembrandt.

187a Rembrandt, **Portrait of Nicolaes van Bambeeck in a picture frame** (companion piece to **187b**), 1641, canvas 108.8 x 83.3 cm. Brussels, Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten. HdG 734; Br. 218; Bauch 386; Gerson 232; Br./Gerson 218; Tümpel 208; ***Corpus* III A 144**; see also *M/W* cat. 34; *Uylenburgh* pp. 193-196.
Inscriptions: on the right, in the lowest section of moulding in the wall, in dark brown ‹*Rembrandt. f. / 1641*›. It is conceivably the signature was copied from that on the companion-piece, perhaps at the time the two paintings were separated in 1814. At the top, a little left of centre, there is a statement of the sitter's age in dark paint: <*AE 44*>.

187b Rembrandt, **Portrait of Agatha Bas in a picture frame** (companion piece to **187a**), 1641, canvas 104 x 82 cm. London, Royal Collection. HdG 860; Br. 360; Bauch 501; Gerson 233; Br./Gerson 360; Tümpel 243; ***Corpus* III A 145**; see also White 1982 (rev.) no. 162; *M/W* cat. 35.
Inscriptions: at the lower left ‹*Rembrandt.f / 1641*›. At the top centre the sitter's age is given in dark paint <*AE 29*>

The correct identification of the sitters is due to I.H. van Eeghen who, in the knowledge of their ages as given on the paintings (the man 44 years old and the woman 29), was put onto the track of their marriage certificate dated 27 April 1638. There is a possibility that Van Bambeeck and Rembrandt had known each other for years: in 1631 the former, also from Leiden, had lived in the Sint-Anthoniesbreestraat, as did Rembrandt when he moved into the house of Hendrik Uylenburgh. Both he and Rembrandt belonged to the group of Amsterdammers who in 1640 lent Van Uylenburgh money for his art business (*Doc.* 1640/2). Compared to her husband, who made his fortune in trade – mainly Spanish wool – but occupied no municipal post, Agatha Bas came from a more distinguished background. She was born into an upper-class Amsterdam family and her father, Dr Dirck Jacobsz Bas from 1610 onwards served several times as burgomaster of Amsterdam and on the board of the United East India Company, undertaking many diplomatic journeys abroad. Agatha died in 1658, and her husband followed in 1661.

* **188** Rembrandt, **David's parting from Jonathan**, 1642, panel 73 x 61 cm. St. Petersburg, Hermitage. HdG 38; Br. 511; Bauch 24; Gerson 207; Br./Gerson 511; Tümpel 19; ***Corpus* III C 84** (as painted in Rembrandt's immediate circle in the early 1640s).
Inscription: slightly left of centre by the bottom edge ‹*Rembrandt : f 1642*›

Worried by the threat posed by King Saul, David felt forced to 'hide in the open fields' [I Samuel 20: 5] and sought the help of his friend Jonathan, Saul's son. They agreed on a sign that would tell David whether he was safe or whether he must definitively flee. The sign would be given by Jonathan shooting an arrow 'in the open fields' which would be fetched by a boy according to a code pre-arranged between Jonathan and David.

> **I Samuel 20: 35-42** 'And so it was, in the morning, that Jonathan went out into the field at the time appointed with David, and a little lad was with him. Then he said to his lad, "Now run, find the arrows which I shoot." As the lad ran, he shot an arrow beyond him. When the lad had come to the place where the arrow was which Jonathan had shot, Jonathan cried out after the lad and said, "Is not the arrow beyond you?" And Jonathan cried out after the lad, "Make haste, hurry, do not delay!" So Jonathan's lad gathered up the arrows and came back to his master. But the lad did not know anything. Only Jonathan and David knew of the matter. Then Jonathan gave his weapons to his lad, and said to him, "Go, carry them to the city." As soon as the lad had gone, David arose from a place toward the south, fell on his face to the ground, and bowed down three times. And they kissed one another; and they wept together, but David more so. Then Jonathan said to David, "Go in peace, since we have both sworn in the name of the LORD, saying, May the LORD be between you and me, and between your descendants and my descendants, forever." So he arose and departed, and Jonathan went into the city.'

Usually Rembrandt managed to forge the many elements of a complex image into a single unity brilliantly, with distinct planes succeeding one another in the depth of the pictorial space through the use of light and shadow. See for instance **150**, **153**, **158**. Could one take this as a formula for Rembrandt's ideal of composition? Because if so, the composition of the painting discussed here appears relatively unbalanced. As the beholder's eye seeks a path from the accurately detailed background to the foreground, it traverses an unusually vacant space between the city and the foreground. Then the foreground is taken up by the single, large illuminated form of two embracing figures.

The fact that Rembrandt opted for such an unusual solution in this painting can be explained by the nature of the episode depicted. When one reads the relevant Biblical text (quoted above) one realizes that Rembrandt has here prioritized content over form in an extraordinary way. He has done so in order that the chosen form – the placing of the figures, the singular organization of the pictorial space – serves the narrative essence of the story. The empty space between the men embracing each other in the foreground and the city, deep in the background, is curious in a pictorial sense but in a dramatic sense it is extremely effective. The merging of the two men reduces the composition to its simplest: a large, strongly lit form placed before an empty space, the open fields mentioned in the Bible, with the city with Saul's palace in the background.

Once we realize this, we see how closely Rembrandt is concerned not only with form but also with the integration of form with content. For the art historian involved in questions of attribution, this means that one must look into matters of content as much as form, for otherwise he may well be led, albeit unconsciously, to disattribute a work such as this because of its unusual composition, even though other arguments concerning style and quality may be deployed to justify the disattribution. This is precisely what happened when the members of the Rembrandt Research Project, including myself, disattributed this painting from Rembrandt, a painting which, apart from its unusual ordonnance, is highly Rembrandtesque in its brilliant execution of the two figures, their emotional expressiveness, and the elaboration of their costumes and paraphernalia.

* **189** Rembrandt, **Self-portrait**, 1642, panel 69.9 x 58.4 cm. Windsor Castle, Royal Collection. HdG 555; Br. 37; Bauch 319; Gerson 253; Br./Gerson 37; Tümpel A69 (as by a Rembrandt imitator); ***Corpus* IV 1; pp. 137-141**(as authentic though heavily overpainted); see also White 1982 (rev.) no. 168; Van de Wetering/ Broekhoff 1996.
Inscription: to the right of Rembrandt's left shoulder ‹*Rembrandt. f. / 1642*›

This painting – from the same year in which the *Night Watch* was finished – is done on a panel on which there is an earlier, unfinished self-portrait by Rembrandt from *c.* 1633, revealed by X-radiography and IR-reflectography (**figs. 1**, **2** and **3**).

Fig. 1. Reconstruction of the underlying picture, based on a tracing of the X-radiograph and the position of the third eye.

Fig. 2. X-ray of **189**

Fig. 3. Infra-red reflectograph of the cheek. The lower eye next to the ear with a golden earring is the eye in the underlying unfinished self-portrait.

In its turn, it too has been largely overpainted, probably in the 18th century, during which process only the face with the ear and part of the background, with the signature, were left untouched. Such a radical treatment was known as 'freshing up'. According to Baldinucci's *Vocabolario toscano dell'arte del disegno* of 1681 (Lemma 'rifiorire'), this was

> *'a most vulgar term by which the lower classes want to express that insufferable stupidity of theirs, to have an old painting occasionally covered with fresh paint even by an inexperienced hand, because it has been slightly blackened by the process of time. This action, not only deprives the painting of its beauty, but also of its air of antiquity.'*

It is to be hoped that these overpaintings and the paint layers underneath will in due course be investigated and, if possible, that the decision is made to remove the overpaintings.

190 Rembrandt, **The Night Watch** (actually: '*The painting in the great hall of the Kloveniers Doelen in which the young Lord of Purmerland* [Frans Banninck Cocq] *as Captain, gives the order to his Lieutenant, the Lord of Vlaerdingen* [Willem van Ruytenburgh] *to march off his Company of Citizens'*, as the painting is called in the family album of Frans Banninck Cocq (**fig. 1**), 1642, canvas 363 x 438 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. HdG 926; Br. 410; Bauch 537; Gerson 239; Br./ Gerson 410; Tümpel 254; ***Corpus* III A 146**; see also Haverkamp Begemann 1982; Tümpel 1986 pp. 218-225; see also *Painter at Work* pp. 185, 195-200; Schwartz 2002; Dudok van Heel 2009.
Inscription: on the bottom step ‹*Rembrandt f 1642*›

Like that other, earlier group portrait, the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* **75**, the *Night Watch* may be seen to represent several different worlds: not only that of 17th-century militias in a purely military sense, but also the social, the civic and political realms, with a range of related phenomena – costumes, weapons and the bearing of weapons – worked into the painting. But while, on the one hand, the painting depicts the world of the individuals portrayed and the added extras, on the other hand it reflects the world of the painter, who saw himself faced with major artistic and technical challenges. At the same time the artist had to be fully informed of the significance of what he was painting, the symbolism connected to it and the context in which the work would be shown.

There is an enormous amount of art historical literature devoted to this painting, too extensive to begin to summarize in the context of this book. What follows, then, are a few comments on the (hidden) symbolism (perhaps developed by Rembrandt himself). We will also briefly explore a hitherto under-exposed artistic problem.

In two of the details reproduced with Pl. **190**, reproducing the two most strongly illuminate figures in the painting, the girl dressed in yellow and the similarly yellow-clad lieutenant, one finds two references that are important for an understanding of the painting as a whole:

1. the prominent claws of the chicken that the girl – who is thereby identified as a camp follower – has hanging from her belt. These seem to refer to the bird's claw in the coat-of-arms of this company, the *Kloveniers*; and
2. the shadow of the captain's outstretched hand which falls on the lieutenant's uniform. This shadow holds between thumb and forefinger a rampant lion which in turn holds the crowned arms of the city of Amsterdam, with its three black St Andrew's crosses placed one above the other. Reading from left to right, these two symbols are placed at a third of the width of the painting in its original form and together they seem to say: 'we the *Kloveniers* Militia protects the city of Amsterdam under the guidance of Commander Frans Banninck Cocq.'

The artistic problem, which to the best of my knowledge has never been proposed in the manner as set out below, relates to the missing

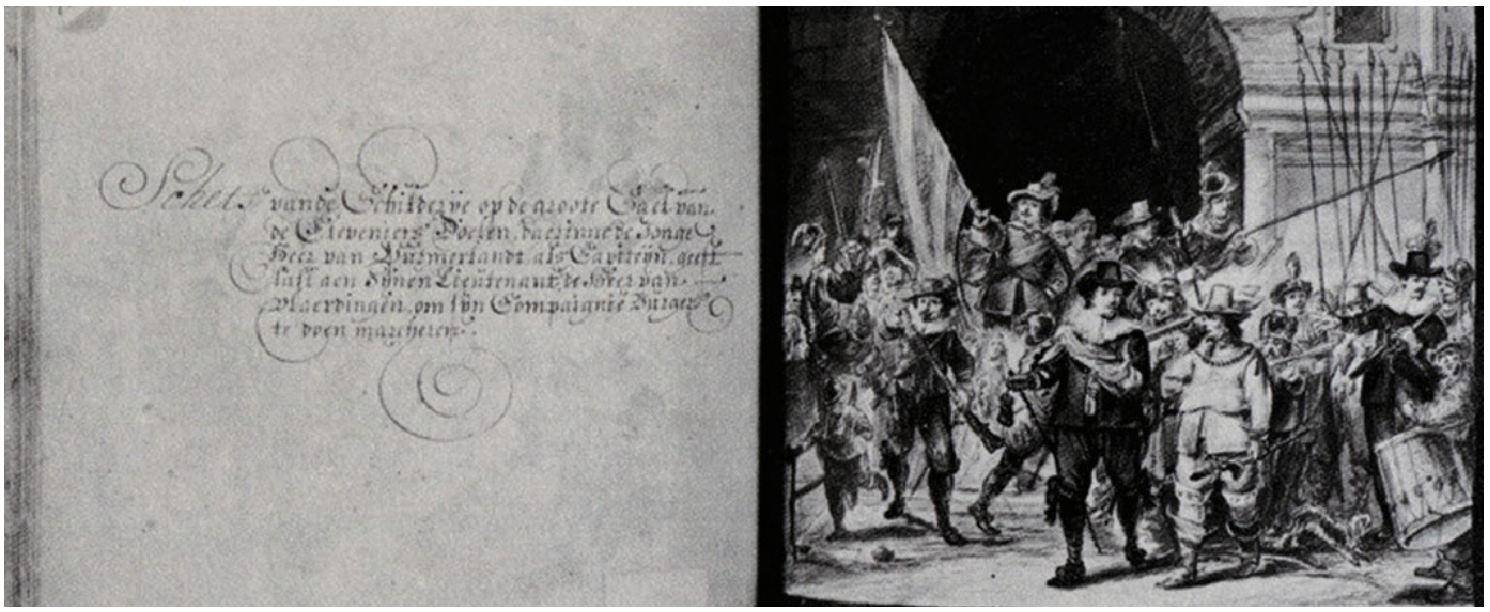


Fig. 1. Two pages from the family album of Frans Banninck Cocq.

piece from the left side of the *Night Watch*. Because of that missing piece, the compositional dynamic, the vital asymmetry that characterizes so many works by Rembrandt, is disturbed (cf. Plate **190** with the reconstruction based on an old copy reproduced beside it). A visual impairment no less serious and perhaps even worse, caused by the removal of this strip, has to do with the beholder's experience of space in the painting. While investigating Rembrandt's etchings seen in mirror image – i.e. as he would have conceived them on the etching plate (Gaffron 1948; see also *Corpus* V pp. 141-146) – it became evident that this reversal gave rise to a different feeling of space. Whether consciously or unconsciously, Rembrandt tended to offer the beholder a deeper view into the pictorial space on the left side of his image. Through the habitual manner in which our brain processes the optic impulses from an observed image, we tend to 'read' that image from left to right, and in doing so the beholder, as it were, explores the pictorial space in that same sequential order. In Chapter II of Vol. V of *A Corpus* all the etchings with histories are reproduced in mirror image. Studying these 'plate images' as Rembrandt produced them one can observe this phenomenon and note that it occurs in a great majority of them (see for instance *Corpus* V pp. 141-146; 198, 245, 249 etc.). (Rembrandt does not do this in those cases where a different organization of the image is preferable for narrative reasons.) One encounters the same phenomenon in his history pieces more often than not (see for instance **25**, **39**, **40**, **127**, **158** etc.).

Once one has been alerted to the significance of this view into the depth of the left part of the background of the *Night Watch*, one realizes just how disastrous the trimming of the left-hand strip from the *Night Watch* has actually been. It was the very place where the eye of the beholder involuntarily explored the mid- and foreground of the painting beginning with a view into the space beyond.

A recently discovered note in the diary of the English tourist Robert Bargrave (1628-1661) visiting Amsterdam on 23 and 24 February 1653 brings the *Night Watch* vividly to life. The tourist had most probably visited the Doelen where the *Night Watch* could be seen among other *schutters* group portraits. It should be borne in mind that the standing, walking, life-size figures in these paintings were probably placed so close to floor-level in the room that to the beholder the paintings would almost have appeared as *trompe l'oeils*. This would explain Bargrave's entry in his diary:

> *'The Principle Roome, [of the Doelen] adorned with Hangings, with Pictures of Burghomasters, Burghers, and chief Officers, in theyr severall postures, drawen to the life in full proportion: and so like persons, that I knew divers of them, as I met them in the Streets.' (Wiemers 1986)*

* **191a** Rembrandt and workshop, **Portrait of a man with a hawk** (companion piece to **191b**), 1643, canvas 114 x 97.3 cm. Private Collection. HdG 748; Br. 224; Bauch 388; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 224 (as by Ferdinand Bol); Tümpel -.
Inscription: left on the bannister *‹[Re]mbrandt f 1643›*

191b Rembrandt and (mainly) workshop, **Portrait of a woman with a fan** (companion piece to **191a**), 1643, canvas 114.5 x 98 cm. Private Collection. HdG 864; Br. 363; Bauch 502; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 363 (as by Ferdinand Bol); Tümpel -.
Inscription: right in the background below mid-height ‹Rembrandt f / 1643› certainly not authentic

Horst Gerson disattributed these two paintings from Rembrandt and attributed them instead to Ferdinand Bol. Yet there are argu-

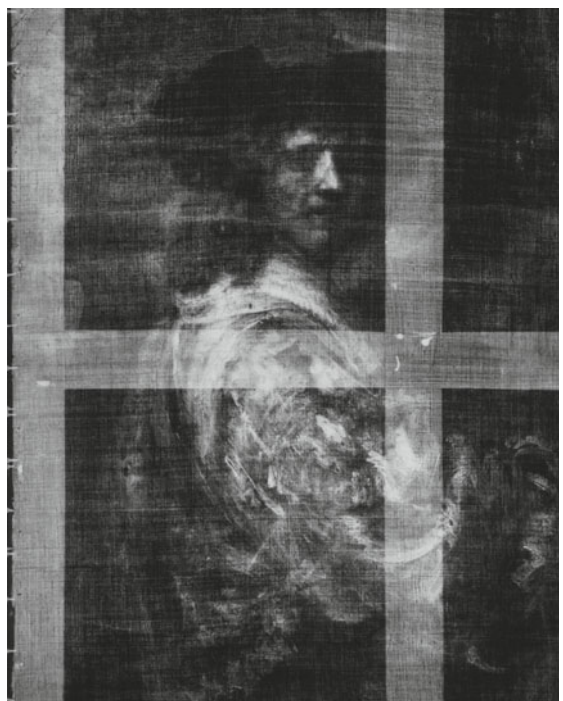


Fig. 1. X-ray of **191a** (detail).

ments to be made for attributing both works to Rembrandt – at least partly, since these are relatively routine products which, as will be argued below, were executed to a significant extent ultimately by a pupil/assistant.

First of all, the signatures obviously need to be considered more closely. In the man's portrait the inscription <[*Re]mbrandt f 1643*> stands on the banister of a staircase from which he appears to have just descended . There is hardly anything left visible of the bottom half of the m, b, r and a. The rest of the signature and the date are similar to authentic signatures. More importantly, a paint sample taken from one of the letters demonstrates that the signature is not a later addition: in this cross-section, no varnish layer was found beneath the black paint of the signature.

The inscription on the pendant woman's portrait, however, is certainly not autograph, and seems to have been applied later. In the 17th century it was quite normal in the case of a pendant pair for only one of two pendants to be signed. Later it would become a common practice to introduce an inscription on the companion piece – not signed by the maker – that more or less corresponded with the authentic inscription on the pendant (see for instance **77a/b**; **121a/b**; **184a/b**).

The signature on the man's portrait, apparently applied immediately on its completion, is not the only evidence supporting an attribution of the painting to Rembrandt; there is also the way in which the man's face is executed. This is similar in many respects to the way in which Rembrandt painted the faces in his (self) portraits during this period: comparatively thin and smooth, with fluent transitions and a slight *sfumato* (cf. **178**, **179**. The fact that the man's voluminous coiffure is thoroughly detailed in the manner one encounters in other works by Rembrandt from this period similarly supports the attribution (cf. **187a/b** the beard in **192**); as does the beret, which is also painted in a manner familiar to us from Rembrandt, with highly suggestive contours with several *repentirs*. The execution of the hawk on the man's gloved hand similarly supports the attribution. The eye cap and the bird's beak are summarily indicated, although in a suggestive but remarkably accurate manner, which surely betrays Rembrandt's hand. The pointing right hand is also characteristically Rembrandtesque.

That is virtually all there is to be seen of Rembrandt's own contribution to this work, as he must at first place have painted far more, including a large part of the costume. A paint cross-section in the costume reveals that the greenish material of the clothing now visible is painted very thinly over a robust paint layer containing much lead-white which belongs to an earlier garment. The light costume, for whatever reason, was eventually rejected in favour of a green attire executed by a different, evidently weaker hand. At that stage, too, the stair banister and the game-bag must have been added, all apparently by the same painter. This must have occurred in Rembrandt's workshop. In the cross-sections of samples taken from the relevant passages of the painting, no intermediate varnish layers were found. The fact, as mentioned above, that there is also no varnish layer between the paint of the signature and that of the banister, could confirm that the signature was applied by Rembrandt.

These observations were made possible thanks to infrared- and X-ray investigations and the analysis of paint samples in the Hamilton Kerr Institute. It also became clear in these investigations that the cloak originally continued through to the bottom left corner of the painting, demonstrating that the banister was applied at a later stage during the genesis of the work (**fig. 1**).

There are also changes that were perhaps already introduced by Rembrandt himself at an earlier stage, changes which it was possible to observe by means of an infra-red reflectographic investigation. It thus turns out that the arm with the hawk was originally held higher and that the man's fist was balled, while the bird was originally placed further to the left and in profile. The second bird may then have been painted – together with the greenish costume – by the assistant. Its head, however, seems to be done by Rembrandt.

Fig. 2. Pupil of Rembrandt, *Man with a sword*, superimposed in fig. 3 (1644) (Br. 235), Private collection.

Fig. 3. X-ray of fig. 2 showing an underlying portrait of a bareheaded gentleman.

Fig. 6. Attributed to C. Fabritius, *Portrait of a man*, Private collection (Br. 251).

Fig. 7. Attributed to C. Fabritius, companion piece to fig. 6. Private collection (Br. 370).

Fig. 4. Attributed to C. Fabritius, *Portrait of a scholar* (1645), Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum (Br. 237).

Fig. 5. Attributed to C. Fabritius, companion piece to fig. 4 (1645), Toronto, Art Gallery of Ontario (Br. 369).

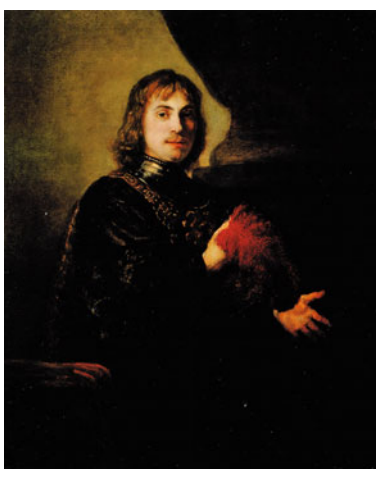


Fig. 8. Anonymous assistant of Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man*, 1643. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (Br. 223).

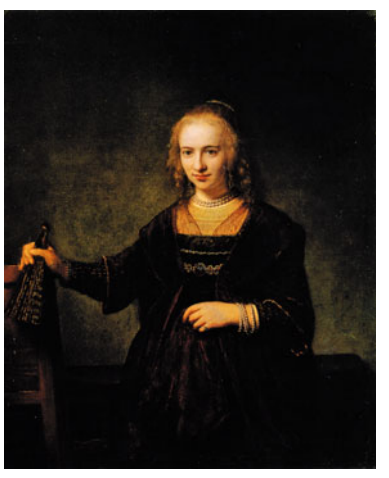


Fig. 9. companion piece to fig. 8. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art (Br. 364).

The pendant woman's portrait **191b** had a much less complex genesis in which, at best, the face and the necklace could have been executed by Rembrandt while the rest seems to have been painted by the same hand that overpainted large parts of the man's portrait.

As was common workshop practice among many 17th-century portrait painters, such paintings were for a large part executed by assistants and yet passed off under the name of the painter who had received the commission. Apart from the *Man with a steel gorget* **195**, after 1642 until 1651 Rembrandt seems to have painted hardly any portraits entirely by himself. Beneath the *Man with a sword* (Br. 235) dated 1644 (**fig. 2**) a man's portrait was recently discovered which, on the basis of the *peinture* and the way in which the forms are suggested, can confidently be attributed to Rembrandt (**fig. 3**). Most portraits from this period he assigned to his pupil/assistant Carel Fabritius (see Br. 251/370, (**figs. 4** and **5**); Br. 237/369, (**figs. 6** and **7**) or other members of the workshop). The so-called *Admiral and his wife* (Br. 223 and 364, (**figs. 8** and **9**)) after possibly being designed by Rembrandt himself seem to be executed by another assistant and probably signed (on the table in the man's portrait) by Rembrandt in 1643.

192 Rembrandt, **An old man in rich costume** (**Boas?**) (possibly companion piece to **193**), 1643, mahogany panel 72.5 x 58.5 cm. Woburn Abbey. HdG 457; Br. 185; Bauch 165; Gerson 243; Br./Gerson 185; Tümpel A39 (pupil of Rembrandt).
Inscription: above right in the background ‹*Rembrandt f. / 1643*›

As far as we know, apart from the duration of the Rembrandt exhibition in Edinburgh in 1950 (cat. no. 16) this painting has never been seen in public. Neither Bauch nor Gerson had ever seen it and in all probability neither had Tümpel. No-one who has seen it at Woburn Abbey, the seat of the Duke and Duchess of Bedford, can have formed an adequate image of it, as it hung high above the towering bookcases of the Woburn Abbey library.

The history of this painting has given rise to disagreement in the Rembrandt literature in one respect in particular: the dating. Hofstede de Groot dated it to around 1632; Bredius placed it among works from 1633; Bauch dated it to around 1635 and Van Gelder reported in 1950 (in *The Burlington Magazine* 92 (1950) p. 328) that during cleaning the date 1643 was found on the painting, a date which was then accepted by Gerson. To the right above the shoulder there are indeed the remains of an inscription, legible only with difficulty: <*Rembrandt f./1643*>. In as far as they are visible the letters are stiffly formed and badly coordinated and do not give the impression of authenticity. As will become evident, however, there are other reasons for accepting the origin of the painting in 1643 as sound (see Note **193**). As far as the attribution to Rembrandt is concerned, there has been little dissension. Only Christian Tümpel has seen in it the work of a pupil, a disattribution which was adopted in the caption under a reproduction in the exhibition catalogue Berlin 2006 (p. 322).

More than in any other work in which Rembrandt depicts an old man or woman, one gets the impression that here, in this completely credible rendering of the skin of the face and of the hands lined by age, one is dealing with an accurate study of old age. The execution of the man's hands in particular is astonishing. It has on occasion been said that Rembrandt could not paint hands. The explanation for this mistaken idea probably lies in the fact that whenever he painted figures with their hands visible, Rembrandt usually toned these down and gave as little detail as possible, apparently observing his own deliberate hierarchical ordering of tonal values and attention-drawing detail in a painting. In this work, however, the hands seem to be given the main role, both with regard to tonality (compared with the face and beard) and in the exceptional way in which they are placed in the pictorial space and worked out in as much detail as possible. The way the right hand's fingers are modelled is exceptionally refined, with their more or less bent positions, and the relative proportion of lighting and shadowing. In the left hand the subtle cues of the topmost phalanges are amazingly well indicated. The small lines between the digits support the anticipation that gripping fingers are closed round the stick. We know from the *Nicolaes Ruts* from 1631 **59** that Rembrandt was a master at painting hands with their backs seen flat on (see also the woman's left hand in **63b**). The figure's left hand in the present painting closed round the stick is an unusual example of this. You look straight at it and yet, as the beholder, you sense the space into which the invisible parts of the fingers disappear.

In fact, everything to do with space has been brilliantly resolved in this painting. This is also true of the lovingly painted and highly detailed grey beard, whose every hair seems to have its own character. Hairs from the moustache hang over the line of the mouth; others are added with grazing strokes in a way that contributes to an atmospheric three-dimensionality, such that the different parts of the beard stand out from each other and from the face. This strong feeling for space is also found in the white sleeve, looming up behind the hands. All this is precise and yet contains this characteristic and effective disorderliness of the *peinture*, in which the brushstrokes are always given a 'useful' direction, i.e. suggestive of plasticity and space, only where necessary. One finds the same refinement in the handling of subtly varied cool and warm whites displayed in, for example, the cap of the *c.* 1640 oil study with the woman lit obliquely from behind **182** and in the 1645 *Girl leaning on a stone window sill* **200**.

While the introduction of this text may seem to imply that this is 'merely' a study of old age, the extremely sensitive and intelligent working out of the detail, described above, in all its aspects suggests that the painting must have been intended as far more than a study. But what exactly? Bredius saw the painting as the *Portrait of an old Jew*. Tümpel was firmly of the opinion that the subject must be a historical figure. There are a number of clues that could perhaps point in one or another direction without leading to a definitive answer to the question of the painting's *raison d'être*.

To begin with, it is remarkable that the painting is executed on a panel that is in many respects closely related to the panel on which **193** is painted. The wood of that panel has been identified as mahogany (*Swietenia mahagony Jacq*). Although the species of wood of the present painting has not been botanically identified, the evidence of its massive weight and the vertical series of lightly curved drying fissures are sufficient to show that it must likewise be mahogany. Moreover, the two panels are almost exactly the same size and both show traces of having been identically worked, including series of drilled holes round the edges in which the X-radiographs show the presence of radio-absorbent material, possibly the remains of nails or metal pins. Everything indicates that these are identical planks that were probably part of a case of Middle American origin in which expensive sugarloaf cones were packed for export to the Netherlands (Klein 1988).

This is not to say that the two paintings should necessarily be considered as pendants. Nevertheless, both paintings have in common that the figures portrayed have the same scale and, more significantly, both hold one or both of their two hands prominently in front of the body in such a way that these hands are as strongly – or even more strongly – lit than the face. The hands in both paintings project from very similar, intricately folded shirt sleeves. Among all these remarkable similarities there is a single detail that could perhaps be the key to revealing the eventual meaning to this remarkable pair. Both the old man and young woman wear a smooth, gold ring, the man on his right, the woman on her left little finger. Hers appears to be a double ring.

Fig. 1. Rembrandt, *Boaz pouring six measures of barley on the veil of Ruth*, *c.* 1649/50, pen and brown ink, 12.6 x 14.3 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet (Ben. 643).

Can we conclude from this accumulation of matching similarities that this couple, so unequal in age, belonged to each other? And if so, who were they? In view of the way they are dressed one might speculate that these are two Old Testament figures. One possibility that comes to mind is that of Boaz and Ruth. In the course of his work Rembrandt certainly engaged once with these sympathetic Biblical figures, in the drawing from *c.* 1650 (Ben. 643, **fig. 1**), in which they are depicted at the moment when Boaz pours the six measures of barley into her veil. Ruth, the Moabite woman, widow of one of the sons of Naomi, who has been gleaning in the fields of Boaz, a relative of her deceased father-in-law, comes to him in his threshing barn and asks him to take her in marriage. Boaz sends her back to Naomi, her mother-in-law with this symbolic gift. The scene is described in the Book of Ruth 3:15, where Boaz says: '*Bring the veil that thou hast upon thee and hold it. And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her*'. The outcome was that Boaz married Ruth not long afterwards. In connection with the suggestion that the two paintings discussed here depict Boaz and Ruth it is perhaps not without interest that the be-ringed hand of the woman in the Berlin painting is clasping a transparent, gold-streaked material that hangs over her shoulder. Could this be the veil of Ruth? It is also possibly of interest that, in the drawing, the bearded Boaz with his beret-like hat and the young woman with her tall, folded headdress and her veil spread on the ground remind one of the figures in the two paintings discussed here (compare **fig. 1**).

If the two paintings are pendants, could it mean that one of the two, the woman, bears an autograph signature while the other was later copied after it (see Note to **191a/b**)?

* **193** Rembrandt, **Bust of a woman** (**Ruth?**) (possibly companion piece to **192**), 1643, mahogany panel 72 x 59 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 605; Br. 109; Bauch 503; Gerson 241; Br./Gerson 109; Tümpel A74 (from Rembrandt's workshop); see also *M/W* cat. 193. Inscription: right, just above the shoulder ‹*Rembrandt f. 1643*›

This painting had long been taken to be a posthumous portrait of Saskia before Horst Gerson first expressed doubts over the authenticity of this icon of Rembrandt's love for his deceased wife. More recently, in the Berlin exhibition catalogue *Rembrandt: Genie auf der Suche* (2006 no. 37), the painting was presumed to be painted by to someone from the 'circle of Rembrandt'.

In his 1969 revised edition of Bredius' survey of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre, Gerson writes:

> 'The X-radiograph and the surface of the painting reveal a technique that is not at all typical: it is a very carefully applied, rather dry and compact field of paint, without the usual accents that Rembrandt created with the brushstroke.' (**fig. 1**).

Fig. 1. X-ray of **193**

If he meant to imply that the painting was not from Rembrandt's hand, Gerson did not actually say so. In fact, he included the painting in his 1968 catalogue *Rembrandt Paintings* (no. 241) with more or less the same commentary. Gerson's characterization of the painting probably contributed to Schwartz' decision to omit it from his 1984 book in which he purported to reproduce all the paintings by Rembrandt. Tümpel (1986, A74), apparently relying on Gerson's authority, also counted it among the works from Rembrandt's workshop, i.e. not painted by Rembrandt himself. In addition, in a draft text written for *A Corpus* in 1990 by Josua Bruyn and Jaques Vis (which remains in the RKD), the painting was removed from Rembrandt's oeuvre and tentatively attributed to Rembrandt's pupil, Samuel van Hoogstraten. If the 1643 date is correct it would thus have been painted shortly after the beginning of the latter's apprenticeship with Rembrandt. This draft text is cited here because it was the basis for the present author's doubt, subsequently expressed, over the painting's authenticity (see e.g. *Corpus* V p. 331).

The 2006 catalogue text referred to above is a good example of the remarkable way in which a painting can disappear from Rembrandt's oeuvre and end up in the 'circle of Rembrandt'. Nowhere does Katja Kleinert, the author of the entry, indicate that it is not a posthumous portrait of Rembrandt's deceased wife; nor is there speculation over who from the 'circle van Rembrandt' might have made the painting. Indeed, she ends the text with a remark which after all suggests that the painting is by Rembrandt, although without actually saying so: commenting on the use of mahogany for the

panel support, she observes that in the choice of such an unusual support 'the artist's delight in experiment is evident'. 'The artist' here is evidently meant to refer to Rembrandt – the catalogue was, after all, devoted to Rembrandt as a searching artist. The only critical note in that entry is to the effect that

> 'in the face of Saskia, executed with partly correcting, searching brushwork, slight uncertainties in perspective are visible that give the face something curiously indefinable.' Berlin 2006 p. 314.

The arguments advanced by Bruyn and Vis in 1990 in the draft-text mentioned above, which was written for the scheduled Volume IV of the *Corpus* are scarcely less vague.

At the same time, however, the authors of that text dealt at some length with the many connections with Rembrandt's work, especially with the Dresden *Saskia as Flora* dated 1641 **181**. None of the above authors who doubted or rejected the painting's authenticity hinted at the possibility that the confusing genesis and a complicated material history of the painting may have affected their judgment.

More than with the great majority of Rembrandt's paintings, the reconstruction of the genesis of this painting is hampered by the difficulty of understanding the traces of a material history which, as will become apparent, was highly eventful. Nor is the unravelling of this material history helped by the paucity of information on the painting's provenance. Exactly how and when it entered the Prussian royal possession is unknown. In 1830 it was transferred to the Königliche Museen Berlin, where the light parts of the image must have been cleaned at some unknown point in time. On the basis of the X-ray (**fig. 1**), and neutron radiographic investigations (**fig. 2**), one gets the impression that at some stage – probably in the 19th or early 20th century – the painting was modified to suit the prevailing idea of Rembrandt's style – little light and more darkness. It is unlikely that the restoration history will be further clarified without undertaking a far-reaching technical investigation during the course of a future restoration. Only thus can one hope to find indications that could help us get an idea of the painting's original appearance and possibly the pictorial aims of its author. At this stage, the following is the best one can say:

As already mentioned, judgment of this painting is hampered first of all by the fact that old varnish layers have only been removed from some light areas. The rest is largely covered with a thick layer of varnish (and possibly overpaintings) that is quite difficult to penetrate with the naked eye. It is therefore also difficult to distinguish which parts of the changes discussed below were executed by the painter himself and which possibly by later hands. Another factor that makes any judgment of the painting difficult is that local blanching has occurred, particularly in the shadow of the woman's face, but perhaps also in the bodice and the shawl on her right shoulder. In these latter passages specifically, it is difficult to distinguish between blanching and the relief of underlying bluish paint that has come to the surface in places.

One sees at once from the X-radiograph (**fig. 1**) that this painting's genesis has been complicated. A series of interventions have altered – and lent greater precision to – the shape of the hand, which has become more slender as a result. The collar of the blouse on the left (from the beholder's viewpoint) was also changed during the course of the work; it originally continued through, but was subsequently turned forward, apparently to create a stronger spatial effect. The woman's right eye was shifted slightly upward. In the forehead, wavy locks of hair appear to have been reserved but at a later stage covered over as a result of which the forehead became higher. The hairline could have been situated as in the *Saskia as Flora* in Dresden **181**, where the trailing strands of hair are clearly seen as well as an ornament just above the hairline. In the X-ray image of the present painting a series of light dots is seen precisely there, which could well have originally belonged to some ornament. The way in which the nose stands out below the nasal bone as predominantly darker is rather remarkable. It seems as though this passage in its entirety was wiped from the wet paint and subsequently reconstructed anew with less radio-absorbent paint. A similar wipe seems to have been applied in the area of the mouth and from the chin upwards along the jawbone.

Something similar happened with the clothing. From the neutron autoradiogram, in which the image is mainly dominated by copper-containing (i.e. greenish or bluish) paint, it is evident that clearly delineated, 1.5 cm. wide, vertical stripes were originally introduced on the bodice (**fig. 2**). To the right, this pattern of decorative stripes is interrupted where a long lock of hair now hangs over the woman's left shoulder. Copper-containing paint is also used in the shawl hanging over the woman's shoulder. This shawl lies in wide folds over her right shoulder and over her right upper arm, which was originally perhaps lifted further upward, and is held by the woman with her visible hand. The light-bluish and greenish paint shows through in these places. This is also evident in the paint relief.

One wonders therefore whether the clothing on her right shoulder and on the bodice was not only more clearly indicated but also lighter in tone, perhaps even indicating that these parts were lit by the light falling on the figure from the left. The same applies to the background, which, above and to the right of the woman, must have been lighter than it is at present. These observations are significant when it comes to judging the painting in its present condition, since one may infer from them with a fair degree of certainty that the light/shadow and spatial relations in the painting must have been far livelier than is now the case. Moreover, one can assume that the painting originally was more richly coloured and, specifically in the left of the painting, of a cooler hue. The sleeve on the right, on the contrary, is still warm red, painted with red lake, with highlights on the folded material. In this connection, it is important to note that in 1644 (cf. the *Christ and the woman taken in adultery* **196**), Rembrandt was experimenting with a greater richness of colours. It may be that this period of exploration actually began during work on the present painting. During our assessment of the painting in 2011, we found with the aid of a microscope that the brown paint covering an underlying blue paint in the bodice shows a network of shrinkage cracks, indicating that this layer may have been applied by a later hand. Was the brown tone thus deliberately added to make the painting conform more to the long-held idea of a 'Rembrandtesque' tonality? This could also have been the occasion when the shawl over the woman's right shoulder was overpainted.

Given the complexity of its genesis, it is clear that this painting cannot have been painted by Samuel van Hoogstraten or any of the

Fig. 2. Neutron Activation image showing copper in the black areas.

young members of Rembrandt's circle or workshop. Moreover, the execution of such details as the necklace and breast ornament (with the somewhat angular contours of the different elements constituting the necklace), the richness and the combination of energy and precision with which the paint is handled in these passages are comparable with similarly detailed passages in Rembrandt's work from the same period, for instance, in the so-called 'Maria Trip' **184b**. The same holds for the way the facial details and the folds of the blouse collar and sleeve have been realized. In short, there are sufficient reasons to retract all reservations concerning the attribution of the present painting to Rembrandt.

In the text devoted to the *Old Man* in Woburn Abbey **192**, it is suggested that that painting and the present one could have been pendants (perhaps depicting Boaz and Ruth (Ruth 2-4). Far less likely, they could depict Judah and Tamar (Genesis 38: 1-30).

194 Rembrandt, **Sarah waiting for Tobias**, *c.* 1643, canvas on panel 81.2 x 67.9 cm. Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland. HdG 305; Br. 110; Bauch 266; Gerson 227; Br./Gerson 110; Tümpel 23; see also Schwartz 1984 figs. 264 and 265 and accompanying captions and texts; *M/W* cat. 36; Bl. cat. 14; *R. Women* p. 100
Inscription: ‹*Rembra/f.164.*›. (see below) The remains of a signature can be made out on the sheet hanging down in the left-hand corner of this painting: < Rembra/f 164. >. This passage in the painting is rather badly abraded and shows considerable loss of bits of ground covered with paint. Only rudiments of the letters have been preserved, executed in dark brown, which renders any judgment of their authenticity virtually impossible. The last cipher stood exactly where the underlying paint and ground layers have disappeared completely. The abrupt termination of the inscription at the letter *a* – without a trace of the missing letters < *ndt* > to be seen – could mean that the signature was, as it were, cut off by a fold in the sheet. The oblique placing of the inscription suggests an 'illusionistic' signature – that is, not so much a signature *on* the painting as an inscription that is *part of* the (*trompe l'oeil*) image. We find a similar solution, also on a bed, in *Jacob's blessing* **245** in Kassel (see also the discussion of Rembrandt's illusionistic signatures in Note **259**).

The painting dealt with in this Note was for a long time beset by questions, particularly as to the meaning of the image and the associated question of whether a specific individual from Rembrandt's circle was portrayed here. The painting's date was – and still is – a further point of discussion. Because for such a long time the dominant tendency was to relate Rembrandt's works to his biography wherever possible (see pp. 6/7), it is little wonder that the main concern in earlier discussions was the possible identification of the model used; and because the last cipher of the date < *164.* > is missing, there were several possible choices. It was thought that the painting could just as well have originated in 1641 as in the mid- or even late '40s. Thus, Saskia van Uylenburgh, Geertje Dircks and Hendrickje Stoffels have all been considered for a possible identification of the woman portrayed.

Eventually, in 1967 when this dominance of biography in all discussion of Rembrandt's oeuvre had begun to seem less compelling, an alternative avenue of interpretation was proposed by Christian Tümpel (Tümpel 1967 no. 21, idem 1986/93 pp. 250-253), who related the painting to a work by Rembrandt's second master, Pieter Lastman (**fig. 1**). In the latter painting a woman is seen leaning out of her bed with a very similarly intent look. In Lastman's painting, however, it is also clearly evident what she is looking at: she sees a man who is burning something and an angel fighting a demon. It was clear to Tümpel who the woman was: Sarah from the Old Testament Apocryphal Book of Tobit. Sarah had previously lost seven husbands on their first wedding night at the hands of a deadly demon. When she subsequently married Tobias, son of Tobit, the angel Gabriel told Tobias how to defeat this demon, by creating smoke through the ritual burning of the heart and liver of a fish together with incense.

> **Tobit 8: 1-3** 'When they had finished eating, they escorted Tobias in to her. As he went he remembered the words of Raphael, and he took the live ashes of incense and put the heart and liver of the fish upon them and made a smoke. And when the demon smelled the odor he fled to the remotest parts of Egypt, and the angel bound him.'

Fig. 1. P. Lastman, *The wedding night of Tobias and Sara*, 1611, panel 42 x 57 cm. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts.

Because Lastman's painting provides the only key to Tümpel's interpretation of the identity of the woman in Rembrandt's painting, this ingenious hypothesis has so far not been widely accepted. Curiously, the possible function of the painting has never been raised in this discussion. To get some insight on that point, it was found useful to look into the painting's 'archaeology'. In the following, therefore, attention is paid to the unusual support on which the work was painted.

The work under consideration here is painted on a canvas support, which is rounded above and comprises two different pieces of prepared canvas (**fig. 2**): a larger piece of linen to whose right side is attached a narrower strip, which is *c.* 2 cm wider at the bottom than at the top. The seam between the two pieces of canvas therefore runs somewhat obliquely. It roughly follows the left border of the outermost fold of the curtain held back by the woman. The linen of the two pieces of canvas comes from two different bolts. From the appearance of cusping one may infer that both

pieces come from canvases that had already been stretched and primed before fragments from them were fitted together by fastening them side by side on a rigid support with a view to this painting. In the narrow strip the weave shows clearly pronounced cusps directed toward the left. It was cut obliquely from an already stretched and prepared piece of painter's canvas. The fact that the slanting seam joining the two pieces of linen follows the course of the last fold of the hanging part of the painted curtain would seem to be a deliberate decision so as to disturb the image as little as possible. Along both left and right edges of this composite canvas there is a series of holes, which seem to be nail holes rather than the string holes made in the traditional stretching of a painter's canvas (see *Corpus* II pp. 31-37; *Painter at Work* pp. 111-123). (They, or at least some of them, are conspicuously large and round – a shape that could be due to the corrosion of iron nails.) Therefore, the composite canvas that had been created must have been nailed and stuck to a wooden panel.

The composite canvas which had been thus fixed on to a panel was removed from it in *c.* 1929 by Martin de Wild, a Dutch restorer mainly active in England and Scotland. The pattern of damage and cracks in the ground and paint layers that one sees in the X-radiograph (**fig. 2**) allows one to infer the nature of the panel. It consisted of a number of vertical planks of unequal width, with wide gaps between them: from left to right, widths of 20.5, 12, 10, 9 and 18 cm (one or two of these putative joint between planks may perhaps in fact be splits in wider planks). At the top, a horizontal plank was fixed above the vertical planks and then rounded off. (This rounding actually extends to include the top edge of the outermost vertical planks). The most plausible explanation for this somewhat primitive wooden construction is that it was a small door which from the very beginning had splits in it, and that by glueing

Fig. 3. Jean-Etienne Liotard (1702-1790), *Portrait of the collector François Tronchin* with **194** on an easel. 1757 pastel on parchment, 38.1 x 46 cm. Cleveland, The Cleveland Museum of Art.

pieces of canvas across it was possible to obtain a closed surface suitable for a painting. The nature of the life-size image makes it likely that it was a painted decoration on an existing door, and that what we have is a *trompe l'oeil* box-bed scene on the door of an actual box-bed.

It is known that the doors of box-beds were sometimes painted (cf. Michel M. Bakker, 'A painted panel discovered in the house at Warmoestraat 90', *Amstelodanum* 78, January/February 1991 pp. 1-10). It was not unusual in Rembrandt's time to decorate doors of rooms or cupboards or other objects of furniture with *trompe l'oeil* paintings. We know that Rembrandt's pupil Samuel van Hoogstraten (who was probably apprenticed to Rembrandt at the time this painting originated) later painted not only various objects in his house but also canvases and panels for free-standing paintings in this same deceptive manner (Houbraken II pp. 157-158).

There is a further reason why we can be certain that this is not a normal painting but rather a painted thin wooden plate (which may have been a small door) covered with painter's linen. In a pastel by J. E. Liotard from 1757 the present painting is shown on a painter's easel beside the then owner, François Tronchin, and it is depicted as a thin, flat plate without frame (**fig. 3**) (Schwartz 1984 p. 240). In a transcription of the catalogue of Tronchin's collection it is described as being 'marouflé' (i.e. linen stuck on a wooden panel). If it had served the function of a *trompe l'oeil*, Tümpel's interpretation of the painting is plausible, because it would mean that the painting was not intended for the open market but was from the outset intended for a domestic interior, whose owner may very well have known the story of Sarah and Tobias. One intriguing possibility is that the door was part of the interior decoration of Rembrandt's own house. Arguing against that possibility, however, there is the fact that the painting is signed in Rembrandt's familiar manner (despite the abrasion mentioned above).

In the Plates section of this book the painting is confronted with the revision of the figure of Danae **149**, painted in or before 1643. One has the impression from this comparison that the *Danae* represents a further development of Rembrandt's mastery in the representation of the life-size female nude – and that the revision of the *Danae* can perhaps even be considered a step in this direction consciously taken after the present painting. With these considerations in mind,

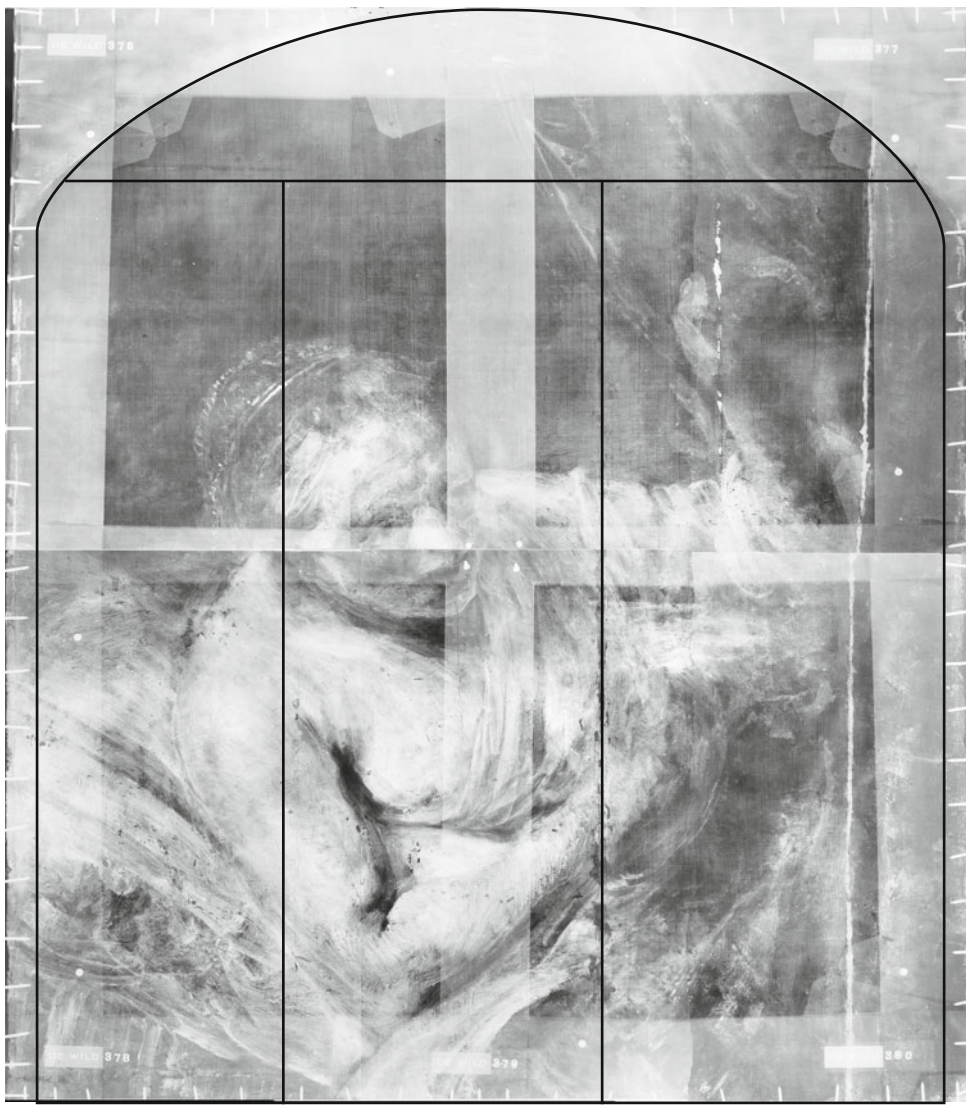


Fig. 2. X-ray of **194**. The joints in the composite panel are indicated by black lines.

it is suggested here that the present painting originated around 1641/43.

* **195** Rembrandt, **Portrait of a man with a steel gorget**, 1644, canvas 94.3 x 77.8 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 758; Br. 234; Bauch 393; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 234 (as an 18th-century imitation); Tümpel -; see also Von Sonnenburg in *R. not R. I* pp. 114-117 (as from the circle of Rembrandt (Govaert Flinck)); Liedtke in *R. not R. II* pp. 100-103 (as by a follower of Rembrandt (possibly Van den Eeckhout)); Liedtke 2007 pp. 724-727 (as presumably by Flinck or Van den Eeckhout).

Inscription: in the lower right background ‹*Rembrandt.f. / 1644*›

After analyzing the literature and oral comments of visiting art historians regarding this painting Walter Liedtke came to the following conclusion:

> 'There is now general agreement among scholars that this canvas (…) was painted by someone in Rembrandt's immediate circle between about 1643 and about 1650. The most plausible attributions have been to Govert Flinck and to Gerbrand van den Eeckhout .' (Liedtke 2007 p. 724).

Until Gerson disattributed this painting there had been no dissent from the consensus over Rembrandt's authorship. Gerson abruptly destroyed this unanimity; he saw in it an 18th-century imitation but gave no further elucidation. On the basis of an investigation of the pigments carried out in *c.* 1994, Von Sonnenburg came to the conclusion that the painting must have originated in the 17th century. However, he thought it was not painted by Rembrandt, but by Govaert Flinck (*R. not R. I* no. 26). Liedtke, endorsing Von Sonnenburg's disattribution, characterized both the latter's attribution of the painting to Flinck and his own preferred attribution to Van den Eeckhout as 'plausible' (*R. not R. II* no. 26) – a demonstration of just how confused the art historical situation of this painting has now become (Liedtke 2007 p. 724) – all the more if one takes the date of 1644 on the painting at face value, since Flinck as well as Van den Eeckhout had left Rembrandt's workshop for *c.* eight resp. *c.* five years at that time.

A firm point of reference was eventually provided by the research of Karin Groen on the grounds applied to the canvases and panels of Rembrandt and other members of his workshop, and of their Amsterdam contemporaries. She found that the painting must have originated in Rembrandt's workshop, since the canvas was prepared with a quartz ground, the type of ground which she encountered only with works by Rembrandt and works which, on stylistic grounds, may be thought to have originated in his workshop (Groen in *Corpus* IV Table IV p. 627). This excludes the option suggested by Gerson, that we are dealing here with an 18th-century imitation; it also means that the views of Von Sonnenburg and Liedtke mentioned above – viz. that it could be a work executed by one of Rembrandt's former pupils after establishing their own studios – can be regarded as unlikely: neither Flinck nor Eekhout used these grounds on their canvases after they left Rembrandt's studio (see Groen, *Corpus* IV p. 676 Table VII). We may now safely assume that the painting must have been painted, if not by Rembrandt himself, at least under his supervision in his workshop.

Corroborative evidence for this is provided by the signature in the background below left. Gerson described this inscription in 1969 as a 'faked signature', a verdict that can hardly be taken seriously, since the inscription was (and still is) almost obscured beneath a layer of thick, old varnish that makes it very difficult to see. It is true that, with the exhibition *Rembrandt/Not Rembrandt* in view, the varnish was removed from the most vital parts of the painting in *c.* 1994, but the varnish layer over the signature, described as 'very thick', was left intact. This may well have been because Gerson had rejected it as false. The most clearly legible part of the inscription is the date <*1644*>. The form, the way of writing and mutual relations of the four delicately brushed ciphers are certainly such as to keep an attribution to Rembrandt an open possibility. Further IRR investigation of the inscription <*Rembrandt.f* > – preferably after removing the varnish in this area – may contribute to a more decisive reading. A cross-section of a paint sample in this area should be analyzed to see whether the signature is directly applied on to the underlying paint.

The low placing of the figure in the picture plane may have played a role in the dismissive judgment of Gerson and more recent investigators. As a result, this *mise-en-toile* differs from Rembrandt's male portraits from before 1644. However, the way the canvas was trimmed by later hands makes it risky to accept the figure's position in the canvas as the original one. The stretcher marks in the fabric shown in the X-ray image reveal that the painting was once larger; the bottom edge must once have begun some 10 cm lower. At the top, where the canvas was very roughly cut, a piece may also be missing (see *R. not R. I* p. 115, showing the painting in partly stripped condition). A further indication that the painting is incomplete below is the fact that the fingertips of the dangling gloves are cut off. In addition to this, the large fold of the cloak hanging over the man's forearm is incomplete in a way, giving the impression that it visually originally continued at least 10 cm further below. The present painting was thus originally less square-ish in its proportions, providing the sitter more space both above and below. One may therefore assume that the placing of the figure in the picture plane was originally more in accordance with the composition for three-quarter length portraits that was usual in Rembrandt's workshop (see Br. 222-224 and 265).

Perhaps those who rejected the painting's attribution to Rembrandt considered the man's gesture to be unlike the master. Of course, Rembrandt had portrayed men gesturing toward the beholder with their right hand, as in 1637 *Eleazar Swalmius* **156**, in 1641 *Cornelis Anslo and his wife* **183** and in 1646 in the etched (posthumous) portrait of *Johannes Sylvius* (B. 280), but these were all clergymen with whom a demonstrative gesture could be considered an attribute of their profession. The same is also true *mutatis mutandis* for the gesture made by Captain Frans Banninck Cocq in the *Night Watch*, depicted in the act of giving an order to his lieutenant. But in the following year, and a year before the origin of the present painting (if we trust the inscribed date 1644, and as argued above, there is reason to do so), two portraits of men were painted in Rembrandt's workshop, both dated 1643, in which the subjects are portrayed making conspicuous gestures. In the case of *The Falconer* **191a**, the subject is making a pointing gesture, and in the other, the so-called *Admiral* (see **191a** fig. 8) the man makes a gesture with the left hand very like the gesture of the man portrayed in the present painting. Perhaps *The Admiral* is (partly or entirely) executed by someone other than Rembrandt in the master's workshop – it is also painted on a quartz ground. It may well be signed by Rembrandt himself, and on this basis one can assume that Rembrandt, perhaps

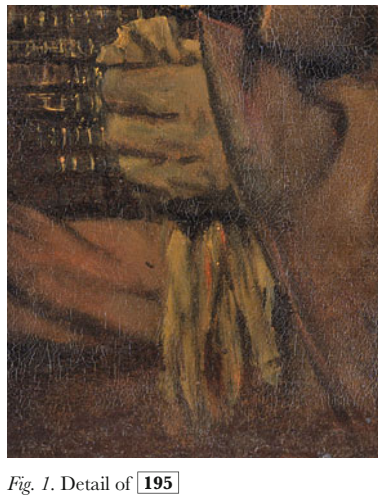


Fig. 1. Detail of **195**

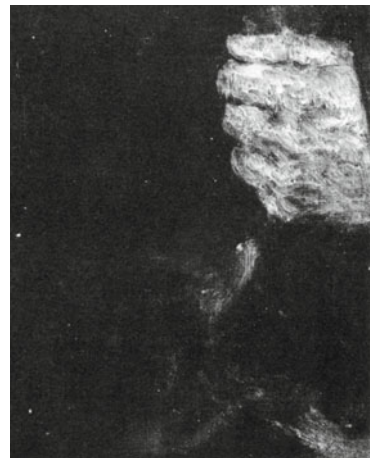


Fig. 2. X-ray of fig. 1, reproduced after an incomplete radiographic image.

in agreement with the sitter, conceived this lively gesture of his models. The gesture of the man in the present painting cannot therefore be seen as so anomalous that it could justify the rejection of the work as a possible Rembrandt. Moreover, it should be added that the sitter's proper left hand, according to the X-radiograph, was originally done in light paint (**fig. 1**). Only in a later stage of the work did the painter change the hand so that it wears a glove and holds the other glove. The hands played an important role in Rembrandt's male portraits from these years, as is confirmed by an unfinished man's portrait from 1644 attributed to Rembrandt, overpainted by a pupil with a *tronie* in the same year (Br. 235), in which the two hands are shown in action (see **191** figs. 2 and 3).

The fact that the man is depicted with his face turned to the light is perhaps one of the factors that either consciously or unconsciously influenced the widely assumed disattribution of the painting from Rembrandt once Gerson had pronounced his negative verdict. This almost frontal lighting of the face is normal with Rembrandt's portraits of women and with his occasional portraits of bachelors **71**, **115** but not with married men. Because of the way in which, with pendant couples, the man is usually shown turned toward the woman, the right half of his face (with the conventional lighting from above, front left) is usually more shadowed than the man's face in the present painting. It is true that this manner of lighting of the face – whether he was portrayed with the face fully lit – could also depend on the capacity in which a man was portrayed (see, for example, the 1631 *Portrait of a man at a writing desk, possibly Jacob Bruyningh* **60**). Nevertheless, it remains such a rarity that in the case of the present painting it could well have played a role in the negative judgment of its authenticity.

When we scrutinize the execution of the painting, we find that the handling of the paint is in many respects typical of Rembrandt: half drawing, half painting, with a free rhythm and above all a specific kind of 'lack of precision' coupled with an effective suggestiveness. For example, there is the white collar with the sweeping line arriving from behind and its freely indicated decorative edge; or the gleam on the gorget, and the pendant dangling on the chain. The chain is typical with its rhythmic-seeming sequence of lead-tin-yellow, sometimes little white glints, apparently governed by chance, on a freely painted underpainting executed in ochre: features which together determine the suggestion of a golden chain and pendant. Typical too is the manner of painting of the freely placed vertical splits in the jacket – not so much descriptive as suggestive; and the splendid way the hand is painted, with few means, in mainly thick paint and with a convincing foreshortening, done with evident ease and concentration. The similarly thickly painted light reflected against the ball of the thumb and the underside of the distal phalanx of the thumb; the reddish and locally carmine indications of the places where the fingers join the palm of the hand; the highlights on the finger tips (relating to the high light on the nose) where these convincingly project into space; the almost casually introduced play of cool and warm tones in the colour scheme of the hand; and the simply sketched little white cuff which contributes in its turn to the effects of space and light. The X-radiograph of the hand testifies to the sovereignty with which this foreshortened hand, so difficult to represent in this position, is rendered (see the Plate opposite Plate **195**).

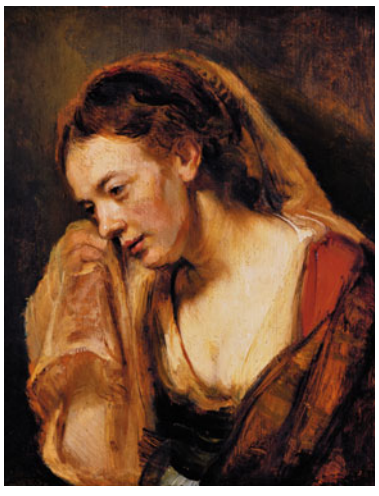
Moreover, there are the simply rendered folds in the cloak over the shoulder and round the midriff, with a light on the edge of the cloak (next to the chain) done in a grazing, half-broken red so typical of Rembrandt. One sees the simple, lightly bent contour of the fold, such as that running over the back of the gloved hand, and the simple contour left along the outstretched arm with the black sleeve, and to our right, conspicuously undulating on the opposite shoulder. On both sides there is a loose demarcation from the background that is partly determined by chance. These and many other specific variations in the handling of the paint, always in the service of the intended illusion, plus the way the traces of the painter's moving brush are left unconcernedly and everywhere visible, convince this author that this is an autograph work by Rembrandt.

196 Rembrandt, **Christ and the woman taken in adultery**, 1644, panel 83.8 x 65.4 cm. London, National Gallery. HdG 104; Br. 566; Bauch 72; Gerson 208; Br./Gerson 566; Tümpel 63; ***Corpus* V 3**; see also Brown 1991 pp. 328-330; *Art in the Making II* no. 10.
Inscription: at the lower right, very small in dark paint ‹*Rembrandt f 1644*›

John 8: 2-8 'Now early in the morning He came again into the temple, and all the people came to Him; and He sat down and taught them. Then the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. And when they had set her in the midst, they said to Him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?" This they said, testing Him, that they might have *something* of which to accuse Him. But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with *His* finger, as though He did not hear. So when they continued asking Him, He raised Himself up and said to them, "He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first." And again He stooped down and wrote on the ground.'

External evidence supporting the painting's authenticity is so strong that no doubt can remain (see Sumowski in *Neue Beiträge* p. 93; *Corpus* V 3). Such instances, certainly in Rembrandt's production of the 1640s, are extremely welcome because they make it possible to delineate the artistic range of his autograph oeuvre with greater accuracy (see also Chapter I p. 12).

197 Rembrandt, **A weeping woman** (oil sketch in preparation for **196**), *c.* 1644, panel 21.3 x 16.8 cm. Detroit, Institute of Arts. HdG 717A; Br. 366; Bauch -; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 366 (in the style of Gerbrand van den Eeckhout); Tümpel -; ***Corpus* V 3 pp. 366-368** (as Rembrandt); see also Detroit 2004 no. 73.
Inscription: none



The connection between the *Christ and the woman taken in adultery* and a small panel with a weeping woman in Detroit was first discussed by MacLaren as early as 1960 (MacLaren 1960 no. 45). Bredius, in his survey of Rembrandt's oeuvre, thought the painting was 'probably a preparatory study for a Lamentation'.

While Bredius took it to be an autograph work by Rembrandt, MacLaren saw 'what seems more probably a later derivation from **196** by another hand'. Gerson, who judged that 'it seems to be a rather poor painting in the style of Gerbrand van den Eeckhout' (Br./Gerson 366). Bruyn included the Detroit painting in the category of small *tronies* that erroneously had long been considered preparatory studies from Rembrandt's hand (Bruyn in *M/W I*, p. 79). The whereabouts of most of these works, including such paintings as Br. 241, 244, 248 and 376 are unknown. Bruyn believed that they should all now be disattributed from Rembrandt – if only because they all appeared to be by different hands.

Implicit in this claim is a rejection of the idea that Rembrandt

made preliminary oil studies for figures in history pieces or other paintings. This categorical denial has proven rash, however, since among Rembrandt's works there are paintings which have in the meantime been accepted as autograph works and are sketches that can be in some way or another linked to his history pieces and other works: **20**, **44**, **46**, **82**, **161**, **182**, **215**, **217**, **260**, **271**, **285**, **288**, **296**, **309**, **310**. It is necessary therefore, that the paintings which Bruyn disattributed as a group should be investigated, one by one, for the possibility that they may well have served as preliminary studies. This is very probably the case with the present painting.

To begin with, it is scarcely imaginable that a pupil could have based himself on the woman in *The woman taken in adultery* **196**. One would then have to accept that this hypothetical pupil had drastically enlarged (by a factor of four) the minuscule figure of the adulterous woman, and in so doing had augmented the relatively few details of the London woman, whose summarily executed costume is closed to the necklace, with partially exposed breasts and shoulders that are executed in a manner that reveals a sovereign handling of the paint.

In my view, the far more likely option is to consider the present painting as a preliminary study, painted from the life, for the woman in the London painting. Finally, a similar painting was sold under Rembrandt's own name, for as early as 1661 it was described in the estate of Willem van Campen (a cousin once removed from the painter and architect Jacob van Campen) in Amsterdam as 'een crijtend vroutgen van Rembrandt' (a weeping woman by Rembrandt) (*Doc.* 1661/11).

198 Rembrandt, **The Holy Family with angels**, 1645, canvas 117 x 91 cm. St. Petersburg, Hermitage. HdG 94; Br. 570; Bauch 73; Gerson 211; Br./Gerson 570; Tümpel 65; ***Corpus* V 4**; see also *Soviet Museums* no. 16.
Inscription: in the left bottom ‹*Rembrandt.f.1645*›

One can imagine that for Rembrandt and the art-lovers of his time the most important feature of this painting must have been the improbable complexity of the light. Rembrandt demonstrates here the intricate and differentiated effects of three light sources – the heavenly light from above left, the light that falls on Joseph's workbench from an invisible window to the right and the fire on the ground that illuminates the foot warmer at Mary's feet and the underside of the mantelpiece above. Nineteenth-century art-lovers, however, looked at this painting very differently. It was perhaps with this picture in mind that Karl Marx (1818-1883) wrote: 'Rembrandt paints the mother of God as a Dutch farmer's wife'. And J.W. Goethe (1749-1832) expressed himself similarly. Later, the French art-lover Theophile Thoré (1807-1869), propagandist for Dutch 17th-century art, would write of 'the art of Rembrandt and the Hollanders, it is a very simple art for people.'

Anyone who is aware of the fact that Rembrandt was a pioneer in the field of complex light effects – which, moreover, played an essential role in the convincing depiction of space without the help of perspectival cues – will realize that a painting such as this must have been made for a sophisticated public, specifically art-lovers for whom the rendering of complex light effects was understood as an extreme pictorial challenge.

In the present painting, numerous instances of reflected light are found in areas depicting illuminated skin, including the heads and hands of Mary and the Child and the faces and nude bodies of the angels. This use of light cast into shadows by a neighbouring object is crucial to the effect of light and space and determines the mood of the scene. Thus, the light that falls on the book is reflected up into the shadows of the neck and cheek of Mary. Reflected light helps define details in the face of the Child and also plays a leading role in the angelic apparition. The foremost angel is primarily lit by the powerful heavenly light streaming in from the upper left. In turn, the illuminated areas of this angel bounce the light up, as it were, onto the face of the angel at the left, engulfed in shadow, so that it glows softly. The full-length angel further to the left shares the light cast up by the foremost angel. Such effects are described by Samuel van Hoogstraten in his definition of reflected light:

> *'Reflection is actually a rebounding of the light from all lit things, but in art we speak only of reflection, the secondary illumination, which falls in the shadow.'* (SvH p. 262).

In his attempt to quantify a rationalisation of the characteristics of reflected light, Van Hoogstraten arrives at the calculation that the power of reflected light should be half that of the actual light (SvH p. 267; see also *Corpus* V p. 77).

That Rembrandt was already noted in his time for his skill in the application of reflections is clear from Van Hoogstraten's words following the above statement:

> *'Our Rembrandt has acquitted himself wondrously in reflections, yes it would appear that the election to cast back some of the light was his true element …'* (*Corpus* V pp. 73-76).

This 'election' is more manifest in this painting than in almost any of his other works.

In singling out Rembrandt's use of reflections, Van Hoogstraten, who trained with Rembrandt between *c.* 1642 and *c.* 1648, may well have been directly inspired by the present painting. Following on from this quoted passage, however, Hoogstraten criticizes his master by remarking that Rembrandt did not keep the 'rules of art'. He counted him among those who *'rely solely on their eye and their own experience'*.

It seems that Van Hoogstraten is here judging his former master in retrospect according to a numerical system for 'calculating' different light intensities, that he developed after his apprenticeship with Rembrandt and eventually published in his treatise on the art of painting in 1678 (see *Corpus* V p. 76).

199 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait with beret and red cloak**, *c.* 1645/1648, panel 73.5 x 59.6 cm (measurements of the painting in its present form including an added strip on the left which is not shown in the plate). Karlsruhe, Staatliche Kunsthalle. HdG 547; Br. 38; Bauch 320; Gerson 262; Br./Gerson 38; Tümpel A70 (as workshop); ***Corpus* IV 5** and **Chapter III pp. 255-259**.
Inscription: on the lower right in the background <*Rem(b)*>

This is Rembrandt's only known painted self-portrait from between 1642 and '52. It is also the only one since 1630 in which he presents himself without moustache and goatee beard, and in which he painted his mouth in such an unusually sensitive manner. As so often, for this self-portrait he used a previously used panel – this time possibly obtained from another workshop – bearing a man's portrait, although whether or not this underlying painting was finished is unclear. (Used panels could well have been cheaper to purchase than new ones.) The large right ear of the earlier portrait of a man shows through in the hair to the left of Rembrandt's ear. The format of the painting has been altered several times: it was changed to oval, but before this change a plank was adhered to the left side of the rectangular panel – possibly to avoid too much of the sitter's body being cut off and to prevent the head being too close to the edge of the painting. The result was that the figure was pushed to the vertical axis of the oval (**fig. 1**). Subsequently pieces were added to the (enlarged) oval panel to make it rectangular again, at the same time maintaining this position of the figure near the mid-axis of the composition. Perhaps it was this transformation of the composition (and the lack of moustache and goatee?) which caused Tümpel to doubt the painting's authenticity. As argued in *Corpus* IV 5 and p. 259, the present author is entirely convinced of the authenticity of this remarkable self-portrait.

Fig. 1. **199** in its present, enlarged and oval format.

200 Rembrandt, **Girl leaning on a stone window sill**, 1645, canvas 81.6 x 66 cm. London, Dulwich Picture Gallery. HdG 327; Br. 368; Bauch 378; Gerson 228; Br./Gerson 368; Tümpel 59; see also Dulwich 1993; Roscam Abbing 1999 p. 89; *R. Women* no. 104; M. de Winkel in Berlin 2006, no. 44.
Inscription: on the uppermost block-shaped object in the right-hand foreground ‹Rembrandt ft./1645›

There are just a few paintings by Rembrandt over which texts have survived that give us an impression of how people in the 17th century observed or evaluated them. But it is not always certain that these witnesses are reliable; one cannot exclude the possibility that a degree of mythologizing had already begun quite early on – perhaps even during Rembrandt's lifetime. This is certainly true of the painting under consideration here. The following story related by a French connoisseur and collector, Roger de Piles, was recorded in two versions, the first of which, from 1708, reads:

> '*Rembrandt, for instance, amused himself one day by painting the portrait of his serving-maid. He then wanted to place it in the window, so that passers-by would think that she was really there. It worked, for the deception was only discovered several days later. […] When I was staying in Holland, I was curious to see this portrait. I was struck by the beautiful brushwork and great power; I bought it and to this day it has an important place in my collection.*'

While De Piles had travelled in the Netherlands as a spy, he was able to pose (not without justification) as an art-lover and collector. During this time he must have discussed the art of painting with Dutch connoisseurs and heard stories about Rembrandt, whose works he greatly admired and avidly collected. In the second version of this anecdote from 1715 De Piles (rightly) emphasizes the fact that it was Rembrandt's ambition to include living people in his *trompe-l'oeil* paintings:

> *'Rembrandt knew very well that in the art of painting it was not difficult to mislead the eye by painting immobile and dead objects. And because he was not satisfied with this rather general mastery, he did his very best to create an optical illusion of living people. Among other things, he proved he could do this with a portrait of his serving-maid, which he hung in his window so that the painted canvas filled the entire window opening. Everyone who saw it was taken in, until, after it had hung there several days, everyone realized they had been fooled because the girl's attitude remained unchanged. Today this work is in my collection.'* (Roscam Abbing 1999 p. 89).

It was long thought that these two versions of the same anecdote concerned **220**. until Roscam Abbing showed incontrovertibly that the story relates to the present painting (Roscam Abbing 1999 pp. 93-94). It is tempting to ignore such a story as an old wives' tale based on anecdotes over examples of deceptive illusions of reality in painting, a *topos* already current in the writings of classical antiquity (Kris/Kurz 1934). But it should perhaps be pointed out that from the end of the '30s until well into the '40s, Rembrandt was occupied with painting *trompe-l'oeils* which included live figures (see, for instance, **18b**, **187a/b**. Moreover, Samuel van Hoogstraten and Carel Fabritius, pupils from this period in which the present painting originated, were both preoccupied later in their careers with painting *trompe-l'oeils* with live figures or animals, Fabritius' *Goldfinch*, for instance, comes to mind.

One might object that the present painting is not a typical *trompe-l'oeil*, as the setting in which the figure is placed is not shown parallel with the picture plane. In a *trompe-l'oeil* executed strictly according to the rules, the opening in which the girl appears and the window-sill on which she leans should be represented parallel to the picture plane. The girl would then have to be depicted frontally. To counter this objection, it could be argued that the woman leaning out of her box-bed in **194**, and the opening from which she leans out, are shown in a setting similarly oblique to the picture plane – and that painting is certainly a *trompe-l'oeil*.

201 Rembrandt and pupil, **Tobit and Anna**, 1645, mahogany panel 20 x 27 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 64; Br. 514; Bauch 26; Gerson 209; Br./Gerson 514; Tümpel 20*(not entirely convinced of its authenticity); ***Corpus* V 7**; see also Berlin 2006 no. 49.
Inscription: on the dais on which the bed stands ‹*Rembrandt. f 1645*›

This work, like Rembrandt's early painting with the same subject **12** depicts a scene from the Old Testament Apocryphal book of Tobit, where the blind, impoverished Tobit questions the provenance of the kid that Anna has brought him (see Note **12** for the relevant text: Tobit 2:11 – 3:1-2).

202 Rembrandt and (mainly) pupil, **Joseph's dream in the stable at Bethlehem**, 1645, mahogany panel 20.7 x 27.8 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 85; Br. 569; Bauch 76; Gerson 210; Br./Gerson 569; Tümpel 64 (as doubtful); ***Corpus* V 8**; see also Berlin 2006 no. 48.
Inscription: at the bottom on the board at Mary's feat <*Rembrandt f 1645*>

> **Matthew 2: 13** 'Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him."'

This small painting **201** and the obviously closely related small painting with *Joseph's dream* **202**, both executed on same-sized mahogany panels, present the art historian with a puzzle. There are parts – specifically the graphically sketched monochrome passages – which would seem to betray the hand of Rembrandt. But in the (mainly light) passages executed in pastose paint they are much more primitive in quality and cruder in execution than one would expect of Rembrandt. Compare, for example, the *Abraham and the angels* **208** which is unquestionably entirely by Rembrandt. However, infrared (*Corpus* V 7 fig. 3 and *Corpus* V 8 fig. 3) and X-radiographic images (**figs. 1** and **2**) show that the parts of the image covered by those pastose passages in the two paintings were originally of more complex design in their details.

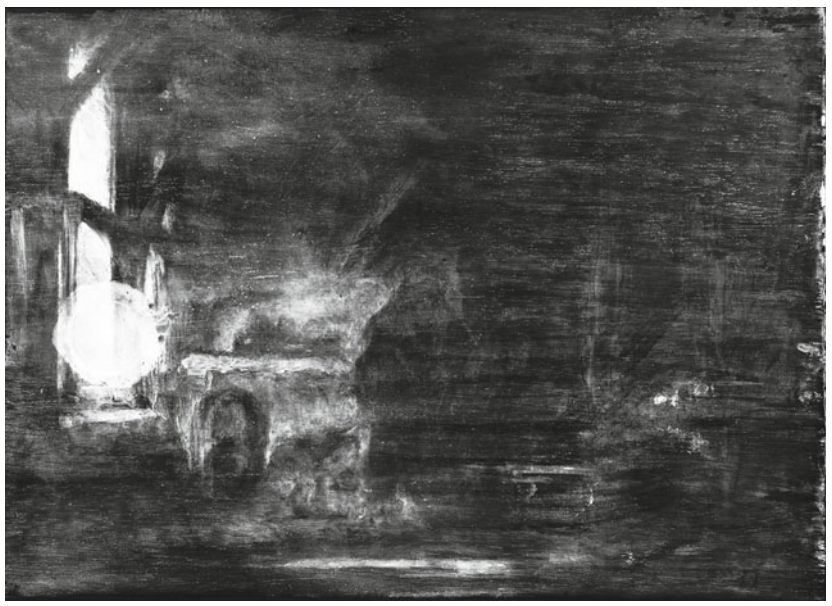


Fig. 1. X-ray of **201**. The whitish round form to the left in the X-radiograph is caused by a radio-absorbent wax seal on the back of the panel (see also **fig. 2**).

Fig. 2 . X-ray of **202**

As a possible explanation for these discrepancies in quality within each of these two paintings it was proposed in *Corpus* V 8 that these works were assignments given to one or two different pupils, who were expected to create a convincing illusion of light and colour over sketches provided by Rembrandt.

In the *Joseph's dream* it would have been a question of the supernatural light radiating from the angel and of the heavenly light from above (see also Note **208**). The pupil (or whoever it was) has overpainted virtually the whole of the image except for the figure of the sleeping Joseph sketched in a complicated pose.

In the case of the *Tobit and Anna* this same – or another – pupil was apparently asked to accomplish 'room light' (see also **85**, **86** etc.) in a work where Rembrandt had already painted the window and the sketch of the interior with the figures of Tobit and Anna. The inferred pupil has painted lit passages in the vicinity of the window, as a result of which the complex form of a spinning wheel has been replaced by the simple cupboard next to the window (**fig. 1**).

These two cases are not isolated. In the New York *Christ and the Samaritan woman at the well* (Metropolitan Museum, *Corpus* V 24), and a self-portrait in the Washington National Gallery (*Corpus* IV) **6** we believe we have found two further works similarly executed by a pupil on the basis of an initial design provided by the master. This may also be the case with the *Pallas* **253**.

* **203** Rembrandt, **Old man with fur coat**, 1645, canvas 110 x 82 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 364; Br. 236; Bauch 190; Gerson 254; Br./Gerson 236; Tümpel A42 (as from circle of Rembrandt).

Inscription: below left ‹*Rembrandt f. 1645*›. The signature is almost carelessly applied and it appears that the last cipher has been altered, as the 5 is set in a small square which shows up dark under IR radiation. One wonders whether there was first a 4 here.

This painting was always considered to be a work by Rembrandt partly on the basis of the apparently reliable signature. Tümpel, however, in his 1986 Rembrandt monograph, which included his survey of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre, relegated the work to the category of products which issued from Rembrandt's workshop – but without advancing any argument for this disattribution. In the catalogue of the Berlin exhibition *Rembrandt. Genie auf der Suche* (Berlin 2006 no. 41) Tümpel's disattribution was adopted by Katja Kleinert without comment.

It is not entirely surprising that this painting should have been sucked into the whirlpool of reductionist polemic that engulfed Rembrandt's oeuvre. What part, for example, the thick and strongly yellowed varnish played in these negative judgements is in retrospect difficult to ascertain. Certainly, at first sight it seems one of the least impressive paintings from the past Rembrandt canon. Its composition is dull; the effects of light and space might almost be called primitive. Nor is the painting enhanced by the remarkably narrow frame in which the figure is trapped. Within this oppressive frame are suspended three light patches: a half-face with a meagre beard, and two hands. It says a great deal that during the five decades following 1822, the year of its earliest report, its ownership changed every ten years. Evidently no-one became attached to it – and this seems to have remained the case until 1874, when, along with the entire collection of B. Suermondt it ended up in the Königliche Gemäldegalerie in Berlin.

Yet when one tries to look through the varnish one finds several of Rembrandt's familiar delicacies and liberties of execution. For example, in the back of the horizontally held hand the relief of the skin-folds between the knuckles are rendered in a free yet refined manner. The paint remains paint, but the illusion is convincing. The same is true of the way the red sleeve with its white cuff round the wrist is done with elegance, spatially and calligraphically, and with an attractive casualness. In the right hand too, which rests on the arm of the chair, one sees the three-dimensionality of the white

cuff and the graphic quality of the red edge of the sleeve that are so characteristic of Rembrandt. The indication of the fur above this hand demonstrates a Rembrandtesque, rhythmic quality in the relatively unwieldy brushwork. The way in which the forefinger shadows the thumb of this hand, and the nature of the grey traces of the veins of the backs of both hands similarly suggest that Rembrandt is the author of the painting. There is a similar refinement in the face, to be seen both in the more or less grainy *peinture* and in the specific rhythm and three-dimensionality of the individual hairs of the beard. The controlled casualness of the indication of folds, or slashes, in the shirt seen in the shadow below also points to Rembrandt. In short, there is more than enough evidence to insist that this is an authentic Rembrandt from *c.* 1645. As argued below, the fact that the painting does not display the grandeur of a Rembrandt portrait or *tronie* of this scale and ambition is at least partly due to the fact that the painting has been radically reduced in size.

Fig. 1. X-ray of **203**

Fig. 2. Neutron-activation autoradiograph of **203**. The darkest parts showing the phosphorous component of bone-black which may be found in different layers of the painting.

If one wants to bring this painting as a whole to life, if only for the inner eye, X-radiography can in this case, as so often, be useful (**fig. 1**). Firstly, with regard to the narrow frame in which the figure sits, investigation of the canvas shows that clear cusps are visible in the X-radiograph only along the top, extending 11 cm into the weave, whereas on the left, right and bottom sides only vague waves of deformation in the canvas are to be seen. We can safely assume, therefore, that in this case the canvas was considerably larger on each of these three sides, and that at most a narrow strip could be missing above. Given that the warp of the linen runs horizontally, the painting could have been in the region of 140 cm high, a very common standard width for bolts of linen used for large paintings. In this context, it is perhaps of interest to point out that the *Old Man* in Lisbon from the same year is 128 cm high, possibly originally 140 cm.

If the present painting was in fact considerably larger, this would at least account for two of the disturbing factors in this work: the way the figure now sits rather oppressively trapped by its frame; and the fact that, when one pays attention to strength of light, the hands are rather too close to the light intensity on the face – something which also holds for the painting in Lisbon and other paintings that were originally larger figure pieces (see also Note **248a/b**). The painting discussed here would have extended below almost another 30 cm. As with the Lisbon *Old Man* **204**, the figure would then have been shown to below the knees, while our painting, when one takes into account the nature of the cusps, could have been between 10 and 15 cm wider on either side. If the painting was indeed so much larger, this would explain why in the X-radiographic image (**fig. 1**), along the top edge and on the right, various shapes in the background are difficult to make out, shapes which at first sight seem to belong to a hanging curtain drawn up to the right such that a bulging, vertical shape could perhaps have been a kind of oversized baluster. As a result of all this one gets the impression that the painting was much more spacious in its original design and much more interestingly conceived in its background. Perhaps this also provides a context that makes the figure's slight leaning to the left more intelligible; for this is another factor, at first almost imperceptible, that militates against appreciation of this painting. The figure lacks the characteristic stability of a Rembrandt composition. When one compares the painting with its X-ray image significant differences become apparent. The figure was initially placed differently.

One needs to be cautioned against the tendency to think that the relations of light-dark seen in an X-ray image are an accurate reflection of some earlier state of light-dark relations in the painting itself. Moreover, one must take into account that the painter himself has made radical changes – for example, the equalization of the background (cf. Note **261**).

Before the beholder tries to grasp the genesis of a painting that can perchance be read from the X-ray image, he/she must be aware of various features in the X-ray image that have nothing to do with the work executed by the painter on his canvas. Apart from the obvious battens of the stretcher frame, there are also the wedge-shaped pegs hammered into the flexibly constructed wooden joints on both sides of this frame in order to maintain the canvas under tension. One also sees the round wax seal, which shows up white (on the beholder's left) in the middle of the vertical batten and the numerous tacks by which the canvas (and its supporting fabric) is fixed to the edges of the frame. There are other features shown by the X-ray image which can be related to the painting's genesis: the top contour of the man's beret was altered; the shape of his left hand was more accurately defined during the working process; radio-absorbent, originally lighter paint shows up along the contour of his right arm, while also the background that shows light to the immediate right of the figure was not continued above and to the right, suggesting that the bulging form of a drawn-up curtain in the top right corner and other shapes beneath it were reserved along the right edge. It is also conspicuous that the figure was originally shown more symmetrically. This is most clearly seen in the fact that the collar on the left side (from the beholder's viewpoint) was both higher and as wide as on the right side. In the X-ray image it appears that the subject was originally portrayed seated frontally and erect. In the painting's present form that is no longer the case. The figure seems to lean to his right. This would mean that the man was later depicted as though leaning with his right elbow on the arm of the chair while the left elbow makes no contact with the other arm of the chair. The right side arm of the chair is hidden by the man's cape. Again, this means that the fur edge does not lie horizontally in the pictorial plane but widens to the front-right. His left forearm hangs in a fold of the tabard, as though in a sling, while the hand grips its opposite edge. The X-radiograph shows that in his first design the painter made these fingers hooked. Neutron activation autoradiography reveals an indication of a large ornament below the present chain (**fig. 2**).

In short, the painting has passed through a series of (minor) changes of the kind that, in various forms, one often encounters in works by Rembrandt (see, for instance, Note **88b**). Taken together with the Rembrandtesque aspects of the execution mentioned above, there are thus sufficient reasons to accept that we are dealing here with an autograph work by Rembrandt whose appearance and impact had been drastically altered by the canvas being seriously cropped on both sides and the bottom. The painting would regain a great deal of its original power if it were cleaned.

(Correction: It should be pointed out that in Corpus V p. 479 it was erroneously claimed that the present painting was painted on canvas from the same bolt as the canvas of the Copenhagen *Supper of Emmaus* (*Corpus* V 15)).

204 Rembrandt, **Old man with a stick**, 1645, canvas 128 x 112 cm. Lisbon, Museu Calouste Gulbenkian. HdG 438; Br. 239; Bauch 185; Gerson 247; Br./Gerson 239; Tümpel 139; see also Broekhoff 1994.

Inscription: at the very bottom left in the background, quite large *<.f:1645.>* Apart possibly from the dot in front of the '*f* there is no trace of a signature.

On the basis of the shallow cusps along the edges, one infers that the canvas was probably originally wider and that the letters of the signature have been cut off. Given the composition of the painting in its present form, however, it is difficult to imagine an originally substantially larger format.

There are several versions of this painting. In such cases this usually raises the question of which one of them is the prototype. However, there can be no doubt that the present version in the Gulbenkian Collection in Lisbon is the prototype: this primacy is demonstrated by the modifications undergone during its genesis, which can be read from the X-radiograph of the painting (**fig. 1**).

Compared with the original design, alterations in the contours of the figure are visible in many places: the course of the shoulder and arm contour on the left is further to the right on the X-radiograph. The beret in the X-ray image has a more generalized, rounded form, while in the eventually painted version it is raised higher with respect to this reserve. Also, the right contour of the beret seems to have been more to the right at an earlier stage, while the transition from the collar of the cloak to the shoulder on the right was originally smoother than in the final painting. There are also several conspicuous differences in the background adjacent to this contour: in the X-radiograph, to the right of the shoulder there is a relatively dark reserve visible with a wavy contour. Possibly this reserve in the background was for a higher back to the chair, conceived differently at an earlier stage; there seems to be no space reserved for the currently visible chair-back in a background introduced later.

Moreover, a considerable number of differences are to be seen in the X-ray image of the man's clothing: from the neck to the cloak falling loosely over the shoulder the paint is unexpectedly strongly radio-absorbent, as though the clothes were initially more strongly illuminated. It would appear that the man wore a shiny double band (or jewellery?) round his right wrist, lightly showing glints of which are now visible in the relief in the shadow passage of the current cuff. The pleated shirt sleeve round his other wrist is remarkably strongly radio-absorbent. As can also be seen in the paint surface, the upper contour of that cuff does not correspond with the present contour.

These differences between the X-radiographic image and the surface image of the painting confirm that we are dealing with the prototype. Moreover, these traces of the work's genesis are also characteristic of Rembrandt's open-minded, often self-critical way of working.

It does not seem possible that the present painting could be a portrait. What precisely its function could have been is unclear. Perhaps such paintings were intended as prototypes to initiate a production of old man *tronies* by Rembrandt's pupils (**fig. 2**), works which after 1645 played an increasingly significant role both in the master's teaching and the workshop production for trade. There was apparently a market for such paintings.

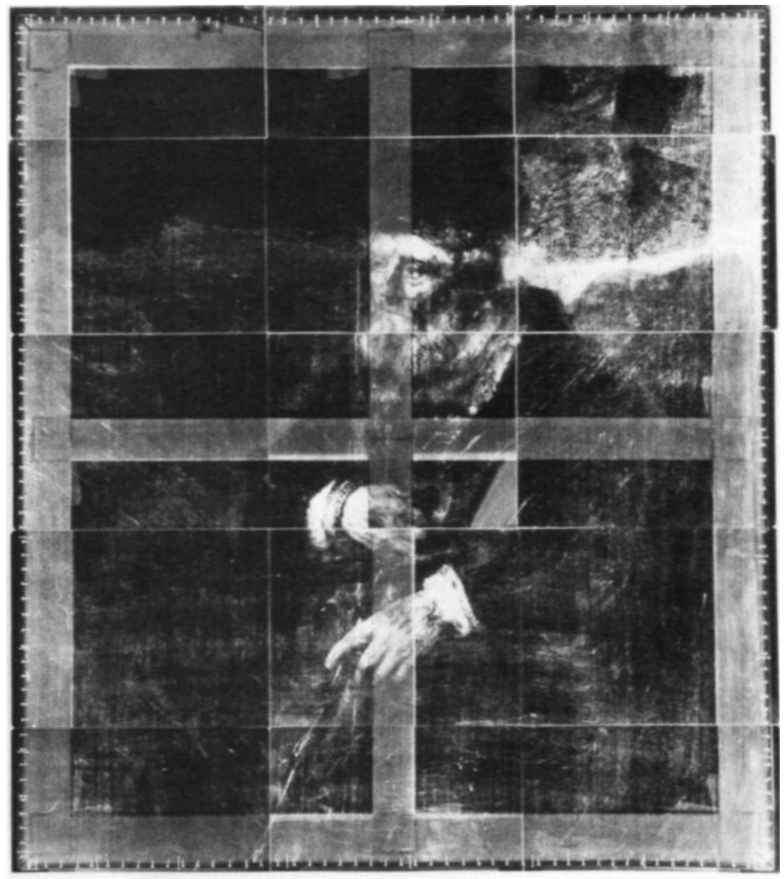


Fig. 1. X-ray of **204**

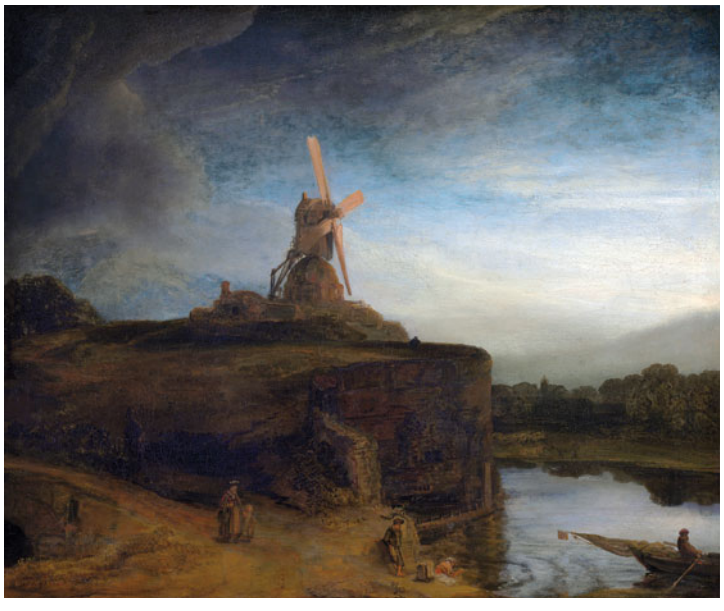
Fig. 2 . Pupil of Rembrandt, *Artist painting an old man*, Pen and ink and brush, 9.1 x 13.9 cm. Collection Frits Lugt, Fondation Custodia, Paris.

205 Rembrandt, **Landscape with a castle** (unfinished), *c.* 1645, panel 44.5 x 70 cm. Paris, Louvre. HdG 960; Br. 450; Bauch 553; Gerson 268; Br./Gerson 450; Tümpel 262; see also Schneider 1990 no. 5 pp. 181-183; *R. Landscapes* 2006 pp. 76-83.
Inscription: none

For some general remarks about Rembrandt as landscape painter, '*paysagist*', see the Note to **175**. The fact that he did not sign the painting could mean that it has remained unfinished. Another argument in support of this idea is based on the way the group of trees in the right foreground is executed. Rembrandt finished his paintings after they had been sketched in brown, transparent paint and always from the back to the front of the pictorial space. The trees would thus be last to be worked out. The extremely cursory, almost crude way in which the highest tree on the far right is painted gives the impression that Rembrandt broke off the painting prematurely. The rough way in which the painter scratched in the wet paint, not only in the two foremost trees but also in a few trees farther in the background, could also indicate that the painting still had to be worked out further.

The painting has had a turbulent history. Its existence was made known only in the art historical literature in 1925 (Conway 1925). Jan Pieter van Suchtelen (1751-1836), a collector of Dutch origin, had taken it from his family possessions in Hoorn to St Petersburg where he was domiciled and where he was later raised to the Russian nobility. It then came into the collection of Prince Paul Stroganoff, remaining in the Stroganoff family until it was confiscated after the Russian Revolution of 1917. Sold by the Soviets around 1930-'35 it was acquired for the collection of Etienne Nicolas in Paris. In 1942 it was sold to the occupying Germans, after which it was reclaimed. Etienne Nicolas donated the painting to the Louvre in 1948.

* **206** Rembrandt, **The Mill**, *c.* 1645, canvas 87.6 x 105.6 cm. Washington, National Gallery. HdG -; Br. -; Bauch -; Gerson -; Br./Gerson -; Tümpel -; see also Schneider 1990, pp. 44-46, 86/87, 183-190; Wheelock 1995, pp. 230-241; *R. Landscapes* pp. 84-103.
Inscription: none



For almost a hundred years there seems to have been a curse on *The Mill* in the National Gallery in Washington. In 1912 this painting, once one of the most famous Rembrandts, disappeared as if by magic from Rembrandt's oeuvre. Even in a bookshelf crammed with art books it is difficult if not impossible to find a reproduction of it. Nor does it appear in the purportedly complete overviews of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre by Bredius, Bauch, Gerson, Tümpel, Schwartz, Slatkes et al. And because as a rule the authors of such books make no attempt to account for the fact that certain previously accepted paintings are missing from their pages, the debate about *The Mill* has been effectively stifled since 1912. Although a few American or American-based art historians – Jacob Rosenberg, Wolfgang Stechow, Arthur Wheelock and Cynthia Schneider – continued to defend the attribution to Rembrandt, their view was without any perceptible effect on the international Rembrandt community.

A sunlit post-mill – one vane plunged into shadow by a cloud – looms up on an elevation, without doubt a 'bulwark', part of the fortified ramparts of a town wall of Dutch design. Windmills were often located on bulwarks like this because here they would catch the most wind. Until now it has always been assumed in descriptions of the painting that the mill stands on the bulwark that can be seen in the foreground. In fact, it is on the next bulwark of the same town wall. The rear edge of the first bulwark is marked by a figure, seen from behind, leaning over the parapet. The fact that the painter wanted to suggest a considerable distance between the bulwark in the foreground and the bulwark on which the mill stands is evident from his use of aerial perspective, the manifest '*thickness of the air*', as it was known in the seventeenth century. At the point where the leaning figure stands it can clearly be seen that the elevation rising beyond the parapet has been executed in lighter tones. In so far as the effects of the aging of the painting (discussed below) admit this opinion, the contrasts between light and dark in this area – and in the mill itself – are not as strong as those in the foreground. This indicates that a clearly defined distance has been suggested here by means of aerial perspective. It is no coincidence that the painter hesitated over how large he should make the figure on the foremost parapet, partly overlapping the second one. The infrared photograph reveals that the figure was initially considerably larger (**fig. 3**).

Fig. 1. Infrared image of **206**

Several attempts have been made to identify the location of this landscape. One possibility suggested by Arthur Wheelock is 'Het Blauwhoofd' on the outskirts of Amsterdam (Wheelock 1995 no. 57, fig. 58), not far from Rembrandt's house. However, he thought it ultimately more likely that this is the 'Pelican Bulwark' in Leiden. This latter suggestion appeals to the imagination because Rembrandt's father's mill stood on that bulwark. Boudewijn Bakker, the expert on the topography of Rembrandt's landscapes, thinks that 'Het Blauwhoofd' is the most probable location. Both authors are well aware, however, that the painter was not specifically aiming for topographical fidelity; the fact that a bridge, or part of one, was originally painted on the right and subsequently removed – as the X-ray shows – is proof enough that in this work the painter did not set out to provide an accurate representation (**fig. 2**).

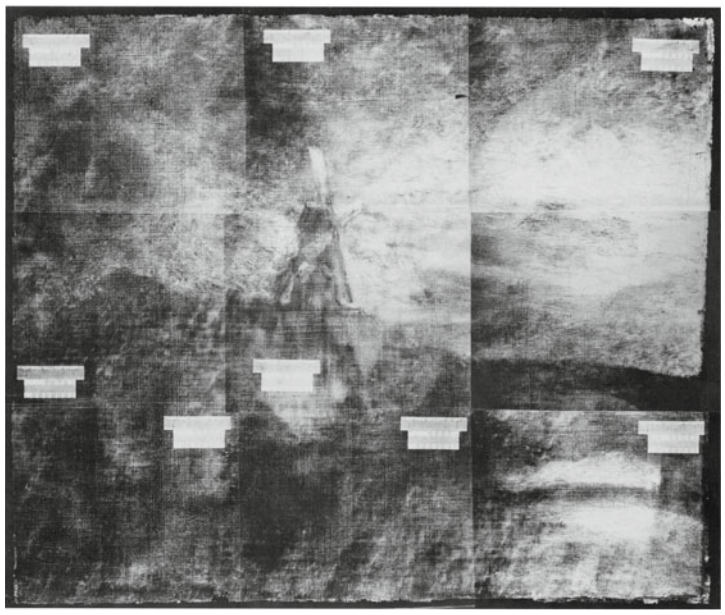


Fig. 2. X-ray of **206**. Each X-ray film is marked with a metal badge.

The downfall of *The Mill* and an evaluation of the arguments used in rejecting the attribution

In the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century *The Mill* was one of Rembrandt's most famous paintings, despite the fact that it was then in a private collection and only occasionally seen in public. Wilhelm von Bode, the most influential Rembrandt expert around 1910, once called *The Mill* 'the greatest picture in the world' and 'the greatest picture by any artist'.

When the painting was sold from the Marquess of Lansdowne's collection to the American collector A.B. Widener in 1911, it fetched the then staggering sum of £100,000. No doubt Bode used the words above in praising the work to the new owner. Soon after the painting arrived in America there began one of the most unfortunate episodes in the historiography of Rembrandt's oeuvre: the German art historian Woldemar von Seidlitz, a specialist in Rembrandt's etchings, rejected the attribution of *The Mill* to Rembrandt, putting forward a whole series of arguments for this rejection (Von Seidlitz 1911 pp. 550-551). Despite the fact that not one of these arguments stands up to scrutiny, Von Seidlitz's rejection heralded the painting's downfall (see *R. Landscapes* pp. 89-90).

It is interesting to look at what Von Seidlitz wrote, not only because, as said, his arguments all prove to be invalid or based on false assumptions, but also because they bring particular aspects of the painting into a sharper focus. For instance, he stated that Rembrandt, in his landscapes, usually chose a high vantage point, whereas he thought the horizon in *The Mill* was low. In fact, none of Rembrandt's landscapes has a horizon that is higher than that of *The Mill* (see **236**, **159**, **175**, **176**, **205**, **207**, **152**, **158** etc.). In some of these landscapes, though, there are mountains or hills that rise above the horizon.

Von Seidlitz went on (again erroneously) to assert that whereas Rembrandt always strove for 'Mannigfaltigkeit' (diversity) in his landscapes, *The Mill* was characterized by a 'straffe Zusammenfassung': a 'rigid simplification' of the composition. (Like all the authors after him, Von Seidlitz only identified one bulwark and failed to realize that the composition of *The Mill* had originally been higher and wider, and that – as a result of the aging of the materials and the associated optical changes – it had many more details than can be seen at present. We shall look at this point in greater depth later.)

Von Seidlitz was also convinced that *The Mill* could not be by Rembrandt because in his opinion the figures in Rembrandt's authentic landscapes were more subordinated to the landscape as a whole than those in *The Mill*. He described the role of the figures in *The Mill* as 'novelistic' – meaning anecdotal. When he then goes on to describe the blue sky and the reflections in the water as atypical of Rembrandt and based his further arguments for rejecting the attribution of the painting on this, it becomes clear that Von Seidlitz was not aware that his view of Rembrandt's painted landscapes was based on the works dating from around 1638-1640 (see **159**, **175**, **176**), whereas *The Mill* most closely resembles Rembrandt's landscapes from the mid-1640s **152** (second phase), **205**, **214**.

The first example of a landscape similar in various respects is Rembrandt's unfinished *Landscape with a castle* of about 1645 in the Louvre **205**. This painting was not published until 1925 (Conway 1925 p. 245), so Von Seidlitz was unaware of it when he rejected *The Mill*. The way in which aerial perspective is used to place the illuminated castle at a considerable distance in the picture plane and the building is partly concealed by dark forms in the foreground is strikingly similar to the way *The Mill* is positioned in the composition. The connection between the two paintings is even stronger than this, however. X-rays reveal that in *The Mill*, as in the *Landscape with a castle*, there was a bridge with a flat arch (which was subsequently removed). This bridge must have been similar to the bridge in the painting in the Louvre **205**. The 'hilliness' of the composition is also comparable in the two paintings. In Rembrandt's day, a great variation in height in a composition was called *sprong* (see Note **174**. Rembrandt's pupil Samuel van Hoogstraten praised Rembrandt (in connection with *The Night Watch*) specifically for his masterly use of this pictorial device. In Rembrandt's most ambitious etched landscape of the same period, *The Three Trees* of 1643 (B. 212), we can clearly see how he exaggerated the height differences in a Dutch landscape by placing three large trees on an elevation (a dune?) in the landscape. Landscape varying in height, which he explores in *Landscape with a castle* **205** and *The Three Trees*, is taken further in *The Mill* in an adventurous, questing fashion, typical of Rembrandt – as will be seen when we come to discuss the X-radiograph.

One of the artist's singular inventions is that he has chosen a vantage point such that the foremost bulwark is reflected in the water. As a result, this dark mass is doubled on the right-hand side, so that the impressive bulk of the towering bulwark is given extra emphasis. This created the 'straffe Zusammenfassung' (rigid simplification) of the composition, so uncharacteristic of Rembrandt in Von Seidlitz's view. It seems far more likely, however, that this was a product of Rembrandt's fascination with the phenomenon of reflection in water (also mistakenly described by Von Seidlitz as atypical of Rembrandt). It is apparent from Rembrandt's *Nocturnal landscape* in Dublin of 1647 **214** just how much this phenomenon must have concerned him. In that painting it would seem that this preoccupation is probably related to an atttempt to surpass Adam Elsheimer's *Flight into Egypt* (see Note **214** fig.1). We also find in the Dublin painting the 'novelistic' figures that Von Seidlitz regarded as un-Rembrandtesque. The same is true of the Kassel *Winter landscape* from 1646 **207** – which incidentally also has a blue sky, considered by Seidlitz to be atypical for Rembrandt.

Both Schneider and Wheelock, in arguing unsuccessfully for a re-attribution of the painting to Rembrandt, pointed out the similarities between *The Mill* and precisely these four works: the *Landscape with a castle* of *c.* 1645, the etching *The Three Trees* of 1643, the *Winter landscape* of 1646 and the *Nocturnal landscape* of 1647. Indeed, Wheelock based his proposed dating of *The Mill* to around 1645 on these resemblances. Before this, certainly before 1911 when Von Seidlitz rejected the painting, Rembrandt experts had dated it to the beginning of the 1650s. Rosenberg and Stechow also maintained this latter dating. The persistent, almost obsessive need to find links between Rembrandt's life and work was certainly a factor in the matter of dating. *The Mill* was seen as the expression of Rembrandt's emotions during the difficult times in which, according to the Rembrandt myth, he supposedly found himself struggling, prior to his bankruptcy.

The gloominess attributed to the painting – and interpreted biographically – was in fact quite largely caused by the fact that it was covered with thick layers of brown varnish. The removal of the varnish in 1978 provoked fierce debate because the cleaning had drastically changed the painting's character. The coats of discoloured varnish, for that matter, were not the only trace of time's ravages that had affected the look of *The Mill*. As we shall see later in this Note, there are other factors, more concealed but no less far-reaching, that have influenced our perception of the painting and may have contributed to the wall of silence that came to surround it.

Despite the lack of plausible alternative attributions, the exclusion of *The Mill* from Rembrandt's oeuvre remained. As we have already seen, in the last couple of decades only two art historians have expressly tried to rehabilitate *The Mill* as an authentic work by Rembrandt: Wheelock and the American art historian Cynthia Schneider. Like Wheelock, in her book on Rembrandt's landscapes published in 1990, Schneider defends the attribution on the grounds of stylistic arguments. Some of their arguments have already been touched upon – implicitly or otherwise. Both authors also pointed out that the role of light in this painting argues for an attribution to Rembrandt: no other seventeenth-century Dutch painter so consistently gave the light a leading role in his landscapes as did Rembrandt. Brightly illuminated areas play a crucial part in both the compositional organization of his paintings and in the suggestion of space in them. Nor was there a single Dutch painter around the middle of the seventeenth century who so closely approached actual light with his painterly light as did Rembrandt. This applies as much to *The Mill* as it does to the other landscapes that are commonly attributed to Rembrandt. Usually, however, the convincing effect of that light has to be achieved with more shade than light, because only with this juxtaposition does the light acquire its full power. A striking feature of *The Mill*, however, is that the proportions of light and dark are virtually the same. One reason for this is that the light sky is reflected in the water. Another factor is the likelihood that the painting was originally larger at the top and on the left-hand side, a possibility we shall look at in more detail. We can assume that the dark areas on those edges were originally larger (see the images below Plate **206**). That would make the balance between light and shade, with the latter predominating, comparable to that in other works by Rembrandt.

This, however, is only one example of the destructive effects of time on the character of the painting. As Cynthia Schneider observed, a comparison of *The Mill* with Rembrandt's landscapes is made more difficult by the fact that *The Mill* is painted on canvas, whereas Rembrandt's other painted landscapes are all on panels. Schneider pointed out that paintings on canvas age differently and that this could have been a factor in the almost unanimous rejection of the painting.

As well as the effect of aging, I shall also examine two other considerations that may have played a role in the rejection of the painting. One is the suggestion originally proposed by Wheelock, who suspected that the painting may have been cut down on all sides. His idea was that if the painting no longer had its original format, the composition itself could have been drastically altered. Another previously unrecognized factor that may have played a role is that the painting has been mounted slightly askew on the stretcher (and hence in the frame). This must have happened before 1786, because in that year Matthieu and Dequevauviller published a reproductive print after *The Mill* that shows the painting in its present state.

The fact that the work is painted on canvas

As we have seen, all the painted landscapes by Rembrandt that are accepted as being by his own hand, and the related landscapes from his studio, are painted on panels. Nonetheless the decision to use canvas as the support in the case of *The Mill*, whoever painted it, makes perfect sense because it is such a large work (87.6 x 105.6 cm in its present condition) – much larger than those landscapes usually attributed to Rembrandt. As will be explained, the painting was probably originally even larger (about 105 x 140 cm).

As Schneider already emphasized, paintings on canvas age differently from those on panel (see **275** / **275a**). Usually the original grey or greyish-brown ground is darker from the outset than the ground on a panel. But because the ground on canvas in fact consists of one or more opaque layers of oil paint, it darkens more or less over time. The treatments used to conserve paintings on canvas may contribute to this process of darkening. Given the fact that, according to neutron activation autoradiographic investigations, the partly translucent underpainting in Rembrandt's paintings on canvas contains more black than that on panel, the aspect of the painting can also become darker in many places. For this reason alone we may assume that the light and dark contrasts in *The Mill* in its present state have become significantly more pronounced than those in Rembrandt's landscapes on panel. The original detailing in the dark areas has also become less distinct. This certainly applies to the dark areas in, for instance, the front bulwark in *The Mill*, which reveals much more workup of detail under a strong light than can be seen under normal conditions. Von Seidlitz's argument that *The Mill* lacks the 'Mannigfaltigkeit' – the diversity – that he considered characteristic of Rembrandt is therefore influenced to a considerable degree by the aged condition of the painting.

The size

Another factor that may have played a part in the negative judgement of the work has to do with its size and the related composition. There are reasons for believing that the painting was originally larger, and that the relationship between the height and width is different from what was originally intended.

As we have seen, Wheelock expressed the view that the painting was originally larger on the grounds that stress arcs (usually called cusping) in the fabric of the canvas (deformations that are caused when the canvas is stretched in an unprepared state and are then fixed when it is prepared) only occur at the bottom. He assumed that the canvas of *The Mill* must have shown cusping on all sides and came to the partly untenable conclusion that at some time in the past the painting must have been cropped on the right-hand side as well as at the top and on the left. However, it is impossible that anything can have been cut away from the right-hand side of the image, as the painted surface stops several centimetres short of the edge of the prepared linen. This right-hand edge of the picture must therefore be the original. When a canvas was not stretched over a frame but was laced to it flat – as was customary in the seventeenth century (*Painter at Work* pp. 118-122) – part of the prepared canvas next to the painted area was left unpainted. (The artist assumed that these unpainted borders would be covered by the frame.)

It would require a very extensive account of seventeenth-century stretching and preparation methods, together with an explanation of the trade in semi-industrially prepared linen and seventeenth-century standard sizes to substantiate the reconstructions of the original dimensions of *The Mill* proposed here. That account can be found in the third chapter of my book *Rembrandt. The painter at Work* (Amsterdam 1997/2009). In the present Note I shall confine myself to outlining two options for the reconstruction of the original dimensions, which will be illustrated with the aid of digitally manipulated images (see under Plate **206**).

One approach to the hypothetical reconstruction of *The Mill* is based on a standard width, expressed in ells, of the linen Rembrandt used. This approach is justified, because Rembrandt and his contemporaries preferred to use the full width of the canvas, which was as a rule prepared by professionals. The canvas for the *Night Watch*, for instance, was made up of three strips of canvas, each about 140 cm (2 ells) wide, stitched together. In the case of smaller sizes (like that of *The Mill*) the canvases were cut from long strips, prepared in a semi-industrial process. The most common standard width for such canvas was approximately *c.* 105 cm (1½ ells). This standard width most closely approximates the original width of the canvas used for *The Mill*, i.e. the height of the painting, because the warp in the canvas on which *The Mill* is painted runs horizontally. Consequently, we may assume that the strip of canvas on which *The Mill* was painted was 105 cm wide, and that the painting was therefore originally 105 cm high.

Our supposition is supported by the observation that this canvas appears to be an end piece from the pre-prepared strip of linen. The deformation of the fabric at the end of such a strip (on the left-hand side of the canvas of *The Mill*) runs in a large arc from corner to corner. This distortion of the weave at the end of a long strip of linen occurred when the canvas was stretched between two long poles by the selvedges of the strip, before the ground was applied. In this procedure the ends of the strip were put under very little, if any, tension, so that the strip ended in a convex arc. A similar arc has been found, for instance, at the bottom of the canvas on which the *Portrait of Johannes Wtenbogaert* is painted **90**. From the path of this deformation of the canvas it can be concluded that a strip is missing

from the top of the painting – a conclusion that is confirmed by the fact that no cusping is observed along the top edge of the canvas (see the figures under Plate **206**).

Had the artist used the full width of the canvas – approximately 105 cm – then assuming the most frequent proportions of 3:4, used by Rembrandt for his paintings – *The Mill* would have measured approximately 105 x 140 cm. It would then have been the same size as, for instance, the *Bellona* of 1633 **101**, the *Portrait of a Man* in Cincinnati of 1633 and its pendant, the *Woman with a Fan* of 1633 **88a** and **88b** and the *Portrait of Johannes Wtenbogaert* of 1633 **90**.

I have already referred to one of the consequences of the reduction of the painting: the relationship between the light areas and the dark zones above and to the left has been considerably altered. This has caused a drastic change in the composition. Were the strip on the left to be reinstated, the massive bulwark would shift relatively further to the right in the composition and the mill would also move to the right. This creates the asymmetry so typical of Rembrandt's compositions. When the composition is extended to the left, this produces the similarly typical diagonal movement, instead of the vertical tendency that characterizes the painting in its present form. The expansion on the left has another surprising consequence: once one realizes that the mill stands not on the foremost bulwark but in the middle ground, the addition seems to shift the mill in space; the compositional connection between the mill and the front bulwark becomes, as it were, accidental. (The viewer should also realize that, given the original size of the painting suggested here, the scale of the mill in the composition as a whole would have been smaller than it is now.)

The digital reconstructions of the painting on the basis of the technical data discussed above clarify the consequences of the ideas developed here about the original appearance of *The Mill*. In these reconstructions the painting has been adjusted to its original position, as explained below.

The tilted canvas

It is evident from the fact that the right-hand edge of the sky (which contains lead white) leans to the right (see **fig. 2**) that at some time the painting was tilted a few degrees to the right, trimmed and put on a new stretcher in that position. The consequences are more dramatic than one might think. The mill now leans too far to the right. (Compare it, for instance, with the mill in the *River landscape with a mill* in Kassel **152**.) The boat now moves into the picture from the lower corner on a conspicuous diagonal. The meadow bank is also now on a slant. But the effect of this tilt seems to have been most severe on the figures on the bank in the foreground. Rembrandt, as he demonstrated time and again, was extraordinarily sensitive to the relationship of his figures to the horizontal and vertical axes. Tilting the painting has, for instance, given the woman coming down the path with the child an instability that is not characteristic of Rembrandt. The way the bank is cut off by the water is also disconcerting.

The tilting of the picture implies that long, triangular strips are missing from the edges of the image. That has serious consequences, especially along the bottom. At the bottom right corner of the painting the missing triangular strip was at least two centimetres wide – and probably more. Only when we become aware of this does it strike us that a reddish reflection of the pennant at the top of the lowered mast of the boat can be seen close to the present lower edge of the painting. Furthermore, only then do we realize that the reflection of the furled sail is cut by the lower edge of the canvas in an unnatural way. Both the sandy bank sloping away to the right and the water with the reflection of the boat must have continued into this corner. Not until we imagine this does it strike us just how similar it must have been in this regard to the lower left corner of the *Nocturnal landscape* in Dublin **214**.

The principal advantage of the digital restoration of the painting to its original condition and proportions is that the composition regains the stability that characterizes Rembrandt's work. The strange instability in *The Mill* introduced by the cropping probably contributed more to the hesitancy surrounding the attribution of the painting than many will have realized. That, at least, is what this author believes.

The genesis of *The Mill*

Once the material history of the painting had been revealed (by X-radiography and inspection of the work) arguments in favour of the attribution to Rembrandt, in addition to those proposed by Cynthia Schneider and Arthur Wheelock, begin to accumulate. The genesis of the work, for instance, also seems to indicate that it was painted by Rembrandt. A great deal can be learned in this regard by technical means, particularly from X-radiographs and infrared photographs (**figs. 1** and **2**).

When analyzing X-radiographs it is important to know that Rembrandt's first, tonal design cannot be made visible in a direct sense. Indirectly, though, we can get an impression of the degree of elaboration or sketchiness of the design. It is known that Rembrandt as a rule worked out his paintings in the pictorial space from back to front. In so doing, he left uncovered those parts of the underpainting that are closer to the foreground (he could still see the monochrome design of the painting in these open areas). On X-rays these open areas, usually called reserves, show up as dark shapes. For instance the approximate dark reserve for the mill, more precise in places, can be seen in the sky, which shows up as light. In painting the sky, the artist must have paid scant attention to indicating the little house behind the mill; but we can see the reserve, to be filled in later with a paint containing lead white, of an elevation further beyond the mill (to its left from the viewer's perspective). On the infrared photograph – which makes areas containing carbon predominantly visible – it can be seen how sketchily this elevation was indicated (**fig. 1**).

The most striking change in the design of the painting is the slightly curved horizontal form that runs to the right from the bulwark. This is the location of the reserve left for the bridge, referred to above, supported on the right by a pier (also visible as a dark area) which, like the bridge itself, must have been reflected in the water.

The absence of an unpainted area in the reflecting water for the boat and the man rowing it means that it was not planned originally. Perhaps it was added because the right-hand side of the painting looked rather too empty once the bridge and its reflection had been removed. (Only the head of the rower can vaguely be seen. The space was created in additional paint containing lead white.)

When the X-radiograph is read in this way, we get a picture of an artist who was still searching, whose sketchily executed design underwent numerous changes and fine-tuning as the work progressed, in a manner that is typical of Rembrandt. Another example of such an adjustment is the altered version – visible on the infrared photograph – of the figure at the rear parapet of the bulwark in the foreground which, as we have seen, was originally larger (**fig. 3**).

The X-ray image (**fig. 2**) also reveals that the vane of the mill that protrudes forwards, like the other vanes viewed fairly frontally, was originally light. The painter must have taken the remarkable decision to make this vane dark at a later stage. This solution is reminiscent of the pictorial device that Rembrandt used several times in portraits, self-portraits and *tronies* of shrouding in shadow the foremost part of a figure – usually the shoulder – turned to the viewer (see, for instance, **29**, **70**, **84**).

Fig. 3. Detail of fig. 1.

The X-ray reveals yet more changes, which cannot easily be explained here, that were made during the process of creating this painting. All these changes, together with the evident confidence with which they were executed, betray the hand, the mind and the temperament of Rembrandt.

Summary and recapitulation of the arguments in favour of the attribution of *The Mill* to Rembrandt

In the argument set out above, I have looked at characteristics of *The Mill* that support the attribution of this work to Rembrandt. I did this while discussing the remarkable history of the painting, and particularly in evaluating Von Seidlitz's unconvincing arguments for disattributing the painting. The similarity of the painting to four of Rembrandt's landscapes of the mid-1640s, pointed out by Wheelock and Schneider, also argues in favour of an attribution to Rembrandt. The efforts to reconstruct the painting as it must have originally appeared has led to new insights which point to Rembrandt as its author, and an analysis of the way the painting came into being would seem to confirm this.

The characteristics of the canvas visible in the X-radiograph are typical for 17th-century hand-woven linen. The ground is of a type that is frequently found in Rembrandt's work, in slightly different formulations. It is the common double ground with a red ochre undercoat covered with a grey layer that contains lead white, carbon black and yellow ochre. Paintings with double grounds, where a grey coat is applied over a reddish layer of earth colour, are commonly found in Rembrandt's work – but not only his – between *c.* 1620 and 1660 (*Corpus* IV p. 323 and Table III pp. 662-671). Analysis of the different pigments used in *The Mill* has brought to light no discrepancies with Rembrandt's palette (Wheelock 1995 p. 230 (research reported by Barbara Miller)). The fact that no Prussian blue – a pigment that first appeared on palettes in 1704 – has been found in the blue sky points to the painting's having been executed in the seventeenth century.

The underpainting also looks familiar. In many places we can see a dark brown to black, more or less transparent sketch laid down with a loose touch. As explained above, we can tell from the X-radiograph that the forms in the first design are freely painted in a manner that is strongly reminiscent of Rembrandt's method. The same is true of the searching approach in the conception of the composition. During the working process, changes to the original concept were carried through in a confident manner. This sort of questing approach is found in many of Rembrandt's works.

As we have seen, the genre-like way in which figures have been incorporated into *The Mill* is akin to the way this was done in two of Rembrandt's painted landscapes of the 1640s **207**, **214**. In this context, Schneider drew attention to Rembrandt's increased activity during this period in making sketches of everyday figures. Wheelock saw striking parallels in style and execution between the rowing figure in the boat and a Rembrandt drawing of two men rowing that he dates to the 1640s. The reconstruction of the lower right corner provides us with another example of the way *The Mill* is linked to the other 1640s landscapes. The interaction between the low bank and the reflecting water is very similar to that in the lower left corner of Rembrandt's *Nocturnal landscape* in Dublin **214**. The resemblance between the two paintings is also marked where the rendition of the vegetation in the foreground is concerned. The handling – if not the precise details – of the grass and plants is identical. Similar details, executed in the same way, can also be found in the foreground of the *Stormy landscape* in Braunschweig **176**.

The Rembrandt of the 1640s is present throughout *The Mill* in the handling of the paint, the relationship between the use of paint and the illusion being sought, as well as in 'the painter's hand'. Rembrandt's hand can be recognized in the utterly individual way that drawing and painting go together. In his painted work this drawing-like approach, where the touch of the brushstroke tends toward being slightly too broad, gives things a specific solidity and stability. The subsequent darkening of the already dark areas of the painting has made some of this striking drawing less visible than it is, for instance, in the lower right corner of the *River landscape with a mill* in Kassel **152**.

To Von Seidlitz, the absence of Rembrandt's signature was an additional reason for rejecting the painting. However, the signature may well have been on the long triangular strip that was cut off the bottom. In his painted landscapes from that period he put his signature near the bottom edge (see Note **173**).

If the arguments presented here were to result in *The Mill*'s readmission to the canon of Rembrandt's paintings, it would mean that Rembrandt's oeuvre would be enhanced by his most ambitious and grandly conceived landscape.

207 Rembrandt, **Winter landscape**, 1646, panel 17 x 23 cm. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 943; Br. 452; Bauch 552; Gerson 267; Br./Gerson 452; Tümpel 264; see also Schneider 1990 pp. 88-92, 190-193 no. 7; Kassel 2006 no. 31 pp. 219-233; *R. Landscapes* pp. 92-101.
Inscription: left, near the bottom edge in the wet paint ‹*Rembrandt. 1646.*›

We assume that painters in the 17th century for the most part produced their works in the studio. Yet it did occur that some were painted outdoors (Van de Wetering in Amsterdam 1998 pp. 8-17). If there is one painting by Rembrandt which could have been painted outdoors, or from a window, looking out on to a frozen canal, it is this small painting. It is a snapshot of a winter's day with a man tying on his skates, others sitting resting, with an old woman walking with her dog over the ice, fearful lest she slip over. In colour (there is a predominance of blue) and in the division between light and shade this small painting occupies a position on its own within Rembrandt's oeuvre. With its immediacy of observation and informality of conception it would fit better among his drawings.

208 Rembrandt, **Abraham serving the three angels**, 1646, panel 16 x 21 cm. Private collection. HdG 1a; Br. 515; Bauch 27; Gerson 214; Br./Gerson 515; Tümpel 21; ***Corpus* V 9**.
Inscription: below, to the left of centre <*Rembrandt f.1646*>
The scene depicted is based on:

Genesis 18: 1-12 'Then the LORD appeared to him by the terebinth trees of Mamre, as he was sitting in the tent door in the heat of the day. So he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, three men were standing by him; and when he saw *them,* he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the ground, and said, "My Lord, if I have now found favor in Your sight, do not pass on by Your servant. Please let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. And I will bring a morsel of bread, that you may refresh your hearts. After that you may pass by, inasmuch as you have come to your servant." They said, "Do as you have said." So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quickly, make ready three measures of fine meal; knead *it* and make cakes." And Abraham ran to the herd, took a tender and good calf, gave *it* to a young man, and he hastened to prepare it. So he took butter and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and set *it* before them; and he stood by them under the tree as they ate. Then they said to him, "Where *is* Sarah your wife?" So he said, "Here, in the tent." And He said, "I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son." (Sarah was listening in the tent door which *was* behind him.) Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in age; *and* Sarah had passed the age of childbearing. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, "After I have grown old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?"'

The first mention of a painting by Rembrandt with this subject is from 1647, one year later than the date on this painting. A transaction between Martin van den Broeck and Andries Ackersloot concluded on 28 March 1647 obliged the former to deliver a set of diamonds, silverwork and several paintings to the latter in exchange for a supply of ropes, masts and iron that he had received worth 800 guilders. Among the paintings was an '*Abraham mette drye engelen van Rembrant*' (Abraham with the three angels by Rembrandt) (*Doc.* 1647/1). This was a business deal between two merchants with the paintings serving as a form of payment, so it is quite possible that the new owner resold the paintings at some stage after the transaction.

The second early mention of a painting by Rembrandt with this subject dates from 1669. The inventory of the effects that he brought to his (second) marriage in that year drawn up by Ferdinand Bol (Rembrandt's former pupil) lists seven works attributed to Rembrandt, including an '*Abraham en de engelen* [van] *Rembrant*' (Abraham and the angels by Rembrandt) (Blankert 1982 p. 77). Bol probably worked in Rembrandt's studio between *c.* 1635 and 1640. Assuming that he was the owner of the present painting, he must have acquired it after his training – perhaps even directly from the aforementioned Andries Ackersloot. The idea that Bol owned the painting gains support from the fact that two works, either by him or from his studio, so closely resemble the present painting that one assumes they were based on it (**fig. 1**).

Fig. 1. F. Bol, *Abraham and the angels*, early 1660s, canvas 404 x 282.5 cm. 's-Hertogenbosch, Noordbrabants Museum (on loan from Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum)

The painting's unusually small format raises the question of its function. It shows a kinship with another small painting of roughly the same size **202**, which we suspect was executed by a pupil on a sketch by Rembrandt as an exercise in 1645 (see **201** and **202**). One may speculate that Rembrandt made the present painting as a demonstration of how to deal with the problems that the pupil working on **202** had to solve, in this case in the rendering of supernatural light. (For this aspect of Rembrandt's teaching practice see Note **314**.)

209 Rembrandt, **The Holy Family with painted frame and curtain**, 1646, panel 46.8 x 68.4 cm. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 90; Br. 572; Bauch 77; Gerson 212; Br./Gerson 572; Tümpel 66; ***Corpus* V 6**; see also Kemp 1986; Kassel 2006 pp. 207-213.
Inscription: on the wooden partition between Joseph and the curtain ‹*Rembrandt.ft. / 1646*›

For remarks concerning this painting see Note **210**

210 Rembrandt or pupil, **The prophetess Anna in the Temple**, 1650 or *c.* 1646, walnut? panel 40.5 x 31.5 cm. Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland. HdG 154; Br. 577; Bauch 81; Gerson 223; Br./Gerson 577 (as by pupil); Tümpel A9 (as from the studio of Rembrandt); ***Corpus* V 17**; see also Littman 1993; Shabar 1993.
Inscription: in black or dark grey on a panel just under the seat of the chair at the right, and overpainted in brown <*Rembrandt f./ 1650*>. In the course of overpainting the last digits may have been changed. For a possibly earlier dating (around 1646), see *Corpus* V p. 399.

In *Corpus* V 6 and 17 a fruitless attempt was made to throw some light on the attribution questions raised by these two paintings. In the case of the *Holy Family* **209** the circumstantial evidence of various kinds in favour of an attribution to Rembrandt is so strong that scarcely any doubt remains. With **210**, however, such evidence is lacking. Similarities between the two paintings in the way particular details are worked out and in the handling of the paint certainly suggest that the two works were painted by the same painter during the same period. But both paintings are so marred by varnish layers and the ravages of time that such comparisons are unreliable. Unsatisfactorily, therefore, we are left with two paintings which await investigation by various means whenever fundamental restoration should be undertaken. Only in this way can we hope to resolve this complex of problems. For the time being, the reader is referred to the texts and reproduced images in *Corpus* V 6 and 17.

211a Rembrandt, **The Nativity** (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik, see p. 178), 1646, canvas 92 x 71 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek. HdG 78; Br. 574; Bauch 79; Gerson 215; Br./Gerson 574; Tümpel 67; for a survey of the contemporary documents relating to this series see ***Corpus* II 65 Documents and sources**; ***Corpus* V 11** and **pp. 284-295**, **310**.
Inscription: at the lower left in black paint <[…]*dt f 1646*>. While the date is clearly legible, only traces of the signature can be seen. According to *Doc.* 1646/6, the painting was delivered in 1646.

Luke 2: 6-16 'And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them

into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.'

In accordance with the 17th-century convention this painting was referred to as a '*geboorte Christi*' (Nativity) (see *Doc.* 1646/6), rather than an *'Adoration of the shepherds'*, the title commonly used later on. Both the composition and the heavily impastoed *peinture* were imitated in Rembrandt's studio, indicating that the present painting was a work of significant influence in the learning and production in Rembrandt's circle (see for example *Corpus* V 5, 12 and 15).

The painting has suffered greatly as a result of drastic restorations in the past. The paint layer must have been flattened during these treatments, which included a transfer to a new canvas. The shepherd in *contre-jour* in the foreground has certainly been overpainted with brown paint; this added paint presents a pattern of shrinkage cracks. Numerous in-paintings are also found in the shadowy lower corners of the picture (for a detailed analysis of this painting see *Corpus* V pp. 284-295).

211b **Studio copy after a lost Circumcision which was part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik** (see p. 178), in or after 1646, canvas 97.8 x 72 cm. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum. HdG 82a; Bauch A31; ***Corpus* V 10**.
Inscription: none

The scene following the account of Christ's birth is taken from **Luke 2: 21** 'And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called Jesus, which was so named by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.'

Between *c.* 1632 and 1639 Rembrandt painted five pictures of scenes from the Passion of Christ for Stadholder Frederik Hendrik (see p. 178). In 1646 he delivered to this patron two more paintings belonging to the same series: the subjects in these, the *Nativity* and the *Circumcision*, relate to the infancy of Christ. Six of these seven paintings, which were first listed as a series of related works in the 1668 inventory of Frederik Hendrik's widow, Amalia of Solms, are now in Munich. The seventh, referred to as '*de besnijdinge Christi*' (the Circumcision of Christ) in the payment order to Rembrandt in 1646 (*Doc.* 1646/6), vanished in the 18th century. It was still recorded as one of the seven paintings of the Passion Series in the catalogue of the electoral gallery in Düsseldorf compiled by Karsch in 1719. But by 1756 one painting of the series had been lost, for only six are mentioned in a letter of that year by Philipp Hieronymus Brinkmann (1709-1761), court painter and curator to the collection of Carl Theodor, Elector Palatine in Mannheim (see *Corpus* V 11, *Provenance*).

That missing seventh painting was a *Circumcision of Christ*. It is generally assumed that a painting with a *Circumcision* in Braunschweig, in the style of Rembrandt, is a copy after that missing painting, possibly painted in Rembrandt's workshop. That *Circumcision* was catalogued in the ducal collection in Braunschweig as early as 1710. The early mention there, nine years before the Passion series was catalogued as complete in Düsseldorf, eliminates the possibility that the Braunschweig painting could have been the original. A range of mutually reinforcing arguments developed in *Corpus* V 10 by Michiel Franken make the conclusion inescapable that the Braunschweig painting must be a *faithful* copy of Rembrandt's lost *Circumcision*.

* **212** Rembrandt, **Saul and David**, *c.* 1645 and *c.* 1652, canvas 130 x 164.5 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis. HdG 36; Br. 526; Bauch 35; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 526 (as a workshop piece); Tümpel -; see also De Vries et al. 1978 pp. 149-165; De Boer 1991 cat. no. 11.
Inscription: none

The scene depicted is based on a Biblical text from:

1 Samuel 18: 9-11 'And Saul eyed David from that day and forward. And it came to pass on the morrow, that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul, and he prophesied in the midst of the house: and David played upon the harp, as at other times: and there was a javelin in Saul's hand. And Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall with it.' (see also Note **38**).

Until 1969 the *Saul and David* in the Mauritshuis was one of Rembrandt's most admired works. Perhaps more than in any other painting by Rembrandt, one recognized in it the depth of the master's much praised ability to fathom the minds of his protagonists (Rosenberg 1948 pp. 228-230). Horst Gerson's rejection of the painting as an autograph Rembrandt that year was therefore world news. The crucial passages of his verdict, published in Bredius/Gerson 526, are quoted here:

> 'Ever since this famous picture – which does not have an old history – was acquired by A. Bredius in 1898 for exhibition in the Mauritshuis, it has been hailed as one of Rembrandt's greatest and most personal interpretations of Biblical history. (…) I fear that the enthusiasm has a lot to do with a taste for Biblical painting of a type that appealed specially to the Dutch public of the Jozef Israëls generation, rather than with the intrinsic quality of the picture itself. The painterly execution is superficial and inconsistent: Saul's turban is shining and variegated, and rather pedantic in treatment, in contrast which the clothing and the hand, which are painted loosely, in one monotonous tone of brownish red. All this points to an execution in Rembrandt's studio, after a design of the master in the manner of Benesch C. 76 (which is itself a copy (**fig. 1**)). This atelier-work could have been executed about the same time and by the same pupil(s)? as Br. 584 (see Note **126** fig. 1). It is revealing that art-historians have never been able to agree as to the date of this [the present] picture.' [...].

Having pointed out that at some time in the past the painting had been cut into two parts which were subsequently joined together again, Gerson continued:

> 'This may partly help to excuse the emptiness of the curtain-motive, but not the superficial handling and the somewhat "larmoyant" interpretation. David's figure is the best and most consistent part of the picture but not that I would recognize Rembrandt's touch in it.'

Fig. 1. David playing the harp before Saul (probably by Willem Drost *c.* 1650). Pen and bistre, slightly washed, some touches in white body-colour, 21.2 x 17 cm. Paris, Louvre.

The range of different datings of the painting is indeed striking. Bredius dated it *c.* 1650, Hofstede de Groot 1665, Bauch *c.* 1657. As will be discussed below, De Vries et al. believed the work had originated in two stages, which they dated to 1655 and 1660-'65.

Around the time of Gerson's disattribution of the *Saul and David*, a considerable number of history pieces with life-size figures that had previously been considered to be Rembrandts were for sound reasons disattributed from Rembrandt (Br. 509, 522, 531, 582, 584, 595; see also *Rembrandt in America* cat. 41; *Wallace Collection* p. 86 (attr. to Drost); Brown 1991 Plate 203 (attr. to Maes)). Elsewhere and in Chapter II pp. 58/59 I have argued that these large works could well have been 'graduation pieces' painted by pupils – as their one chance to demonstrate that they were capable of realizing a large format painting with life-size figures (*Corpus* V p. 201). These works sometimes seem to have been executed by two cooperating pupils (see for instance Br. 595). I have long presumed that the *Saul and David* could be assigned to this last category of studio productions and was therefore readily convinced by Gerson's rejection of the present painting, not least because of the great difference in style compared with the Kassel *Jacob's blessing* from 1656 **245**, the only large scale history piece with a number of life-size figures from the 1650s still thought to be by Rembrandt. Until recently, there seemed to be no reason for the RRP to revisit the question of the present painting's attribution, particularly since Gerson's rejection had scarcely been challenged with convincing arguments (De Vries et al. 1978 pp. 149-165 esp.162-163; Schwartz 1984 pp. 320-321; Slatkes no. 35).

Around 2007, however, an investigative project on the *Saul and David* was begun in the Mauritshuis, with the main task of resolving the question of the painting's dramatic material history, primarily with a view to the possibility of restoring the work in the future. This project, led by Petria Noble, the conservator in chief of the Mauritshuis, uncovered valuable information concerning the painting's genesis, the originally considerably larger format (for a tentative reconstruction see Plate **212**) and the extent to which the background had been overpainted during a drastic restoration by the Berlin restorer Alois Hauser in 1899; only in 2011 could an image of the overpainted part of the curtain be obtained with x-ray fluorescence imaging (*Perspectief* p. 251-253). Gerson had no knowledge of such information when he formulated his negative verdict.

As mentioned by Gerson, and studied in more depth by De Vries et al. (pp. 149-154), the painting had at some unknown time been cut in two in order to make two separate paintings out of it – a large one with Saul and his spear and a smaller one with David and his harp. As a consequence of this operation considerable sections of the original composition were lost. The two remaining parts, which at that stage had become independent paintings, were subsequently rejoined and quasi-completed with some necessary additions. According to De Vries et al. these operations took place between 1830 and 1869.

The 'inconsistency' of the execution that Gerson complained of could mean, as he suggested, that the painting had been executed by more than one pupil. Alternatively, it could have been created in different stages. Indeed, De Vries et al. (p. 160) suggested on stylistic grounds that there had been two such stages: a hypothetical first stage painted around 1655, and a second stage (in particular the roughly executed parts of Saul's cloak) painted between 1660 and 1665.

Indeed, if one chose to accept the *Saul and David* as a work by Rembrandt himself one could see differences in execution as indicating that he changed an earlier painting at a later stage, just as he did with the *Danae* **149**, which was first painted in 1636 and subsequently altered considerably around 1643. Rembrandt also altered the Berlin *Susanna and the elders* **213**, which he began in *c.* 1638 and later gave its final appearance in 1647. The large Kassel *River landscape with ruins* **152**, first painted in *c.* 1637, was drastically changed after some eight years. This may well have occurred also with the *Saul and David*.

Between 2010 and 2012, I studied a considerable number of paintings traditionally attributed to Rembrandt from the '40s, '50s and '60s for their genesis, the facture of the brushwork and the relation between the handling of the paint and the illusion thereby created. I also studied the *Saul and David* in this manner and, like De Vries et al., I thought I could recognize as distinctive of Rembrandt's hand and mind at different times the 'leaps' between certain distinct passages that have been worked out in markedly different 'styles'. On the one hand, for instance, there is quite strong detailing, particularly in the turban, in Saul's face and ear and in the figure of David with the harp; while on the other hand there are passages that have been executed in a later 'rough' manner, specifically in Saul's cloak and those parts of his dress to the right of the spear. The crown also seems to belong to the second phase and some touches on the boundary between the curtain and the nose, as well as some of the lights on the sleeve and the broad brushstrokes on the back of the hand. Even the lit fold under Saul's eye seemed to belong to that later, rough phase.

When the painting was confronted with its X-radiograph (**fig. 2** and **3**) its genesis became more evident: it was found that the painting had undergone a complex genesis: the cloak must originally have been otherwise – not only in *peinture* but also in the depiction of the drape of material and the way it lies over the shoulder. Saul's right shoulder must have been much less covered by the cloak, leaving more of his arm visible. It would seem that the cloak left much of his trunk free, so that the lighting on the chest was also different (cf. the light place on the X-ray image where the present cloak casts a shadow). The loop-shaped light shadow of the turned-back hem of the cloak (to the left of the spear) probably shows a remnant of the lit folds in the armpit of Saul's sleeve.

Scrutiny of the paint surface reveals that the turban, Saul's face, ear and neck and the now visible part of the right sleeve seem to have not been executed in the same period as the roughly painted rest of the figure of Saul.

If the work is entirely from Rembrandt's hand, the more finely painted passages mentioned above appear to represent a considerably earlier phase of his development. One need only look at the thoroughness of the detail of Saul's ear to be reminded of his work from the 1640s (cf. **182**). The colourfulness of the turban would also fit better in that period during which Rembrandt experimented with a greater variety of colour than he had used in the decades

Fig. 2. Detail of **212**

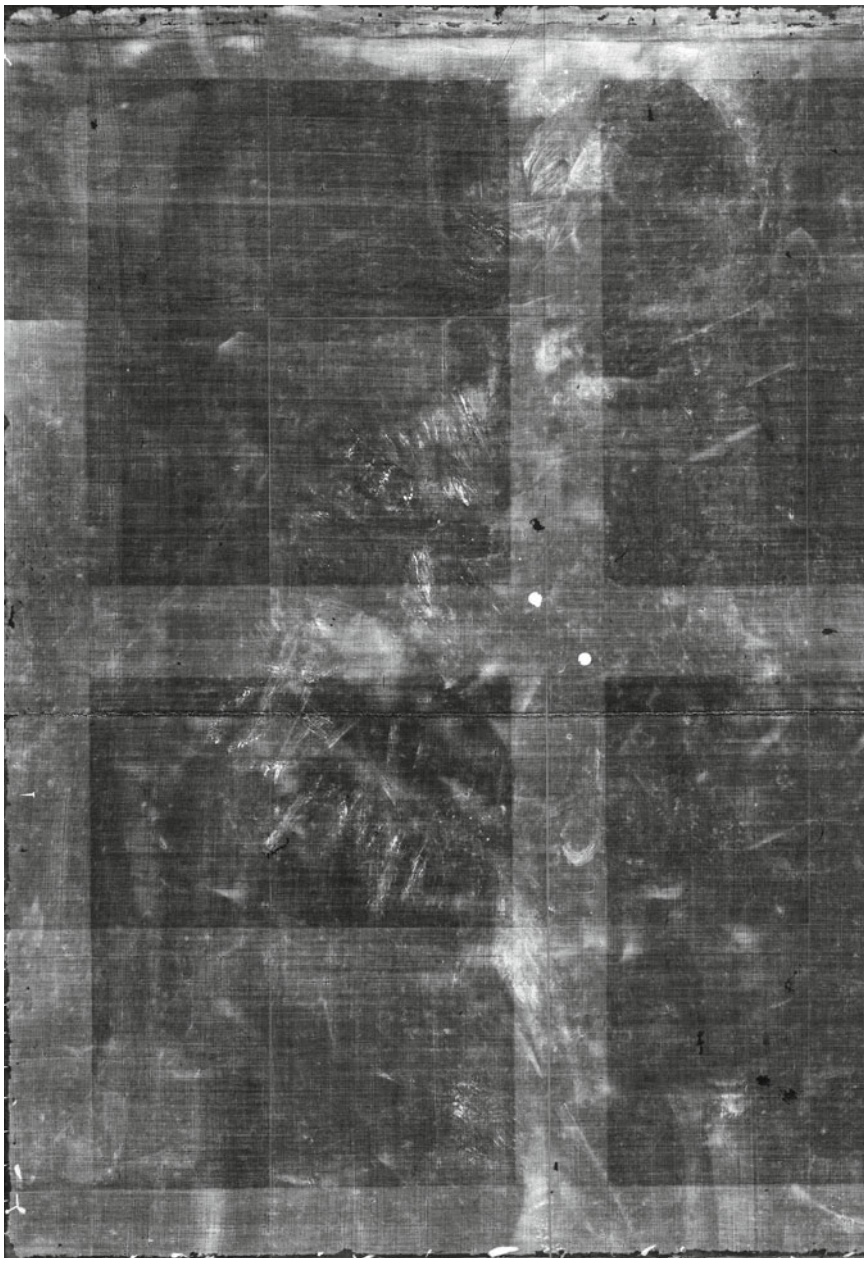


Fig. 3. Radiographic image corresponding with fig. 2.

either before or after (cf. **196**). In the execution of the painting as a whole, in spite of the differences between the two phases of its genesis, one sees the same candour and creative freedom as in so many other works by Rembrandt, from no matter what period of his activity as a painter: it is mainly the scale and facture of the brushstrokes that differentiates the two phases here.

It is evident that the two distinct stages in the painting's genesis match earlier stages of Rembrandt's development as a painter than art-historians had thought. Their estimated datings ranged between 1657 and 1665. Only Bredius with his dating to around 1650 came close to the dating of the two subsequent periods proposed in this Note. The free manner of 'drawing' with a broad brush distinguishable in Saul's attire, especially in the lining of his cloak on his thigh, occurs in the earliest stage of the so-called 'late Rembrandt', around 1652. (Compare, for example the right arm of the *Young Girl at the window* in Stockholm of 1651 **220**; the left arm of *The old man in an armchair* dated 1652 **221**; and the *Hendrikje with fur wrap* **223** – which, for physiognomic and stylistic reasons I also date to around 1652. In particular, see the broadly brushed lines in her right sleeve and earlier phases of that painting visible in the X-ray image of the painting. Later on, Rembrandt would rarely paint with such long strokes of the brush.)

If that stage of the genesis of the painting did indeed occur around 1652, it would mean that the earlier phase of the work originated considerably earlier. There is sufficient evidence to date the first stage of the work on this painting to the mid 1640s. With regard to the play of light and shadow on the face and hands of David, one is struck by the correspondence with a similarly free treatment of this aspect in the nude body of the *Danae*, which Rembrandt had revised around 1643 (see the Plate opposite **194**), and in the angels of the *Holy Family with Angels* from 1645 **198**. There one sees a play of light, shadow and reflected light on the human flesh that is not solely determined by the modelling of the individual forms. It also seems to be governed by a particular freedom in dealing with cloudy patches of muted light. And that is precisely what one finds in the hands and face of David. As already hinted, in that period Rembrandt was striving for greater colourfulness (cf. the *Christ and the woman taken in adultery* from 1644 **196** and the works from 1647, **213**, **214**). One also finds in this period more than before or afterwards the use of the 'pathos formula' of lightly forward-leaning figures **198**, **209**, **211a**. If the earlier dating of the first phase of the *Saul and David* is justified, it would lead to the surprising insight that in the period following the *Night Watch* **190** in 1642, and before the *Aristotle* of 1653 **228** and the *Bathsheba* in 1654 **231**, Rembrandt worked on a monumental (history) piece with life-size figures.

My proposal is that the *Saul and David* should be freed from the limbo of disattribution, to which it was banished by Gerson without adequate reason.

213 Rembrandt, **Susanna and the elders**, *c.* 1638-1647, mahogany panel 76.6 x 92.8 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 55; Br. 516; Bauch 28; Gerson 221; Br./Gerson 516; Tümpel 22; ***Corpus* V 1**; the most thorough analysis of this painting, written mainly by Michiel Franken, is to be found in *Corpus* V 1; see also Sluijter pp. 113-141.
Inscription: at the lower right on the vertical edge of the receding step on which rest the slippers, in black <*Rembrandt.f.[1]647.*> . The inscription shows the letters and the numbers in perspective. Some of the letters appear to have *pentimenti* in an ochreish yellow colour. Above the numbers is a black line, also in perspective; the three legible figures seem to have been slightly strengthened. The unusual degree of care with which the signature has been executed could signify the importance that this painting may have had for its maker.

For the relevant Biblical text (**Daniel 13: 15-21**) see the Note to **144**.

Rembrandt's *Susanna and the Elders* in Berlin is one of the most intriguing paintings of his entire oeuvre. It originated around 1638, but the artist kept the painting in his workshop for *c.* 9 years. In this period he worked on it in two 'waves', the first of which, in *c.* 1642, is exceptionally well documented thanks to a copy of the whole painting accurately drawn by a pupil (see the drawing reproduced opposite Plate **158**). The reliability of this copy is confirmed by the X-radiograph of the painting (*Corpus* V 1; fig. 2). The latter phase of Rembrandt's involvement with the painting in all probability dates to shortly before, or in 1647, when the painting was completed in a freshly altered form and was then signed and sold to Adriaen Banck (see *Doc.* 1659/17).

The significance of this long genesis lies in the insight it gives us into Rembrandt's changing ideas over the representation of movement in his paintings. What seems to have preoccupied him after his work on the first stage of the painting (see opposite Plate **158**) are the poses of the two main protagonists – Susanna and the elder groping at her – and problems regarding the composition of the background and the originally blue sky. Between 1642 and '47 in particular he must have thought deeply about the movements of his figures and other manifestations of what, in a letter of 1639, he had called '*de meeste ende natureelste beweeglijkheid*' (the greatest and most natural effect of movement). From the very beginning of his career as a painter Rembrandt had striven to show his figures as convincingly as possible in motion. In this regard one thinks of the *Stoning of Steven* **5**, the *Abduction of Proserpina* **49** or the *Resurrection of Christ* **163**.

All the changes that Rembrandt introduced in the *Susanna and the elders* after 1642 have to do with cancelling abrupt movements. In order to indicate that this was a dramatic scene Rembrandt had originally painted, to the left of Susanna, several waterfowl taking flight from the pool before the aggressive approach of the elders. Rembrandt now painted these birds out. He also painted out an overturned vase whose contents was shown flowing out into the water. The most radical of these changes concerned the left arm of the foremost elder, originally groping for Susanna's breast. Rembrandt altered this arm and hand so that it no longer made such a violent movement. Now, time seems to be slowed down. Remarkably enough, the painting has become more natural as a result, possibly because more of the story is supplied by our imagination (see on the subject of Rembrandt and motion at the end of the 1630s *Corpus* V pp. 208-212).

214 Rembrandt, **Nocturnal landscape with the Holy Family**, 1647, mahogany panel 33.8 x 47.8 cm. Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland. HdG 88; Br. 576; Bauch 80; Gerson 220; Br./Gerson 576; Tümpel 68; ***Corpus* V 13**; see also *M/W* cat. 214; Waiboer 2005; Franken 2005; *R. Landscapes*, pp. 102-109 and 132-137.
Inscription: at the lower left in black <*Rembrandt. f.1647.*>

For a long time, the subject of the Dublin painting was interpreted in various ways. In 1762 Horace Walpole described it simply as 'A Nightpiece', in 1836 Smith called it 'A Landscape, represented under the aspect of night', and in 1854 Waagen titled it 'Two gipsies by moonlight'. Bode, prompted by the painting's relation to a composition by Elsheimer, discussed below (**fig. 1**), identified the subject as the rest on the flight into Egypt (Bode 1883 pp. 491-492 and 592, no. 261). Although suggested earlier by William Turner in a lecture held in The Royal Academy in London in 1811, this identification only gained general acceptance with Bode's publication.

The seemingly effortless execution of the various light effects underscores the remarkable quality of this small painting and also adds to its convincing spatial effect. The latter feature is further reinforced by the way in which the bank at the left curves toward the

Fig. 1 . A. Elsheimer, *The flight into Egypt*, 1609, copper 31 x 41 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek.

foreground, and in particular by the reflection in the finely rippling water of the group around the fire. Such an extensive reflection is rare in Rembrandt's oeuvre. Another closely related example is seen in *The Mill* in Washington **206**. The complexity of the problems related to the painting of reflections in water was later described by Gerard de Lairesse, who notes: '*The rendering of the reflection in the water is no minor accomplishment.*' (Lairesse I p. 255). He then makes clear that reflection is an essential aspect of the perspectival construction in the depicted space. According to De Lairesse:

> '*It is for this reason that some landscape painters often ignore reflections in water, in order to avoid the problem of perspective.*'

Aside from the choice of the point where the reflected figures in the Dublin picture are cut off by the bank, and the different position in the reflection of the foremost cow's head in relation to that of the kneeling shepherd, the aspect of perspective plays a relatively minor role in the reflections in the present painting. More significant in this connection are De Lairesse's comments with regard to the colour scheme:

> *'Reflections in the water, however dark and clear it is, are never as light as the objects themselves, but always a tone or a half-tone darker.'*

As in **130A**, Rembrandt may have been attempting to emulate and surpass Elsheimer in this painting – or at least to demonstrate how certain solutions are open to improvement. (see also note **130A**)

215 Rembrandt, **Preparatory oil sketch for the etched portrait of Dr Ephraim Bueno** (B. 278), before 1647, panel 19 x 15 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.
HdG 627; Br. 252; Bauch 396; Gerson 263; Br./Gerson 252; Tümpel 210; see also Van de Wetering 2000/01 p. 58; *Jewish R.* pp. 31-33.
Inscription: none

Fig. 1. Rembrandt, *Ephraim Bueno*, 1647. Etching, dry point and burin, 24.1 x 17.7 cm. (B. 278).

Ephraim Bueno (1599-1665) was a Jewish physician, poet, philanthropist and one of the most prominent financiers of the Hebrew publishing house of Menasseh ben Israel. He lived at Houtkopergracht 25 in the same block as Rembrandt. The identification of the sitter in **215** and the etching based on it (**fig. 1**) rests on a tradition that is not entirely certain. The authors of the book published to accompany the exhibition '*The 'Jewish' Rembrandt. The myth unraveled*' write: 'if the tradition is correct, Bueno is the only Jew portrayed by Rembrandt, whose name is known to us. '

Fig. 1. X-ray of **216**

Fig. 2. Detail of **216**: signature.

* **216** Rembrandt, **Portrait of a man reading by candlelight**, 1648, canvas 66.5 x 58 cm. Williamstown, Clark Institute.
HdG VI p. 468; Br. 238; Bauch -; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 238 (as by Barent Fabritius); Tümpel -; see also Chigago 1969 no. 22.
Inscription: above the book ‹Rembrandt.f:/1648> (**fig. 2**) see below.

The portrait of a man reading from the Clark Institute in Williamstown was first published in 1920 by Abraham Bredius in an article in *The*

Burlington Magazine titled 'An Unknown Masterpiece by Rembrandt' (Bredius 1920). At least six other versions of the painting had already been reported by Smith 1836 (VII p. 156) and by Hofstede de Groot in 1916. When one of these versions was attributed to an artist it was usually to Rembrandt's pupil Carel Fabritius, no doubt because of the light background sometimes used by this painter. The date on the version published by Bredius was read by him as 1645, by others as 1643 (as demonstrated below it should be read as 1648). In his 1966 survey of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre, Kurt Bauch considered the painting published by Bredius to be 'the best version of at least four known copies (most of which bear the inscription <*Rembrandt.f.*> and are dated 1643) after a superb lost original, which is perhaps by Carel Fabritius' (Bauch p. 47).

Bauch should be corrected here. Apart from the present painting, no Rembrandt signature can be distinguished on the reproductions of five versions kept in the files of the RKD. These copies are, according to the RKD: 1. 72.4 x 57.7 cm, Johnson collection, Philadelphia; 2. 67 x 58.5 cm, Art-dealer G. Stein, Paris (before 1946); 3. Cte A. de G…, 11-6-1904, no. 23; 4. Canvas 73 x 60 cm, George Petit, Paris, 28-6-1909, no. 27 (as K Fabritius); 5. 72.25 x 67. Richmond Cook coll., Cat. 1914, no. 313 (a print, probably 19th century, is probably based on this version); 6. 73 x 60 cm, Coll. Rath, Budapest. This copy is probably based on no. 5 of this list. Foucart reports the existence of as many as ten copies.

J.Q. van Regteren Altena's reaction to the disattribution by Bauch is, at the very least, a testimony to common sense. Having first observed that Bauch was in the habit of attributing to Fabritius paintings that he rejected as Rembrandts, Altena continued:

> 'The [Bauch's] idea of attributing the three-quarter length reading man to Fabritius I cannot accept. The only basis for this is the surprising invention of profiling the model veiled in shadow against a light background, but not the way it is painted. And was not Rembrandt constantly surprising? Moreover, it is difficult to explain how this piece can several times have been copied after Fabritius and yet with a Rembrandt signature.' (Van Regteren Altena 1967).

The conviction of other investigators of Rembrandt's oeuvre like Bauch, that the painting discussed here was not a work by Rembrandt, implies that they considered the inscription *'Rembrandt.f:/ 1648 (sic).'* to be a false addition. This includes Horst Gerson, who in 1969 begins his brief commentary on the painting by actually stating that 'the signature: *Rembrandt f. 1645* was added later'. Having reintroduced Bauch's idea about Carel Fabritius, Gerson concludes with his own opinion: 'I would prefer an attribution to the young Barent Fabritius' (Br./Gerson 238). This attribution was undoubtedly suggested by the fact that Barent (1624-1673) – probably following the example of his elder brother Carel – sometimes (partially) silhouetted one or more of the figures in his history pieces and other paintings against a light background. Whatever the case, Bauch's and Gerson's opinions on the painting led to its disappearance into an art historical limbo.

Following his work on the exhibition *Rembrandt in America* in 2011-12, George Keyes tried to resurrect the question of a possible attribution of the painting to Rembrandt. In his text for that exhibition he suggested that the signature might, after all, be authentic. Indeed, in its form, facture and the placing of the letters and ciphers, this signature shows the same characteristics which forensic script experts have observed in the Rembrandt signatures they have investigated – and in many cases authenticated – from the period 1632/3 to '42 (Froentjes et al. 1991) (**fig. 2**). Moreover, the 8 is written in an unusual way (which has led to its being mis-read) that shows a striking similarity to that on the only other known works dated 1648, viz. *The supper at Emmaus* in the Louvre **218** and an etching from the same year (B. 176). Comparison of the signature as a whole with the much smaller signatures on these latter two works shows many more convincing similarities.

The signature on the present painting has remained unusually intact (**fig. 2**). Given the reaction to the writing brush by the paint layer to which the signature was applied, and the way in which the slight traces of wear correspond to the relief of that paint layer, it cannot have been introduced – or enhanced – by a much later hand. All the evidence argues for its authenticity. The following observations deal with Rembrandt's activities in the 1640s, particularly the late '40s, that are relevant to the proposed re-attribution of the painting to Rembrandt.

It must have been a crucial moment in the course of Rembrandt's artistic activities when, in 1647, he choose an exceptionally original solution for the lighting in an etched portrait of Jan Six (B. 285). He placed Six with his back to the light entering via a window and allowing his physiognomy to be recognized by illuminating it with reflected light from the pages of a book (or manuscript) in his hands. Both for the patron and the author of the print this was an extremely daring choice, which must have occasioned much admiration among art-lovers (of whom Jan Six himself was of course one). One sees this, for example, from the fact that in 1657 Rembrandt's friend, the art lover Abraham Francen, similarly had himself portrayed with his back to the window, such that the face is largely lit by light reflected from the print he is holding (B. 273). Later Rembrandt would repeat this daring solution in another way **241**. One of his pupils also practiced a variation on this unusual invention (Br. 307).

The fact that the present painting bears the date 1648 is relevant in this context. This was the year after the origin of the etched portrait of Jan Six. Keyes suggested the attractive idea that the work is 'a visual representation of comprehension – the apprehension of an idea gleaned from the text on a printed page' (*Rembrandt in America* p. 129). Certainly, metaphorical allusions were common in 17th-century paintings, but here it is the portrait character of the work that is most conspicuous. The man is portrayed wearing a hat and with his hair cut in the fashion of the time, cf. **215**. He also shows distinctively individual facial features. It is therefore unlikely that either Rembrandt or the sitter would have left the execution of this portrait to a pupil. In judging this painting one also has to take into account the likelihood that the face has darkened somewhat over time. This impression is corroborated by the fact that the face is more clearly visible in some of the copies after the painting (see above).

One of the arguments that could be raised against an attribution of the painting to Rembrandt is the background, which at first sight appears remarkably yellow. From his earliest years, Rembrandt gave the plastered walls that were lit by natural light behind his figures a cool grey-white colour, never a yellow (cf. **20**, **21**, **24**, **29** in 1628/9 up to **319** in *c.* 1665). However, in paintings with a shielded artificial light source, for instance a candle or lamp, as in **25**, **28** or **265**, he gave the wall behind the silhouetted figures (or other silhouetting shapes) a yellow colour. This would be a strong indication that the figure portrayed masks a candle or a lamp. This in turn raises the question of the light source illuminating the hand and book. Are we dealing with a second, invisible light source, i.e. local day-light from outside the image, and is it this light source that illuminates the shoulder and the top edge of the hat? If so we have a situation comparable with **28** where a combination of daylight and candle light is also represented. As so often in the rendering of light effects Rembrandt must have allowed himself a certain creative freedom. However, that is not to deny that this painting should be considered an adventurous experiment with light and shadow. Rembrandt's contemporaries and later painters who were interested in his experiments with light must also have realized as much, which could perhaps explain why there are so many old, as it seems contemporaneous, copies after the present painting.

In relation to the attribution, there is yet another context in which the painting can be considered. If the dating 1648 does indeed indicate the year of its origin – and there is no evidence to the contrary – then the painting would have originated in a period of Rembrandt's activity that is puzzling in many respects. The way in which the years 1643 to '51 constitute an exceptional period in Rembrandt's artistic life has already been discussed on pp. 296/297 of this book. Possibly the most puzzling phase in this period is that between 1647 and 1650/51. Rembrandt hardly painted anything at all. Instead, he was mainly preoccupied with work on exceptionally ambitious etching projects (B. 285, 278, 277, 74, 112, 176, 22) and a probably originally much larger print (B. 126) whose plate was subsequently greatly reduced in size (see *Corpus* V p. 229).

The paintings that preoccupied him in 1647 are the *Susanna and*

the elders, which he completed in that year **213** and the *Nocturnal landscape with the Holy Family* in Dublin **214** wherein Rembrandt perhaps achieved the most daring artificial light, nocturnal effects, backlighting and reflected light effects of his entire career. In 1648 we have only the Paris *Supper at Emmaus* **218** and the present painting (assuming that we accept that as an autograph work). From 1649 no dated painting from his hand survives. The next painting is the *Noli me tangere* in Braunschweig **219** which originated in *c.* 1650. Thus, there appears to have been a void in Rembrandt's development as a painter in which things could have happened that are difficult for us to anticipate. The *Supper at Emmaus* **218** for example is such an exceptional work. It includes subtle still life details incorporated in a setting of architectural elements, which show Rembrandt trying to give the paint, applied in a grainy fashion, a new materiality. In this respect, there is certainly a kinship between that painting and the present work, in which the lit part of the hand is executed with a similar application of roughness in the paint, juxtaposed with a locally finely detailed articulation of forms. In the *Supper at Emmaus*, moreover, a shadowed figure is seen with folded hands catching the light: this figure is shaped with similarly angular contours, whereas in the shaded parts of the figure forms are given rather more detailed attention, again very much like the definition of forms within shadows in the figure in the present painting. Such observations argue for a reattribution of the present painting to Rembrandt.

The genesis of the work is also in line with an attribution to the master. Comparison of the painting with the X-radiograph gives a good idea of the stages of its genesis (**fig. 1**). At first sight, the contour of the reserve for the figure in the background corresponds with what one sees in the painting. But on closer inspection of this X-ray image, one registers in the shape of the hat a marked play of convex and occasional concave segments of the overall contour, and between them, the kinks in this contour that are characteristic of Rembrandt. The left edge of the hat is eventually, probably in accordance with fashion, painted with a fine oval shape over this rather undulating, underlying contour. Also, the course of the bottom edge of the hat's right flap has been changed such that the shape near the forehead is now somewhat convex, while in the X-ray image it is slightly concave. In the rest of the hat too there have been small changes to the contour. The increase in radio-absorbency round the ball of the hat leads one to suspect that the painter has also introduced corrections here.

The book is another passage in the painting that is significant for an understanding of its genesis and ultimately its attribution. The book originally continued further above right and changes have been carried out above the thumb up to the contour of the arm. In this corner of the painting the painter must have executed a complex of subtle interventions, beginning immediately above the book where the background was toned down, in the book itself where the pages loosely folded behind have been given another contour, and with the particularly refined shadow-work on the paper. The X-radiograph also reveals the first design of the hand. Between the paper executed partially in lead white and the lightly under-painted thumb and hand, the painter left an edge that shows up black under X-rays. Subsequently the bulge of the page raised by the reading man's index finger was worked out so that it now overlaps the thumb slightly, giving an enhanced spatial effect. In addition, the thumb and its shadow on the paper were modelled with extreme subtlety with a finely granular paste of paint. The lightly sketched indication of the forefinger and of the other fingers folded beneath the book is 'dissolved' with even greater delicacy in the space and the shadow. Here too an alteration in the contour has played a contributory part. Whereas the reserve from the projecting shoulder of the man's jerkin to the book follows a straight line, in the working out of the painting a kink was introduced with bulging contours on either side, just as the painter had originally wanted to give the hat. This tireless attention to the dynamic of the contours and the play of space, light and shadow, and reflected light is typical of Rembrandt. One finds the observed toning down of light tones in almost every painting by Rembrandt because he almost always tried to further enhance the credibility of the depicted light by a carefully graduated, and often augmented amount of shadow. The way in which the lines on the pages of the book in the reader's hands have been introduced (with the indication of a sub-heading on the right-hand page) is also typical of the way Rembrandt addressed this illusion (see for instance **259**).

The rendering of the face is graphic. The nose passage however seems to have been seriously abraded and was subsequently rather crudely covered with brown paint. It is evident that we are dealing with an overpainting here from the fact that the nose is clearly defined in copies that are known to us. Some of the hairs of the beard are cursorily indicated with light lines, apparently to give some structure and a suggestion of volume in that part of the image.

The handling of contours, the dialogue between the graphic and the painterly, the variation in the *peinture* of the hand, the interplay of loosely brushed and more clearly defined lines in the edge and the pages of the book, and not least the beautifully preserved original signature – all this, and taking into consideration the relation between the painting and the etched *Portrait of Jan Six* and *The supper at Emmaus* from the same year, makes it extremely probable, if not certain, that we have here an autograph work by Rembrandt.

217a Rembrandt or pupil, **Oil study of Christ**, *c.* 1648, panel 25 x 20 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 158; Br. 622; Bauch 215; Gerson 323; Br./Gerson 622; Tümpel 78 (as product of Rembrandt's workshop); see also Slive 1965; Berlin 1975 p. 343; *Face of Jesus* esp. pp. 31-73, 109-145 and 199-249.
Inscription: none

* **217b** Rembrandt or pupil, **Oil study of Christ**, *c.* 1648, panel 25.5 x 20.1 cm. Private Collection. HdG -; Br. 625; Bauch 197; Gerson 256; Br./Gerson 625; Tümpel -; see also *Face of Jesus* pp. 31-73, 212.
Inscription: none

In 1935, from a group of related small panels depicting Heads of Christ, Abraham Bredius attributed six to Rembrandt (Br. 620-625). Slive, in response to the acquisition by the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge Mass. of a hitherto unknown painting of the same type, devoted an article to the entire group (now enlarged by one) in which he suggested that all seven could plausibly be attributed to Rembrandt (Slive 1965). Gerson considered six of the seven to be autograph works by Rembrandt (Br./Gerson 620, 621, 622, 624, 624A, 625), whereas Tümpel accepted only one of them, the Berlin painting, as authentic **217**, whilst he considered those in Cambridge, Detroit and Philadelphia to be works from Rembrandt's workshop and ignored the others.

The group of sketches was seen by Slive (and later also by Gerson) as having a more or less direct relation to the Christ figures in

Fig. 1. **217a** Berlin.

Fig. 2. **217b** Private collection.

Fig. 3. Detroit.

Fig. 4. The Hague.

Fig. 5. Cambridge (Mass).

Fig. 6. Philadelphia.

Fig. 7. Amsterdam.

Rembrandt's so-called *Hundred guilder print* (B. 74) and his *Supper at Emmaus* in Paris from 1648 **218**. His hypothesis would be the main focus of the investigations carried out by Lloyd DeWitt and his colleagues in the years 2007-2011 for the exhibition *Rembrandt and the Face of Jesus*. It was based on the record of '*A head of Christ after life' (Een Christus tronie nae 't leven*) in the 1656 inventory of Rembrandt's estate. This painting was kept in Rembrandt's studio (*Doc.* 1656/12 no. 326). Taking this record together with the related physiognomies of the Heads of Christ mentioned above, Slive inferred that

> 'one of the members of the Jewish community who were his [Rembrandt's] close neighbours on the Breestraat must have sat as the model for the painting listed in the inventory.'

Slive continued:

> 'The same young man may have posed for the paintings now at Detroit, Berlin, Philadelphia [etc] (see **17a** **17b** and **figs. 1-7**): a broad, rather low forehead; high, wide cheekbones; a tapering face; heavy, silky, dark hair parted in the middle; a thin moustache, and a beard that hardly covers his square chin. There are certain differences as well as some similarities with the features of the figure represented in the painting now at The Hague (**fig. 4**). Perhaps Rembrandt used a different model for this sketch, but, on the other hand, he could have used the same one and taken greater liberty in transforming his model into a Christ-type. After all, in these studies Rembrandt was not concerned with making realistic portraits. He used the model as a point of departure to show attitudes and expressions which depict Christ's character: his humility, his mildness, his inner preoccupations.' (Slive 1965 p. 410).

With the recent restoration of the *Supper at Emmaus* in Paris, the time seemed ripe to subject the entire group of seven heads of Christ to a thorough investigation. This initiative led to a Franco-American project involving various art historians and scientists. It resulted in the exhibition mentioned above that was presented in 2011 in Paris and Philadelphia and in 2012 in Detroit. The book with the title *Rembrandt and the face of Jesus* which accompanied that exhibition will be referred to below as *Face of Jesus*. Quotations from that book will be indicated with the relevant page number.

Together with physicists Mark Tucker and Ken Sutherland, the art historian Lloyd DeWitt investigated the seven heads of Christ accepted by Slive with respect to questions of attribution, dating, painting technique, state of conservation etc. This project resulted in a technical analysis of these seven works, designated as the core-group, and several related Heads of Christ and other works. The work on the core-group resulted in technical information with infrared photographs/reflectograms and X-radiographs.

As to the question of which of these works could have been executed by Rembrandt himself, DeWitt et al. refrained from expressing any definitive conclusion. In a sub-chapter of their book titled 'Connoisseurship and condition' (pp. 43-45), DeWitt defended his team's view that, in the end, old paintings such as the present Heads of Christ do not readily submit to connoisseurial judgment:

> 'Changes in the original paint materials such as blanching have only more recently been studied in detail in Rembrandt's paintings. Such study contributes to a growing awareness of the degree to which inherent alterations may further compromise fundamental pictorial qualities, such as tonal relationships and spatial effects, on which connoisseurship depends.' (p. 44).

The discussion around the attribution of these Heads of Christ thus seemed to have become pointless; even hanging together the paintings concerned in the planned exhibitions would not change that position.

> 'If the paintings did look very similar initially, as the appearance and handling of their materials suggest they must have, their varying states of preservation impose spurious differences among them while obscuring subtler variations that would have been visible in their original state.'

Elsewhere in their book (p. 112), however, DeWitt claimed that

> 'the essay by Tucker, DeWitt, and Sutherland in this volume has laid out how these works [the core-group of seven Heads of Christ] form a consistent group and belong to the same moment.'

Used in this context, DeWitt certainly seems to stretch the meaning of the word 'moment' when he states:

> 'The Heads of the Christ, which Rembrandt probably began as models for his *Supper at Emmaus* panel of 1648, stand out as the largest such group among his many small oil sketches, suggesting that the project to develop a new model of Jesus "after life" expanded once underway.'

In this way, like Slive before him, DeWitt seems to have glossed over the problem of attribution; leaving one to assume that the seven Heads of Christ of the core-group are all from Rembrandt's hand. They constitute, as DeWitt explained, part of a project that 'expanded once underway': to be specific, the dendrochronological data reveal that four of the Heads of Christ could well have originated (though not certainly) before 1648 (Berlin **217a**, Philadelphia (**fig. 6**), The Hague (**fig. 4**), Private Collection **217b**). Three certainly could not (Detroit (**fig. 3**), Cambridge (**fig. 5**), Amsterdam (**fig. 7**)); these must have originated in the period not long after 1655, while the Amsterdam exemplar was probably painted in or after the mid-1650s. From the appendix that Slive added to his 1965 article, with catalogue entries devoted to each of the seven paintings, it is evident that the reigning assumption in his time was that the whole group had originated in or around 1648.

Now that the duration of Rembrandt's 'project' of Christ after life was shown to have lasted rather longer, its aim also became less obvious than had initially been assumed. While Slive and Gerson still thought that these small paintings were studies made in preparation of several works originating in close succession around 1648 with Jesus in the main role, DeWitt now had to assume another, wider purpose, which he described as the aim 'to develop a new model of Jesus 'after life'', a formulation which derives from the item listed in the inventory of Rembrandt's estate: '*A head of Christ from life*' (*Een Christus tronie nae 't leven*). DeWitt elaborated on Slive's hypothesis (cited above).

DeWitt's suggestion that over the late 40s and early 50s Rembrandt consciously worked on the development of this new image of Jesus – wanting to give him a new 'face' – is an interesting idea.

As George Keyes put it in his introductory essay in the same book:

> 'considerably earlier in his career Rembrandt represented Christ as a powerful and active presence' (p. 3).

Works such as those reproduced in Plates **4**, **25**, **48**, **52**, **105**, **111**, **112**, **127**, **145**, **196** and the etchings B. 69, 71, 73, 88 do indeed, in Keyes' words, 'portray a Christ whose actions are emphatic and decisive'.

Lloyd DeWitt, whose central essay in the same book (pp. 109-145) is sub-titled 'Rembrandt's radical new image of Jesus', concentrated mainly on the new type of face that Rembrandt gave Jesus as represented in the core group discussed in this Note. According to DeWitt it is clear that Jesus' previous type of face in the works referred to by Keyes (see above) refers to one of the *archeiropoieta*, the sacred icons made without human hand, familiar examples of which are the Sudarium (the veil of Veronica), or the Shroud of Turin. DeWitt claims that another of the *archeiropoieta,* the Mandylion of Edessa, had indirectly influenced Rembrandt's earlier Jesus image. The Mandylion is a likeness of Jesus miraculously imprinted on a cloth that Jesus held to his face, and which he sent to Edessa to heal its King, Abgar. That allegedly Byzantine image of Jesus had been most influential in Northern European Art since the Middle Ages: typically, Jesus has a high forehead and shallow (i.e. not deeply incised) feminine features. DeWitt recognizes this type in Rembrandt's *Incredulity of Thomas* **127**, in the *Christ and his disciples in Gethesemane* from 1634 **111** and also again in his *Christ and the woman taken in adultery* from 1644 **196**.

The Lentulus letter

DeWitt continues:

> 'The authority of the Byzantine image in northern Europe was further propagated through an apocryphal written source called the 'Lentulus letter', a description of the physical appearance of Jesus that according to legend was sent by a certain Publius Lentulus to the Roman senate during Christ's lifetime' (pp. 121/122).

Although this text is now generally regarded as a mediaeval fake, its influence must have been considerable. It is curious that DeWitt should minimize the possible significance of the Lentulus Letter for his research, despite the fact that Rembrandt's pupil Samuel van Hoogstraten included this text *in toto* in his book on the art of painting, in the section where he reviews the ways in which the various figures important for a history painter can be recognizably portrayed (SvH p. 105). Before quoting this originally Latin text in its entirety, it is worth quoting DeWitt's commentary on the fact that the Lentulus letter is featured by Hoogstraten without DeWitt seriously connecting it with the main topic of his book *Rembrandt and the face of Jesus*:

> 'However groundbreaking his innovation (i.e. his face of Jesus after an Amsterdam Jewish model), Rembrandt failed to convince even some of his pupils of the validity of his new model.' (p. 129).

In Van Hoogstraten's 1649 painting *The incredulity of Thomas* (**fig. 8**), Jesus retains the high forehead and shallow, feminine features found in Rembrandt's 1634 panel of this subject **127**. DeWitt continues: 'Although Van Hoogstraten was skeptical about the authenticity of the Lentulus letter, in his 1678 treatise he nonetheless

Fig. 8. S. van Hoogstraaten, *The incredulity of Thomas*, 1649, panel 47 x 60 cm. Mainz, Mittelrheinisches Landesmuseum.

recommended it as the best available literary source for young artists to follow. '*Be it real or fiction*,' Hoogstraten wrote, "*we will restrict ourselves to that which tradition attributes to the Roman Lentulus.*" DeWitt goes on: 'His [Hoogstraten's] view was typical, and we seldom find Rembrandt's pupils following their master's innovation.' (p. 130) DeWitt is perhaps rather over-hasty here in his assumption of the Rembrandt-Hoogstraten relationship. In *Corpus* V Chapter I, I tried to show how a great many of the principles and practice taught by Rembrandt to his pupils can be found to be reflected in Hoogstraten's treatise on the art of painting from 1678. DeWitt overlooks the chronology of events under discussion here. When Hoogstraten painted his *Incredulity of Thomas* dated 1649 (**fig. 8**), his apprenticeship with Rembrandt, which lasted *c.* 1643-46, was already three years behind him (Roscam Abbing 1993 pp. 34-35). Rembrandt almost certainly developed his new face of Jesus after Hoogstraten's training period; while Hoogstraten's attention could have been drawn to the Lentulus letter at any time between leaving Rembrandt and 1678, when his book was published. Another factor which plays a role in the chronology of events is that the *100 Guilder Print,* which was usually dated to 1649 now has to be dated, on the basis of paper-historical research (Hinterding 2008 pp. 157-158) to 1648. It may well be that Rembrandt himself only became acquainted with the Lentulus letter in that year. In any case, DeWitt's proposal that the Lentulus letter played no part in Rembrandt's creation of a new image of Jesus is disputable.

This is the point at which that document needs to be considered further and in doing so I shall make use of Murray Pearson's translation of the text as found in Hoogstraten's *Hooge schoole*.

> *'Honourable Fathers! A man still living is known to us of great powers, named Jesus Christ, called by the people a Prophet of Truth, but his Disciples call him the Son of God, he raises the dead, and cures the sick. In appearance he is noble, average [in height] but distinguished; his countenance instils great respect, such that his beholders must love and revere him; his hair is the colour of ripe hazelnut, parted above, in the style of the Nazarenes, smooth to the ears, but further below with round curls, shining yellow and falling from his shoulders; he has a smooth brow, his face is without spot or wrinkle, his cheeks are heightened by a pink colour, there is nothing on his body that could be censured; his beard is large and full, not long but forked in the middle; the gaze of his eyes shows simplicity, but tempered by maturity; his eyes are clear and awesome, never about to laugh, but more inclined to weep; he has straight hands, and his arms are exceptionally beautiful; he is a man of few words, and very well-mannered in all his dealings with others; and finally he is the finest of all mankind.'*

While DeWitt sees Lentulus' text (quoted in part in *Face of Jesus* p. 22) as another example of the image of Jesus after a Byzantine model, one actually finds no reference in the Lentulus letter to Jesus having 'a high forehead, shallow and feminine features', the features of the Byzantine model postulated by DeWitt. Moreover, DeWitt takes no account of the fact that the text describes Jesus' external appearance

> 'his hair is the colour of ripe hazelnut parted above […] smooth to the ears, but further below with round curls, shining yellow and falling from his shoulders' and 'his beard is large and full, not long but forked in the middle'.

This description does not conflict with what one sees in the seven oil sketches with Heads of Jesus, in the *100 Guilder Print* (B. 74), the Paris *Supper at Emmaus* **218** or the Braunschweig *Noli me tangere* **219**. The impression given by Jesus' appearance according to the Lentulus letter (reflecting his '*inner life*'), is one that corresponds far more closely to the Jesus in those works originating round and after 1648 – characterized (in Keyes' words) by 'a sublime stillness and serenity' – than the Jesus of Rembrandt's earlier representations, in which Christ is shown as a 'powerful and active presence', 'whose actions are empathic and decisive'.

By a curious coincidence, at the time of DeWitt's project I had become involved with a specific aspect of Jesus' appearance in Rembrandt's works from the '40s and '50s, the proportions of his body, i.e. the ratio of head to the whole body length H:BL (Head to Body lengths; H, from crown to chin; BL, body length including the head). The question was whether Rembrandt could have been interested in a canon of human proportions, an aspect largely influenced by the culture of classical antiquity and the various phases of classicism. Moreover, had Joachim von Sandrart not written in 1675 that Rembrandt '*was not afraid to turn his back on all our rules of art such as the rules of anatomy and human proportions*' (Sandrart/Peltzer p. 202). It occurred to me that Rembrandt's standing, full-length Christ figures in this period always have about the same proportions of H:BL = 1:7.5 (in so far as his way of painting and drawing on the etching plate allows Christ's proportions to be measurable) (see *Corpus* V p. 44 fig. 50). Where Christ is described in the Lentulus letter as '*In appearance […] noble, average but distinguished*', the word 'average' (*medioris* in the original Latin text) may be of significance. We know that Rembrandt must have been thoroughly familiar with Dürer's *Four Books on Human Proportions* (bound in a single volume). Not only did he possess that book (probably in the Dutch translation published in 1622), he must have studied Dürer's ideas intensively (*Corpus* V pp. 38-44). He would thus have learned from Book II that Dürer's many anthrometric studies had led him to the average proportions for an adult human of *c.* 1:7.5 (H:BL).

From the fact that Lentulus' Jesus is described as 'average [in height]' and that Rembrandt systematically depicted him with the 1:7.5 (H:BL) proportions, I am led to believe (with the necessary reservation, of course) that Rembrandt not only knew the letter but also used it for his image of Jesus in his works from the '40s and '50s (see *Corpus* V p. 44 fig. 50). The obvious inference is that he would also have paid attention to other aspects of Lentulus' description, specifically his account of Jesus' face, hairstyle and beard. Of course, this does not mean that Rembrandt could not also have used a model. The *'Christus tronie nae 't leven'* listed in the inventory suggests that he did. But it would seem more likely that his choice of model would have been determined by Lentulus' description than randomly picking a young Jewish man from the Breestraat to pose for him. DeWitt's essay 'Testing Tradition against nature' (pp. 109-145) could perhaps have been more helpfully titled 'Fitting the choice of model to Lentulus' description of Jesus'.

In the context of this problem of Rembrandt's changing his image of Jesus, one may wonder whether it is possible to point to the time when Rembrandt became aware of the content of the Lentulus letter. In the case of Rembrandt's representation of the infant Jesus and other small children it seemed possible to identify with remarkable precision when he must have first become acquainted with Albrecht Dürer's Books on Human Proportions: some moment in 1635. The infant Jesus in the *Holy Family* in Munich from 1634 and the Ganymede from 1635 both have body proportions approximating to the 1:5 H:BL proportions that Karel van Mander prescribed for representing small children: '*they are five heads high*' (KvM Cap. 3:14). In that same year 1635 and in the following period Rembrandt, however, etched and drew remarkably many children with the proportions 1:4 (*Corpus* V pp. 38-43). Dürer gave exactly those 1:4 proportions to the only small child whose proportions he recorded. (One suspects that this was an, in the end unsuccessful effort to standardize the proportions of the infant Jesus.)

It will require further investigation to demonstrate when painters in the Netherlands such as Rembrandt could have had access to the content of the Lentulus letter. The Latin text was already available on a print by Hans Burgkmair from 1532 (*Face of Jesus* p. 122), but perhaps Rembrandt only later had access to a Dutch translation and preferred to use that though having some knowledge of Latin.

The problem of attribution

For the purpose of this book, the question of whether all seven works from the core-group of Heads of Christ are painted by Rembrandt is more urgent than the question, in itself highly intriguing, of Rembrandt's evolving image of Jesus.

With a view to the possibility of answering this question, it is important to point out first of all that, apart from the '*Christ's head after life*' (*Christus tronie naer 't leven*) already mentioned (*Doc.* 1656/12 no. 326) (whose author – although not actually named – because the painting was found in his studio – was most likely Rembrandt), there were another two '*Heads of Christ*' in the house which are both explicitly recorded as painted by Rembrandt (*Doc.* 1656/12 nos. 115 and 118). Given this information, and the fact that they were still in Rembrandt's possession in 1656, plus the fact that Rembrandt is found to have kept a number of his sketches of various kinds (see Note **161**), it is not unlikely that these, like the Christ *tronie* recorded in Rembrandt's studio, could have been sketches of the type discussed here, if not one or more of the seven of the core-group dealt with by Slive and DeWitt et al. If so, it would mean that one or more of the seven small Heads of Christ could have been from Rembrandt's hand.

There is no more precise documentation of the core group of seven. For a possible solution to the attribution problem we must rely on to stylistic investigation and observation of painting technique and quality in combination with such data as have emerged from the research project of Tucker, DeWitt, Sutherland and the wood biologist Peter Klein. First of all, it should be stated that in the case of all seven paintings a technique for painting on panel was used that was not specific to Rembrandt's workshop but was in common use: a panel that had first been given a white filler/ground was evenly covered with a thin layer of yellow-brown paint. On this, using semi-transparent dark brown paint, a sketch was painted such that tonal differences arise through differences in thickness of this paint layer corresponding to the relation between light and shadow and other tonal differences (e.g. between hair, human flesh, clothing and background). This sketch is so executed that a monochrome image of the planned painting is created (see also Plate **238**). Next, the painting's background is more or less worked out and subsequently the figure is worked out in colour and tone and placed in its pictorial space. This is a very rapid way of working which ensures that the painter already has a generalized picture of

the desired image before his eyes in the first stages of the work. It is also possible that a very first sketch is made with white chalk, the visible traces of which disappear when the chalk comes into contact with oil paint or varnish. Some painters, including Rembrandt, were in the habit of sometimes 'heightening' the lightest passages in their monochrome sketch with light, lead white-containing paint (*Painter at Work* pp. 31-32). The characteristic – and advantage – of this technique is that, when working out the painting, intermediate tones in the monochrome semi-transparent sketch often do not need to be covered with opaque paint of the right tone (which can often only be obtained by mixing in white paint). The painting thus retains a pleasing looseness and luminosity, even in the shadow passages or dark tones.

When seven same-sized paintings with the same subject – the bust of Christ in a brown habit – are painted by several different hands using this technique, each time on more or less the same scale and in Rembrandt's style, they can have such a similar appearance that they appear at first to be from one and the same hand. This is what makes the problem of attribution particularly difficult in this case. Technical investigations using X-radiography infra-red reflectography can however reveal individual differences in working habits, though one must be careful in drawing comparisons between such images because they can have been produced under differing circumstances. It can be seen in the X-radiographs that some painters added lead white with almost all gradations of lit flesh-tones (**fig. 9**), while others, including Rembrandt, try to avoid this as far as possible (**fig. 10**). Typical differences in their way of working can also be seen in the infrared reflectographic images. In some, the brush movements are relatively broad (**fig. 11**); in others much more elaborate (**fig. 12**). In some paintings one encounters childlike faults in draughtsmanship – as in the Amsterdam painting (**fig. 7**) – while in others one finds repentirs, as in the Detroit painting where indications of Jesus' hands were painted originally (**fig. 12**).

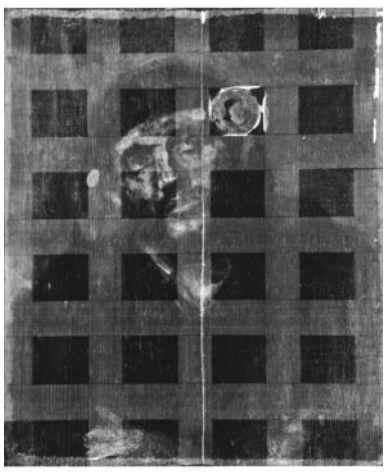


Fig. 9. X-ray of fig. 3.

Fig. 10. X-ray of fig. 6.

Fig. 11. IRR of fig. 4.

Fig. 12. IRR of fig. 3.

Fig. 13. IRR of **217a**

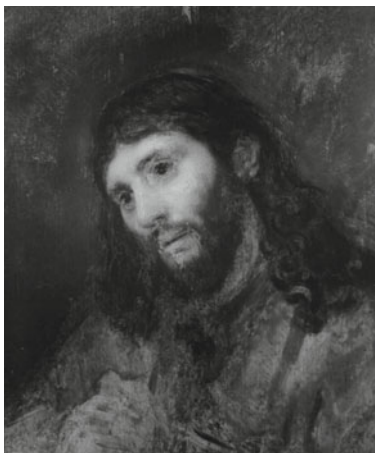


Fig. 14. IRR of **217b**

Comparison of all the available technical images reproduced in *Face of Jesus* leads one to the conclusion that not all seven paintings of the core group can have been painted by the same hand. Taking all the evidence (which is beyond the scope of this book to set out fully) into consideration, I believe there may be two works from that core group that are by Rembrandt's hand, the one in Berlin **217a** and the one in a private collection **217b**. In this context it is interesting that the Berlin *Head of Christ* is painted on a panel of secondary quality, the grain of the wood running horizontally. Rembrandt painted other sketches on inferior supports (see Note **277**). In **217a** and **217b** the manner of sketching, visible in the infra-red image (**figs. 13** and **14**), is strongly reminiscent of Rembrandt's way of sketching with the brush. In **217b** Christ's hands, evidently folded in prayer, and the posture of the head and the upward-directed eye, suggest that this sketch was made in connection with a scene with *Christ praying in the Garden of Gethsemane*.

The evidence presented above, together with the results of dendrochronological investigation, rules out the possibility of the seven Heads of Christ of the core group being part of one project. All five of the remaining sketches appear to be from different hands. In my view, we are dealing mainly with free variants by pupils, some of them painted quite some time after Rembrandt had painted the prototype(s) (regarding free variants from Rembrandt's workshop see Chapter II (fig. 3).

218 Rembrandt, **The supper at Emmaus**, 1648, mahogany panel 68 x 65 cm. Paris, Louvre. HdG 145; Br. 578; Bauch 82; Gerson 218; Br./Gerson 578; Tümpel 69; ***Corpus* V 14**; see also *Face of Jesus*.
Inscription: at the lower left in black paint <*Rembrandt. f 1648*>

From the very beginning there were differences of opinion within the RRP about the authenticity of this painting – the negative view being largely determined by an *a priori* assumption concerning Rembrandt's stylistic development, viz. that Rembrandt's style had developed consistently from 'fine' to 'rough'. Because there are some extremely finely painted passages in this painting, it did not conform to that *a priori* idea of Rembrandt's evolution (see Chapter I p. 38). *Corpus* V 14 sets out the argumentation supporting my conviction that there can be no reasonable doubt that this is an autograph work by Rembrandt.

There are several reasons for wondering whether the support of **218**, whose height slightly exceeds its width, still has its original format. In the first place, it is the only panel used by Rembrandt or members of his circle that we know of with these unusual proportions. Secondly, certain parts, such as the dog and the hat to the left of the left disciple, are partially cropped. Moreover, the left pilaster is not shown to its full width, while the painter clearly devoted much attention to the symmetry of the architectural setting. It would be more logical if the composition continued further to the left; in which case it is likely that a window was originally included in the composition. In this context, it is significant that two of the three paintings related to this work (*Corpus* V 16 and a painting by Gerbrand van den Eeckhout (**figs. 1** and **2**)), with the same scene and a similar staging, both include a window. The third, the Copenhagen *Supper at Emmaus* (*Corpus* V 15), has a curtain in the same place. All these three derivatives of the present painting are arranged in a horizontal, rectangular format. If the painting under discussion originally had a rectangular format, it would certainly have been a horizontal rectangle as the wood grain runs in this direction. One could also conclude that something is missing on the right side, considering that the right door post is so very close to the edge of the panel.

Fig. 1. Unknown painter, '*The supper at Emmaus*', canvas 50.5 x 64 cm. Paris, Louvre.

Fig. 2. Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *The supper at Emmaus*, 1655, canvas 63 x 80 cm. Rome, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica.

219 Rembrandt, **Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene**, '**Noli me tangere**', 1650 or slightly later, canvas 65 x 79 cm. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum. HdG 143; Br. 583; Bauch 83; Gerson 269 (some connection with Samuel van Hoogstraten); Br./Gerson 583 (some connection with Samuel van Hoogstraten); Tümpel 70***** (not completely convinced of the work's authenticity); ***Corpus* V 18** (as an autograph work); see also Klessmann 1988.

Inscription: at the bottom right, in black <*Rembrandt.f.165[.]*>. The last digit is so damaged that it must be considered irrevocably lost. In view of the painting's overall poor condition, one wonders whether the whole signature was retouched by a later hand. Because of the present condition of the varnish layer, however, this question cannot be answered. The frequently cited date of 1651 is therefore open to discussion. The execution of parts of Mary Magdalene's face and the ointment jar are reminiscent of similar sections in the Paris *Supper at Emmaus* of 1648 **218**. Given these similarities, the first three digits *165*, and the great changes in Rembrandt's style in 1651/'52, 1650 would seem to be the most likely dating of the painting.

For the relevant text from the Bible (**John 20: 16-17**) see the Note to **158**.

When the Duke of Braunschweig-Lüneburg's Schloss Salzdahlum was expanded in 1709/10, this painting was hung in a room that was partially built over a canal. Apparently climatic conditions were so unfavourable that the work had to be restored several times within a short period (Fink 1967 pp. 35-36). This episode in the painting's material history may explain why the paint layer is so seriously damaged and why the original aspect of the painting is more than usually disturbed. The X-radiographs, however, provide insight into a complex genesis which, as is the case with several other works from Rembrandt's middle period, evinces the painter's ongoing search for solutions to compositional and narrative problems in this phase of his career (see **196**, **206**, **213**). Gerson, who did not have these X-ray images at his disposal, cautiously noted that

> '(t)he picture is now so dark and thin that it is difficult to judge properly the painterly qualities of the surface, which may have suffered from abrasion. Some connection with the work of Samuel van Hoogstraten seems likely.'

Tümpel, probably for the same reasons, also let it be known that he was not entirely convinced of the work's authenticity.

However, it seems highly likely that this painting is the one mentioned in a contemporary document, where it is explicitly described as a work from the hand of Rembrandt. This document is a poem by Rembrandt's friend Jeremias de Decker (1609-1666), first published in 1660 in the *Hollantsche Parnas*. The poem deals with a painting with Christ and Mary Magdalene by Rembrandt:

'On the Representation of The Risen Christ and Mary Magdalene,
Painted by the excellent Master Rembrant van Rijn, [the poem being dedicated] *to H.F. Waterloos.*

When I read the story as told us by Saint John,
and beside it I see this artful scene,
Where (I wonder) did brush ever follow pen so closely,
in bringing lifeless paint so close to life?

It seems that Christ is saying: Mary, tremble not.
It is I; Death has no part of your Lord.
She, believing this, but not being wholly convinced,
appears to vacillate between joy and grief, between fear and hope.

The grave-rock rising high in the air, as art requires,
and richly shadowed,
dominates the painting and gives majesty
to the whole work. Your masterful strokes,
friend Rembrandt, I first saw move on this panel.
Thus my pen was able to rhyme of your talented brush
and my ink to speak of the fame of your paints.'

Formerly, the poem was generally thought to refer to the London *Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene* of 1638 **158**. Klessmann, however, convincingly argued that it actually pertained to the Braunschweig painting (Klessmann 1988).

The significance of De Decker's poem for the question of attribution of the Braunschweig *Noli me tangere* under discussion is contained in the passage: '*Your masterful strokes, friend Rembrandt, I first saw move on this panel*'. This line could be interpreted as a comment on Rembrandt's masterful handling of the brush; but an alternative explanation is that De Decker was actually observing the painting as it was being created in Rembrandt's studio.

Rembrandt and De Decker must have felt a strong kinship in the way they both practised their art. In 1651 De Decker published his moving book-length poem *Goede Vrijdag* (Good Friday) on which he

Fig. 1. Detail of **219**

Fig. 2. X-Ray of **219** (detail).

must have labored in the same period that Rembrandt was working on, or shortly after he had completed, the present *Noli me tangere*. The two men shared the ability to relive imaginatively the events of Christ's Passion.

An alteration made by Rembrandt during the genesis of the work, visible in the X-radiograph (**figs. 1** and **2**), is tentatively proposed here as indicating his need for a revision of the iconography of the painting. Taking into account the shadowy, vertical reserve near Jesus' right arm, which appears originally to have hung down, and the fact that the reserve for this lower arm continues to the ground, one could speculate that this Christ figure – like the one in the London *Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene* of 1638 **158** – originally held a shovel, and was thus initially depicted as a gardener. In comparison with the London painting, the Braunschweig work in its present state depicts a later moment in the story as described in the Gospel of Saint John. The fact that Mary Magdalene looks up and hesitantly extends her right hand covered by her veil denotes her *recognition* of Christ. Further emphasis of this moment of recognition is provided by the halo visible around Christ's head in the painting. It has been previously noted that Rembrandt sometimes introduced radical changes in a painting for primarily narrative reasons – for example, in the London *Lamentation* **113** of 1634/35. The formal and narrative transformations which that grisaille underwent are analyzed in *Corpus* III A 107.

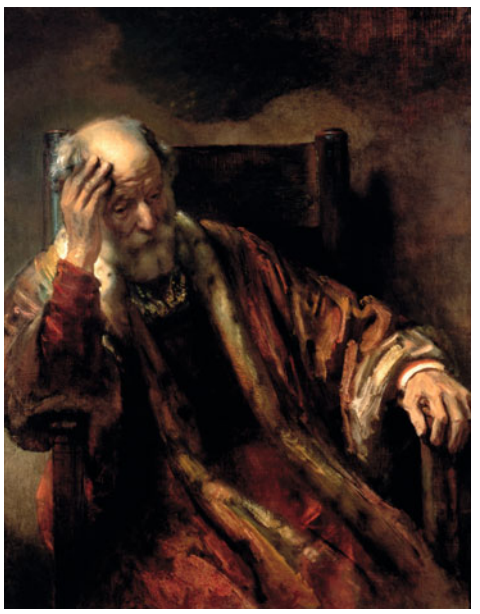
The idea is raised in *Corpus* V 18 (p. 515) that, for theological reasons, Jeremias de Decker might have had a hand in Rembrandt's ultimate decision to depict the 'noli me tangere' at this very moment in the biblical narrative rather than Christ as a gardener.

220 Rembrandt, **Girl at a window**, 1651, canvas 78 x 63 cm. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum. HdG 330; Br. 377; Bauch 269; Gerson 285; Br./Gerson 377; Tümpel 150; see also Stockholm 2005 pp. 405-408; Copenhagen 2006 no. 13. Inscription: on the window sill ‹*Rembrandt f. 1651*›

With many of Rembrandt's paintings, their *raison d'être* is problematic. The present painting is a case in point. Should it be considered a genre piece? A young girl looking out of a window was a favourite theme in the 17th century. Or should one see it rather as a portrait – possibly of a serving girl from Rembrandt's household? Or is it perhaps no more than a (roughly executed) *trompe l'oeil*? Given its date 1651 this is perhaps the first painting from his late period in which Rembrandt used the so-called 'rough manner', so it could well be a painting that is mainly concerned with the art of painting itself. It would accordingly be more of an experiment in the art of painting, eliminating the other options mentioned above. But perhaps it is all these things simultaneously: a favourite theme with the characteristics of a *trompe l'oeil* for which Rembrandt's kitchen maid posed, since Rembrandt did not usually conduct his experiments in the art of painting without a model. The French collector Roger de Piles recorded the (perhaps true) anecdote that a serving girl has posed for the *trompe l'oeil* painting *Girl leaning on a stone window sill* (see Note **200**). There is thus no reason why a young help in the household should not similarly have posed for the girl in the present painting (compare **182**). But none of this need obscure the possibility that this painting perhaps documents the first time that the so-called 'late Rembrandt' reveals himself in a painting with a life-size figure.

Incidentally, what should one make of the minute mosquito- or fleabite in the middle of the back of the girl's left hand? Anyone who closely considers this forearm and wrist, and the back of the hand with only a vague indication of the knuckles, will find a marvel of subtlety in the rendering of human skin. On the fist on which the girl rests her head can be seen a red spot that fades away at its edge. It has to be an insect bite. Why did Rembrandt paint this skin blemish? Just as in the 15th century the rendering of wood or stone was more convincing if some small, true to life damage was added (Van de Wetering 1996 p. 417), or just as Johannes Vermeer painted a small hole in a plastered wall or a nail with its own shadow, so the skin of the back of the girl's left hand appears more skin-like with this insect bite. In several of Rembrandt's self-portraits one finds pimples, minor blemishes, on the skin (see **19** and **274**): Rembrandt must have considered them useful in achieving a convincing rendering.

* **221** Rembrandt, **Old man in an armchair**, 1652, canvas 111 x 88 cm. London, National Gallery. HdG 292; Br. 267; Bauch 206; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 267 (as not by Rembrandt); Tümpel A47 (as from an unknown collaborator in Rembrandt's studio); see also McLaren 1960 (as by Rembrandt); Brown 1991 (as by a follower of Rembrandt); *Art in the Making II* no. 25 (as by a follower of Rembrandt). Inscription: top right corner ‹*Rembrandt f. 1652*›



After 1969 the *Old man in an armchair*, which had previously been considered to be a major work by Rembrandt, was more and more relegated to the National Gallery's storeroom, where it was to spend more time than on public exhibition over the ensuing years. This gradual change in the work's status was the consequence of a few sentences written by Horst Gerson in his 1969 revised edition of Bredius' survey of Rembrandt's paintings:

> 'Imposing as the mood is, however, the overall structure of the picture – and in particular the "painterly" execution of the beard and the fur coat, as well as the right hand – is very weak, and even contradictory. The old man's left hand and the sleeve, for example, are conceived in a different style, one that is superficially powerful and impressionistic. These differences are not to be found in Rembrandt's autograph portraits from this great period, as may be seen by comparing Br. 266, Br. 268 and Br. 276 (**225**, **226**, **233** respectively).'

As so often observed in the present book, a negative comment by Gerson could set the tone for others' future judgment of a work. This is the case with the present painting, which is evident from Christopher Brown's revision of the relevant entry in the National Gallery of London *Dutch School* catalogue. Brown's evaluation of the painting is little more than a paraphrase of Gerson's text (quoted above) with the main argument that it differs too greatly from Rembrandt's genuine portraits from this period.

But the *Old man in an armchair* is evidently not a portrait (in the sense that it was not intended by painter and sitter to be a likeness of the latter); a true portrait of someone in this posture would not have been conceivable before the 19th century.

In slightly different wording the same assessment is again found in the relevant entry in the National Gallery's second edition of *Art in the Making II* (no. 25), where the painting is included in the category of 'Followers of Rembrandt'. The data from technical investigations summarized in that entry provide no evidence that would conflict with an attribution to Rembrandt and a dating of 1652, yet the authors close their entry with a judgment based on Gerson's and Brown's verdict, adding some further characterizations of style and quality. They conclude:

> 'Therefore, for the time being the attribution to an anonymous pupil or follower of Rembrandt must remain.'

Fig. 1. Signature of **221** applied on the semi-transparent vertical brush strokes in the upper background.

It can be safely assumed that the *Old man in an armchair* originated in 1652. The signature placed in the top right corner, < *Rembrandt f. 1652* >, does not essentially differ from reliable signatures from the period and shows traces of wear which jibe with the condition of the paint on to which it has been applied (**fig. 1**). In the following discussion, the date 1652 is most significant because it tells us that the painting originated at an early stage of the period usually referred to as 'the late Rembrandt'. The year 1652 also witnessed the portrait of Nicolaes Bruyningh **226** and possibly also the portrait of an unknown man in Buscot Park **225**; but these two works basically conform to the existing portrait conventions of the time and (as indicated above) are for this reason not closely comparable with the present painting. Nor is it in this sense comparable with another portrait to which Gerson referred in this context, the *Portrait of Jan Six* **233**, which originated two years later but whose remarkable originality in execution can perhaps be traced back to the work under discussion here (as will be discussed below).

Given the fact that the painting originated in this significant period of Rembrandt's rather abrupt change of style – his choice of the rough manner – a better comparison would be with the Stockholm *Young girl at the window* **220** which was painted in 1651 (a work that Gerson incidentally referred to as a 'powerful painting'). That painting is also obviously not a portrait – nor, for that matter, a routine genre piece. It represents an important (perhaps first) step in Rembrandt's new exploration of the boundaries of the art of painting in the early 1650s. In that work one finds for the first time *mutatis mutandis* those pictorial features which led Gerson to disattribute from Rembrandt the *Old man in an armchair*. Compare the girl's two hands with each other and one sees that the difference in execution is as great as between the two hands of the *Old man*. Or compare the girl's roughly executed right sleeve with the left sleeve of the *Old man in an armchair*. One could say that what began in the Stockholm work was more daringly continued in the present painting. The assuredness with which the 'rough manner' was applied in these two paintings, the amazing wealth of variation in the red, the differentiation of the play with smoothness and roughness in the brushwork is typical of Rembrandt after 1650.

There is also the play with light – for example, the tiny moments where the light appears behind a form, behind the girl's hair, or, in the *Old man*, to the right of the man's facial contour and to the right of his right forearm, and (on a larger scale) beside his right wrist. In both paintings Rembrandt engages in an intriguing play of *finito* and *non-finito*, yet achieving *trompe l'oeil* effects through the precise suggestion and construction of particular forms, for instance in the girl's face and in the man's left hand, which in both paintings are achieved with minimal action of the brush and astonishing accuracy in the shaping of these details. In particular, when seen in the context of that period, these striking characteristics are remarkable for their innovative novelty within Rembrandt's painted oeuvre.

As already said, Gerson based his disattribution of the present painting to a significant extent on a comparison with the portrait of Jan Six. But if one takes into account the sequence of origin of these two paintings, the present painting in 1652, the *Jan Six* in 1654, one could also see the relations between them from a different viewpoint.

Jan Six, a gifted and experienced art-lover and connoisseur must have followed avidly Rembrandt's artistic developments for some time. It would seem that it was this common interest which led to the engagements with Six as sitter and Rembrandt as portraitist in two commissions, the etched portrait by the window from 1647 (B. 285) and the famous painted portrait mentioned above **233**. Rembrandt's investigations in the areas of light reflection (see **198**) and 'room light' (see **85**, **86**, **173**) could well have induced Six to have himself portrayed in the etched portrait (B. 285) in a comparable manner. The painted portrait of Jan Six, in many ways so unusual and painted seven years later, would seem in many respects to be an extension of the work on the *Old man in an armchair*. The two men must have developed particularly close contacts in 1652, as witness the two majestic Rembrandt drawings in Six' Album Amicorum (Ben. 913 and 914; *Corpus* V pp. 236-237). Is it too fanciful to wonder whether the art-lover and friend Jan Six could have watched the

Fig. 2. Follower of Rembrandt, *Old man in an armchair*, canvas 108 x 86 cm. St Petersburg, Hermitage.

genesis of the *Old man* – as Rembrandt's friend Jeremias de Decker seems to have done in the case of **219**? Six's strongly lit, broadly painted right hand is prominently situated in the foreground between the loosely indicated gloves and cuffs. The figure of Jan Six, dressed in red, with its subtly shadowed face held in half-light, could be seen as a portrait version of the *Old man in an armchair*. Both paintings are the result of Rembrandt's adventurous explorations of *sprezzatura* (the looseness in the handling of the brush), light and colour.

In the context of Rembrandt's development as a whole, one may assume that the Stockholm *Young girl at the window* and the *Old man in an armchair* were in the first place works dealing with problems and possibilities within the art of painting. If only on the basis of the relatively early origin of the *Old man in an armchair*, it would seem much more obvious to see this as a pioneering attempt by the work's author than as the product of a pupil or imitator – which is the implication of the rejections cited above. One would expect that a pupil or imitator would only imitate a style once the new direction in the style of a master had become fully established. A painting such as Br. 274, the St Petersburg *Old man in an armchair* (**fig. 2**), with the subject seated in a comparable chair and with similarly prominent hands in the foreground, might therefore be more readily seen as the work of some member of Rembrandt's workshop. Besides, that work could well have been based on the present painting, but what a tame product it is by comparison.

In works from the early 1650s one frequently encounters in various forms the appearance of linear elements executed with freely placed, broad brushstrokes (**220** right sleeve; **222** in the clothing and along the contour of the face; **223** mainly visible in the X-radiograph; **224** in the clothes; **229** in the shift; **230** in the arm joints). Later this phenomenon occurs less frequently. This phenomenon is typical of the execution of the present painting and lends strong support to its re-attribution to Rembrandt. The same goes for the striking manner in which the figure here is shown reserved in the background in the X-radiograph (**fig. 3**). (See e.g. the course of the top edge of the chair-back and the old man's right elbow.)

Indeed, as has often been said, if anyone was being imitated – or rather *emulated* – in the *Old man in an armchair*, then it was Tintoretto, but certainly not as a portrait painter; rather as a history painter where he often placed his figures occupying much of the pictorial space in a similar manner, and correspondingly with a forceful play of light and shadow, colour and brushwork. Such a step could only be expected from a master rather than a pupil or imitator, and is doubly remarkable in that it comes so early in a new phase of Rembrandt's development. (In this connection see the comment in Note **265** on a master's emulation of another master, and the production of free variants painted by pupils after the work of their own master (compare **221** and **fig. 2** in this Note)). My proposal is obvious at this point that the *Old man in an armchair* should be reattributed to Rembrandt.

Fig. 3. X-ray of **221**

222 Rembrandt, **An old man in fanciful costume**, 1651, canvas 78.5 x 67.5 cm. Chatsworth. HdG 399; Br. 266; Bauch 204; Gerson 299; Br./Gerson 266; Tümpel A46 (as from Rembrandt's workshop).
Inscription: introduced later below left ‹*Rembrand* (sic) *f. 1651*›. For a discussion of this inscription, see below.

In the Rembrandt literature to date, only Tümpel has questioned the authenticity of this painting – albeit in a hesitant manner. It is true that the work raises questions, but that is not enough to justify Tümpel's final judgment that this is a product of Rembrandt's workshop.

The painting bears the inscription *Rembrand f. 1651* below left, on the background. But because of the hesitant way it has been applied this inscription inspires little confidence. The dating to 1651 should also therefore not be unquestioningly accepted. For various reasons, it is thought that strips of canvas have been cut from the sides, and a broader one from the top of the painting. It may well be that the present inscription was copied from a signature on the strip cut from the top. Taking over an inscription in this way occurred more often (see, for example, the Danae, *Corpus* III A 119). The date 1651 could therefore well indicate the year of the painting's origin. There is also stylistic and other evidence, to be mentioned below, in support of this suggestion.

The way the right hand of the old man is transected below left by both bottom and left edges is comparable to the way this was done by Rembrandt in the late Melbourne and Mauritshuis portraits **317** and **318**. Given the fact that the X-radiograph of the canvas shows strongly marked cusping along the bottom, one can exclude the possibility that the hand was fully shown in an earlier state of the present work. On the left, right and top sides the deformations of the canvas do indicate that the painting could have been larger – particularly at the top (as suggested above) where there could have been a missing strip with the original signature.

The man's costume raises questions: is there a possible reference in this dress to the original *raison d'être* of the painting? This is perhaps suggested by the evidently conspicuous display of the breast piece carrying a complex, rather enigmatic design. The way this breast piece is held by straps running over the shoulders is also rather surprising, as is the fact that the left sleeve, which appears under the cloak hanging over the shoulders, seems to be black, whereas the man's right sleeve is of a reddish colour. The article of clothing in white fur that has a remarkably high collar and covers the other garments mentioned above is also unusual. It would seem that this must be an imaginary costume; yet at the same time the head shows such pronounced features (which are not recognizable from any other of Rembrandt's models) that one wonders whether

this might actually be a portrait. The fact that one finds the same very free execution, with broad lines drawn by the brush, in the so-called *Large Vienna Self-portrait* from 1652 **224** not only supports the idea that the present painting might be a portrait, but also upholds the attribution of the painting to Rembrandt.

223 Rembrandt, **Hendrickje with fur wrap**, *c.* 1652, canvas 103.3 x 86.5 cm. London, National Gallery. HdG 715; Br. 113; Bauch 521; Gerson 396; Br./Gerson 113 ("... in its present state it is impossible to decide whether it is an original or a copy"); Tümpel A77 (from Rembrandt's circle; certainly not by Rembrandt himself); see also Brown/Plesters 1977; Brown 1991 pp. 364-367; *Art in the Making II* pp. 146-51.
Inscription: (false?) lower left <*Rembrandt.f./16*(?5 or 6)*9*>

This painting is usually referred to as *Hendrickje with fur wrap*. In his entry in the National Gallery 'Dutch School' catalogue Christopher Brown refers to it as a portrait, though perhaps an informal portrait. One has to ask whether the meaning of the term 'portrait' has been stretched too far here. In Rembrandt's time the function of the portrait was to 'immortalize' someone in a representative manner – which could certainly not have been the *raison d'être* of this work. The first and probably the only time Rembrandt painted a portrait (in this sense) of Hendrickje Stoffels – and then most probably together with a companion piece with himself – is the painting in the Louvre **235b**. It is much more likely that the present painting is one of his explorations in the art of painting in which, as was his habit, Rembrandt worked after the life and used a model for the purpose. It is therefore somewhat misleading to include the name of the person who served as a model in the title of the painting, even though (for the sake of convenience) the same practice is frequently followed in the present catalogue.

Nevertheless, the question should not be ignored of whether the woman whose features appear in this painting is or is not Hendrickje Stoffels. Eric Jan Sluijter has emphatically rejected the idea that Rembrandt used his common law wife Hendrickje as his model between her arrival in Rembrandt's household in 1647 and her death in 1663 (Sluijter 2006 pp. 327-331)). The gist of his argument, which centres largely on the *Bathseba* in the Louvre **231**, is that it was inconceivable in the 17th century for a painter to allow the woman with whom he lived to pose for a life-size nude. From this assertion he argued that we simply don't know what Hendrickje looked like and that there is absolutely no indication that Hendrickje ever posed for Rembrandt. However, in view of the fact that Rembrandt had depicted Bathsheba more or less *en profil* and that her face has little in common with the woman that we are used to thinking of as Hendrickje Stoffels, Sluijter's thesis is rather superfluous. Assuming that Rembrandt's late sketches of clothed women from the life would have originated in domestic situations, there are good grounds for wondering whether, for example, the two drawings of a woman resting in a window frame, which apparently originated in a single sequence, could have been drawn after Hendrickje (**figs. 1** and **2**).

Fig. 1 Rembrandt, *Woman at a window (Hendrickje Stoffels), c.* 1655, pen and brush, 16.5 x 12.5 cm (Ben. 1102). Stockholm, Nationalmuseum.

Fig. 2. Rembrandt, *Woman at a window (Hendrickje Stoffels), c.* 1655, pen and brush, 16.2 x 17.4 cm (Ben. 1101). Stockholm, Nationalmuseum.

In these two drawings, we have a small, stocky woman with a strikingly round forehead and a broad face with fleshy cheeks. One finds the same facial type, showing similar physiognomic characteristics, in the famous *Young woman sleeping* in The British Museum (**fig. 3**) and several of Rembrandt's paintings from the 1650's (**fig. 5-10**) and early 60s (**fig. 11**).

Fig. 3. Rembrandt, *A young woman sleeping (Hendrickje Stoffels), c.* 1654, brush and brown wash, 24.6 x 20.3 cm (Ben. 1103), detail. London, The British Museum.

We know in the cases of for instance Jan Steen and Gerard Ter Borch that members of a painter's family did serve as models; and in this regard Gerard de Lairesse was very clear (Lairesse I pp. 173-174). The purported identification of Rembrandt's assumed family members in his oeuvre has in the past been taken to absurd lengths – as pointed out in Chapter II (see also *R. Mother*). Sluijter's reluctance to acknowledge Hendrickje Stoffels as the model in the works mentioned above is therefore understandable but would seem to be unnecessarily radical, and apparently far too narrowly focused on the nudity of the *Bathsheba* in the Louvre (see in this connection Van Mander Lives Fol. 252v; 24). I am of the opinion – albeit with the degree of reservation that must accompany this kind of historical inquiry – that the woman in the works listed above is in fact Hendrickje Stoffels and that she also sat as the model for the present painting.

In this painting, however, she clearly looks younger than in the other paintings for which Hendrickje served as a model (**fig. 6-11**). It is not irrelevant to point this out, for there is a dating problem associated with this painting. Following research, the staff of the National Gallery are convinced that the signature and the dating are probably later additions. Speculations that the work was painted in 1659 are of little value, but one is generally inclined to date the painting to the latter half of the 1650s. Bauch even suggested that it could have been painted in 1660, whereas Lloyd Williams placed it in the period *c.* 1654-9, keeping open the possibility that the inscription could have some significance. Slatkes guessed 1656 as its possible date of origin; Brown came up with a dating to *c.* 1654-56, which he based unconvincingly on a drawing (Ben. 1174) whose dating to *c.* 1654-60 is in turn arbitrary. (Both Royalton-Kisch and Lloyd Williams have rightly disputed the suggested connection between that drawing and the present painting.) There is a tendency to date any painting in which Hendrickje can be recognized to or about 1654. Perhaps the period of origin of this present painting is better inferred from her conspicuously younger face compared with 'the other Hendrickjes'.

Hendrickje Stoffels was a girl from the provinces, born in 1626, who came into Rembrandt's household in 1647. Their intimate relationship could have begun in 1649, or not long afterwards, during or after the tumultuous episode of Geertje Dircks' departure. In 1654 Hendrickje became pregnant by Rembrandt – but why could she not also have posed for Rembrandt before 1654?

There is another reason for locating the date of the painting in the period before 1654. The origin of this painting, as with other works from this early phase of Rembrandt's late period, was an artistic adventure in which a truly remarkable combination of drawing with a broad brush and painting is here evident, particularly in the X-radiograph (**fig. 4**). The X-radiograph also shows that extraordinarily bold, radical changes were made during the work. Christopher Brown confronted this X-radiograph with the painting itself and, on the basis of his interpretation, he described the genesis of the painting as follows:

> 'The X-radiograph reveals substantial changes in the position of the hands. Rembrandt seems originally to have painted Hendrickje with folded arms or with her hands clasped in her lap […]. The left arm was across the body, as in the final version, but not tucked into the wrap. The right arm dropped vertically from the shoulder and folded across to link with the left. He then moved the right hand upwards and introduced the arm of the chair to support it. The left hand was then concealed within the folds of the wrap. In making these alterations, Rembrandt seems to have obliterated the original image with vigorous scrubbed brushstrokes of lead white and then painted the present design on top.'

Such a genesis hardly accords with the aim of producing a portrait. It would appear rather that solutions were being sought for artistic problems.

If the painting is indeed from the early 50s, it might have played a role in the transition to what we call 'late Rembrandt'. The unusual idea of making a large white fur wrap the subject of the painting, with the challenge of modelling in a sketchy fashion and draping the massive white fluffy folds over the flesh tones of Hendrickje's shoulder, breast and arms, can certainly be called unusual and adventurous. It is perhaps not insignificant that the only other painting in which Rembrandt took on the challenge of painting white fur is the *Old man in fanciful costume* in Chatsworth **222**. The latter painting bears the date 1651 – possibly referring back to a signature together with this date that was lost during a cropping of the painting. It is certainly plausible that the present painting could have been an exercise in the rendering of fur from the same year.

It is not so fanciful to imagine that in her years with Rembrandt Hendrickje must have developed a strong interest in the art of painting. In this context it is significant that after Rembrandt's bankruptcy, as a way of protecting him from his creditors, together with Titus she set up a firm with Rembrandt as the sole employee. In her biography of Hendrickje Stoffels, A. Waltmans assembled data showing that it was not uncommon for the wives and widows of painters to be actively involved in the art trade (Waltmans 2006). I pointed out in connection with the extremely refined play with the *non-finito* in the *Callisto in the wilderness* **229** that Hendrickje may well have been aware of this and other art-theoretical concepts.

Tümpel was convinced that the present painting could not have been painted by Rembrandt. Others too – including members of the RRP – hesitated before attributing the painting to Rembrandt. There are several aspects that need to be borne in mind here; not least the condition of the painting. In a discussion of the role of the painting's brown ground in *Art in the Making II* (pp. 149-150), this is described as follows:

> 'The dark brown colour of the ground is clearly visible in many parts of the painting, notably in the lower part of the white wrap. It plays a significant role in the overall tone of the picture – partly because the picture is unfinished, but perhaps now more than originally intended, since the paint layers are quite worn and thin in some areas. In fact, the condition of the picture is an important factor in the interpretation of its technique, because the overall wearing, cracking and subsequent retouching of the paint layers all affect the image to some degree and alter the perception of the way the image is constructed.'

These effects of time can not only mislead us in our assessment of the painting technique (which is the main concern in *Art in the Making*) but also influence judgment of the stylistic aspects and quality of the painting. Most disturbing is the predominant role of the locally red to red-brown colour in the painting as a whole, but particularly in the background to the left of the figure. The fragment of

Fig. 4. X-ray of **223**

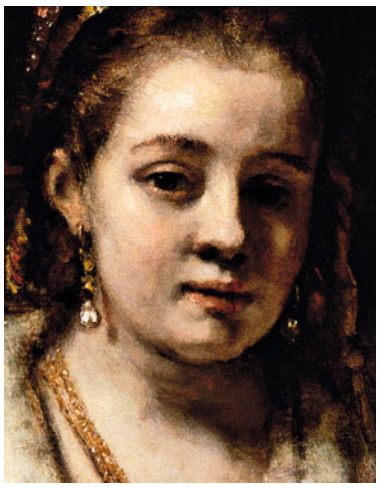


Fig. 5. Detail of **223**

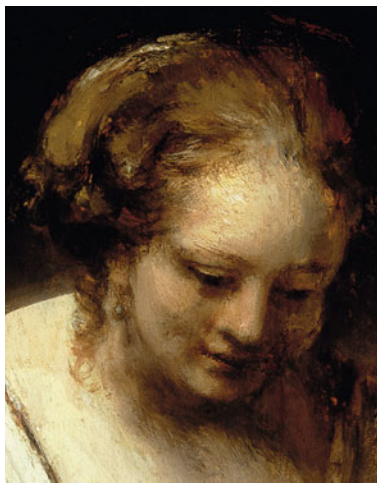


Fig. 6. Detail of **229**

Fig. 7. Detail of **232**

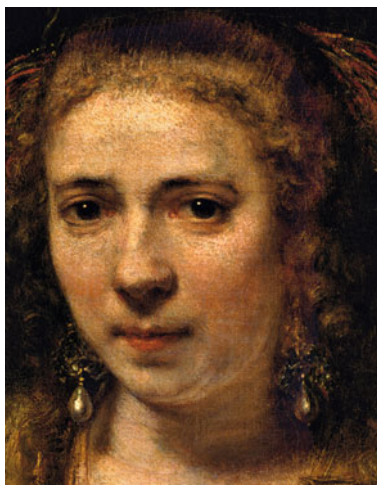


Fig. 8. Detail of **235b**

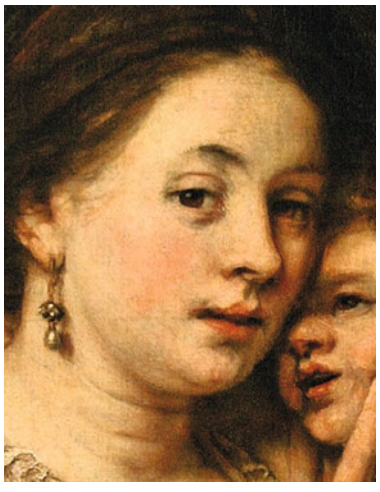


Fig. 9 Detail of **251**

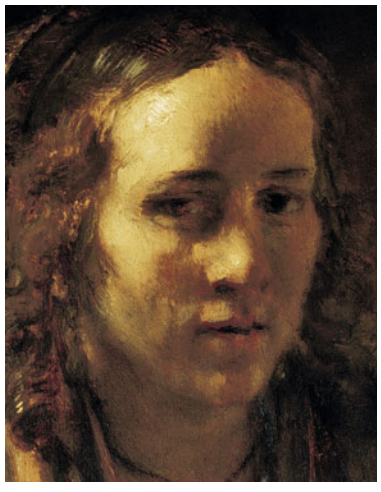


Fig. 10. Detail of **277**

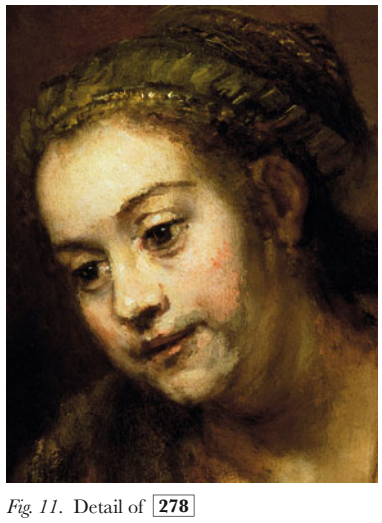


Fig. 11. Detail of **278**

a table covered with a red cloth in the foreground was a device that Rembrandt used on occasions to suggest depth. For example, one finds it in the portraits of Aletta Adriaensdr **169**, Anna Wijmer **180** but also in the Juno **252**, where the bottom-most zone of the painting was initially almost entirely taken up by a similarly red-covered table. The space-creating effect of this type of red repoussoir arises not only from the depicted figure being overlapped by this table and thereby pushed back into the pictorial space, but also because the colour red tends to advance in a pictorial space (Lairesse I p. 229). What is striking – if not disturbing – in the painting discussed here is that this latter effect is negated by the orangeish red of the left-hand part of the background, which similarly tends to push forward. It is in fact hard to imagine Rembrandt painting in this manner, for as a rule Rembrandt paid great attention to the relation between warm and cool zones. Nowhere else in his painted oeuvre does one encounter a reddish background like this.

The obvious conclusion might be that this background was added by a later hand; but there is evidence both for and against this assumption. On the one hand, in his analysis of paint samples from the painting, Ashok Roy saw no evidence to suggest an overpainting in this part of the background. On the other hand, the red paint of the background in places overlaps the white paint of the sleeve (see fig. 151 in *Art in the Making II*). Also, significantly, the radio-absorbent paint of the fur wrap in the bottom left corner of the painting continues through under the red background. (Perhaps it should not go unmentioned that in the 17th century red was already considered the colour of love (SvH p. 223).)

With regard to Tümpel's serious doubts concerning the attribution of this painting to Rembrandt, quite apart from the troubling aspects of the painting's condition discussed above, it may be pointed out (i) that the painting is painted on a quartz ground, and therefore must have originated in Rembrandt's workshop; and (ii) that it is difficult (if not impossible) to imagine that this could be the work of an imitator, as both the X-radiograph and surface paint betray a work process in which an exceptional spontaneity is combined with a purpose-orientation in a way that is scarcely imaginable for a pupil.

224 Rembrandt, **The so-called large Vienna self-portrait**, 1652, canvas 112.1 x 81 cm. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum. HdG 580; Br. 42; Bauch 322; Gerson 308; Br./Gerson 42; Tümpel 169; ***Corpus* IV 8** and **pp. 263-266**; see *R. Self* no. 65.
Inscription: at the bottom left in black in the wet paint ‹*dt.f.1652*›

This marvelous self-portrait, the first from Rembrandt's late period, has been deprived of its original format. The signature at the bottom left is incomplete – apart from the date only the last two letters of the name are visible – leading to the conclusion that the canvas was cut down on the left. This also explains the missing elbow of the arm on the left. The shallowness of the cusping at top and bottom suggests that strips could also be missing there. But since the selvedge of the canvas still seems to be present on the right, no more can be missing on that side than the *c.* 1.8 cm of the folded edge.

Fig. 1. Willem Drost (?), *Rembrandt, as dressed in his studio* (presumed composite copy after **224** and B. 22), after 1652, pen and brown ink, 20.3 x 13.4 cm (Ben. 1171). Amsterdam, Museum Het Rembrandthuis

A drawing in the Rembrandt House in Amsterdam now attributed to Willem Drost (**fig. 1**) (on the attribution and function of this drawing see *Corpus* IV pp. 151-157) raises the question as to whether Rembrandt originally depicted himself full-length in the *Large Vienna self-portrait*. However, the presence of cusping along the bottom edge of the canvas rules out this possibility. Before the canvas was substantially trimmed along the left edge the figure would have stood more in the centre. We are virtually certain about the reason for this alteration to the format: the painting had to fit into a strictly symmetrical wall arrangement, whose lay-out survives in a painted catalogue of 1720. The arrangement of the imperial collection in Vienna at that time was recorded by Ferdinand Storffer (*c.* 1694-1771) in miniatures executed in opaque water colour of the separate wall arrangements (**fig. 2**). In the case of the present painting, this lay-out demanded that it should be the same height as a large panel (114 x 137 cm) by Jan Sanders van Hemessen and that it should act as a pendant to – and so had to be made the same width as – a painting by Reynier van Gherwen (113 x 81 cm). In view of these alterations and of the faintness of the cusping found along the top and bottom edges, it is not unlikely that a little of the canvas is missing on those sides too.

Fig. 2. Copy 2. F. Storffer, One of the wall arrangements of the paintings in the Kaiserliche Bilder Galerie, Vienna, 1720.

The life-size image of Rembrandt's face as reproduced beside Plate **224** shows Rembrandt's amazing ability to suggest subtly and effectively the facial complexion – the appearance and differentiated texture of the skin, with loose brushstrokes almost casually applied from different directions. This suggestion is enhanced by the gleam and transparency of the eyes, particularly the strongly lit eye on the left side. What the painter achieves with no more than two touches in the circular zone of the iris, with the opening of the pupil dissolved in the shadow of the eyelid, is a marvel. As beholder, one experiences the crystalline transparency and gleam of the cornea that bulges over the dish-shaped iris – which is lit below right by the same ray of light that causes the concentrated glint on the cornea. The force of that glint is given extra emphasis by the way Rembrandt has made the gleam on the other eye, slightly further distant from the light source, a bit smaller and less white.

225 Rembrandt, **Portrait of a man**, *c.* 1651, canvas 92.5 x 73.5 cm. Buscot Park, Faringdon Collection. HdG 735; Br. 265; Bauch 391; Gerson 250; Br./Gerson 265; Tümpel 211; see also Schwartz 1984 p. 259 fig. 298.
Inscription: ‹*Rembrandt.f.*›

So far no convincing identification of the man portrayed in this strange and hauntingly beautiful portrait has been proposed.

226 Rembrandt, **Portrait of Nicolaes Bruyningh**, 1652, canvas 106.8 x 91.5 cm. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie.
HdG 628; Br. 268; Bauch 404; Gerson 307; Br./Gerson 268; Tümpel 212; see also Van Eeghen 1977b; Kassel 2006 p. 167 ff.
Inscription: above right, above the right post of the chair-back by which it is partially obscured ‹*Rembrandt f.1652*›

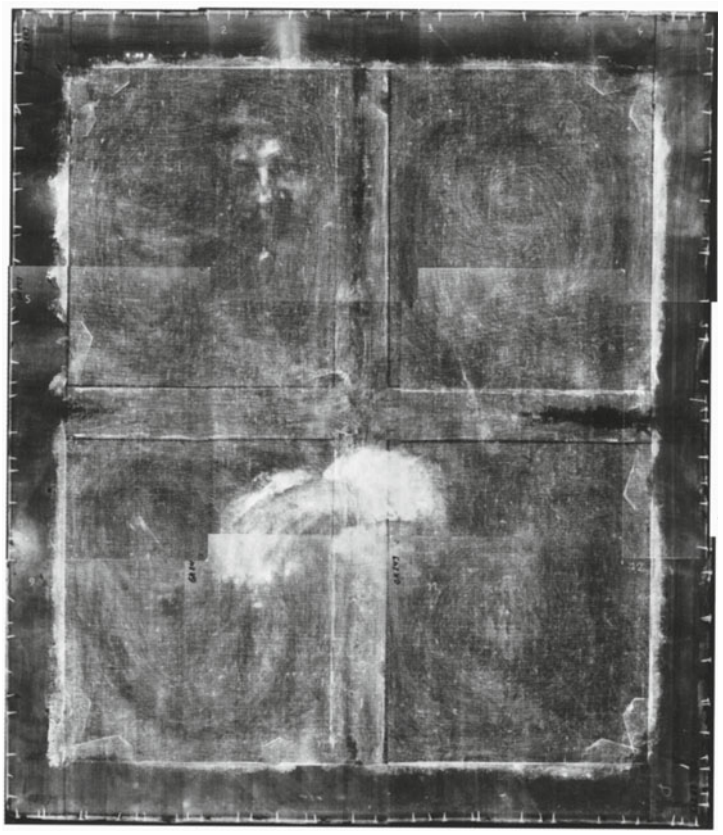


Fig. 1. X-ray of **226**. Where the hand is now seen, both the sitter's hands (with white cuffs) were originally painted, one folded over the other. For reason of conservation the back of the canvas was treated with a radio-absorbent paint.

Nicolaas Bruyningh (1629/30-1680), son of a wealthy Amsterdam family, studied at the University of Utrecht between 1648 and 1652. In the latter year he inherited a sizeable fortune from his grandfather which enabled him to live without further financial worries. In the same year, at the age of 22, he had himself portrayed by Rembrandt in the present painting. After the death in 1672 of his wife Catharina van de Nieuwstad, the daughter of an Alkmaar regent, Bruyningh held various public positions in Alkmaar up to his death in 1680.

Rembrandt made radical changes to the position of the sitter's hands and cuffs (**fig. 1**).

227 Rembrandt, **Half-figure of a bearded man with beret**, *c.* 1653, canvas 78 x 66.5 cm. London, National Gallery. HdG 392; Br. 283; Bauch 218; Gerson 334; Br./Gerson 283; Tümpel 142; see also Brown 1991 no. 190; *Art in the Making II* no. 15.
Inscription: below left in the background ‹*Rembrandt f 165*(.)›

The function of this simple and directly executed painting is not immediately obvious. It has already earlier been noted that the facial features of the man who must have posed for it reappear in the *Aristotle* **228**. Given that the position of the head clearly differs in **227** and **228**, however, the idea that **227** could be a preliminary study for **228** seems at first unlikely. Yet this option should not be ruled out. In the few cases where Rembrandt made use of preliminary oil studies for full-length figures the position of the head in the sketch differs from that in the end result. It would seem that, with such studies, Rembrandt was more concerned with phyhsiognomic features than with the position or the lighting of the head (cf. **82** and **84**; **271** and **272**; **296** and **297b**).

The last cipher of the date <*165.*> is illegible. In *Art in the Making II* (p. 157), on the basis of a microscopic analysis of the traces of the last cipher of the signature, it is claimed that only a highly placed horizontal strip of paint can be considered to be an authentic fragment. The cipher could either have been a <3> or a <7> (Rembrandt's fives as a rule do not have a horizontal upper stripe but one tilting upwards). A dating to 1653 would strengthen the possible link with the *Aristotle* **228**.

228 Rembrandt, **Aristotle with the bust of Homer**, 1653, canvas 141.8 x 134.4 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 413; Br. 478; Bauch 207; Gerson 286; Br./Gerson 478; Tümpel 108; see also Giltaij 1999; Liedtke 2007 pp. 629-654.
Inscription: on the base of the bust ‹*Rembrandt.f./1653*›

The earliest document that mentions this painting is the inventory of the Sicilian nobleman and art-lover Don Antonio Ruffo from June 19, 1654, which refers to a '*half-length figure of a philosopher made in Amsterdam by the painter named Rembrandt*' with the addition in brackets: *('it seems to be an Aristotle or Albertus Magnus')* (*Doc.* 1654/16). It would thus seem that Ruffo, when he ordered the painting from Rembrandt, did not actually specify which particular philosopher was to be painted for him; evidently it was more important that he should possess a painting by the famous artist Rembrandt, a collection of whose etchings he already owned. The term *'naamkoper'* (name-buyer) was already becoming current in the art world at that time (SvH p. 3 in Hoogstraten's preface).

Ruffo would later order from Rembrandt two pendants to the painting: a *Homer* **301** and an *Alexander the Great* (now lost). Alexander was Aristotle's pupil and like his tutor an admirer of Homer's epic the *Iliad*. So did the subject perhaps matter after all? Well, probably it would if you were looking for one or two pendants for a painting you already had. At the time, a symmetrical arrangement of paintings with subjects that were in some way related was much preferred when hanging paintings on a wall.

229 Rembrandt, **A woman wading in a pool** (**Callisto in the wilderness**), 1654, panel 61.8 x 47 cm. London, National Gallery. HdG 306; Br. 437; Bauch 278; Gerson 289; Br./Gerson 437; Tümpel 122; ***Corpus* V 19**; see also *M/W* cat. 40; Brown 1991 p. 332; *Art in the Making I* and *II* resp. no. 11, no. 12; Leja 1996; De Vries 2006; Sluijter 2006 pp. 174-193. For an account of the different readings of this painting, see *Corpus* V pp. 524-529.
Inscription: on the boulder at the lower right in brown: <*Rembrandt. f 1654*>. In 1960, MacLaren read the date incorrectly as 1655 (McLaren 1960 p. 313).

In 1996 the American art-historian Jan Leja argued that the wading woman's shift could be interpreted as a reference to the story of Callisto, daughter of the Arcadian King Lycaon. Callisto was one of the band of warrior nymphs led by Diana, for whom chastity was an absolute commitment. She was violently raped by Jupiter and became pregnant. When her loss of virginity was discovered, Callisto was banned by Diana from her retinue. Given the relative frequency with which this episode appears in paintings and prints, the story of Callisto must have been well-known in Rembrandt's time. In his own painting of *Diana bathing with her nymphs* of 1634, Rembrandt actually included the scene in which Callisto's pregnancy is exposed by the other nymphs (see Plate **130**). Ever since Titian's introduction of this theme into painting, Callisto was always shown wearing a shift that was clearly visible under her sumptuous gowns, which the other nymphs opened to discover her pregnancy. From this iconographic tradition, one may conclude that the shift was considered to be her 'attribute'. The costly robe on the bank behind the wading woman in the present painting supports this surmise.

The weak point in Leja's hypothesis is that in other respects the present painting falls entirely outside the pictorial tradition of Callisto. Leja assumes that in the London painting Callisto has been isolated from the broader scene of Diana bathing with her nymphs. This suggestion is unsatisfactory, however, since immediately after the discovery of Callisto's pregnancy, according to Ovid's *Metamorphoses* – which is after all the only source of the Callisto story referred to by Leja – she was immediately banned from Diana's company. The whole scene is described by Ovid as follows:

> 'Now the moon's horns were filling out to complete their ninth circle, when the Goddess wearied with hunting in the fierce heat of the sun, came to a cool grove, from which there flowed a murmuring stream that rippled over its smooth sandy bed. Diana exclaimed with pleasure at the sight, and dipped her foot in the water: delighted with this too she called to her companions: 'There is noone here to see us – let us undress and bathe in the brook.' The Arcadian maiden blushed. All took off their garments, while she [Callisto] alone sought excuses to delay. As she hesitated, the others pulled off her tunic, and at once revealed her body and her crime. She stood dismayed, and with her hands vainly tried to cover up the evidence of her guilt. But Diana cried: 'Off with you! Do not defile this sacred spring!' and ordered her to withdraw from her company.'

According to this original version of the story, Callisto dared not bathe and after the discovery of her pregnancy she was forbidden to pollute the 'sacred spring'. Leja's reading of the painting as an isolated Callisto would only be possible if Rembrandt had based his painting on a scene *before* Callisto's pregnancy was discovered. But the woman in the present painting has removed her outer garments and has already entered the water. This episode from the Ovidian narrative simply does not allow for a reading of this painting as an isolated episode (what Tümpel called a 'Herauslösung' [an isolated scene]) from the scene of the bathing Diana and her entourage.

Leja overlooked the possibility that Rembrandt may not have been working from the original Ovidian myth, but rather from a version of the myth current in his own time. Indeed, there had been a long tradition of interpreting Ovid's pagan fables so as to give them a less pagan import; they were subjected to a process of cleaning up, with minor plot changes and shifts of emphasis in order to derive from them a suitable (usually Christian) moral. An early 17th-century version of the Callisto story, a version in Dutch, which Rembrandt would certainly have known, differs significantly from Ovid's account. The text in question is in Karel van Mander's section in his Schilderboeck that deals with the 'Fable of Callisto and Arcas' in his *Wtlegghingh* – his elucidations – of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. Van Mander recounts that Callisto, after the discovery of her pregnancy

> *'was chased from the sacred place, which sacred place the poet [Ovid] had embellished with the pool of Diana: she then took secret refuge in the wilderness for some time'* (KvM *Wtlegghingh* fol. 17v).

Van Mander has here changed the nature and significance of the expulsion: whereas Ovid has Diana cry '*Off with you! Do not defile this sacred spring!*', Van Mander removes all reference to sacred waters. Van Mander had a motive for removing this pagan motif from the story, since his purpose was to draw morals from the Ovidian texts according to the standards of his own [Christian] time, and to render them suitable for a modified iconography, see also Note **41**.

If one admits that Rembrandt could have based a painting of Callisto on Van Mander's version of the story rather than on Ovid's tale, the narrative objection to identifying the woman as Callisto at once disappears; and crucially, the woman's shift indicates that if she is indeed Callisto it is a representation of her *after* the discovery of her pregnancy. She would not be the apprehensive, still secretly pregnant Callisto in Diana's sacred pool, which Leja's reading suggested, but rather the disgraced Callisto in the wilderness. Not only can the Van Mander version support Leja's identification of the wading woman as Callisto, it may also contain the key to the *raison d'être* of this painting, which seems to escape the customary Callisto iconography.

At this point, parallels between Callisto and Hendrickje Stoffels, who obviously modelled for this painting (see the Note to **223**) seem to emerge. Leja ends her article with the inconclusive remark:

> 'Why, in 1654, Rembrandt created the *Woman bathing*, probably using Hendrickje as model, may never be known with certainty, …'

she nevertheless continues:

> 'but few commentators, particularly those who believe the model to be Hendrickje, have failed to mention the probability of a connection with the artist's personal life. If one is inclined to accept the identification of the *Woman bathing* as Callisto and the notion that Hendrickje served as Rembrandt's model, then one might reasonably ask, given Hendrickje's pregnancy in 1654, whether the painting represents a nexus, rarely found, between the artist's work and life'.

In 1654, when the present painting was painted, Hendrickje was summoned before the Reformed Church Council and accused of 'hoererij' – unwedded cohabitation – with the explicitly mentioned Rembrandt. After Hendrickje had appeared before the Council and had confessed to having 'fornicated' with Rembrandt, she was admonished and barred from 'The Lord's Supper'.

One understands why Leja was reluctant to draw a connection between, on the one hand, Rembrandt's painting and the figure of the pregnant Callisto (with the assumed features of Hendrickje Stoffels), and on the other hand the biographical fact that Hendrickje was pregnant that same year. In the current art historical world there is an understandable aversion to any all-too-facile connections between the life and work of an artist, particularly in the case of Rembrandt.

Another reason for Leja's hesitation is that, apart from her pregnancy and its unlawful status, Hendrickje's situation in 1654 would seem to provide few points of contact with Ovid's grisly tale in its entirety. According to Ovid, Callisto was deceived by Jupiter, raped, drew the wrath of Juno, and was punished as though she were the lover of the latter's faithless husband. Juno's punishment consisted in Callisto being metamorphosed into a bear. Jupiter then had to intervene to save her from being killed by her now adult son, the hunter Arcus, and for her own protection gave her a place in the firmament. According to Ovid, Juno ensured that her place in the firmament was as ignominious as possible by ensuring that her constellation, *Ursa major* – the 'Great Bear' – was so placed in the firmament that it would never touch the 'sacred water' because, seen from the northern hemisphere, it never disappears below the horizon. Callisto's disgrace would be permanent, her sinfulness forever exposed.

But none of these dissimilarities between the careers of Callisto and Hendrickje add up to such an overriding objection to a connection between the painting and Hendrickje's situation that all speculation on such a relation can, *a priori*, be dismissed as anachronistic. As has already been seen above, comparison of Ovid's and Van Mander's versions of the episode of Callisto's expulsion shows, there is a significant shift in the moral of the story as related by Van Mander. In his version, the emphasis lies on the 'sacred *place*' from which Callisto was banned. At the very least, this reminds one of Hendrickje's exclusion from participation in the most important ceremony of the church calendar, 'The Lord's supper', charged with its Christian symbolism.

Van Mander subsequently explains that Callisto was called '*Beyrinne*', she-bear, because of her stay in the wilderness,

> *'which was later believed to be the cause of her ascent into the heavens. And that these stars* [the Great Bear] *were raised so near to the top star* [North Star] *that they did not drown in the waves',* (in other words, never dipped below the horizon).

The crucial part of Van Mander's account of Callisto, pertinent to this line of reasoning, is that following the discovery of her unchastity and her pregnancy, she was chased from the 'sacred place', withdrew into the wilderness and finally was awarded a place of honour '*in the heavens*'.

The way Gerard de Lairesse, in his *Groot Schilderboek*, develops Ovid's fable – while at the same time implicitly building on Van Mander's *Wtlegghingh* – clearly suggests that the reader was also always free to give the pagan story of Callisto a Christian meaning. Having related the beginning of the story, De Lairesse continues:

> *'That Ovidius gives her … a substantial place in the … heavens, … he does so to show her eternal shame in a marvellous way, … Yet one can also give this a much more Christian interpretation, namely that this tainted soul having turned away from the offence she had committed, her genuine reform and sincere repentance were so marked, and God so gracious, that he gave her a much more honoured place and a more brightly shining countenance in the heavens, close to a fixed point [the Pole Star]; so that all mortals, following her example, may reform and conduct themselves virtuously; …'.*

The kind of gesture toward a Christian moral that we find in De Lairesse was also there for Rembrandt to exploit, when Callisto's unhappy story was, in an unpredictable way, much more applicable to Hendrickje's (and Rembrandt's) situation in 1654. An interpretation of the Callisto story such as provided by De Lairesse would certainly have been a fitting answer to the condemnation of Hendrickje by the Church Council.

The above argument (a shorter version of *Corpus* V 19) is mainly intended to clear a space for new interpretations and to enlarge the room for further speculation about the meaning and function of the painting discussed in this text.

* **230** Rembrandt, **Oil study of an old man with a red hat** (**Eli?**), *c.* 1654, canvas 52.4 x 37 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 363; Br. 269; Bauch 203; Gerson 283; Br./Gerson 269; Tümpel A48 (as by a pupil of Rembrandt); see also Klessmann 1973 p. 350; Berlin 2006 no. 59 (as from Rembrandt's workshop).
Inscription: none

Fig. 1. Workshop copy after **230**. Fort Worth, Kimbell Art Museum.

Fig. 2. X-ray of **230**

Fig. 3. X-ray of **237** (detail).

This is one of the paintings swept up by the wave of 'reductionism' that washed over Rembrandt's painted oeuvre in the 1960s and subsequent years. As a result it was unjustly (in my view) consigned to the limbo reserved by art history for disattributed paintings. It is embarrassing to retrace the downfall of such a painting, to acknowledge the remarkable poverty of the arguments advanced for its disattribution and to note the uncritical way in which this negative opinion is subsequently adopted by others.

Up to 1968/'69, when Gerson published his canon of Rembrandt's paintings, the authenticity of the present painting as a work belonging to Rembrandt's oeuvre remained undisputed. Gerson, who spearheaded many of the rejections in this period, said nothing that would question the authenticity of the present painting. In his view it was obvious that this work belongs to the category of Rembrandt's 'studies for history paintings'. The first time Rembrandt's authorship was openly disputed was during the Berlin Rembrandt conference in 1970, when it was contested by Rüdiger Klessmann (Klessmann 1973 p. 47). This began the painting's gradual downfall. Jan Kelch did remark that the 'broad handling of the brush, full of temperament' was reminiscent of the *peinture* in the *Old man in an armchair* in London **221**, but since Gerson had disattributed the latter work, Kelch also disattributed the present painting and placed it in the 'circle of Rembrandt' (Berlin 1975 p. 350). Subsequently, Tümpel placed it in the category 'pupil of Rembrandt' (Tümpel 1968 no. 19). Sumowski saw in it the work of a *Rembrandt-Nachahmer* (imitator) (Sumowski *Gemälde* VI p. 3537) while at the same time he considered a very weak version of it in the Kimbell Art Museum – a copy of the present painting that is in all respects inferior – as a work by a *Rembrandt-Schüler* (from the school of Rembrandt) (**fig. 1**) (Ibid. p. 3538). In the Berlin catalogue of 2006 (no. 59) the present painting was placed in the category 'Rembrandt's workshop', yet despite this – and taking its wording straight from Gerson's text – it was described as a sketch [by a pupil?] for a history piece [by the same pupil?].

The only author who put forward a cogent argument for the disattribution of the painting was Rüdiger Klessmann (see above). He concentrated exclusively on the X-ray image (**fig. 2**) which he compared with only one other X-radiograph of a painting with figures of the same scale, that of the *Joseph and Potiphar's wife* **237** which is also in Berlin (**fig. 3**). On the basis of this comparison he arrived at an erroneous interpretation of the old man's face in the X-ray image compared with the face of Potiphar's wife. Klessmann overlooked the fact that far more (radio-absorbent) lead white must have been used in the modelling of the face of Potiphar's wife than in the face of the old man in the present painting, which is mainly painted in ochres, which are scarcely radio-absorbent. That, of course, resulted in the significantly different X-radiographic images of these faces in the two paintings. Klessmann also failed to take account of the fact that, as Gerson had already remarked, the present painting has the character of an oil sketch, whereas the Potiphar painting is worked up in considerable detail.

Before going any further with the attribution question, it should of course be emphasized that just because all Klessmann's predecessors – Gerson included – thought that this painting is a Rembrandt does not necessarily mean that it *is*. What is being outlined here is merely the *process* which ensued (as in many other cases as well) when a single individual disattributes a painting on the basis of invalid arguments. The fact that Klessmann (himself no Rembrandt specialist) was the curator in whose collection the relevant painting was held, would undoubtedly have carried more weight. Why would he disattribute 'his own' Rembrandt if he had no decisive arguments for doing so? My arguments for re-attributing the painting to Rembrandt are briefly summarized below.

First, it should be pointed out that the discoloured varnish layer of variable thickness interferes with observation, making especially the 'reading' of the old man's light garments so difficult that at first sight it makes that part of the painting seem too chaotic for Rembrandt.

1. The painting should be considered an oil sketch. It is not only the sketchy execution of the man's light clothes which indicates this but also the fact that the setting for the figure is extremely cursorily painted and contains no clue for any iconographic reading.

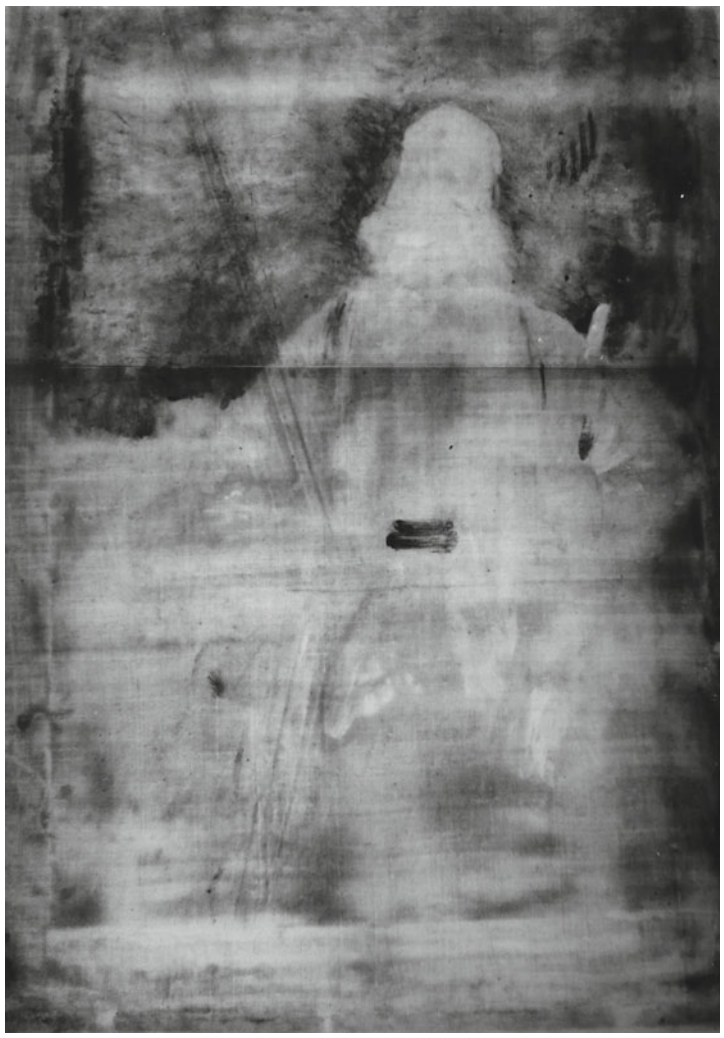


Fig. 4. Neutron activation autoradiogram of **230**

Apart from the general tonal differences along an irregular border in the left background, the few unclear details on the left (shown by UV irradiation) appear to have been introduced by a later hand. The unevenness in the pattern of cusping moreover leads one to suspect that the present painting was executed on what was originally the top left corner of a much larger canvas. One would expect with Rembrandt that he would paint a work as small as this (52.4 x 37 cm) on a panel. But with oil sketches Rembrandt sometimes used remains of prepared linen derived from larger canvases – either rejected or cropped **110**, **113**, **194**, **280**. Thus, the alleged long 'object' (mentioned in Berlin 2006 no. 59) that appears on a neutron autoradiogram of the present painting and which would have been held in the right hand of the man in the present painting, may be the trace of a twist, or a series of parallel scratches in the ground while it was not yet dry (**fig. 4**). Perhaps this was the reason the original canvas was cut into several pieces.

2. The sash round the man's middle is unusual; it was done with two swipes of copper- (and possibly arsenic-)containing paint, whereas paint of this mixture is found nowhere else in the painting (see **fig. 4**). Perhaps the painting originated alongside other works, with Rembrandt simultaneously busy on another painting in which that (or those) pigments were being used. It is also interesting that there is no vermilion in the red hat (as shown by autoradiography) but in the red patch on the lower sleeve of the old man's right arm there is – albeit mixed with red ochre. The appearance of such red spots in relatively random places is typical of Rembrandt (in imitation of Titian?). It is remarkable that all the neutron autoradiographs reveal a dark zone, tending towards square, surrounding the hat. There seems to be a mixture of various pigments there that contain manganese, mercury, copper, phosphorus and arsenic, which leads one to suspect that for the contour corrections round the cap, as observed in the X-ray image (**fig. 2**), Rembrandt used the dregs from the *pincelière* – which he seems sometimes to have used (see *Painter at Work* pp. 24-25).
3. The paint on those parts of the costume closest to the observer in the pictorial space, such as over the man's knees, are worked out with the heaviest impasto. What is achieved by this is referred to by Van Hoogstraten as *'kenlijkheid'* (perceptibility); this painterly technique was employed mainly by Rembrandt as a means of enhancing the suggestion of space (see *Painter at Work* pp. 182-186).
4. Then there is the mix of drawing and painting with the brush which one so often sees in paintings by Rembrandt, especially in the early 1650s.
5. A closer analysis of the man's light clothing betrays an interest, typical of Rembrandt, in a deeply considered assemblage, style and layering of the garments his figures wear (see *Corpus* V pp. 98-102). Only when one sees through the complexity of the costume in this painting does the apparently random distribution of highlights in the man's dress become more intelligible. On the forearms, on the chest and on his right knee one can make out a light brown, short undergarment with a gold-shining finish along the bottom edge. This undergarment is closed round the middle by a blue-green sash. Over this he wears a loosely falling white overgarment. He wears two scarves round his neck and shoulders. The outer one, with what look like dark crosswise stripes (on the left, from the beholder's viewpoint), ends in a fringe that hangs down to the belt round his middle. The shadow cast by the man's right arm on the cloak runs beneath this hanging scarf. The other end, also with a fringed end, does not hang that far down from his left shoulder. Just to its left, appearing from under the beard, a narrower strip of material falls in folds, ending at the level of the hip in a round knot or knob.
6. There are two free or partial copies of the painting, both of which appear to have originated in Rembrandt's workshop, in Fort Worth (**fig. 1**) and in Indianapolis. Their existence can be seen as an indication that the prototype after which they were made is likely to have been from the hand of the master. This was usually the case with such 'satellites' (see Chapter II). When one compares the quality of the copies with that of the present painting one can safely conclude that this must have been the prototype of the copies.
7. Kelch's observation that the *peinture* shows a kinship with that in the *Old man in an armchair* **221** is in essence correct (though the latter is on a much larger scale). There too one finds a way of painting where some folds in the dress are indicated with broad and, as it were, drawing brushstrokes, sometimes with S-shaped strokes in the transition from the upper arm to the forearm. These similarities argue for the authenticity of the present painting. An even better comparison is with the *Woman wading* **229** which is painted on the same scale. In the *Woman wading* one sees in the execution of the white shift and the hand holding it up the same degree of sketchiness as in the present painting, and especially (e.g. in the elbow) brushwork which betrays the same temperament. It would be a great step forward to remove the serious impediment of the interfering layers of varnish from the painting discussed here.
8. Finally and above all: the masterly way in which the limbs are positioned, the rendering of the hands' grasp, the placing of the feet, the set of the head on the shoulders, the facial expression, the shift of the figure's centre of gravity upward with regard to the lower body – all this conveys a tensed feeling of movement, making it seem convincingly as though the figure has been caught in an actual situation as if shifting his weight in order to rise from his chair. Such a performance is typical of Rembrandt's ability to depict individuals in all their varied movements and emotions. One only has to compare this painting with the copy in Fort Worth (**fig. 1**) to realize the full significance of this.

Exactly what situation the *Old man* was intended to represent remains unknown. Justus Müller Hofstede pointed out that there exists a drawing by Rembrandt (**fig. 5**) where an old man, the aged Jacob from the Old Testament, is depicted in a similar pose as he listens to Joseph telling his dream. It is unlikely that the man in the present painting is a sketch of Jacob in the same situation. In view of the dynamism in the pose (described under point 8) the old man in the present painting seems to be excited by something to which

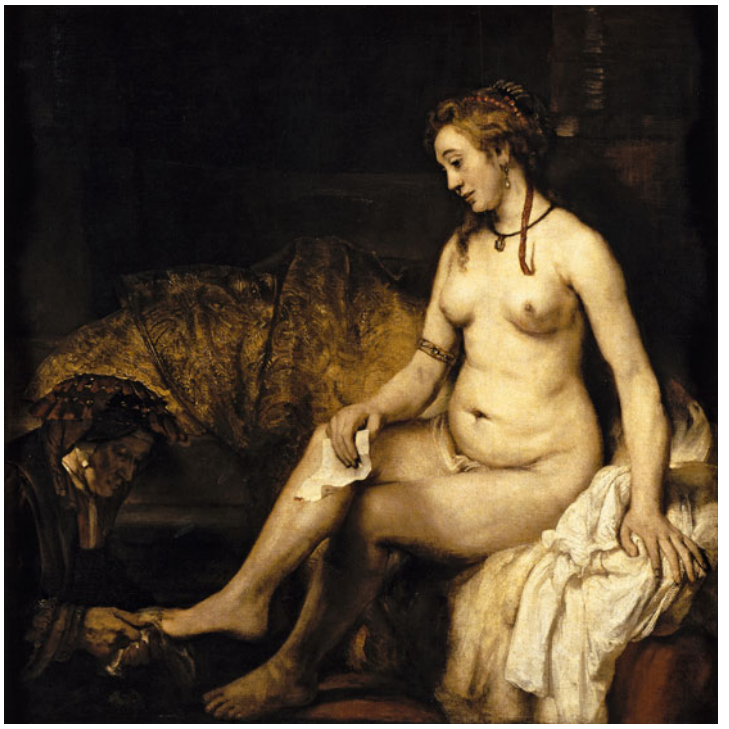
Fig. 5. Rembrandt or pupil, *Joseph telling his dreams to Jacob*, pen and brown ink, wash, heightened with white, 17.5 x 24.5 cm (Ben. 526). Vienna, Albertina.

Fig. 6. Rembrandt, *Eli learns of the death of his sons. c.* 1656. Drawing, pen and wash in bistre, 18.4 x 24.8 cm (Benesch 1011). London, Victoria and Albert Museum.

his attention is directed. This figure could scarcely be the listening Jacob, whom Rembrandt in **fig. 5** and the etching B. 37 represented listening to Joseph in a passive attitude.

Christian Tümpel's reference to another drawing (**fig. 6**) may be nearer the mark. This drawing, which Benesch interpreted as the return of the prodigal son, was identified by Tümpel as *The messenger bringing Eli the news of the death of his sons and the loss of the Ark* (1 Samuel 4: 14-18) (Tümpel no. A48). Eli was a priest and one of the Righteous; the old man's complicated light costume with its different shawls in the present painting can perhaps also be explained in this context. The biblical scene with Eli is played out in the evening or at night. The blind Eli sits waiting for the news of the battle between the Israelites and the Philistines, which in the event turns out to be a disaster: the Israelites have been defeated, the Ark of the Covenant appears to have been seized by the Philistines and both his sons have been killed. In **fig. 6** the messenger is approaching Eli to deliver the bad news.

231 Rembrandt, **Bathsheba at her toilet**, 1654, canvas 142 x 142 cm. Paris, Louvre. HdG 41; Br. 521; Bauch 31; Gerson 271; Br./Gerson 521; Tümpel 24; ***Corpus* V p. 242**; a book containing seven essays on this painting was published by Cambridge University Press in 1998, edited and introduced by Ann Jensen Adams, with contributions by S. Alpers, M. Bal, M.D. Carroll, G. Schwartz, E.J. Sluijter, L. Steinberg and E. v.d.Wetering; see also *M/W* cat. 39; Sluijter 2006 Ch. XII.
Inscription: above Bathsheba's right foot ‹*Rembrandt f. 1654*›



2 Samuel 11: 2-5 'It happened, late one afternoon, when David rose from his couch and was walking about on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; the woman was very beautiful. David sent someone to inquire about the woman. It was reported, "This is Bathsheba daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite." So David sent messengers to get her, and she came to him, and he lay with her. (Now she was purifying herself after her period.) Then she returned to her house. The woman conceived; and she sent and told David, "I am pregnant."'

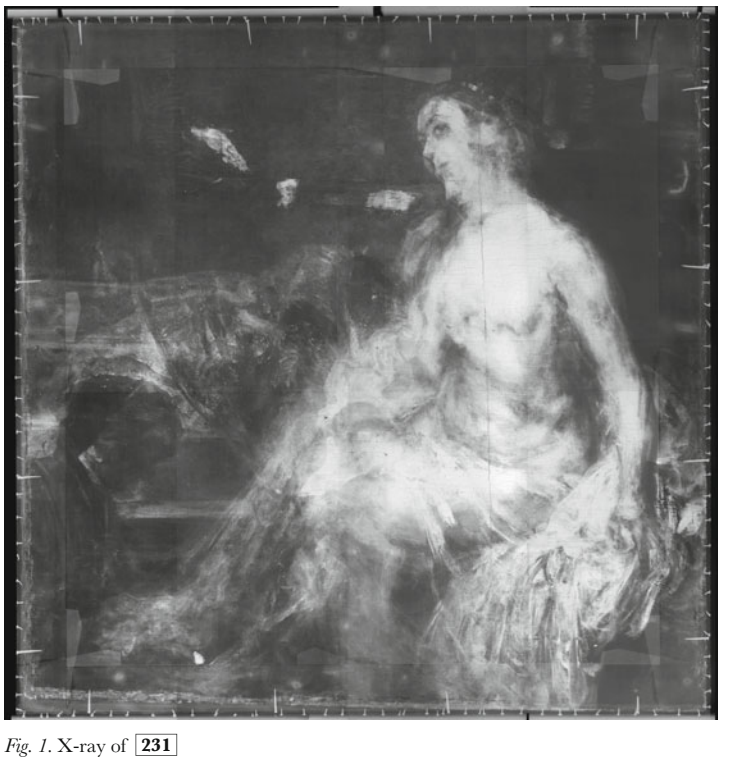


Fig. 1. X-ray of **231**

For many, Rembrandt's *Bathsheba* in Paris is one of the most fascinating and moving works by the master. This fascination is so immediate, and the memory of its impressions so lasting, it almost seems sacrilegious to analyze the sources of its power. The painting appears so simple in its pictorial structure that, apart from Bathsheba's glorious nudity and the enigmatic and moving expression on her face, one might feel that no further explanation is required. Bathsheba's body is presented in simple profile and fills the centre of the composition, while the old woman cutting her mistress's nails is also depicted in profile and situated in the lower left corner. Bathsheba sits on a red bench covered with lush white drapery in which a collar and a sleeve can be recognized, implying that she has just

undressed. Between and behind the two women, a pile of softly shimmering gold brocade indicates the richness of the overgarment she has removed. To the right in the dimly lit background, vaguely indicated architectural elements are partly darkened by a shadow cast by Bathsheba's body.

During Rembrandt's work on this, as well as in the centuries after its completion, the painting underwent changes that the reader needs to be aware of in order to better understand the situation. The following passages are quoted from my essay titled 'Rembrandt's Bathsheba: the object and its transformations' in the volume edited by Ann Jensen Adams, cited above.

We can safely assume that a strip at the left side of the painting is missing. The illogical way the figure of the old woman on the left has been transected, together with our knowledge of the standard widths of canvas commonly used in the seventeenth century, clearly indicates this. The canvas of the *Bathsheba* consists of two pieces sewn together in a seam that runs vertically through the torso and cheek of Bathsheba. Thus, the left side of the image is painted on a wider strip of canvas than the right. Research into the dimensions and construction of Rembrandt's canvases reveals, however, that when he employed two strips of canvas, either they are equally wide and comprise two full widths of a given strip of canvas or one of them is wider than the other, and then, for obvious economic reasons, the wider one is usually made of a full width of a bolt of canvas (in this case 1,5 ell (*c.* 105 cm) wide) and has selvedges on both sides (see *Corpus* II Ch. II; also in *Painter at Work* Ch. V). The location of the vertical seam leads one to presume that the painting was originally greater in height than in width. Moreover, we can be certain that the composition was considerably taller because the linen fabric at the top shows no trace of cusping (the distortion of the canvas from stretching before it was primed). The seam running through Bathsheba's torso and head leans slightly to the left. The direction of the warp threads throughout the canvas run similarly askew (**fig. 2**).

Fig. 2. Hypothetic reconstruction of the original shape of the painting.

This alteration from the painter's original intention has resulted in a slightly different positioning of Bathsheba's body. This may be the result of the complicated material history that the painting has undergone, but there may be another explanation. It is possible that Rembrandt himself carried out this operation in order to shift Bathsheba's position. As revealed in an X-radiograph discussed below, Rembrandt introduced a major change in the position of Bathsheba's head, giving her a much more contemplative countenance than the initially more lively expression when she appeared to look upward. This may have induced Rembrandt to move her torso slightly forward by tilting the canvas. But that is mere speculation (for a possibly similar case compare **143**).

The evidence of X-radiography is probably more significant for our interpretation of the painting – specifically the ways in which the X-radiograph differs from the present image (**fig. 1**). The X-ray image shows that the letter Bathsheba holds is painted on top of radio-absorbent paint that could not have been a first indication of that letter; this suggests that the letter was an afterthought. Then there are the paint strokes on her left thigh, which, together with the bulging shape on her lap, may well indicate that much more drapery was meant to cover more of her body than in the final state of the painting. The most intriguing change, of course, is the change in position of her head. What we see here is not the X-radiographic image of a rough sketch. The earlier head must have been more or less finished before it was changed, a conclusion we can draw from the precision in the rendering of the forms: even the white of the eye is carefully indicated, suggesting that she looks upward from the corners of her eyes (**figs. 3** and **4**).

Fig. 3. Detail of X-ray of **231**

Fig. 4. Detail of **231**

On the basis of this change, one is tempted to think that Rembrandt may have originally intended to depict a different moment in the biblical narrative. Initially, Bathsheba directed her glance upward and beyond the picture space, over the spectator's shoulder, as it were. Such a glance could be interpreted as reflecting the moment after King David looked down from his palace and discovered the beautiful Bathsheba, i.e. the beginning of this tragic story. In which case, Rembrandt's *Bathsheba* initially would not have held a letter in her hand.

From time to time one reads of a medical diagnosis that explains some painter's distinguishing characteristics or choice of subjects, e.g. that El Greco was astigmatic or that Van Gogh had a problem with colour vision. In the case of the *Bathsheba,* it was the sensational 'news' that Rembrandt's companion Hendrickje Stoffels, who is usually (but probably wrongly, see Note **223**) considered to be the model for this painting, must have died of breast cancer (Van Megchelen 1987). This was concluded from the observation of what was interpreted as a lump in the shaded part of Bathsheba's left breast. This area must, however, be seen as an uneven abrasion in the vulnerable dark paint of the shadow. Dark paint is easily damaged because it contains more binding medium than paint containing lead white.

This abrasion must have occurred long ago. Ultraviolet photographs taken after the last restoration in 1950 reveal that thick varnish layers were left on the painting by the restorers on that occasion. Because of these earlier yellowed varnish layers, the condition of the painting is not easy to assess. But the image is disfigured by more than just varnish. Close study of the paint surface reveals that thin glazes must also have been applied by restorers in the past, possibly to merge passages in the painting where Rembrandt may have instead meant to show steps in tonal gradations, which are typical of his works from this period. The cleaning and restoration of the painting occurred while this text was still in preparation. Only after the publication of this book will we be able to get a clearer idea of the painting's original appearance.

232 Rembrandt, **Woman at an open half-door**, *c.* 1654, canvas 88.5 x 67 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 716; Br. 116; Bauch 518; Gerson 399; Br./Gerson 116; Tümpel 188; for a detailed analysis of this painting see Jan Kelch in *M/W* cat. 45; also Miller 1986.
Inscription: none

In his *Rembrandt and the Italian Renaissance* (1966) Kenneth Clark demonstrated a clear connection between the present painting and a painting attributed to Palma Vecchio, which was in Amsterdam in the 1640s (**figs. 1** and **2**). By means of X-radiography and neutron autoradiography, Jan Kelch discovered that the painting had been introduced over another painting (probably a small-scale history

Fig. 1. Drawing from the manuscript catalogue of the Vendramin collection (1627), London, British Museum.

Fig. 2. Palma Vecchio, *Portrait of a young woman*, canvas 65 x 54 cm, Berlin, Gemäldegalerie.

Fig. 3. X-ray of **232**

Fig. 4. Neutron activation autoradiography of **232**

piece) (**figs. 3** and **4**). During the genesis of the present image Rembrandt introduced a series of changes, both in the face and in the position of the woman's right arm. This masterful picture may be counted among Rembrandt's paintings with *trompe l'oeil* characteristics (along with e.g. **179**, **181**, **186**, **187a/b**, **194**, **200** and **220**). Regrettably, the painting's appearance is still impaired by a strongly yellowed layer of varnish.

(For the option that Hendrickje Stoffels served as the model for this painting see Note **223**.)

233 Rembrandt, **Portrait of Jan Six**, 1654, canvas 112 x 102 cm. Amsterdam, Six Foundation. HdG 712; Br. 276; Bauch 405; Gerson 309; Br./Gerson 276; Tümpel 214; see also Six 1893 p. 156; De Jongh 1985; De Winkel 2006 pp. 93-134; *Dutch Portraits* pp. 200-203.
Inscription: none (see below)

This portrait, to this day still in the collection of the Six family, is exceptional among Rembrandt's portraits from after 1651. In Note **221** it is suggested that Jan Six, who must have been a considerable connoisseur of art, may himself have opted for this formula of composition and painterly technique in consultation with Rembrandt after having seen the *Old man in an armchair* **221**. The latter painting originated in 1652, the year in which Jan Six and Rembrandt seem to have developed a particularly close relationship (see also *Corpus* V pp. 234-237). The prominent position of the hand(s) in the foreground, the position of the face further back in the pictorial space and in half-shadow, can be regarded as evidence of a close connection between the two paintings. The same holds for the unusually free *peinture* and the predominant use of the colour red in both paintings.

Marieke de Winkel has drawn attention to a previously unrecognized link between the present painting and the etched portrait of Jan Six from 1647 (B. 285), at the same time examining the richly diverse costume- and cultural-historical context in which these two portraits of Jan Six seem to have originated (De Winkel 2006 Chapter III).

The following chronosticon is one of 215 written by Jan Six in the large "Pandora Album" (*Chronostica mea*, fol. 410):

'*AonIDas tenerIs qVI sVM VeneratVs ab annIs taLIs ego IanVs sIXIVs ora tVLI. op myn schildery*' 'This is the face I, Jan Six, had; I, who since childhood have worshipped the Muses. – On my painting.' (*Doc.* 1654/21)

This chronosticon by Jan Six refers to his portrait without any mention of the artist's name. The capitalized letters read as Roman numerals, give the date 1654. Six's descendant (1893 p. 156) was the first to suggest that Rembrandt's unsigned and undated portrait of Jan Six is the painting to which the verses allude.

234 Rembrandt, **The Standard-Bearer** (**Floris Soop**), 1654, canvas 138 x 113 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 269; Br. 275; Bauch 408; Gerson 317; Br./Gerson 275; Tümpel 213; see also Van Eeghen 1971; Liedtke 2007 pp. 655-656.
Inscription: lower left ‹*Rembrandt f. 1654*›

The following passage is taken from *Doc.* 1654/10: A note in the records of the notary Frans Uyttenbogaert (NA 1915, fol. 743, on 21 December 1657) records in the inventory of the estate of Floris Soop (1604-1657):

'*In the entrance hall* [the portrait] *of Floris Soop, Lifesize*'. Although the artist's names of several portraits of Floris Soop in the inventory are not mentioned, Van Eeghen identified this life-size one as the painting of a standard bearer by Rembrandt (i.e. the present painting). Floris Soop was the eldest of the 54 standard bearers of the Amsterdam civic guard during the year 1654, which makes it plausible to identify Rembrandt's painting of 1654 as that of the elderly bachelor. (In this connection see the Note to **147**.)

Soop operated a very successful glass blowing and mirror manufacturing business established by his father, Jan (d. 1638). The Soop's residence was known as *Het Glashuys* (The "Glass House") on Kloveniersburgwal (now nos. 105-109) neighbouring that of Jan Six, whose portrait Rembrandt painted, most likely, also in 1654 (see **233**).

* **235a** Rembrandt, **Self-portrait** (companion piece to **235b**), 1654, canvas 72 x 58.5 cm. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 536; Br. 43; Bauch 324; Gerson 310 (doubts); Br./Gerson 43 (the attribution to Rembrandt is not wholly convincing); Tümpel -; ***Corpus* IV 9** and **pp. 266-270**; see also Schnackenburg 1996 no. 244; *R. Self* no. 66; Kassel 2006 pp. 172-177.
Inscription: to the right in the background ‹*Rembrandt / f.1654*›

235b Rembrandt, **Portrait of Hendrickje Stoffels** (companion piece to **235a**), *c.* 1654, canvas 72 x 60 cm. Paris, Louvre. HdG 721; Br.111; Bauch 512; Gerson 310; Br./Gerson 111 (in its present state it is impossible to decide whether it is an original or a copy); Tümpel 187; see also Foucart 1982 pp. 63-65; Foucart 2009 p. 214.
Inscription: none

While working on his catalogue raisonné of the Dutch paintings in the Kassel Gemäldegalerie in 1991, Bernhard Schnackenburg considered disattributing from Rembrandt the self-portrait under discussion here, judging that the painting lacked 'the lion's claw'. Eventually (in part under the urging of the present author), the painting was included in Schnackenburg's catalogue as a work by Rembrandt. His (temporary) doubts put him in the company of Horst Gerson, who in 1969 had written of this work that 'the attribution is not wholly convincing'. Tümpel subsequently omitted the painting (without comment) from Rembrandt's oeuvre, as would Slatkes. In *Corpus* IV 9 (esp. pp. 266-270), it is argued that there are sufficient reasons to accept the authenticity of this work. The doubts mentioned above were probably due primarily to the rather tame portrait character of the painting compared to most other self-portraits by Rembrandt. The other painting discussed here **235b**, a portrait of a woman with the features of Hendrickje Stoffels, is also relatively formal in several respects. Although, like Rembrandt in **235a**, she is not attired in fashionable dress, this is the only painting among others with Hendrickje's physiognomy in which she is portrayed according to 17th-century convention.

The stylistic kinship between the two paintings and the fact that they are of the same size (72 x 58.5 and 72 x 60 cm respectively) explain why Jacques Foucart and others have suggested in the past that they were pendants, conceived and produced as a pair of portraits of Rembrandt van Rijn and Hendrickje Stoffels, painted by Rembrandt himself (Foucart 1982, p. 64). The present author finds this suggestion so convincing that the two paintings are reproduced and catalogued here as pendants. The fact that the portrait of Rembrandt is signed and dated while that of Hendrickje is not can actually serve as corroborative support for this opinion, as it was not unusual with pendants in the 17th century to sign only one of the two portraits (see for instance **77a/b**, **120a/b**, **121a/b**.

Rembrandt and Hendrickje Stoffels were never formally married, which might be construed as evidence against the suggestion that we are dealing here with pendants. There were problems over their unmarried status and the fact that, in precisely the year in which these paintings originated, Hendrickje became pregnant (see further **229**). She was consequently punished by the Church Council of her church. A clear and sensible account of this episode, with the relevant events judiciously placed in their 17th-century context, is given by the historian and archivist Dudok van Heel in his biography of Rembrandt in the catalogue *Rembrandt's women* in Edinburgh/London (2001). His version also provides an implicit explanation of why Rembrandt painted himself and Hendrickje Stoffels as a couple.

> 'The church council began taking an interest in the pregnant Hendrickje Stoffels in the summer of 1654. That was its moral duty, for she was practicing 'whoredom' with Rembrandt, in the sense of premarital cohabitation. After confessing that this was so she was given only a lenient punishment: exclusion from the Lord's Supper. [She could also have been excluded entirely from the church community, as those who committed other sins sometimes were.] When her child Cornelia was baptised in the Oude Kerk on 30 October 1654, it was, however, registered as the daughter of Rembrandt van Rijn and Hendrickje Stoffels. The entry does not reveal that Cornelia was born out of wedlock, for the authorities assumed that the couple would marry anyway. They were living in a metropolis, after all. There could be no question of marriage as the church understood it, because Rembrandt was no longer able to pay Titus the money he owed him from his mother's estate, and without the approval of Saskia's family for the settlement the artist could not get permission to remarry from the Commissioners of Martial Affairs. The secular and ecclesiastical powers did not toe the same line [in these matters].'

It is therefore not improbable that both Rembrandt and Hendrickje and many in their circle regarded Hendrickje as Rembrandt's wife. In a document from 20 October 1661, according to which Hendrickje acted as a witness to an incident on the Rozengracht close to their home, she is referred to as '*Hendrycken Stoffels huysvrouw van Sr. Rembrant van Reyn, fijnschilder*' (Hendrickje Stoffels, wife of Mr. Rembrandt van Reyn, painter). It is therefore not unlikely that Rembrandt and Hendrickje had already for some time considered themselves man and wife – probably since the time of her pregnancy, or following the birth of their daughter Cornelia – and had seen this as the occasion to immortalize themselves as a couple in the pair of paintings under discussion here.

Because of the way Hendrickje's hand is transected by the bottom edge of the canvas it has been suggested that the canvas with her portrait has been cropped. If that were the case it would argue against the assumption that we are dealing with pendants. However, in Rembrandt's portraits hands do not *per se* have to be shown in the entirety (cf. for example **169**, **177a/b**, **187b**, **222**, **317** and **318**). It is not far-fetched to think that the painter (and Hendrickje herself) was mainly concerned here with the wrist and its ornamental bracelets which are just as prominently shown as the earrings – the pearl shaped pendants at her ears – and the ornament on Hendrickje's bosom. There is probably much to be said about the role of jewellery and ornaments in the relationship between men and women in the 17th century; one need only think of the role that Saskia's jewels, given by Rembrandt to Geertje Dircks, played in Rembrandt's entanglement with Geertje (*Doc.* 1648/2).

The gold chain Rembrandt is wearing in the painting may refer to his status as a famous painter (Chapman 1990 pp. 51-54).

236 Rembrandt, **The Polish Rider** (partly unfinished, locally completed by later hand), *c.* 1655, canvas 116.8 x 134.9 cm. New York, Frick Collection. HdG 268; Br. 279; Bauch 211; Gerson 287; Br./Gerson 279; Tümpel 123; ***Corpus* V 20**; see also New York 2011 no. 2.
Inscription: on the rock, extreme right ‹*R(e)*›

The myth that the Rembrandt Research Project removed the *Polish Rider* from Rembrandt's oeuvre is an extremely stubborn one. This is how it arose: in 1984 the then chairman of the RRP Josua Bruyn suggested in a book review that the *Polish Rider*, one of Rembrandt's most famous paintings, might in fact have been painted by Rembrandt's pupil Willem Drost (1633-1658). Bruyn wrote:

> 'As the field [of the oeuvre of Drost] is further explored, one should not forget to take into account a number of paintings that until recently were accepted as Rembrandts or still are: the *A seated man with a stick* in London (MacLaren 1960, No. 51), for example, already questioned by MacLaren, or the so-called *Polish Rider* in the Frick Collection, which shows striking affinities, to say the least, with Drost's early, Rembrandtesque work.' (Bruyn 1984 p. 158).

It was a throw-away remark, anticipating the actual investigation of the painting. Doubt is of course permissible; it is after all the motor of science and scholarship. But this was a minor disaster, because countless Rembrandt devotees thought they had lost one of their favourite Rembrandts – all the more because other Rembrandt specialists now also began to doubt the painting's authenticity. Once sown, these doubts took root, even though in 1997 it was reported reliably that the RRP considered the painting to be an authentic Rembrandt. The interpretation offered below is intended to explain certain discrepancies in the *Polish Rider* which gave rise to this crisis of attribution.

In part, the doubts raised can be traced to the fact that some forms roughly sketched by Rembrandt seem to have been further worked out by a later painter. Had the painting been left in an unfinished state? Was it 'completed' by someone else (e.g. the leg of the boot and the turned back corner of the coat)? Other parts of the painting – the horse's hind legs and tail, and also the terrain through which our horseman is riding – had largely remained at the stage of Rembrandt's first rough sketch. In these parts, the grey-brown ground remained exposed in many places.

There is moreover one feature in particular that may have contributed to the doubts over the attribution to Rembrandt. The horse's feet that stand on the ground are remarkably long, particularly the right hind foot, as a result of which the horse has a peculiar unsteadiness – which is indeed characteristic of Willem Drost's early works (Sumowski *Gemälde* nos. 311, 315, 317, 318). But these two feet were in fact painted by a later restorer, and not altogether competently. They had to be re-painted because a strip had been cut from the bottom of the painting and replaced with a new strip of linen.

Whereas earlier viewers of the *Polish Rider* were blind to the painting's weaknesses, presumably because the stronger parts made them overlook the less successful parts painted by different hands, in recent years (ever since Bruyn's remark, quoted above) the converse has been the case. One hopes that the above explanation will, where necessary, open the viewer's eyes to the qualities evident in most parts of this most intriguing painting, qualities that are so typical of Rembrandt.

In Rembrandt's time, Polish warriors were extremely popular. They defended the eastern borders of Christendom against the advancing armies of the Ottoman Empire. For an analysis of the rider's costume and the iconography and function of the image see Marieke de Winkel's valuable contribution to *Corpus* V 20 as far as this is dealing with these aspects.

237 Rembrandt **Joseph accused by Potiphar's wife** (with possible additions by another hand), 1655, canvas 110 x 87 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie.
HdG 17; Br. 524; Bauch 32; Gerson 274; Br./Gerson 524; Tümpel 25; ***Corpus* V 22**; see also Klessmann 1973 pp. 44-47; Bl. cat. 16; Berlin 1975 pp. 349-350; Berlin 2006 no. 62.
Inscription: bottom right ‹*Rembran / f. 1655.*›

The Biblical text on which the present painting is based follows on from Genesis 39: 11-13, quoted in *Corpus* V p. 198.

> **Genesis 39: 13-19** 'When she saw that he had left his garment in her hand and had fled outside, she called out to the members of her household and said to them, "See, my husband has brought among us a Hebrew to insult us! He came in to me to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice; and when he heard me raise my voice and cry out, he left his garment beside me, and fled outside." Then she kept his garment by her until his master came home, and she told him the same story, saying, "The Hebrew servant, whom you have brought among us, came in to me to insult me; but as soon as I raised my voice and cried out, he left his garment beside me, and fled outside." When his master heard the words that his wife spoke to him, saying, "This is the way your servant treated me," he became enraged.'

In *Corpus* V 22 Michiel Franken analysed in depth the genesis and iconography of the present painting. This is Rembrandt's first history piece with small-scale figures since the *Noli me tangere* from *c.* 1650 **219**. It was painted over an apparently rejected, unfinished, life-size painting of an old man (**fig. 1**). He signed the first version of the present painting where one now sees the volute on the left bedpost, a signature that was only discovered by neutron activation imaging. Rembrandt must have then taken up the painting again, as a result of which the signature disappeared beneath the paint. He also introduced changes in other places and subsequently applied the final signature, this time in the bottom right corner. On the X-radiograph one sees an unclear configuration of freely applied brushstrokes in the place where the ges-

Fig. 1. X-ray of **237**

ticulating Joseph stands, suggesting that Rembrandt wrestled with the conception of this figure. One doubts whether the figure of Joseph in its present form was actually painted by Rembrandt himself, all the more since there are traces of intervention by another hand in the bedclothes in that part of the painting. It is possible that in connection with Rembrandt's doubts about this part of the painting he conceived a second version, to be executed by a pupil (**fig. 2**). In this respect, this case is perhaps comparable to the *Sacrifice of Abraham* **136** and its second version produced by a pupil **136** (fig. 2). This phenomenon might have occurred with the second (nocturnal) version in Copenhagen (*Corpus* V 15) of the Paris *Supper at Emmaus* **218**. In the present case the pupil concerned painted the figure of Joseph in a totally different posture and state of mind. At first sight this copy would seem to be a satellite of the kind we are familiar with (see Chapter II, fig. 3); but it is not impossible that Rembrandt gave his pupil the task of producing this variant where the figure of Joseph was to be based on the Asnat in the *Jacob's Blessing* from 1656 **245**.

Fig. 2. Pupil of Rembrandt. Free variant after **237**, canvas 105 x 98 cm. Washington, The National Gallery.

In the biblical story Potiphar's wife accuses Joseph to her husband in Joseph's absence. One might wonder whether the addition of Joseph was connected with a possible moralistic purpose behind the work. In his foreword to *Joseph in Egypten* the poet Vondel recommends hanging up a picture of Joseph as a

> '*perfect example of unbending chastity*' in the '*bedroom of youths who, though bathed in beauty and grace from their mother's body on, are often shipwrecked in the spring of their life through the siren song of mermaids.*'

It is worth noting in this context that, according to the Bartolotti family inventory of 1664, a '*Joseph met Potiphaer's Huysvrouw*' hung '*in the room where the young ladies sleep*'. The didactic significance of the tale of Joseph and Potiphar's wife in the 17th century is also evident in *Selfstrijt* ([Christian] Self-Struggle) by the poet Jacob Cats, although it must be said that several contemporary poets seriously doubted whether Cats' model of chastity was an apt one, because of the erotic nature of the story (see notes 15-21 in *Corpus* V 22).

* **238** Rembrandt,
Oil sketch of an old man, *c.* 1655, panel 23 x 18 cm. Private collection. HdG 433; Br. 228; Bauch 179; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 228 (as most probably by Gerbrand van den Eeckhout); Tümpel -; see also Plomp 1997 pp. 143-44.
Inscription: none

There have been different opinions as to the attribution and dating of this painting since Gerson attributed it to Gerbrand van den Eeckhout. This attribution was mainly based on a drawing, itself unconvincingly attributed to Eeckhout (**fig. 1**). In a verbal communication to the art dealer S. Lilian, Bruyn attributed **238** to Samuel van Hoogstraten and consequently dated it around 1645 (Hoogstraten was trained by Rembrandt between *c.* 1642 and *c.* 1646). However, Bruyn's tendency to attribute Rembrandtesque oil sketches to Hoogstraten is questionable (see *Corpus* V p. 366-367).

There is a strikingly close relation of **238** to a drawing in Teylers Museum (**fig. 1**). On vague grounds, the Teyler drawing has usually been attributed to Gerbrand van den Eeckhout (1621-1674) who was Rembrandt's student from *c.* 1635 to *c.* 1640 and a life-long friend who continued to follow his teacher's development. Contrary to frequent assertions in the literature, this drawing is not signed, let alone by Gerbrand van den Eeckhout (Plomp 1997 pp. 143-144). Stylistically, there is no connection with Eeckhout's signed drawings. Sumowski, whilst attributing the drawing to Eeckhout in *Oud-Holland* 1962 (p. 11 ff) omitted it from his survey of Eeckhout's drawings in his *Drawings of the Rembrandt School* (Vol. 3, 1980). Michiel Plomp, with reference to two paintings by this painter that contain profile heads, does not exclude the possibility of an attribution of the drawing to Eeckhout. But the position of these heads in profile is the only feature in common between the drawing and those paintings (Sumowski *Gemälde* II [Eeckhout] nos. 436 and 442).

Fig. 1. Copy after **238**, mixed drawing technique on paper 23 x 18 cm, Haarlem, Teylers Museum.

Particular significance should be attached to the fact that the unusually broad zones and lines scraped in the wet paint in the area of the man's hands in the present painting were copied very precisely in the Teylers drawing. This is strong evidence that the drawing was made after the present painting and not after one of the other versions that differ from **238** in this specific respect.

The fact that not only such an accurately drawn copy was produced after so rough a sketch, but also the number of painted copies after the present painting may be seen as an indication that particular significance was attached to it. On this evidence and also on the basis of the quality and the painter's 'hand' in the present painting, I am entirely convinced that the present painting is by Rembrandt and is the prototype of the Haarlem drawing as well as the other painted versions.

According to the dendrochronological data for the panel provided by Peter Klein, 'a creation is plausible from 1631 upwards'. The painting is executed with a fluid brush, that reveals remarkable variation and could well be compared to Rembrandt's brush drawings from the 1650s (compare **223** figs. 1 and 2). A dating of the painting to the 1650s should therefore be considered.

239 Rembrandt, **Man in armour**, *c.* 1655, original canvas *c.* 113 x 90 cm. with strips added on all sides (4.5 cm at the left, 10 cm at the right and at the top and 14 cm along the bottom); the present painting, including these additions, now measures 137 x 104.5 cm. Glasgow, City Art Gallery and Museum. HdG 208; Br. 480; Bauch 280; Gerson 294; Br./Gerson 480; Tümpel 109; see also Miles 1961 Vol. I, no. 601; *M/W* cat. 43; Brown/Roy 1992; Giltaij in Bl. cat. 15.
Inscription: bottom left above the added strip ‹*Rembrandt f/ 1655*›

The most frequently discussed issue in relation to this painting, which has been enlarged with strips of linen on all four sides, is the possibility that this might be the *Alexander* that Rembrandt painted for Don Antonio Ruffo in Messina as a pendant for the *Aristotle* **228** and the *Homer* **301**. Ruffo complained that the painting Rembrandt delivered was an originally smaller painting that had been enlarged with strips of linen (*Doc.* 1662/11):

> *"Report for the Consul Gio. Battista Vallembrot upon his arrival in Amsterdam. He will inform Sir Isaac Just of how little pleased his friend from Messina* [Antonio Ruffo], *who commissioned the 'Alexander', is with this painting. He will further inform him that it cost him more than the 'Aristotle'* **228** *paid years ago and that the said painting* [the 'Alexander'] *was painted on four pieces of canvas sewn together. These four seams are horrible beyond words. Besides, in time they will crack and consequently the canvas as a whole will be ruined. Said person* [Antonio Ruffo] *does not own a single painting with patched canvas among his 200 examples of the best subjects* [painters?] *in Europe. Rembrandt – maybe in order to save work or perhaps crushed by his many tasks – in order to transform this 'Alexander' (since at the start it was nothing more than a Head on a single canvas) into a half-length figure, decided to extend the canvas. He first extended it lengthwise, but then, seeing that the painting was too narrow added another piece widthwise.*[..]"

The present painting, with a heroic figure in ancient armour, was an obvious candidate to be considered as the work in question, because it has been enlarged on all four sides with strips of linen of various widths (**fig. 1**). However, the idea that this could be the Ruffo painting was firmly rejected by Miles in 1961 in the Glasgow Museum catalogue (no. 601), where he concluded:

> "Tempting though it may be to argue for the identity of the missing picture [Ruffo's *Alexander*] with no. 601 [the present painting], the evidence seems almost wholly against it. (i) The picture can scarcely be said to have been enlarged from head size (as indicated in the letter quoted above)), and such additions as there are betray nothing of the master. (ii) Neither the actual nor the former size of no. 601 conforms with either of those given for the 'Alexander', allowances made. (iii) The 'Alexander' in Ruffo's inventory is described as seated. (iv) No. 601 almost certainly dates from 1655 and is not in accord with Rembrandt's style of, say, 1660, when it is likely that he worked on the 'Alexander' received by Ruffo in the following year. (v) If no. 601 is to be identified with the picture in the Count Fraula sale, Brussels, 21 June 1738, it cannot be Ruffo's 'Alexander', which was still in Messina in 1743."

Fig. 1. **239**, with later additions.

In 1992 the painting was subjected to technical analysis by Christopher Brown and Ashok Roy. In their report published in the *Burlington Magazine* in 1992 (Brown/Roy 1992), they argued that the painting could indeed be the work painted for Ruffo. This also provided the basis for Brown's entry in the catalogue *Rembrandt: the Master and his Workshop* (*M/W* cat. 43). However, Jeroen Giltaij, who investigated the sources relating to Ruffo's collection and his contacts with Rembrandt, has convincingly rejected the arguments put forward by Brown and Roy (Bl. cat. 15). Giltaij's arguments for the most part tally with those of Miles, quoted above.

240 Rembrandt, **A slaughtered ox**, 1655, beech panel 95.5 x 69 cm. Paris, Louvre. HdG 972; Br. 457; Bauch 562; Gerson 291; Br./Gerson 457; Tümpel 124; ***Corpus* V 21**; see also Foucart 2009 p. 215.
Inscription: bottom left ‹*Rembrandt. f 1655.*›

In 1982 the art historian Jacques Foucart, at the time curator of the Netherlandish and Flemish paintings in the Louvre, published his *Les peintures de Rembrandt au Louvre*, devoting a remarkably detailed entry to the painting discussed in this Note.

Before dealing with the art historical, iconographic and iconological context in which the work should be considered, he first concentrated on its special artistic qualilities, particularly emphasizing how important the painting had been for 19th-century French painters such as Eugène Delacroix (1798–1863), François Bonvin (1817–1887) and Honoré Daumier (1808-1879) who had all copied or had been inspired by the subject or the pictorial potency of the painting. In the same context he also referred to 20th-century painters who had been inspired by Rembrandt's painting, the expressionist Chaïm Soutine (1893-1943), of course, and also the English painter Francis Bacon (1909–1992).

This work is a clear case of 'a painter's painting': it not only inspires artistic freedom, it also stimulates the expressive drive in certain painters. The mobile quality of the pastose *peinture* in the splayed carcass would seem to make Rembrandt's painting an early example of painterly abstraction. This 'landscape' of flesh, congealed fat, stretched hide and the rhythmic order of the ribs is placed almost vertically in the picture space. A painter like Jean Fautrier (1898–1964), for example, could well have been influenced by this.

But if one looks at this work as just one of a great many 17th-century paintings with dead cattle or pigs, splayed and hanging on a ladder, one sees it rather differently. And one also realizes then that Rembrandt must also have regarded the painting very differently from the 19th- and 20th-century painters cited above as well, not to mention the art-lovers of that period. Familiarity with the language used by one of Rembrandt's pupils – and probably therefore by Rembrandt himself – to describe the relation between the surface textures of materials and *peinture* will lead one to see that the astonishing pictorial richness of this painting is not so much due to a Rembrandt imagined anachronistically as a proto-expressionist or abstract painter, but rather to the devotion with which Rembrandt has tried to do justice to the anatomical complexity of his subject. In his book on painting, Samuel van Hoogstraten (Rembrandt's pupil) repeats the advice of his master (advice to which the adult Hoogstraten did not in fact conform):

'*the most praiseworthy of all is this: that one should become accustomed to a brisk brushwork, which indicates distinctively those passages that differ in some way from other passages [in the painting], giving them their proper character and where appropriate a playful liveliness.*' (SvH p. 233)

and similarly in connection with the handling of the brush:

'*But you will in all things succeed if your hand is ordinarily obedient to your eye and your judgement.*' (SvH p. 235) (see *Corpus* V pp. 122/133).

One encounters in this painting a mobile *peinture*, with varying paint substance and thickness together with the deliberate admission of chance in the handling of the paint, on a scale that is largely determined by the painting's actual subject.

The iconographic section of *Corpus* V 21, written by Marieke de Winkel and quoted in part below, is indispensible for an understanding of the painting's meaning in the context of Rembrandt's time – and even in that of his immediate circle:

'Seventeenth-century probate inventories contain repeated mentions of paintings of slaughtered oxen and pigs in particular. Perhaps these subjects were depicted as pendants; an Amsterdam inventory of 1676 lists 'two pieces of an ox and a pig [hanging] from a beam by Victors'. In the 17th century, the word 'ox' was frequently used to refer to cattle in general, or more specifically a bullock. As only a few bulls were needed for breeding purposes, the vast majority of male bovines were castrated and fattened up for their meat. In the province of Holland pastures were well-suited for raising livestock and West-Frisian cattle in particular were famous. Important ox markets existed in Amsterdam, Hoorn, Enkhuizen and Purmerend (Van Dillen 1970 pp. 218-19). A phenomenon prevalent in the mid-17th century was the so-called '*ossenweiderij*' (ox-grazing), an agrarian industry in which members of the (Amsterdam) city council and wealthy merchants had vested interests. These investors, called '*ossenweiders*' (oxen graziers), imported lean oxen from Denmark (Jutland, Schleswig), fattened them up on leased pastures in Holland and subsequently had them slaughtered (Gijsbers 1999).'

In 1969 Muller introduced the idea that the suspended carcass represented death and shortly thereafter De Jongh placed it in the context of the more general theme of *memento mori* (Muller 1969 p. 173; De Jongh 1971). The latter primarily pointed to the fact that the *vanitas* symbolism of paintings with this subject is further reinforced by the motif of children playing with an inflated bladder, which is frequently included in scenes of a slaughtered ox, and as a reference to the *Homo Bulla* motif also functions as a *memento mori*.

The suggestion that the association of the ox with imminent death was current in the 17th century is supported by contemporary literature that has never before been cited in this context. For example, there is a poem by Jeremias de Decker, who was a friend of Rembrandt at the time that this painting was produced. The poem entitled 'Gelijck den Os voor de bijl' was published in 1656 – one year after the painting was made:

'*The lean ox is herded into the lush grass*
But it grazes itself large and fat for the axe (oh poor soul)
Thus man also enters the pasture of this life
The further he forages, the closer he comes to death.
Our gain is our loss; the more we grow in years,
The more our fragile life declines.
Whether we are old or young, fading or blooming,
We hasten steadily from the cradle to the grave.'

This poem by De Decker is but one of many containing this symbolism (see further *Corpus* V 21).

241 Rembrandt, **An old woman reading** (study in lighting effects), 1655, canvas 79 x 65 cm. Drumlanrig Castle, Duke of Buccleuch Collection. HdG 315; Br. 385; Bauch 279; Gerson 292; Br./Gerson 385; Tümpel 152; see also *R. Women* 2001 no. 121.
Inscription: centre left ‹*Rembrandt f. 1655*›

This is one of those paintings for which it is difficult to provide an adequate title – adequate in the sense that the title should correlate with Rembrandt's possible intentions in painting it. The current title *An old woman reading* is undoubtedly the safest, and yet it can seriously mislead the beholder in that it may deflect attention from what makes this painting so special, viz. the light effects. We are after all used to ignoring unusual light effects in our daily lives because our attention is mostly fixed on the *what* of that which we see – e.g. an old woman reading. But a painter would in fact have had to make many singular decisions in order to place this 'old woman' in this setting – decisions that for a painter are highly demanding: the incident light falling from high above on the left lights the nose, the mouth and the point of the chin. The strength of that light can be read from the whiteness of the lit parts of the white garment covering the woman's breast and – insofar as they are visible – her left arm. The same direct light also illuminates the woman's dark brown, almost black, headwear. Lined with a decorated material, the outer material of this head-covering is such (possibly velvet?) that it reflects no light except above left by the upper contour.

The woman is reading a book. The intense light falling on the unseen pages of this open book is sufficiently strong for its reflection from these pages to serve as a secondary light source. This reflected light is of course not as strong as the direct light, as one can see by comparing the light from above as it strikes the nose with the light reflected from below, illuminating the eye sockets. Yet it is strong enough for all the details in the face to be clearly distinct. There are places where it is impossible to discern the boundary between those parts that are lit by direct light and those parts of the face that are lit by the reflected light – such as the area beneath the nose. This subtle play of light is what gives the painting a singular magical quality.

One of the particular aspects of Rembrandt's artistry is that these effects never appear forced as they do in the works of such artists as Gerard Dou or Godfried Schalcken. With Rembrandt they seem to be almost incidentally achieved. From time to time from 1629 onwards, Rembrandt turned his attention to works in which, through further analysis, an interplay of the effects described above was refined to its utmost, compare for example, **27**, **28**, **284**, **307**, and etchings like B. 273 and B. 285. In some cases, we know that art-lovers admired such *tours de force* with reflected light. This could mean that the present painting's current title *An old woman reading* does not adequately reflect the work's true significance. A more accurate, albeit unwieldy, title might be: 'A study – or demonstration piece – of the working of light, shadow and light reflected into shadow'.

242 Rembrandt, **Titus at a desk**, 1655(?), canvas 77 x 63 cm. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen. HdG 702; Br. 120; Bauch 411; Gerson 325; Br./Gerson 120; Tümpel 184; see also *M/W* cat. 42; Giltaij 2003 no. 31; Berlin 2006 no. 64.
Inscription: in the light paint below, on the already hardened paint of the desk (see below) ‹*Rembrandt f 1655*›

Fig. 1. Detail of **242**

Fig. 2. Detail of **257**

This work, although unquestionably by Rembrandt, is one of the many paintings from his hand for which there is no 17th-century document to connect it either directly or indirectly to Rembrandt. Exactly why it was produced, its meaning and function, the precise period of its origin, the identity and nature of the activity of the figure depicted, all remain in the realm of speculation. And as will become apparent, even the date in the inscription ‹ *Rembrandt f 1655* › is not necessarily to be trusted. Yet this painting has always been regarded as self-evidently a portrait of the artist's son Titus, painted in 1655 even though there is absolutely no proof that it is.

Fig. 3. B. 11 (mirror image).

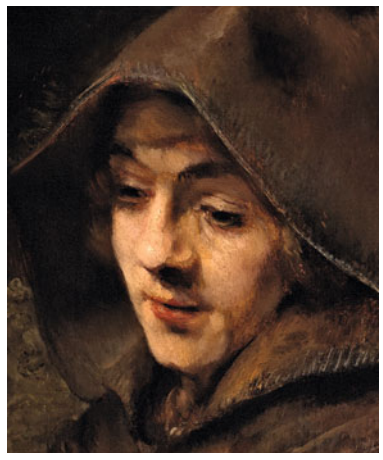


Fig. 4. Detail of **279**

Fig. 5. Detail of **280**

It is likely that the person depicted here (**fig. 1**) was also portrayed by Rembrandt or used as a model in **figs. 2-9**: **257** (**fig. 2**); B.11 (**fig. 3**); **279** (**fig. 4**); **280** (**fig. 5**); **288** (**fig. 6**); **289** (**fig. 7**); **307** (**fig. 8**); **315** (**fig. 9**). The facial structure and physiognomy are so closely similar in all these paintings that it can be taken to be the same individual at different stages of his life. This individual seems to have been around Rembrandt's studio from 1655 (if the date inscribed on the present painting is correct) to *c.* 1667. There are facial resemblances to both Saskia **94** and Rembrandt **66** – the long nose with a broad tip, the high dark eyebrows with a slight undulation **94**, the tapering shape of the face ending in a narrow chin. All this taken together makes it almost certain that the youth in the present painting is Rembrandt's and Saskia's son Titus (1641-1667). One may, however, question whether the boy in the present painting was painted at the age of fourteen. The rounded cheeks, the relatively large eyes, the relation between head and, insofar as it is visible, the trunk, the length of the neck and forearms, all suggest a child of around ten years old rather than a teenager. While it is true that the letters and cyphers of the inscription do not differ significantly in either form or placing in relation to each other from the inscription on e.g. *The slaughtered ox* from 1655 **240**, there is nevertheless a notable difference. The signature on the present painting is lightly applied in whitish paint to the relief of the dry, already hardened paint of the reading desk, behind which the boy sits (**fig. 10**). Did Rembrandt apply this inscription later, for example upon the sale of the painting, as he seems to have done on other occasions (see for instance **4**) If so, the painting could have been painted earlier

Fig. 10. Signature of **242**

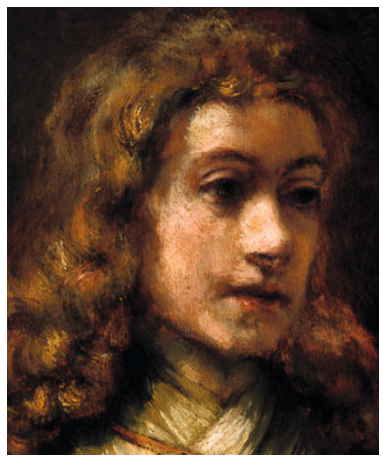


Fig. 6. Detail of **288**

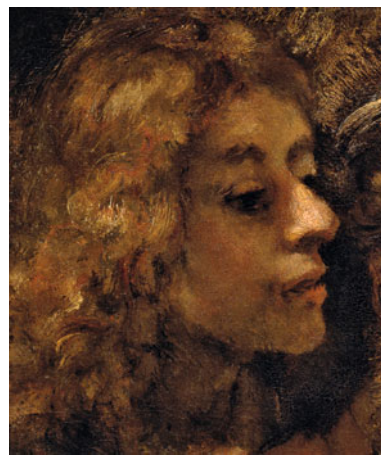


Fig. 7. Detail of **289**

Fig. 8. Detail of **307**

Fig. 9. Detail of **317**

Fig. 11. John the Evangelist, on a 17th century Amsterdam gable stone.

than the year indicated by the inscription. Did it perhaps originate during the same phase as the *Young girl in the window* from 1651 **220**, which is in many respects related?

An undocumented painting like this can thus give rise to all kinds of speculation – for example, the claim that it actually represents John the Evangelist writing – on the basis of a similarity to the John, recognizable by his attribute, the eagle, on a 17th century Amsterdam gable stone (**fig. 11**). Could the present painting thus be not a 'portrait' of Titus but a painting with a wholly different *raison d'être* for which the young Titus posed?

It is usually assumed that the young man is concentrating on what he is writing. Van den Boogert, however, has argued that he is in fact drawing in a Dutch door whose top half is open (Berlin 2006 no. 64).

243 Rembrandt, **Unfinished portrait of a boy**, *c.* 1656, canvas 65 x 56 cm. Pasadena, Norton Simon Museum. HdG 489; Br. 119; Bauch 410; Gerson 319; Br./Gerson 119; Tümpel A99 (from Rembrandt's circle); see also *Painter at Work* p. 203,
Inscription: none

Many of Rembrandt's late paintings give the impression of being unfinished, even though with most of them Rembrandt, by adding his signature, indicated '*that the master has achieved his intention in it*'. (See *Corpus* V pp. 238-239) for Rembrandt's intentional '*non finito*'.)

But this child's portrait must actually be considered unfinished. Was the boy too restless when posing or did he perhaps die before the painting was completed? We shall probably never know. However, the painting in its state of incompletion affords us a unique glimpse of Rembrandt's working method.

The first and most important insight it provides is that Rembrandt did not paint on a white prepared canvas, as is usually the case today, but on canvas with a coloured 'ground'. The grey-brown ground with which this canvas was evenly prepared has remained almost entirely uncovered on the boy's chest and right shoulder. Working on such a coloured ground has an immediate advantage. With just a few light and dark licks of paint on this intermediate tone you already have a painting with convincing rendering, as can be seen in the boy's arms and chest.

Adding a dark background – which must have been rapidly introduced – round the boy's silhouette ensures that the figure stands freely in the pictorial space. The painting is then already so far developed that it '*tickles and amuses*' the eye of the painter [as one contemporary of Rembrandt wrote], '*thus arousing and spurring the desire to continue*' (Lairesse I p. 14). Subsequently, with the cursory addition of the white collar, the beret and some light touches on the small face, it would have been as though a light had been switched on in the painting and Rembrandt could then patiently work out in detail the face and the glossy hair. After that, for whatever reason, work was abruptly abandoned.

We shall also probably never know what Rembrandt's intention was for the boy's outstretched left arm. Was a falcon planned there? If so, was the boy a young scion of the aristocracy? The portrait is frontally lit and not obliquely from above left as is usually the case with Rembrandt. Could this have been at the request of the commissioning patron(s)?

One can keep speculating over the boy's identity (he is certainly too young to be Titus, as was long thought). But what this painting most certainly does give us is the feeling, in a quite exceptional way, of looking over Rembrandt's shoulder while he was at work.

244 Rembrandt, **Man with beret and tabard** (**a falconer?**), *c.* 1656, canvas 115 x 88.3 cm. Toledo (Ohio), Museum of Art. HdG 750; Br. 278; Bauch 409; Gerson 316; Br./Gerson 278; Tümpel 215; see also *R. in America* cat. 32.
Inscription: below right, *c.* 20 cm from the bottom edge ‹*Remb… / 16…*›

This painting above all raises questions. Is it a portrait of a passing foreigner such as, for example, in **261**? Or is it a Dutchman in historicising costume – in which case what is the meaning of the strange small dagger-shaped object (a coral amulet?, a whistle?) hanging against his belly (**fig. 1**) or the shiny object above his right hand? Another pressing question concerns the painting's original format. This issue arises first of all because the X-radiograph shows that cusping is present only along the top of the canvas. How much is missing on the other sides? The idea that a strip, possibly a considerable part of the image, is missing from the right side is suggested in the first place by the way the man's left forearm is transected by the right edge of the painting. One also finds an arm transected in this manner in the *Smiling Titus* **280**, but there the figure is shown seated

Fig. 1. Detail of **244**.

and one can well imagine that the arm is resting on the arm of a chair. The man in the present painting, however, is standing and from the fact that the last remaining fold of the transected sleeve runs vertically but is bent slightly inwards one may infer that the forearm itself was bent forward. The question of whether he is holding something in his (once visible?) outstretched left hand or whether there is something resting on his forearm then becomes more significant. Could that something have been a hawk or a falcon? A bag hangs from the leather strap over his chest which could well be a 'hunting pouch'. Comparison with the *Portrait of a man with a hawk* **191a** here springs to mind.

Fig. 2. Detail of the X-ray of **244** showing the top right edge.

The outermost 2 cm of the right- hand edge of the canvas on the X-radiograph are puzzling. In this area there are indents in the surface which show the irregular slanting stitches made with a thin cord, and running parallel to them a double row of holes in the canvas (**fig. 2**). One has the impression that a foreign stitching technique was used along this edge, which may perhaps indicate that the subject of the portrait was a foreigner who had taken his portrait back to his own country and had a strip from the right side of the painting removed, on which perhaps there was a hawk or a falcon.

245 Rembrandt, **Jacob blessing the sons of Joseph**, 1656, canvas 175 x 210.5 cm. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 22; Br. 525; Bauch 34; Gerson 277; Br./Gerson 525; Tümpel 26; see also Hausherr 1976; Sonnenburg 1978; Bar-Efrat 1987; Kassel 2006 no. 30. Inscription: bottom left ‹*Rembran*(the *dt* is semi-overlapped by Jacob's blanket) */ f. 1656.*›

Genesis 48: 1-20 'After this Joseph was told, "Your father is ill." So he took with him his two sons, Manasseh and Ephraim. When Jacob was told, "Your son Joseph has come to you," he summoned his strength and sat up in bed. And Jacob said to Joseph, "God Almighty appeared to me at Luz in the land of Canaan, and he blessed me". When Israel [Jacob] saw Joseph's sons, he said, "Who are these?" Joseph said to his father, "They are my sons, whom God has given me here." And he said, "Bring them to me, please, that I may bless them." Now the eyes of Israel were dim with age, and he could not see well. So Joseph brought them near him; and he kissed them and embraced them. Israel said to Joseph, "I did not expect to see your face; and here God has let me see your children also". 'Then Joseph removed them from his father's knees, and he bowed himself with his face to the earth. Joseph took them both, Ephraim in his right hand toward Israel's left, and Manasseh in his left hand toward Israel's right, and brought them near him. But Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on the head of Ephraim, who was the younger, and his left hand on the head of Manasseh, crossing his hands, for Manasseh was the firstborn. He blessed Joseph, and said, "The God before whom my ancestors Abraham and Isaac walked, the God who has been my shepherd all my life to this day." When Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand on the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; so he took his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. Joseph said to his father, "Not so, my father! Since this one is the firstborn, put your right hand on his head." But his father refused, and said, "I know, my son, I know; he also shall become a people, and he also shall be great. Nevertheless his younger brother shall be greater than he, and his offspring shall become a multitude of nations." So he blessed them that day, saying, "By you Israel will invoke blessings, saying, God make you like Ephraim and like Manasseh." So he put Ephraim ahead of Manasseh.'

This generally well preserved painting (despite having been damaged in places by a vandal with acid in 1977) belongs among Rembrandt's most important late works – one of the few large-scale history pieces from that period. The composition had a complex genesis, reconstructed by Sonnenburg on the basis of X-radiographs (**fig. 1**). The X-rays convey the way in which the composition developed. In the beginning Joseph appeared on the right, behind his children. Subsequently he was moved close to his father. Eventually Rembrandt changed the position of Joseph's head, probably introducing Asnath at the same time (Sonnenburg 1978). Whether the painting was made on commission, and if so for whom, cannot be ascertained with any certainty. It is noteworthy that the work was painted in the year of Rembrandt's bankruptcy which suggests that it was perhaps a commission, payment for which could have helped alleviate Rembrandt's financial distress. It is not improbable that the painting remained in Amsterdam before being acquired by the Landgrave Wilhelm VIII von Hessen in 1752.

This work has been subjected to many theological and iconographic readings. The fact that the younger of Joseph's sons, Ephraim, was blessed first by Jacob, because the people descending from him would be greater than those of his elder brother Manasseh, has led to speculation over the centuries as to which people were meant. Since the Middle Ages it has been assumed in the West that these prophetic words were meant to refer to the rise of Christian-

Fig. 1. A detail of the X-radiograph of **245** reveals how the composition developed: in the first stage Joseph appeared on the right behind his children; subsequently he was moved close to his father. Rembrandt then changed the position of Joseph's head and probably at this time also introduced Asnath.

ity, while the lesser people descended from Manasseh were the Jews (Hausherr 1976 pp. 29-30). The fact that the younger grandson, shown as a blond child in Rembrandt's painting, holds his arms crossed over his chest, could be read as an indication that Rembrandt (or his putative commissioning patron) wanted to lend extra emphasis to

this interpretation of the story. The fact that Manasseh was depicted with dark hair would conform to this interpretation.

Apart from moving and altering the figure of Joseph (**see fig. 1**), a further change in the narrative and compositional structure of the painting has been discovered: Von Sonnenburg thought that placing Jacob and Joseph close together created an empty space which, according to Sonnenburg, was subsequently filled at a later stage by adding the figure of Joseph's wife Asnath. The fact that the form of Asnath in the X-radiograph is surrounded by lead white-containing paint need not necessarily mean that it was reserved in the background at an earlier stage; it could also mean that the background was painted afresh locally after the woman had been added.

246 Rembrandt, **The anatomy lesson of Dr Joan Deyman** (fragment that survived a fire), 1656, canvas 100 x 134 cm. Amsterdam, Amsterdam Museum. HdG 927; Br. 414; Bauch 538; Gerson 326; Br./Gerson 414; Tümpel 255; see also *M/W* cat. 44; *Painter at Work* pp. 211-215; Middelkoop 1998.
Inscription: at the bottom of the fragment ‹*Rembrandt f 1656*›

This is the only surviving part of a much larger painting, a group portrait with Amsterdam physicians observing the dissection of a corpse. The painting was seriously damaged in a fire in 1723. However, Rembrandt had made a drawing of it in its original state (**fig. 1**), apparently in connection with the painting's framing and hanging. In this drawing he drew the beams in the ceiling of the Anatomy Theatre in the Weigh House on Amsterdam's Nieuwmarkt in which it was to be hung. To the left a half-open window can be seen. Thanks to this drawing we can envisage the original painting and locate the fragment within the original composition. It must have been a most impressive masterpiece before the dramatic mutilation.

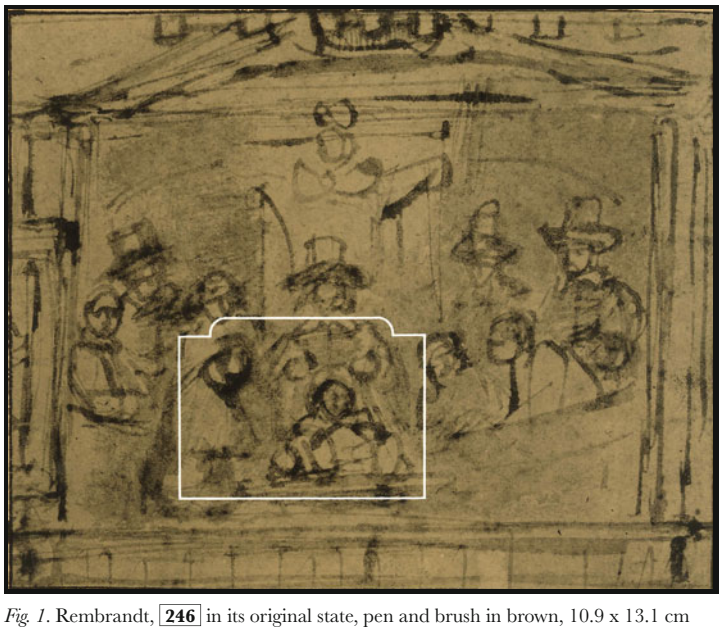


Fig. 1. Rembrandt, **246** in its original state, pen and brush in brown, 10.9 x 13.1 cm (Ben. 1175). Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.

247 Rembrandt, **A young man seated at a table**, *c.* 1656, canvas 109.9 x 89.5 cm. Washington, National Gallery. HdG 784; Br. 312; Bauch 439; Gerson 405; Br./Gerson 312; Tümpel 217; see also Wheelock 1995 pp. 265-270; Bl. cat. 19.
Barely legible inscription: at centre right ‹*Rembrandt f. 166.*› The last ciphers are in fact illegible. The remains of the third cipher are usually taken to be a 6. However it could equally be a 5 (for the possibility of confusion between Rembrandt's 6 and 5, see Note **250**.

In the past, the date in the inscription has been read as either 1662 or 63. Wheelock rightly pointed out that such a dating hardly corresponds with the relatively thin and supple handling of the paint in this painting.

Given the extremely poor condition in which the signature has survived, the present author takes the liberty of tentatively shifting the painting's possible date of origin to the mid fifties. Such a dating would also provide a better fit with the loose attire of the open flat collar and the posture of the right hand of the young man in the fragment of the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Deyman* **246**. An earlier dating would also be consistent with the hypothesis that the subject of this painting could be Rembrandt's former pupil Govaert Flinck (1615-1660) (**fig. 1**). Wheelock proposed this identification of the sitter on the basis of a physiognomic likeness to Flinck and also the fact that there seems to be a painting in the (badly preserved) background in the present painting.

Fig. 1. Arnold Houbraken, G*ovaert Flinck*, shown in reverse, from *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlandsche Kunstschilders en Schilderessen*, The Hague, 1718/1753.

248a Rembrandt, **Portrait of a gentleman with a tall hat and gloves** (companion piece to **248b**), *c.* 1656, canvas 99.5 x 82.5 cm. Washington, National Gallery. HdG 779; Br. 327; Bauch 446; Gerson 411; Br/Gerson 327; Tümpel 221; see also Wheelock 1995 pp. 252- 261.
Inscription: none

248b Rembrandt, **Portrait of a lady with an ostrich-feather fan** (companion piece to **248a**), *c.* 1656, canvas 99.5 x 83 cm. Washington, National Gallery. HdG 880; Br. 402; Bauch 528; Gerson 412; Br/Gerson 402; Tümpel 250; see also Wheelock 1995 pp. 252-261.
Inscription: none (see, however, below)

For a long time this pair of companion pieces, the so-called Youssoupoff portraits, had no clear place in my idea of Rembrandt's oeuvre. Tümpel was also uneasy about these two paintings, declaring – though without giving any reason – that he was not totally convinced of their authenticity. Both paintings are unusual among Rembrandt's portraits in two respects: compared with the great majority of his portraits the scale of the sitters is remarkably large, an impression that is enhanced by the fact that the figures are placed in relatively narrow frames. A peculiarity with the woman's portrait, which is far better preserved than the man's, is that the intensity of the light on the ostrich feather in her hands is as strong as on her face. That is unusual for Rembrandt, because as a rule, in three quarter-length portraits from his later period he strove to reduce the strength of the lighting – and concomitantly the degree of detailing – toward the bottom of the painting (see for example **225**, **226**, **234**, **244**, **247**, **261**, **270**, **274**, **281**, **294**, **297a**, **311a**, **311b**, **319**, **321**). As a result, the attention of the beholder is principally drawn to the face, which was undoubtedly what Rembrandt intended. But in this painting there is no such hierarchy in the light intensity. This must originally have been the same for the man as well, for according to the X-radiograph both hands were equally strongly lit (whereas his left hand has since been toned down, possibly by a later painter).

The fact that the gloves held loosely in the man's left hand are transected by the frame below gives the first indication that the two paintings must originally have been larger. It may be significant in this context that the X-radiograph of the man's portrait reveals clear forms beneath the background, now largely overpainted. The X-ray image gives the impression that originally to the man's right an inverted baluster shape and other architectural forms were visible, somewhat reminiscent of the left background in the full-length standing man from 1639 in Kassel **168**. The background to the left also shows unidentified forms that are not only vaguely distinguished on the X-radiograph but also in the painting itself, due to correlated local differences in the surface structure of the paint. Beneath the almost uniform overpainting of the background in the woman's portrait there appears to be a background that was lighter on the left than on the right.

Taking these observations together, one is led to suspect that the Youssoupoff paintings were once much larger, probably monumental full-length portraits that could have been more than 2 metres in height and *c.* 140 cm wide (**figs. 1** and **2**). In Rembrandt's well preserved few full-length portraits (**168**, **120a/b** and **121a/b**) one sees the floor and along with it some details which summarily define the space in which the figure is placed. If the Youssoupoff portraits were indeed originally full-length, that would certainly explain the deviant light hierarchy in the surviving fragments. The paintings have been transferred to new supporting canvases with a gauzes-like fabric interleaf, making it impossible to investigate cusping in the original canvases. It can nevertheless be seen that the original canvases had a twilled binding, such as one sometimes finds with some of Rembrandt's very large canvases, e.g. **298**, **299** and **311a/b**.

The X-ray image of the man suggests that the right side of his jacket showing beneath the cloak, together with its visible breast-piece, were probably lighter and must also have been much more clearly delineated. A row of buttons that follows the curves of the chest shows up in the X-ray image. The original conception, the manner of painting and the quality of the better preserved parts dispose of any doubt as to the authenticity of both paintings.

It has in the past been the tendency to locate the Youssoupoff portraits in a late stage of Rembrandt's career, in part because it was thought that one could read 'Rembrandt f. 166.' on the woman's portrait. However, during recent research at the conservation laboratory of the Washington National Gallery no such inscription was found. Bredius and Bauch dated the pair to *c.* 1667, Slatkes to *c.* 1661/62. Wheelock presented evidence that the dress worn by the couple were in the fashion of the 1650s and dated the paintings to around 1658-60. Stylistically, however, a dating to around 1656 would fit better within Rembrandt's oeuvre.

Fig. 1. Hypothetical reconstruction of the original size of **248a**

Fig. 2. Hypothetical reconstruction of the original size of **248b**

249 Rembrandt, **Portrait of a man**, **possibly Arnout Tholincx**, 1656, canvas 76 x 63 cm. Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André. HdG 725; Br. 281; Bauch 415; Gerson 327; Br./Gerson 281; Tümpel 216; see also Vosmaer 1877.
Inscription: right, beside the shoulder ‹*Rembrandt f. 1656*›.

The identification of the man portrayed in the present painting as Arnout Tholincx (1607-1679) rests on the strong likeness to the man in Rembrandt's etching B. 284 (**fig. 1**) from the same year, which, it is agreed, depicts this Amsterdam doctor (Vosmaer 1877).

Fig. 1. Etched portrait of Arnout Tholincx (B. 284).

Arnout Tholinx was one of the most prominent medical men of Amsterdam. He completed his medical studies in 1631, receiving his doctoral degree on 16 April in the French city of Caen. As the husband of Catharina Tulp (1622-1664), whom he married in 1648, he was the son-in-law of the famous doctor Nicolaes Tulp (1593-1674), whose *Anatomy lesson* painted by Rembrandt dates from 1632 **76**. Tholincx was in addition a brother-in-law of Jan Six (1618-1700) **233** who in 1653 married Catharina's sister Margaretha Tulp. Between 1643 and 1653 Tholincx was Inspector of the Collegium Medicum. His successor in this post was Joan Deyman (1620-1666), to whom Tholincx was also related. Rembrandt painted his *Anatomy lesson*, completed in 1656 **246**, for Deyman.

250 Rembrandt, **Portrait of the poet Jeremias de Decker**, 1656, panel 71 x 56 cm. St Petersburg, Hermitage. HdG 776; Br. 320; Bauch 442; Gerson 413; Br./Gerson 320; Tümpel 225; ***Corpus* V 18 pp. 513-515**; see also *Soviet Museums* no. 30; De Jongh 2008.
Inscription: below in the right background
<Rembrandt f. 16(5/6)6>

Hitherto this painting has always been dated to 1666. The work would thus belong among Rembrandt's very late portraits. Stylistically, however, it fits better with his works of the 1650s. Because sources indicate that De Decker was portrayed by Rembrandt before 1660, it was assumed that Rembrandt must have portrayed him twice (see Gerson 1968 no. 413) and, accordingly, that the first portrait must have been lost. But closer examination of the inscription on the present painting shows that the middle 6 of the dating is rather thick and squat, which raises the possibility that a cipher 5 has at some stage been taken to be a damaged or abraded 6. Because the 17th-century 5 lacks the now customary upper horizontal stripe, it strongly resembles a 6. If one accepts the revision of the dating proposed here, the logical inference is that Rembrandt only once painted the portrait of his friend Jeremias de Decker (1609-1666). A print after that portrait, the present painting, was incorporated in one of the editions of De Decker's works. The identification of the sitter in the portrait under discussion was based on the resemblance with that print (**fig. 1**). Jeremias de Decker wrote a poem of gratitude "*to the excellent and world famous Rembrandt van Rijn*" in which he mentions that Rembrandt had painted his portrait 'strictly as a favour … for the love of art' ['*louterlijck uit gunst …uyt liefde tot de Kunst'*] and thus not as a paid commission (see further *Corpus* V 18 esp. pp. 512-516). De Decker wrote a poem on Rembrandt's *Christ and Mary Magdalen at the tomb* '*Noli me tangere'* (see Note **219**).

Fig. 1. Anonymous engraver, *Portrait of Jeremias de Decker* (after Rembrandt), 18th century, etching and drypoint 185 x 131 mm.

* **251** Rembrandt, **Venus and Cupid**, (possibly part of a tripartite series with 252 and 253), *c.* 1657, canvas 110 x 88 cm. Paris, Louvre. HdG 215; Br. 117; Bauch 107; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 117 (as not autograph); Tümpel -; see also Emmens 1964/65 no. 97; Foucart 2009 p. 217 (as by a pupil of Rembrandt).
Inscription: none

Fig. 1. 17th-century copy of **251**, Bader Collection.

The painting dealt with here has played no further role in the literature since 1969 when, in his revision of Bredius' survey of Rembrandt's oeuvre, Horst Gerson wrote

> 'There is, to me, an incompatibility between invention and execution which points to a pupil like F. Bol.'

Implicitly Gerson was suggesting that the painting might be a copy after a lost original. It was subsequently omitted from other authors' surveys of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre. In the Louvre too it was from then on considered to be a copy after a lost original (Foucart 2009 p. 217). In 1961, Madeleine Hours, a former director of the Laboratoire du Louvre, reported in the Laboratory's Bulletin her investigation of several paintings considered to be late Rembrandts. According to her, the X-radiograph of the present painting (**fig. 3**) did not display 'the same swiftness of execution as the preceding compositions' (Hours 1961 no. 6), an observation which in those days implied that it must be a copy.

In the inventory of paintings belonging to Herman Becker, drawn up in 1676, in addition to a '*Venus en Cupido van dezelve*' [by the same i.e. Rembrandt] there also appears a '*Venus en Cupido na* [after] *Rembrant*' (Bredius 1910b pp. 197 and 200). It is unspecified whether the latter was a copy of the original owned by Becker. There are still paintings in circulation with the same scene as in the Paris painting, for instance in the Bader collection (**fig. 1**).

In preparing the present book both the Paris painting and its X-radiograph (**fig. 3**) were investigated afresh. In the course of this investigation it became clear that the Paris version should be considered the prototype rather than a copy. In a copy like the one in the Bader collection (**fig. 1**), the copyist had the prototype in front of him and more or less accurately imitated it. There is virtually no discernible difference between the forms seen in the surface paint of the painted image and in its X-ray image (compare **figs. 4** and **5**). In the X-radiograph of the Paris painting (see **fig. 3**), on the contrary, one observes a searching, exploratory way of working, specifically in the most complex section of the composition around Cupid's arm, which indicates that this painting is no copy.

There are significant divergences from the image seen in the paint surface: the right contour of the light area of Venus' breast on the right bulges out to the right while the corresponding contour of

Fig. 2. Detail of **251**

Fig. 3. X-ray of fig. 2 (detail).

Fig. 4. Detail of fig. 1.

Fig. 5. X-ray of fig. 4 (detail).

the hand in the painting bulges slightly to the left. Cupid's hand also betrays an exploratory way of working: the spatial staggering of thumb and forefinger seen on the surface is absent in the X-radiographic image and the dark reserve for that hand, compared with the width of the wrist, is clearly wider than the current form of the hand (compare **fig. 3** with **fig. 2**). It would appear that the placing of the finger tips was also changed during the course of the work: although one cannot be certain, it appears that the fingertips of the ring-finger, middlefinger and forefinger now project beyond the reserve for Cupid's hand. There is also a conspicuous contrast in the radio-absorbency of Cupid's wrist and forearm. In addition, the arm continues into the upper arm without apparently taking into account the veil wrapped over it. This could mean either that this veil was introduced later or that the painter had taken its transparency into account beforehand. It is interesting to note that both the bottom contour of the veil against the arm and the top contour just below the shoulder do not show up on the X-radiograph, whereas one would expect that Rembrandt would have marked the jump from naked skin to veil, as one sees in the X-radiograph of the copy (**fig. 5**). In the X-ray of the Paris painting the veil shows up because of the small highlights introduced here and there, predominantly in a horizontal direction, but also in the bend next to Venus' hand.

One may wonder whether the string of pearls over Venus' breast and under Cupid's hand could have been added by the painter later, as there is no (or scarcely any) visible reserve for it in the radio-absorbent passages of Venus' skin. Another difference between the X-ray image and the painting is that the fingers of Venus are indicated with separate little marks from joint to joint, whereas the bending of the fingers was rendered during the final execution of the hand. Cupid's cheek also appears to have been underpainted with a lead white-containing paint. Remarkably, the fact that Venus' finger would leave an imprint seems already to have been taken into account in the underpainting of Cupid's cheek.

All this argues that this painting is no copy but a prototype. Both Gerson and Madeleine Hours must have assumed that in his late paintings Rembrandt always applied a conspicuous *peinture* with more or less broad brushstrokes and with marked impasto. One has the impression from Gerson's commentary in his 1969 edition of Bredius' book that he took this to be an autonomous stylistic characteristic that was typical for Rembrandt's late paintings and could serve as a criterion of authenticity (see also the present book p. 9). But from 1626 (see **11**) until his very last years, Rembrandt adapted his handling of the brush to the material or surface structure to be represented. His pupil Samuel van Hoogstraten, undoubtedly inspired by Rembrandt's teaching (see *Corpus* V pp. 11-12 and 122-123) articulated this precept as follows:

> *'Do not bother much with learning a particular handling or manner of painting, but do [take the trouble] to become ever more firm in your observation, and to distinguish the different parts of the art [nature], and to imitate them carefully'* and *'give everything its own [characteristic surface] quality in the handling [of the brush].'*

If one bears this insight in mind while studying the *peinture* in this painting, one finds a wealth of different effects, but scarcely anything – if at all – of the impasto or rough manner that Gerson and Hours considered to be the hallmark of authenticity with Rembrandt. In Rembrandt's rendering of a woman's or child's skin the *peinture* is immediately less brisk than with a man's skin (see also *Corpus* IV pp. 308-311 and Note **173**). The brushstroke in Venus' temple, forehead and cheekbone follows the direction of the incident light, which Rembrandt often did when painting smooth skin of life-size figures.

It should be said, however, that the thick layer of varnish on the surface of the present painting makes it very difficult to distinguish the actual surface structure of the brushstrokes. The finer nuances in the warm and cool tones of the flesh colour are also obscured by this varnish layer, as is also the red tone above the lit eyelid. One often sees this latter effect – related to the translucency of cartilage and skin – in Rembrandt's noses. As here too, there is usually the rosy hint under the lit nose wing, mostly done with a seemingly casually placed, thin swipe of reddish paint. It is interesting how the cupid's bow of Venus' upper lip is marked by wiping away the flesh-coloured paint, such that the grey ground thus exposed serves the role of a small shadow. It is also significant that the more thickly painted passages appear in all those places where one would expect them with Rembrandt, on the upper lip, along the nose wing to the tip of the nose, in the lit part of the forehead and cheekbone, and also to a degree on the lit part of the chin. The alternation of the sharply defined boundaries, for example to the right of the nose, in the eyes and nostrils, with the more *sfumato* transitions such as in the corner of the mouth, is also characteristic. Time and again throughout the whole painting, one sees in the traces of his brush that interaction between decisiveness and chance which is so characteristic of the late Rembrandt. Similarly, the way the earring, the pearls and the little gold chain are painted with a wonderful interplay between casualness and precision is what one regularly observes in the late Rembrandt's handling of such details. The same holds for the finish of the dress, the folded collar or the undulating cuff round Venus' right forearm. In conception and execution, these details are all typical of Rembrandt, just as the quasi-absence of control with which the small lights were introduced in the veil and the highlights on the feathers of Cupid's wing. And always this is achieved with a feeling for space and rhythm that is characteristic of Rembrandt.

Removal of the obstructing varnish would give access to an undoubtedly authentic Rembrandt painting.

In the past, the painting was dated to 1662. Authors such as Jakob Rosenberg (Rosenberg 1980 p. 97) and Bauch (Bauch no. 107) suggested the possibility that Hendrickje as Venus is embracing her daughter Cornelia as the model for Cupid. So did even Emmens who usually was averse to making connections between works from Rembrandt's oeuvre and the circumstances of his life. Here, the fact that Rembrandt has painted Hendrickje as the personification of Venus raises the suggestion that he has also deliberately given their daughter

Cornelia the place of Cupid. The fact that he has not represented Cupid as a *putto*, as was usually the case, but as a child with the bodily proportions of a 3 to 4 year-old child, which Cornelia would have been in 1657 or '58, does enhance the likelihood that Cornelia has been represented here with her mother. (For Rembrandt's dealing with human proportions, see *Corpus* V pp. 35-48.)

252 Rembrandt, **Juno**, *c.* 1657-1665, (possibly part of a tripartite series with **251** and **253**), canvas 127 x 106 cm. Los Angeles, Armand Hammer Museum. HdG 207A; Br. 639; Bauch 285; Gerson 374; Br./Gerson 639; Tümpel 131; see also Held 1969 pp. 85-103.
Inscription: none

Fig. 1. X-ray of **252**

The first trace of this painting after its documentation in the 17th century is a record of it in the collection of Otto Wesendonck in Berlin, in 1888. In 1906 it was loaned, along with the rest of this collection, by Otto's son Dr. Karl von Wesendonck to the Provincial Museum in Bonn. In 1925 it was purchased by the Rheinisches Provinzialverband. Apparently, throughout this period the painting was not thought to be a work by Rembrandt, for in 1935 it was auctioned in Cologne as a work 'in the style of Rembrandt'. It was sold for 900 Deutschmark. Bredius was the first to devote an art historical publication to it (Bredius 1936). Between 1935 and 1976 it passed from one art dealer to another, and was finally acquired by Armand Hammer in 1976.

Bredius was the first to draw attention to the connection with a document from 1665 (*Doc.* 1665/17). On 29 August 1665, at the request of his friend Rembrandt, Abraham Francen declared that 18 months earlier he had gone on Rembrandt's behalf to the art-lover/gentleman-art dealer Herman Becker to pay back a loan with interest, and that it was expected that Becker would subsequently return the nine paintings (probably not by Rembrandt, according to Held 1969) and two books with etchings and drawings that had been given over as collateral. Becker is alleged to have responded that Rembrandt first had to complete the *Juno* and that Rembrandt also had to paint something else for him, to which the latter asserted that he was under no such obligation. Becker thereupon refused to accept the money from Rembrandt (*Doc.* 1665/17). Bredius presumed that the *Juno* referred to in the document was the present painting.

On 6 October 1665 Rembrandt paid the debt he had incurred, and on 7 December 1665 Becker returned the collateral. Does this mean that Rembrandt had fulfilled the condition that he should complete the *Juno*? That is not at all certain, since the painting has inspired the impression that it is still not finished. In this context, for example, Julia Lloyd Williams remarks 'that it may be that Rembrandt never did complete the painting, since areas of the [Juno's left] arm and hand appear to be unfinished', whereas the present author considers these passages in the painting to be a high point of Rembrandt's work in his late Titianesque manner.

This whole question regarding the completion of the painting might in fact have more to do with an iconographic detail. The most radical change in the genesis of the painting involves Juno's right arm with the sceptre, traditionally her royal attribute. According to the X-radiograph this arm replaced a previous arm which leaned on the table or ledge in front of her, symmetrical with her other arm. Initially therefore there was no sceptre, or at least not in Juno's right hand. Nor are there any highlights to be discerned elsewhere in the painting that might indicate the presence of a sceptre that could have been painted out. It seems that Rembrandt may have sacrificed the sceptre to the originally intended (and apparently also realized with the trio of goddesses in view) strictly symmetrical frontal depiction of Juno (**fig. 1**). If so, was it at the insistence of Herman Becker that Rembrandt added the new right arm with the sceptre to replace the leaning right arm with no sceptre?

The painting is done on two strips of linen joined by a vertical seam in the midline. The original seam has been cut out, probably during a later lining because of the thickness of the turned-over linen, and the two strips of the original canvas shoved up against each other on the linen backing. As a result there is a thin vertical strip missing from the midline. The composition of the canvas corresponds with that of the *Self-portrait* of 1658 in the Frick Collection **264**, which led the present author to suggest once during a lecture that the two paintings could have been intended as pendants. This suggestion was adopted by Slatkes (pp. 410-413), but was subsequently rejected by the present author in favour of the idea that the *Juno* constituted part of a classical trio of goddesses and the hypothesis proposed by De Winkel that the attitude and attire of the Frick *Self-portrait* refers to Lucas van Leyden or Jan Massys (see **264**). It is

interesting to note in the X-radiograph that Juno's shoulders and breast were originally covered by a white cloth which ran from above left to below right in the same way as in the Frick self-portrait (**fig. 1**). This and other features in common could perhaps indicate that Rembrandt had begun the *Juno* around 1658 and that Herman Becker had to wait seven years until the painting was finished before he accepted Rembrandt's repayment of the debt and returned the collateral.

The painting has been roughly treated during an eventful history whose traces are evident in the surface of the paint. It has been heavily cleaned over the entire surface and badly flattened in the process of gluing on a lining canvas which is still present. A strip of canvas is missing along the top edge, while along the bottom edge the crumbling away of the paint can be seen on the X-radiograph. It is possible that Juno's gown was originally red (in accordance with the conventional iconographic instructions (see for example SvH p. 100) and has since discoloured to a grey-brown.

253 Rembrandt and pupil, **Pallas Athene**, (possibly part of a tripartite series with **251** and **252**), *c.* 1657, canvas 118 x 91 cm. Lisbon, Museu Calouste Gulbenkian. HdG 210; Br. 479; Bauch 281; Gerson 293; Br./Gerson 479; Tümpel 110; see also *M/W* p. 261 (as a pupil's derivative of **239**); Postma 1995.
Inscription: none.

With regard to both the subject and the dating of this painting and the circumstances surrounding its origin one finds diverse opinions in the art historical literature. The attribution to Rembrandt has also been contested.

In his 1968 monograph Haak dated the work to around 1660 and on the basis of the owl worked into the helmet identified the figure as Pallas Athene (Haak 1968 p. 265). Gerson on the other hand thought the subject was Alexander the Great, arguing that iconographic elements like the owl, the figure's long curls and the Medusa head in the shield were used in representations of both Athene and Alexander (Br./Gerson 479). On the basis of this interpretation he connected the painting to Don Antonio Ruffo's commission for an Alexander the Great, suggesting that it might be the second version of the *Alexander* that Ruffo commissioned, painted in 1662, after Ruffo had expressed his dissatisfaction over the work with the same subject that Rembrandt had delivered earlier (see the Note to **239**). On the basis of this hypothesis and *Doc.* 1662/11 Gerson dated the work to 1662. Tümpel rejected this entire theory and defended the proposition that the painting depicts Pallas Athene. Without adducing any arguments he dated it to around 1655 (Tümpel pp. 305 and 403) Hugo Postma suggested that this work was painted on the occasion of the Amsterdam St Lucas feast in 1654. During this feast the best painter of Amsterdam was chosen, who then had to paint a Minerva (Postma 1995). If Rembrandt had been elected, which is by no means certain, it does not exclude the possibility that this painting could subsequently have been one of Herman Becker's putative trinity of goddesses or that it might even have been the germ of the whole idea of this trinity (see the text opposite to Plate **251**.

Gerson's Ruffo-theory was an attractive one but the iconographic argument is unconvincing. Given the long curly hair, the helmet with the owl and the shield with the Medusa head, the identification as Pallas Athene/Minerva is certainly more likely. According to Karel van Mander in his book on the Metamorphoses (fol. 425):

> '*... She had a shining golden helmet: for the Divine wisdom has a clear radiance, by which Human understanding is illuminated.* [...] *A sharp pick, [which symbolizes] astuteness of mind.*[...] *On her shield she bore the snakes head of Gorgon or Medusa. This was terrible to her enemies.* [...] *She carried an owl, because this bird sees by night, and a wise man is observant everywhere, day and night, seeing things that are hidden to others'.*

Brown, who titled the painting 'Figure in armour', proposed:

> 'In my view the Lisbon painting contains such notable weaknesses of draughtsmanship and modelling that its attribution must be questioned. It is probably best considered as a pupil's derivation of the Glasgow painting.' (*M/W* pp. 260-261).

There are, however, traces of an earlier underpainting in the shield, in places in the scarf and in the bottom-most curls of the hair which lead one to wonder whether an initial design was first laid in and partly worked out – for instance the face, the helmet and the collar – by Rembrandt, while the remaining parts were completed by a less experienced hand, possibly by a pupil. If this were the case it would be perfectly in line with the hypothesis of Rembrandt's teaching methods suggested in the legend to Plate **202**) and would offer an explanation for the disparity between the strength of the design of the painting and the disappointing weakness of execution of parts of it.

There are passages which show up in the X-radiograph but are not to be seen in the surface image: for example, to the right on the helmet, the top edge of the ear-protector and in the zone below it. If the first rough design of the painting was from Rembrandt's hand and the painting subsequently was finished by a second painter, then this second painter deviated in places from the first design.

The painting originally had a different size. The contour of the shield beneath the shoulder ran lower and showed the shield more sharply in perspective. Where the now visible shield is given a rounder contour there were originally larger reflections done with pastose paint. One sees in various places that these impasto reflections are abruptly broken off; probably the still wet paint was removed with a finger or brush, for one can still see the standing edges of the impasto.

The lay-out of the painting in its present form – quite apart from the likelihood that it belonged to a trio of equally large goddesses – suggests that it was originally considerably larger (see opposite Plate **251**. The most obvious guess is that on the originally, larger canvas the shield was shown in its entirety and that narrower strips were removed from the other edges. See Plate **253**.

Hypothetical reconstruction of the trinity of Godessess **251** **252** **253**. See also opposite Plate **251**

254 Rembrandt and workshop, **The apostle Paul at his writing desk**, *c.* 1657, canvas 129 x 102 cm. Washington, National Gallery. HdG 178; Br. 612; Bauch 221; Gerson 295; Br./Gerson 612; Tümpel A16 (who at first doubted the attribution); see also Wheelock 1995 pp. 141-147; *Religious Portraits* no. 2.
Inscription: [redrawn?] ‹Rembrandt f.› According to Wheelock the signature was almost certainly added later.

The genesis of this painting remains puzzling and its subsequent material history in many ways obscure. For an account of this history based on investigations carried out during a restoration, see Wheelock 1995, pp. 241-246. It is unclear whether the impressive man sunk in deep thought over his paper was originally intended to depict the apostle Paul, since his attribute, the sword, is a later addition. It is unknown by whom or when this was done. It might be that the sword was added to transform this painting into a depiction of Saint Paul, so that it could serve as a pendant to the *Saint Bartholomew* in San Diego **255** which is the same size.

255 Rembrandt, **The apostle Bartholomew**, 1657, canvas 122.7 x 99.5 cm. San Diego, Timken Museum of Art. HdG 170; Br. 613; Bauch 236; Gerson 361; Br./Gerson 613; Tümpel 80; see also Bl. cat. 17; *Religious Portraits* no. 3
Inscription: center left ‹*Rembrandt f. 1657*›.

This large, broadly painted, sketchily executed painting succeeds almost casually in achieving a convincing suggestion of light, space and movement, giving it such a timeless quality that one cannot help being reminded of certain much later paintings, for instance, by John Singer Sargent (1856-1925).

256 Rembrandt, **The so-called small Vienna self-portrait** (fragment of a larger painting), *c.* 1657, walnut panel 48.9 x 40.2 cm. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum. HdG 581; Br. 49; Bauch 326; Gerson 324; Br./Gerson 49; Tümpel 171; ***Corpus* IV 13** and **pp. 271-273**; see also *R. Self* no. 69.
Inscription**:** top left in the background ‹*Rembrandt. f*› added by a later hand.

An assessment of this painting, which is undoubtedly cut down, is hampered by its complex material history and relatively poor condition. The latter is probably related to the unusual nature of the support: walnut panel. Glued to the painted panel is a second equally thick panel with cradling. The cradle was renewed in 1942. The panel itself displays a series of cracks. These cracks were undoubtedly the reason for extensive overpainting in the past (**fig. 1**).

A large, overpainted knot can be discerned at the right in the area of the red waistcoat. A light yellow-brown ground shines through the locally thin paint layer in various areas, for example in the face, around the eyes, in the collar to the right, the chin, the doublet, the outer contour of the cap and the background. The ground in these areas displays a vertical pattern of brushstrokes, which appear to be straight and uninterrupted. The surface of this unusual ground is so rough in places that these corrugations play a role in the structure of even the thicker paint layers. A similar ground was found on the oak panel of **288**.

The panel may well have been drastically reduced, as the larger than life-size head is set in a frame that is unusually narrow for a self-portrait by Rembrandt. The many cracks in the support may explain why it has been reduced to its present format, then planed down drastically and glued to another panel. A few other paintings by Rembrandt and his studio assistants were also executed on walnut, namely the *Portrait of a man seated* **62a** and its pendant the *Portrait of a woman seated* **62b**, both in Vienna, and the *Prophetess Hannah in the temple* **210** in Edinburgh. In those cases too it appears that walnut is particularly given to cracking and eventually breaking. The panel of the *Prophetess Hannah in the temple* displays serious cracks (including a wedge-shaped one) like those in the present painting, and the panel of the *Portrait of a woman seated* mentioned above which also has two cracks at the upper edge.

Fig. 1. IRR of **256**. The black patches in costume, background and the eyes are mostly overpaintings.

Another indication that the panel of the present self-portrait was probably reduced is the presence of saw marks along the lower edge of a kind unusual for Rembrandt's panels. The reduction in size must have taken place prior to 1783, when the painting was mentioned by Von Mechel already with its present dimensions (see *Corpus* IV p. 459 *Provenance*). That the panel in question is walnut rather than the more usual oak is in keeping with the fact that, as of 1639, Rembrandt primarily used other types of wood for his relatively few late paintings on panel. A possible explanation for this may be that, at the time the painting was produced, the supply of oak from the Baltic region had been cut off as a result of the Swedish blockade of Gdansk during the Second Northern War (1655-1660) (Wazny/Eckstein p. 513).

The many overpaintings in the head complicate a reliable assessment of the physiognomy in the present painting. Nevertheless, distinctive facial features in Rembrandt's self-portraits, such as the asymmetrical crease above the nose and the sagging fold of the eye lid at the right, have been preserved in the original paint. Although there are no physiognomic traits that might challenge the authenticity of this self-portrait, it is conspicuous that the eyes are placed relatively close together (compare **224**).

257 Rembrandt, **Portrait of Titus van Rijn**, *c.* 1657, canvas 67.3 x 55.2 cm. London, Wallace Collection. HdG 704; Br. 123; Bauch 419; Gerson 330; Br./Gerson 123; Tümpel 186; see also *Wallace Collection* 1992 p. 280.
Inscription: below right in the background ‹*R…*›.

Much of the attention that art-historians paid to this painting has to do with its original format. Only the first letter of the

signature remains, from which it is usually concluded that a strip is missing from the right side of the painting. The way a passage in light paint, part of some unidentifiable form in the right background, is cut by the edge of the painting corroborates this assessment. But whether it also implies that strips are missing from the left side and bottom of the painting, is not certain. Along the bottom edge an unidentifiable light form is evident whose top boundary runs parallel with the edge of the painting.

It is unclear how we should picture the original background. Both the light forms on the right and the obviously deliberate discontinuity in tone and *peinture*, marked by a horizontal boundary added with light brush lines, indicate that the figure was originally placed before a rather lively background.

Taking these indications together, one may surmise that the painting could originally have had a format similar to for instance **242**. There is no question that Titus is the subject depicted here (see the Note to **242**). On the basis of the estimated age of the sitter and given the year of Titus birth 1641, the date of the present painting's origin is usually estimated as 1657/58. See also the comparable, very strong brushstroke on the left shoulder of **261**, painted in 1658.

258 Rembrandt, **Portrait of Catharina Hoogsaet**, 1657, canvas 126 x 98.5 cm. Penrhyn Castle. HdG 652; Br. 391; Bauch 519; Gerson 336 Br./Gerson 391; Tümpel 244; see also Dudok van Heel 1980; De Winkel 2006 pp. 15 and 79; *R. Women* 2001 no. 122.
Inscriptions: above left on plates on the wall ‹*Rembrandt. f./1657.*›.<CATRINA HOOG / 5 AET / OUT.50. / Jaer>

For biographical information on this remarkable woman, see *R. Women* no. 122. The question of whether there could have been a pendant to this painting has been discussed in the Rembrandt literature. This is unlikely. It is true that Catharina Hoogsaet was married at the time this portrait was painted, but she had for some time lived apart from her husband. There are several changes in the arms and hands and there once was a curtain in the upper left corner (**fig. 1**). There also was a so-called rush basket to carry dried fruits and such. The way in which the sitter's parrot is painted suggests that the bird may not have been painted by Rembrandt himself.

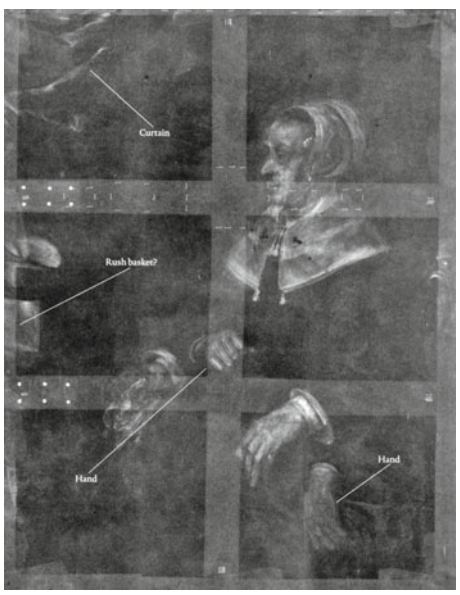


Fig. 1. X-ray of **258** With grateful acknowledgment to the Rijksmuseum.

* **259** Rembrandt, **Portrait of an unknown scholar** (**also known as 'The Auctioneer'**), 1658, canvas 108 x 85 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 756; Br. 294; Bauch 422; Gerson 340; Br./Gerson 294; Tümpel A94 (as from the circle of Rembrandt); see also *Art and Autoradiography* pp. 88-92 (as by a follower of Rembrandt); Sonnenburg in *R. not R. I* pp. 20-21 and figs. 52-53, 58-59 no. 32 (as by a follower of Rembrandt); Liedtke 2007 pp. 763-766 (as by a follower of Rembrandt)
Inscription: worked into the suggested text on the visible page of the open-folded book or manuscript held by the sitter ‹*Rembrandt f. 1658*›

The title commonly given to this work, *The Auctioneer*, is misleading. It comes from the groundless suggestion that the subject portrayed could be Pieter Haringh, the man whose cousin Thomas was involved as auctioneer in the completion of Rembrandt's bankruptcy (see *Doc.* 1657/6). Attributes in the background – a classical bust, a column – as well as the beret the man wears and the manuscript or book in his hand – all support the more likely surmise that this is a portrait of an unknown scholar.

The remarkable history of the disattribution of this painting since *c.* 1979 needs to be related in some detail. It is an instructive example of those cases where Rembrandt scholars, and even the custodians concerned, have obstinately maintained that the work could not be from the hand of Rembrandt, without giving valid arguments to support their position and in the face of good evidence to the contrary (see also, for instance, **32**, **221**, and **266**).

In this case, parts of that history are fairly easily followed because Walter Liedtke, in his 2007 catalogue, provided a chronological survey of all published opinions on this painting – as well as the recorded oral comments by visiting art historians and others. Moreover, the painting was dealt with in both volumes of the *Rembrandt/Not Rembrandt* publication of the Metropolitan Museum from 1995. At several points in Vol. I of that publication, written by Hubert von Sonnenburg, the painting is discussed in relation to technical and material investigations.

This painting had long been accepted as an autograph work by Rembrandt. Not only is it signed and dated in a manner not unusual for the artist; in its execution it also shows numerous characteristics of Rembrandt's late style. Following their investigation of the painting in 1976 Bruyn and Haak of the RRP were convinced

of the painting's authenticity and in oral communications said as much to Liedtke (Liedtke 2007 p. 764 note 2).

However, the secure status of *The Auctioneer* in the Rembrandt canon was abruptly terminated in 1979 when the guest curator of Dutch Paintings at the Metropolitan Museum, Professor Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann, rejected the painting as a work by Rembrandt. In 1966 Begemann had still accepted *The Auctioneer* as one of Rembrandt's portraits of unidentified sitters. Liedtke noted in 1979 that 'he (Begemann) rejects the painting as by Rembrandt, comparing its technical qualities with those of the *Aristotle.*'

When I much later asked Begemann if he remembered what or who had made him change his mind in 1979, he referred to the New York restorer Louis de Wild (1909-1988), son of the Dutch restorer Carel de Wild (1870-1922). We met both in Chapter I of this book. Experienced restorers were in those days considered to be the experts to whom connoisseurs deferred because of their long involvement with old paintings as artifacts (see also pp. 9/10 with the correspondence between Gerson and the restorer William Suhr). Louis de Wild was a good friend of Begemann and Von Sonnenburg, both of whom held his judgment and experience in the field of Dutch 17th-century paintings in the highest regard.

Begemann's arguments against an attribution of *The Auctioneer* to Rembrandt are to be found in the entry on the painting that he and Maryan Ainsworth contributed to *Art and Radiography*. The following comments from that entry are unrelated to the autoradiographic images, but rather concern aspects of the paint surface itself.

> 'Of particular note is the absence of the characteristic build-up of brushwork for lighting effects in the background. Instead, spatial definition is attempted by an arrangement of summarily defined objects – the ancient bust, a curtain, and a column. Previously, a window at the upper left was also included, perhaps in the place of the column. Such a confusion of objects in the background is unusual for Rembrandt, who mastered the definition of color and light through well-integrated but varied brushwork.'

These remarks were apparently added by Begemann, as they seem to derive from a comparison of *The Auctioneer* with the *Aristotle* **228** in the same museum. In the latter work the treatment of light in the background is much further worked out than in the present painting, and the background is less complex than in *The Auctioneer*. But quite apart from the question of Rembrandt's artistic intentions, it should also be borne in mind that each of the two paintings must have had a significantly different *raison d'être*. The *Aristotle* from 1653 is an ambitious history piece painted for an experienced art-lover already in possession of a large collection of works by artists of repute, whereas *The Auctioneer* is one of the portraits that Rembrandt produced five years later in the wake of his bankruptcy. In this portrait some of the sitter's attributes, allusions to his learning, are summarily indicated in the background. The sitter is more soberly dressed than Aristotle, such that the distribution of light is less determined by the nature of the costume.

In its genesis *The Auctioneer* shows several characteristics of Rembrandt's way of working. At the end of the text in *Art and Autoradiography* attention is drawn to a number of *repentirs*: the contours of the sitter's hat and the bust were changed slightly, and the hands and manuscript pages were moved further away from the body; the curtain was moved to the right. This type of *repentir* is typical of Rembrandt (compare the *Portrait of Catharina Hoogsaet* **258**, the Coppenol-sketch **260** and the *Portrait of a man with arms akimbo* **261**, all portraits from the same period).

It was Begemann's verdict which seemed to seal the painting's fate. The restorer Hubert von Sonnenburg in his book for the *Rembrandt/Not Rembrandt* exhibition project, characterized *The Auctioneer* as a

> 'brilliant one-time exercise by an independent artist rather than an imitation by a pupil working in Rembrandt's studio.'

It must have been the scale and the complexity of the painting which led Von Sonnenburg – and subsequently Liedtke too – to reject the possibility that this could be a work by one of the members of Rembrandt's studio. From then on it was implicitly assumed that the painting's author – sometimes referred to as the 'imitator', sometimes as the 'follower of Rembrandt' – was not someone who

Fig. 1. Detail of **282**

Fig. 2. Neutr. Act. Autoradiogram of fig. 1.

was considered to have been active in Rembrandt's workshop. Von Sonnenburg's *a priori* conviction that *The Auctioneer* was the work of this hypothetical 'imitator' led to remarkable complications in the question of its attribution, all the more surprising since it puts into question Von Sonnenburg's belief in the value of the neutron activation autoradiographic research. In *R. not R. I*, he confronted two reproduced autoradiographic images in which one can see the distribution of (phosphorus-containing) bone black mostly in the sketched underpainting. The first image is of the Metropolitan's *Self-portrait* by Rembrandt from 1660 **282** (**figs. 1-2**), the second of *The Auctioneer* (**figs. 3-4**) (*R. not R. I* pp. 20-21). The accompanying text is worthy of a contortionist:

> 'When the autoradiograph of the self-portrait (…) is compared to that of the imitative *Auctioneer*, the heads are certainly more similar than dissimilar, and both faces show the same kind of faint preparatory sketching. This particular comparison, which may slight the strength of the useful method of autoradiography, demonstrates the ease with which it can lead to false conclusions.'

Because Von Sonnenburg had already taken for granted (without any valid argument) that *The Auctioneer* was an imitation, he felt forced to deny the value of the evidence which he himself had established, viz. that the two autoradiographic images showed striking similarities. So, rather than re-examine Louis de Wild's/Begemann's verdicts and his own *a priori* assumption, he asserts that it is the conclusion from the evidence that is unreliable. Von Sonnenburg continues his attack:

> 'The most convincing arguments for the imitative character of *The Auctioneer* are based on an examination of the technique of the paint layers that overlie the sketch. A comparative study of the heavy impasto in the face of *The Auctioneer* shows that it is markedly different from that of every authentic Rembrandt.' (**figs. 5-6**) (*R. not R. I* p. 54).

This is an audacious claim, since it is hardly likely that Von Sonnenburg could have investigated X-radiographs of all late portraits

Fig. 5. Detail of **259**

Fig. 6. X-ray of fig. 5.

Fig. 3. Detail of **259**

Fig. 4. Neutr. Act. Autoradiogram of fig. 3.

by Rembrandt with attention to the nature of the impasto. In studying the X-radiograph of the face of *The Auctioneer* (**fig. 6**), moreover, one finds that Von Sonnenburg seriously exaggerates when he writes:

> 'The handling of the heavily built-up impasto in this face is by itself a valid argument against Rembrandt's authorship. The imitator did not model with a loaded brush; instead he piled up his impasto with repeated, mostly corrective applications, producing a mask-like effect.'

In fact, it may be argued to the contrary: the mere fact that the *modelé* of the face clearly shows in the X-radiograph – a consequence of differences in thickness and/or tone of the lead white-containing paint (the thicker it is, the lighter it shows up) – demonstrates that the author of the work really did 'model with a loaded brush'. Moreover, he did so in a manner that one encounters in numerous paintings by Rembrandt (and in the X-radiographs taken from them) – the thickest paint in the brightest areas. In portraits, the quantity of lead white applied in this process can of course vary, as it may take more or less work with the brush and paint to successfully capture a sitter's likeness. Von Sonnenburg's remark about 'impasto with repeated, mostly corrective application' is an apt description, especially in the case of a portrait. Probably for the same reason one finds conspicuous variation in the quantity of lead white in the faces of Rembrandt's late self-portraits. (see, for example, *Corpus* IV 8 and 13, 15 and 18, 27 and 28).

Time and again in his analysis Von Sonnenburg asserts that this is the work of an imitator whilst nowhere presenting any real evidence that the painting originated outside Rembrandt's workshop.

Von Sonnenburg published his ideas in 1995. Liedtke, in his 2007 catalogue (p. 765), included as the most recent information the results of technical material investigations that had been brought to the attention of the Metropolitan Museum two years earlier: viz. that the ground underneath *The Auctioneer* turned out to be a so-called quartz ground, the type of ground which was shown by Karin Groen's thorough and extensive investigation of painters' grounds used in Amsterdam between 1640 and 1670 (*Corpus* IV pp. 318-334 and Table IV p. 672) to occur only with Rembrandt and in paintings in his style which, for various reasons, are thought to have originated in his workshop. And yet, despite including the information, Liedtke simply ignored this essential evidence.

> 'Considering how little is known about the artist's [Rembrandt's] immediate circle from the mid-1650s onward, it would be unwise to insist on an origin [of **259**] outside his workshop. However, the bravura with which passages of the painting have been dashed off bears little resemblance to the studious approach found in pictures such as the *Head of Christ* [Br. 626]. Contemporaneous imitation at some remove from the master seems all the more plausible in the case of fashionable portraiture.'

Like Begemann, Liedtke took his main argument for disattributing the painting from a comparison between *The Auctioneer* and the *Aristotle*. In his case, he compared the left sleeve of the *Aristotle* and the right sleeve of *The Auctioneer* and that of the *Flora* **269**, similarly in the Metropolitan. (One cannot help noting that during the *Rembrandt/Not Rembrandt* project – a very hurried project designed to fill an unexpected gap in the museum's exhibition schedule – the works from Rembrandt's oeuvre that were used for comparison consisted mainly of paintings in the Metropolitan Museum.) With reference to the major differences in execution between *The Auctioneer* and the *Aristotle* Liedtke concluded:

> 'The painter of *The Auctioneer* imitated the surface effects of Rembrandt's late manner but not its descriptive qualities'.

It is a common tendency among connoisseurs to analyze comparable details (in this case a comparison of sleeve with sleeve) in order to produce plausible arguments for or against an attribution. It is, however, not always the best method, as the 'old RRP' had to discover, for deciding for or against an attribution (see for instance **171** vs **181**). Certainly with the late Rembrandt this is a risky approach, since Rembrandt subordinated the degree of elaboration and lighting of the elements of his images to the pictorial role the relevant elements play in the painting *as a whole*. In the *Aristotle* the left sleeve plays a major role, while the left hand is subordinate; whereas the *converse* is the case with the right sleeve and hand of *The Auctioneer*. The highest light on the shirt sleeves in the present painting is introduced on the opposite, left sleeve of the *Auctioneer*, which is only partially visible – an exceptionally refined solution which is typical of Rembrandt's variable ways as a painter. In *The Auctioneer*, however, this solution demands that the sleeve in the foreground should be given only general form and should be placed in subdued light since Rembrandt as a rule maintained a strict regime with regard to the hierarchy in the lighting and detailing within a painting. Comparison between the sleeves of *The Auctioneer* and those of the *Aristotle* therefore does not provide a valid means of arriving at a judgment over the authenticity of the present painting.

Liedtke dismisses the signature on the painting as false; yet he provides no evidence or argument to support his assertion of '… the false signature and date, which are unexpectedly located on the folio' (*R not R* II p. 116). This casual dismissal of the inscription on the painting was based on no research, but it is of a piece with the current tendency to distrust *a priori* the signatures on Rembrandt's paintings – certainly in the case of paintings on canvas (see p**.** 65). The tendency to disregard signatures as potential evidence is regrettable, as it is clear that Rembrandt almost always provided his paintings and etchings intended for sale with a signature. The signature on the present painting is so placed that it seems to constitute part of the text on the doubled back page of the book (or manuscript) held by the subject of the portrait: Rembrandt's name and the date 1658 are incorporated in the succession of roughly indicated lines of text on this page (**fig. 7**). The obliquely running signature is thus adapted to the perspective distortion of the page.

Perhaps that is why Liedtke considered it to be 'unexpectedly located'. But such a location for a *Rembrandt* signature is by no means as unexpected as he implies. In *c.* 40 paintings Rembrandt placed his monograms or signatures on separate objects or clearly distinguishable architectural elements; in eight of these he placed it on a book or piece of paper in the image. In four – five, if this painting is included – of these cases he took more or less account of the perspective distortion of the relevant paper or book **14**, **64a**, **72**, **89**. Where other objects were the recipients of the signature, such as the ship's rudder in *Christ in the storm on the Lake of Galilea* **105**, or the step in the Berlin *Susanna and the elders* **213**, and on at least three comparable occasions, he adapted the placing of the inscription to

Fig. 7. Detail with signature of **259**

the perspective and spatial representation of the object concerned **12**, **194**, **245**.

Examination of the paint surface of *The Auctioneer* in situ yielded no evidence that this signature <*Rembrandt / f.1658*.> had at some stage been strengthened with new paint – or at most, only the very last letters of Rembrandt's name. Calligraphically the signature fits among other signatures of the late Rembrandt while the tone of the paint with which the signature is applied is identical to that of the lines suggested on the page. Moreover, the ageing of the paint of the signature corresponds to that of the paint layer on which it is applied.

In short, there is no reason to reject the inscription as false – unless, of course, the painting as a whole were not only false but an exceptionally skilful and singularly well-informed imitation; and in view of the fact that it is painted on a quartz ground, that can be ruled out entirely.

When one turns to the use of paint in the image as a whole, given the painting's normal wear and tear, one finds again no reason to doubt its authenticity. The colour scheme of the lit back of the hand is executed with extreme subtlety with cool tones for the knuckles, pink-yellowish tones for the bottom-most knuckles and tendons, and a group of parallel hatchings at the wrist. The casually placed, small light on the knuckle of the left hand's index finger is remarkable for its effectiveness. The indication of the pages executed with grazing lines of the brush at the edge of the manuscript is characteristic of Rembrandt's way of working (see **198**, **216**, **289**). The small ochre lines subtly indicating the leather cover track with the displacement of the doubled over, upper edge of the book. There can be little doubt that Rembrandt is the artist who here depicts a leather-bound book or manuscript (see also **242** and **294**).

The same wealth of variation in the *peinture*, applied time and again in the rendering of material and its placing in the space and the light, is to be seen in the costume, and in the face where slightly redder tones are applied than the cooler tones used elsewhere. Then there is the red light that one often sees with Rembrandt on the underside of the lit wing of the nose. The way in which the mouth is painted is free and subtle, partly determined by chance. There is an audacious small lick below the moustache, above the upper lip's cupid's bow (compare Venus' mouth in **251**). A small fleeting light on the upper eyelid indicates that this is rather heavy, so that pupil and iris are largely shadowed. This is why there is no gleam placed on the eye; one sees this elsewhere in Rembrandt's portraits with figures whose eyes are strongly shadowed by the upper eyelids.

Over the forehead by the temple, above the lit eye can be seen partially painted out indications of hanging strands of hair, an aspect of the *coiffure* of his male sitters that Rembrandt indicated sketchily in other portraits as well (see for example **310** and **312**). Another feature typical for Rembrandt is the differentiated *'sfumato'* along the various contours in the painting (see *Painter at Work*, p. 188).

In summary, when the case proposed by Begemann, Von Sonnenburg and Liedtke for the disattribution of this painting from Rembrandt is critically examined, one finds a distortion or disregard of evidence and invalid or inadequate argumentation, which cannot justify such a drastic decision. My proposal is therefore that the painting should be re-admitted to the Rembrandt canon.

260 Rembrandt, **Preparatory oil sketch for the etched portrait of Lieven Willemsz van Coppenol** (B. 283), in or before 1658, panel originally 35.6 x 25.7 cm, subsequently enlarged to 35.6 x 28 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 636; Br. 291; Bauch 424; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 291 (The painting is too weak to be attributed to Rembrandt); Tümpel -; see also Wijnman 1933 pp. 150-56; *Chicago Symp. 1969* p. 88; Sonnenburg 1976 (as a copy after the print B. 238); Van de Wetering in *R. Printmaker* pp. 36-63 esp. 59-62 (as autograph by Rembrandt); Liedtke 2007 pp. 668-679 (as by Rembrandt).
Inscription: none

Of all Rembrandt's portrait etchings, the so-called *Large Coppenol* (B. 283) (**fig. 1**) is by far the largest: 33.5 x 28 cm. It was long assumed to be self-evident that Rembrandt made the present painting, painted on panel, in preparation for this etching. The painting is an almost exact mirror image of the print, and must have been transferred to the copper plate using some (indirect) tracing method.

In 1969, however, Hubert von Sonnenburg expressed doubt as to whether the painting had, after all, been made as a preparation for the etching, suggesting that it should rather be considered as a later, mirror image copy *after* the print (*Chicago Symp.* 1969 p. 88). In an article of 1976 he rejected the painting even more firmly (Sonnenburg 1976). Von Sonnenburg's thesis was partially based on what he considered the quality of the painting, which he considered to be unacceptable for a Rembrandt, and of the head in particular. In addition, he pointed out that the X-radiograph showed, on all sides of the panel, unprecedented strips of X-ray absorbent paint of various widths that had been applied with broad brushstrokes. From this he concluded that the imitator had painted on a panel that had been used previously. With these arguments accepted without discussion, the painting virtually disappeared from the Rembrandt literature.

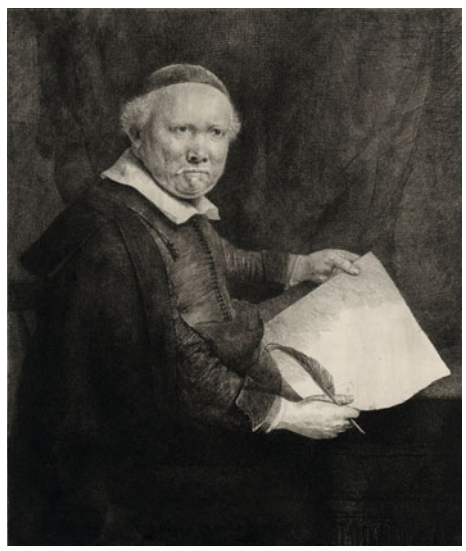


Fig. 1. Etching after **260** (B. 283).

Fig. 2. X-ray of **260**

Prior to its investigation of the New York sketch in 1995 the Rembrandt Research Project had not committed itself in print to a view as to its status. The most important reason for the investigation was the dendrochronological dating of the panel: it had emerged that the last annual ring of the panel dated from 1634, and that the earliest possible date that the support could have been used for the painting was 1651. This information did not confirm Von Sonnenburg's view that we are dealing with a later imitation; on the contrary, the facts were consistent with the accepted dating of the print in, or shortly before, 1658. Furthermore, as with most of Rembrandt's panels, the wood appeared to be of Baltic origin.

Analysis of the X-radiograph revealed some ten minor but significant *pentimenti*, for example in both thumbs, in the cuffs and collar, in the feather and in one of the eyes. These *pentimenti*, taken together, exclude the possibility that the painting could be a copy.

The execution of the painting, as far as may be judged given its worn and partly overpainted condition, indicates that it should be reattributed to Rembrandt. The brushwork, crisp and economic while at the same time loose, in details like the hands, the cuffs and

collar and the feather, corresponds to Rembrandt's own manner in paintings with small-scale details, as in his small history paintings from the late 1640s and 1650s. Taking this together with the other evidence presented here, one can only conclude that we are dealing here with the sketch for the *Large Coppenol* from Rembrandt's own hand.

There are still questions, however, that need to be addressed, the most important of which concern the obviously weak quality in the execution of certain parts, including the head. The last question relates to the aforementioned brushstrokes with radio-absorbent paint found in the X-radiograph (**fig. 2**) and partly visible in the areas of wear.

The paint-layer has suffered much from local wear such that it had to be retouched – in actual fact, repainted – in particular the head. With over-cleaned faces, certain details usually have to be reconstructed. In this case, it would seem an obvious assumption that in 'restoring' the face, and where necessary other parts of the painting, the etching – the *Large Coppenol* (B. 283) – would have been used as the model. This would explain why the striking correspondence between the painting and the print, precisely in the head, coincides with an un-Rembrandtesque execution in these very areas. The second question is why Rembrandt, in this particular case, made a full-scale oil-sketch for the etching, whereas, for instance, in the case of the *Portrait of Ephraim Bueno* **215** he did not.

In Rembrandt's day it was common practice for full-size oil-sketches to be made when the end-product was to be executed by another hand. The somewhat mechanical execution of the *Large Coppenol* does indeed raise the question of whether another hand might have been involved in the making of this print.

There is also the question of the enigmatic brush strokes along all four edges, visible on the X-radiograph and in areas where the surface has worn (see **fig. 2**). For a possible explanation, one needs to turn to a peculiar phenomenon regarding Rembrandt's framing. In Rembrandt's drawings, one sometimes finds indications of framing which, naturally enough, do not coincide with the edge of the sheet. With paintings, one may reasonably assume that as a rule, the framing of the composition coincides with the limits of the support. Yet there are exceptions to this rule. The most interesting in the present context is the large grisaille of the *Concord of the State* **153**. The original format of this sketch, done on a panel measuring 74.5 x 100 cm, was about 65 cm high. Strips along both the top and bottom margins of the support were left unpainted. When the grisaille acquired another purpose, the composition was enlarged to the margins both above and below. Did something similar happen with the oil-sketch for the *Large Coppenol*? Was the original intention perhaps deliberately not to fill the entire panel, just as Rembrandt's drawings on paper often were not meant to fill the entire sheet? And was it only subsequently that the enlargement of the composition not only came to fill the panel, but also required a further strip of wood to be added to the left side of the panel?

One can see, both on the X-radiograph and in the paint surface, that the original framing of the sketch was situated approximately 5 cm from the left edge, 4 cm from the bottom, 3 cm from the top and 1.5 cm from the right edge. The evidence is clearly visible in the altered direction of the brushstrokes in the piece of paper that Coppenol holds, showing that it was only at a later stage decided to enlarge the composition. This change in the brushwork runs along a vertical borderline on the main panel, through the piece of paper, around 5 cm from the present left-hand margin. Apparently, the composition in its original conception was considered – either by the sitter or the artist – to be unsatisfactory and so it was decided to include the whole piece of paper that Coppenol is holding into the sketch. This intervention meant that the framing of the composition had to be expanded, not only to the left but, for compositional reasons, on the remaining edges as well. The composition of the sketch was filled out to the edge of the panel, whilst, in order to include the tip of the sheet of paper, a 2.3 cm wide strip of wood had to be added to the panel. This, then, was how that image grew from which the tracing for the etching was subsequently taken. This kind of expansion of a composition – with all the various consequences for the support – is commonly seen with Rubens. Although rare in the case of Rembrandt, it does occur, as for example in the enlargement of the *St John the Baptist preaching* **110**, and the *Concord of the State* **153** discussed above.

However, one still needs to account for the margins of white (or lead white-containing) paint applied round the image on the original panel, the brushwork of which is more or less visible in the X-radiograph depending on the thickness of the radio-absorbant paint. One is led to wonder whether these margins outside the initial framing were painted light in order to give the sitter a clear idea of how the print as initially intended (with its white margin) would look like. When expanding the composition these margins were overpainted.

Lieven Willemsz van Coppenol (1598-1667 or '68) was a renowned calligrapher. Apart from the etched portrait (the so-called *Large Coppenol* (B. 283)) for which the present painting was produced, Rembrandt also made a second etched portrait of him (B. 280), the so-called *Small Coppenol*.

261 Rembrandt, **Portrait of a man with arms akimbo**, 1658, canvas 107.4 x 87 cm. Private collection. HdG -; Br. 290; Bauch 421; Gerson 342; Br./Gerson 290; Tümpel A 93 (from Rembrandt's circle); see also Sutton 2011.
Inscription: below left ‹*Rembrandt f. 1658*›

This painting resurfaced in 2009, having been lost from view for a long time. There are a number of features which, when taken together, provide strong evidence in support of our conviction that this is an original work by Rembrandt.

– The density and weave characteristics of the canvas are so closely similar to those of **262** as to indicate that the two canvases were taken from the same bolt of linen.
– Analysis of the ground showed that the work is painted on a quartz-ground. In the context of the Rembrandt Research Project it has been demonstrated that paintings on this type of ground originate from Rembrandt's workshop, and were painted either by Rembrandt or by one of his students or assistants (see Groen in *Corpus* IV Chapter IV esp. pp. 325-334 and Table IV pp. 672-673).
– Comparing the painting with its X-radiographic image (**fig. 1**) shows that – as usual with Rembrandt – the work has gone through different phases of a genesis during which the painter took the opportunity to alter the conception, as to both the form and the posture of the figure. In particular, radical changes were

made to the contours of the beret, the hair and the shoulders. These changes meant that the painter had to revise the organization of the play of light on the wall behind the figure, placing it in front of an almost neutral grey background in which lighter grey in the upper left corner gradually merges into a darker grey in the lower right. Such revisions during work in progress are typical of Rembrandt. In this case these revisions seem to be aimed at refining solutions for the lighting of the figure, particularly the way in which the incident light touches the folds of the top of the man's left upper arm and, apparently coming from behind the trunk, grazes the sleeve of the forearm and the cuff of the left wrist. In different ways, this remarkably creative handling of light effects and the dosage of that light in unexpected places is also found in several paintings from the same period **245**, **259**, **267**, **268**, **276**, **277**.

– The way paint is applied on the figure's right, upper arm turned towards the light – with pastose white paint applied with grazing brushstrokes and over this a thin red glaze – is seen similarly in the *Portrait of Titus* in the Wallace Collection **257**.
– Other aspects of the genesis have had direct consequences for the character of the paint surface in this painting. The 'openness' of the texture of this surface is characteristic of Rembrandt; in many places the greyish ground has been left exposed or shows through partially covering brushstrokes.
– The looseness of the brushwork in the costume, in part seemingly governed by chance, is typical for the late Rembrandt. It is characterized by a mixture of freedom and control in the execution that is specific to Rembrandt.
– When one compares the height of the points of the standing collar of the dark tunic, the line connecting these points is found to slope obliquely downward toward the right in the direction of an imaginary horizon running somewhere at the height of the man's chest. In this way the beholder is unconsciously given the impression that the man is looking down at him/her, an effect which contributes to an impression of the subject's self-awareness. Rembrandt uses this same effect *mutatis mutandis* in his oblique placing of the top edge of the yellow jerkin in the Frick self-portrait from the same year **264**.

Fig. 2. X-ray of **261**

As with most paintings on canvas, strips were trimmed from the edges in the process of re-stretching and lining – in this case from the left and bottom edges at least. This has affected the painting's composition to some extent.

The painting originated in a period during which Rembrandt executed a considerable number of portrait commissions: **244**, **246**, **247**, **248a/b**, **258**, **259**, **263**, **270**, **272**, and the etched portrait B. 273 (with its design in oils **260**).

The identity of the sitter remains an enigma. Given his attire he would seem to have been a foreigner, possibly from southern Europe. Sutton suggested that he could have been a mariner.

262 Rembrandt, **The risen Christ**, *c.* 1658, canvas 81 x 64 cm. Munich, Alte Pinakothek. HdG 157; Br. 630; Bauch 240; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 630; Tümpel 87; see also Giltaij 2005 no. 38; *Religious Portraits* no. 6 and p. 134.
Inscription: ‹*Rembrandt f. 1661*› (almost certainly added later)

This oval fragment is cut from a larger and originally probably rectangular painting. Under the frame, along the right side at shoulder height, there is a small flesh-coloured semi-circular patch which could be part of Christ's left hand, with which he could originally have been blessing, or holding e.g. a staff or a cross with a banner. Giltaij observed on the X-radiograph cusping along the top and bottom of the canvas (Giltaij 2005, p. 198).

As so often with ovals, there is the risk that a painting finishes up slightly askew in the frame, or is actually cut askew from a larger whole such that the longitudinal axis of the oval is no longer vertical. This is the case here, as the vertical threads of the weave do not run vertically, while the inscription, parallel with the horizontal weft is slightly slanted. If one were to turn the painting slightly to the right to make the weave run vertically/horizontally, then Christ's breastbone would be more or less vertical and the head would be more strongly tilted to the right. In Plate **262** we have corrected this slanting according to the weft direction and the signature.

The fact that the inscription gives the impression of not being autograph needs not necessarily mean that the dating is incorrect. Stylistically, however, the painting fits better in the late 50s rather than 1661 as indicated by the present inscription. In 1661, the period in which, for instance, the apostle series originated (see **289**-**294**) Rembrandt's *peinture* was markedly freer than in this painting, which exhibits a relatively compact *modelé* with a *peinture* that shows striking kinship with that of e.g. the *Portrait of a man with arms akimbo* **261**, dated to 1658. Also the shading transition of light to shadow in the eyesocket is very similar in the two paintings. Finally, the structure and density of the weave in the two canvases corresponds

so closely, it is likely that they were taken from the same bolt of linen.

This Christ figure, as the Christ figures in **218** and **219** corresponds most closely to the description given in the Lentulus letter quoted in Note **217**. The correspondence is particularly striking in the case of the hair: *'his hair is the colour of ripe hazelnut, parted above, …, smooth to the ears, but further below with round curls, shining yellow and falling from his shoulders.'*

* **263** Rembrandt, **Portrait of the dyke reeve Dirck van Os**, *c.* 1658, canvas measurements of the stretcher 104 x 87.5 cm; of the painted surface 101 x 86 cm. Omaha, Joslyn Art Museum. HdG 664; Br. 315; Bauch 428 (doubts); Gerson 400 (strong doubts); Br./Gerson 315 (strong doubts); Tümpel A100 (as by a pupil of Rembrandt).
Inscriptions: no signature or date were found; near the coat of arms: D.VAN OS [DIJCKGRA]EF VAN D[E BEEMSTER]

263 After restauration.

Fig. 1. **263** Before restauration.

In its appearance and material condition, this portrait has endured a rough passage from its original state to the present. As a result of interventions by later hands over the centuries, the painting not only suffered radical changes in its appearance but also serious damage, particularly in the darker passages (**fig. 1**). When this painting was seen in 2010 it was advised that a radical restoration was needed, not only to repair damage but also to remove or hide the overpaintings that had evidently been added by other hands over the years. As a result of this recent restoration, carried out by Martin Bijl, much of the following description of the painting as it appeared in 2010 is no longer to be seen.

To begin with, the embellishments to the sitter's costume could only be considered as costume-historical anachronisms. An investigation of the lead white-containing paint in the painting enabled the restorer to establish which additions were the work of another, no doubt, later painter than Rembrandt. These additions were probably carried out in the late 17th or early 18th century, including the lace attached to the collar and on the sitter's right cuff, a ribbon on his cane, a chain with a cross hanging from it and various highlights e.g. on the cane and on the tassels of the cords closing his shirt at the neck. Gold-coloured ends of the sleeves were also added by – possibly the same – later hand, as were other parts of the costume e.g. the gold buttons that were painted over originally deep purple buttons, and large button-holes. In a probably earlier stage, a large coat of arms was added in the top right corner together with an inscription, probably added by a third hand at the end of the 17th century. These after-additions were heavily damaged.

One sees the evidence of the painting's disturbed material history in the black and white photographs and reproductions that until recently were only exclusively available. Since one may assume that none of the above-cited authors actually saw the painting (and we know for certain that is the case for Bauch and Gerson), one assumes that their doubts regarding the authenticity of the painting were based on an assessment of the black and white reproductions available to them.

At some later stage, probably in the 18th or 19th century, the painting underwent a violent 'cleaning'. It was not unusual at that time to clean paintings by rubbing them with an alkaline solution and after some time rinsing off the dissolved varnish (together, alas, with some of the original paint) with water. It is highly likely that this is the kind of treatment undergone by the present painting. The vulnerable dark paint in the costume and background specifically suffered so badly that these passages were later largely overpainted to make the painting fit to exhibit again. Then, in the 20th century, the painting was twice transferred to another canvas and in the process the thickly applied led white-containing later additions were pressed into the original paint. The result was to deform irreversibly the surface of the painting.

Separate from the question of whether or not it was painted by himself, it is certain that this portrait originated in Rembrandt's workshop: the canvas on which it was painted is found to have been given a quartz ground, a type of ground which was only used in Rembrandt's workshop (see *Corpus* IV pp. 325-334 and Table IV).

I had the chance to study the portrait and X-radiographs of it in Omaha in November 2010. On that occasion I was also able to study the dossiers assembled in 1942 in the Conservation Laboratory of the Fogg Art Museum concerning the research conducted there and the documentation relating to the restoration carried out at the time. In 1953/54 the painting was once again lined and restored. On this occasion earlier retouches and overpaintings were removed and re-done. However, the 'embellishments' and added attributes introduced in the first centuries of the painting's existence

were not removed. These demonstrably later additions must have played a role in the past in raising doubts over a possible attribution of the painting to Rembrandt.

On the basis of the distinctions between the still preserved original parts of the painting and the parts added later, I advised that this un-presentable painting should be restored so as to approach its original appearance as closely as possible.

The restoration was carried out in 2012/13 by Martin Bijl, who in 1988-'90 had participated in and partially directed the restoration of the six late and several early paintings by Rembrandt from the Rijksmuseum's collection. In the course of the treatment of the present painting it was decided to remove the lead-white-containing additions from view without materially removing them, but by covering them with paint of the same colour as the passages over which they were applied. The lacunae in the damaged dark passages of costume and background were rid of their overpaintings with refined nuances of tone and colour in the remaining original paint coming to light. After that, the old damages and lacunae were retouched. Certain parts were found to be damaged beyond reconstruction, however, such as the objects on the table. During the restoration the Rembrandtesque characteristics and qualities of the original parts became more clearly evident.

On the basis of those original passages that were to varying degrees still preserved in the face, hair, the cane and parts of the hands, I am convinced that there is ample evidence to support the attribution of the painting to Rembrandt. In the first place, there is the relation between brushwork, colour and illusion in the lit parts of the face, characteristic of Rembrandt, and the characteristic rendering of the facial features and hair of the sitter. Further, the manner in which the cane is painted betrays Rembrandt's own hand.

This work is one of the group of painted and etched portraits that Rembrandt produced on commission between 1655 and 1659/60. The similarities with the pose and bearing of the Frick self-portrait dated 1658 suggest that it could have originated in that same year. Any signature and date that may once have been present have probably disappeared during the course of the various treatments applied to the paint layer and support.

The identification of the subject of this portrait rests on the family coat of arms introduced in the top right corner around 1700. The sitter was born in 1591 and lived in Amsterdam. He was the dyke reeve (the equivalent of a mayor) of the Beemster polder. This polder was drained in 1612 by a number of entrepreneurs one of whom was the father of the sitter, also called Dirck (**fig. 2**), from whom the Dirck in the present painting inherited the position.

Fig. 2. Portrait of Dirck van Os the Elder, the father of the sitter of **263**. Alkmaar, Stedelijk Museum.

264 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait**, 1658, canvas 131 x 102 cm. New York, Frick Collection. HdG 563; Br. 50; Bauch 329; Gerson 343; Br./Gerson 50; Tümpel 172; ***Corpus* IV 14** and **pp. 74-76**, **275-281**; see also Slatkes 1992 pp. 410-413; *R. Self* no.3; New York 2011 pp. 47-53.
Inscription: on the end of the armrest on the right ‹*Rembran / f. 1658*›

The following series of quotations taken from the Rembrandt literature from 1906 to 2005 demonstrates the different ways in which this self-portrait has been seen over the last century.
In 1906 Schmidt Degener wrote that

> 'it was Rembrandt's cult of his own personality that at first made him produce his self-portraits. Rembrandt then became the grave man who expressed everything in his self-portraits, including his unhappiness and his loneliness; but he also expressed his self-confidence, pride and triumph as an artist.'

That view of Rembrandt constantly recurs in the interpretation of this self-portrait. In the same spirit Jakob Rosenberg described the painting in 1948 as follows:

> 'In the majestic portrait in the Frick Collection Rembrandt appears in rich Oriental garments, leaning back in an armchair like an old pasha. He sees himself as a sovereign in his realm of pictorial fancy.'

Perry Chapman in her book on Rembrandt's self-portraits from 1990 wrote:

> In the Frick Self-portrait [....] Rembrandtt used frontality to idealize his image. By adopting a dignified upright bearing and placing both hands on the arms of his chair he informed the seated pose with its traditional connotation of authority and supremacy.

And if one asked the *raison d'être* of such a painting, the predominant idea in 1990 was still that Rembrandt's self-portraits issued from

> 'a unique drive to self-exploration generated by internal pressure'

as Perry Chapman put it.

More recently, however, there have been dissenting voices. Inspired by Raupp (Raupp 1980a pp. 7-8; 1984 pp. 10-11) and by Eddy de Jongh (De Jongh 1991), the present author proposed that the

'market for self-portraits – or for portraits of artists otherwise produced – has to be seen in the context of a strongly developing interest in artists and their works in the 16th and 17th centuries on the part of a select and steadily growing community of art-lovers. [...] All the evidence indicates that Rembrandt saw himself in this great tradition and considered himself the equal of the great masters of art history. Many of Rembrandt's contemporaries must also have seen him so. When one places Rembrandt in this context, it is obvious that both the creation and the acquisition of his self-portraits must have been freighted with significance.' (*Corpus* IV p. 144).

In her investigation of Rembrandt's self-portraits in historical or historicizing dress, Marieke de Winkel in 1999 came to the conclusion that

'in this way [in works like the present painting] Rembrandt wanted to present himself as an artist in the tradition of the Dutch and German masters of the past.' (*R. Self* p. 70).

This way of referring to his great predecessors would not have escaped the art-lovers of Rembrandt's time, for they were thoroughly acquainted with Van Mander's *Schilderboeck* and the many published engravings with portraits of artists. In discussing the present painting De Winkel commented:

'As for the striking yellow colour of the jerkin, Rembrandt may have had in mind the anecdote told by Van Mander in his life of Lucas van Leyden: *Lucas* [on his visits to Middelburg and several towns in the Southern Netherlands] *was accompanied everywhere by the aforementioned Jan de Mabuse, who acted in a very stately manner, resplendent in a garment of cloth of gold, and Lucas wore a jerkin of yellow silk camlet which in the sunshine also had the luster of gold.*' (KvM *Lives* Fol. 214 v 05-08) (De Winkel in *Corpus* V p. 76).

265 Rembrandt, **Philemon and Baucis**, 1658, originally probably on mahagony panel, later transferred to a gauze-like material subsequently stuck on to an oak panel, 54.5 x 68.5 cm. Washington, National Gallery. HdG 212; Br. 481; Bauch 106; Gerson 278; Br./Gerson 481; Tümpel A26 (as from Rembrandt's workshop); ***Corpus* V 27** (as a work by Rembrandt or by one of his pupils); see also Wheelock 1995 pp. 247-252 (as by Rembrandt).
Inscription: at the lower left in thin black <*Rembrandt f. 1658*>. Given the condition of the fragile dark sections in the painting the signature in its present state is to be considered unreliable. Because of the nature of the current varnish layer, the extent to which the inscription may have been strengthened or added later cannot be assessed. For a description and analysis of the painting's material history and its present condition see *Corpus* V 27.

Jupiter and Mercurius are looking for a place to rest and are offered hospitality by an elderly couple, Baucis and Philemon. They invite the gods, who are journeying *in cognito*, into their humble cottage and offer the meagre meal which in their poverty is all they can provide. The story is from Ovid's Metamorphoses

(**VIII, 679-689**) 'Meanwhile the old couple noticed that, as soon as the mixing bowl was empty, it refilled itself, unaided, and the wine appeared of its own accord. They were fearful at this strange and astonishing sight, and timidly Baucis and Philemon murmured a prayer, their palms upwards, and begged the gods' forgiveness for the meal, and their unpreparedness. They had a goose, the guard for their tiny cottage: as hosts they prepared to sacrifice it for their divine guests. But, quick-winged, it wore the old people out and, for a long time, escaped them, at last appearing to take refuge with the gods themselves. Then the heaven-born ones told them not to kill it. "We are gods," they said."'

In *Corpus* V 27 this painting was attributed to either Rembrandt or one of his pupils. The ruinous condition of the painting, the result of a transfer which was evidently inexpertly carried out, seemed to make it impossible to decide between these two alternatives. Yet there are considerations that argue for an attribution of this work to Rembrandt rather than to one of his pupils. The most significant of these is the fact that Adam Elsheimer is emulated here.

Fig. 1. See **25**

Rembrandt had already responded to the challenge of Elsheimer's work on three previous occasions – the first time with his *Supper at Emmaus* from 1629 **25** (**fig. 1**) which, like the present painting, was based on the print by Hendrick Goudt after Elsheimer's *Philemon and Baucis* from 1608 (**fig. 2**).

Fig. 2. H. Goudt after A. Elsheimer, *Philemon and Baucis*, engraving, 1612.

The other two occasions on which Rembrandt attempted to surpass Elsheimer were his *Flight into Egypt* from 1634 **130A** and the *Rest on the flight into Egypt* in Dublin from 1647 **214**. In the latter two cases Rembrandt could have based himself on Elsheimer's original work from 1609, which was most probably in the Netherlands at the time (see **130A** fig. 1).

In all cases Rembrandt put into practice his ideas on the art of painting that he had developed: he concentrated the narrative elements and pictorial effects that Elsheimer had dispersed over the surface of his image, in such a way as to achieve what Hoogstraten referred to as '*eenwezigheid*' or unity, a term which he may well have learned from his teacher (see *Corpus* V pp. 58-59). Compared with Elsheimer's invention transmitted by Goudt (**fig. 2**) one finds the same pictorial transformations in the present painting.

Elsheimer had placed the four protagonists of the story widely separated from each other (Philemon is even occupied outdoors). Consequently, just as in Elsheimer's *Flight into Egypt*, the light sources and the lit zones are placed considerably further apart than in Rembrandt's alternative, and they all are more or less of the same pictorial significance. In Rembrandt's design, there is a much great-

er cohesion within the scene, while simultaneously the credibility of the suggested light sources and the effects they cause is enhanced. It is also important to note that the light falling on the wall behind Mercury and on Jupiter is of a yellowish colour. In this regard, the similarity to Rembrandt's *Portrait of a man reading by candlelight* in Williamstown, painted ten years earlier, is striking **216**.

There are no known examples of pupils' work from Rembrandt's workshop in which masters from the past were emulated. It was apparently exclusively the master's prerogative to take on the challenge of a revered master in this fashion. In the production of what we now refer to as 'satellites', Rembrandt's pupils based themselves, apparently exclusively, on the work of their master (see Chapter II fig. 3). Accordingly, it is almost certain that the present painting must have been a work by the master Rembrandt himself.

* **266** Rembrandt, **Tobit and Anna**, 1659, panel 41.8 x 54.6 cm. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (on loan from the Willem van der Vorm Foundation). HdG 65; Br. 520; Bauch 30; Gerson 348; Br./Gerson 520; Tümpel 28* (expressing doubts); Giltaij 1994 no. 30 (possibly as work by Barent Fabritius); ***Corpus* V 28**.
Inscription: along the bottom edge in black <*Rembrandt f.1659*>

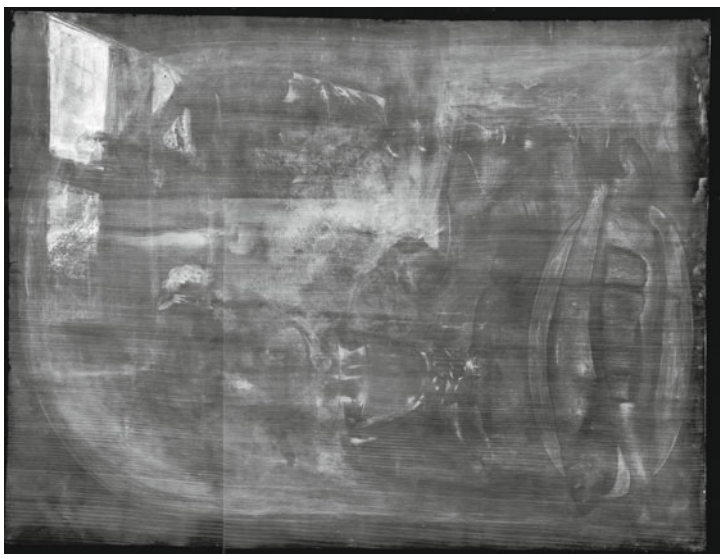


Fig. 1. X-ray of **266**. When turned 90° to the right the radiographic image of an underlying vanitas still-life emerges.

The painting shows an episode taken from the Apocryphal book of Tobit (chapter 10, verses 1-7) in which the blind Tobit and his wife Anna anxiously await the return of their son Tobias. The latter, accompanied by the archangel Raphael, who had been sent by God, had gone to Rages in Media to fetch money that Tobit had once entrusted for safe keeping to a certain Gabael, a member of the family. For various reasons, Tobias has been away much longer than agreed.

> **Tobit 10: 1-3** 'Now Tobit his father counted every day: and when the days of the journey were expired, and they [Tobias and Raphael] came not, Then Tobit said, Are they detained? or is Gabael dead, and there is no man to give him the money? Therefore he [Tobit] was very sorry.'

According to iconographic tradition, Tobit's wife Anna is shown at work in the same room, earning their living by spinning (Tobit 2: 12). To understand the painting, it is important to know that the once wealthy Tobit, having fled from the wrath of the King of Nineveh, on return to his house had found all his goods plundered and that all that remained to him, apart from the house itself, were his wife Anna and Tobias, their son (Tobit 1: 23).

The bottom window stands wide open, opening inwards to the left. The edge of this lead-paned window, strongly foreshortened, is just visible at the left.

The X-radiographic image is largely obscured by a still-life lying beneath the present image (**fig. 1**). This still-life consists of a dish or plate with two fishes, the foremost of which is cut in slices. Behind the fish stand two full glasses and a candlestick with a burning candle. It would seem to have been a *vanitas* still-life. In view of the arch that encloses this still-life above and the horizontal enclosure at the bottom, the objects depicted seem to be placed in a niche out of which the edge of the plate with the fishes projects forward slightly.

Although the X-ray image is dominated by the underlying still-life, parts of the now visible painting are also revealed. Next to the upper part of the window there was a third, slightly smaller window that was situated above the door. In this painted-out window can be seen the reserve for an oblique beam which apparently had the same kind of function as the vaguely indicated supports that brace the ceiling beams from the back wall.

Equally important for an understanding of the painting's genesis is the fact that in the part of the wall behind Tobit there is a crudely outlined reserve for his cap and shoulder. Further to the left there is a similarly rough reserve for the spinning wheel. Anna's headscarf and collar appear as light shapes that correspond with what is now visible in the surface.

For a long time the attribution of this painting remained undisputed. In 1986, however, Tümpel let it be known that he was 'not completely convinced of its authenticity' (Tümpel no. 28). In 1994 Giltaij, curator of the Van der Vorm Collection, also thought there was justified reason for doubt about its authenticity. He based his doubt on what he considered to be an insuperable weakness in the quality (Giltaij 1994 no. 30):

> 'The figures are arranged rather awkwardly in the picture space, the background is poorly defined, and the right-hand side of the painting simply wilts to an end. Parts of the work are fairly amateurish, such as the unstructured figure of Anna, the exceptionally weak hand, and the limp brushstrokes trailing over the floor.'

In view of the fact that the painting was done over a 17th-century still-life totally unrelated to the work that is now visible, Giltaij referred to the possibility, once voiced by members of the RRP, that perhaps it should even be considered a 'deliberate falsification'. He tentatively attributed the painting to Barent Fabritius, referring in particular to an unfinished painting in York that is attributed to this painter (Sumowski *Gemälde* II no. 553).

During the investigation of this painting conducted by the RRP in 2009/10 the indications accumulated in favour of an attribution to Rembrandt. First of all, it was observed that the painting was disturbed by serious wear of the surface, such that the paint (and with it a range of colours) from the underlying painting had been revealed in many places. Also resulting from this wear, much of the brushwork of the uppermost painting had been deformed.

The arguments to consider are summarized below (sometimes with brief additional elucidation). Perhaps it should be said that the present author began this investigation in a thoroughly sceptical frame of mind: it seemed to me at first that this was no autograph work by Rembrandt, but my opinion changed under the weight of the arguments presented below.

– Rembrandt and his pupils (during their apprenticeship with

Rembrandt) took up the history of Tobit and Anna and their son Tobias remarkably often (Held 1964).

– The painting bears the inscription <*Rembrandt. f. 1659*>. The way this is written, the form of the letters and their spacing does not differ from other Rembrandt signatures from this period.
– From a cross-section of a paint sample taken from the signature, Karin Groen concluded that the signature could not have been a later addition and must have been applied very shortly after the origin of the painting itself. So far as we know, Rembrandt did not sign the works of his pupils. One cannot of course exclude the possibility, however unlikely, that Rembrandt or even his pupils sometimes added a Rembrandt signature to a work painted by a pupil.
– The painting is superimposed on a painting from the first half of the 17th century. Later forgers often painted their forgeries on old paintings – in the process adding a false signature. The possibility that this painting might itself also be a forgery has in the past been raised casually by some – including myself. It can now be confirmed that the painting is not a modern forgery: a printed text stuck on the back of the panel, cut from an unidentified but definitely 18th-century sale catalogue, gives the description and measurements of a painting which corresponds so closely to the present painting that it undoubtedly refers to the same work. Karin Groen's analysis of the paint of the Tobit painting leaves no room to suspect that it could be a later forgery.
– Throughout his life Rembrandt frequently painted on supports (usually panels) that had been previously used – mostly over an underlying painting by himself (see the Notes to **18** and **32**), although occasionally over a painting from another hand (see **1** and **199**). The *Tobit and Anna* is painted over a still-life from the first half of the 17th century. As far is known, Rembrandt painted no still-lifes as such, but a number of still-lifes (presumably painted by others) are mentioned in his inventory as 'retouched' by Rembrandt (*Doc.* 1656/12 nos. 25, 27, 28, 120, 123). This would suggest that Rembrandt had in his possession still-lifes by other painters and could well have re-used them as supports for his own work.
– Infrared reflectography reveals in places a rough black undersketch for the figure of Tobit, drawn with a brush (**fig. 2**). If one compares the abrupt transition of the underlying brushstrokes from thick to thin with that in Ben. 1047 (**fig. 3**), a drawing generally considered authentic and also from 1659, the 'handwriting' is remarkably similar.
– The way the painting is worked out – from background to foreground – is normal for Rembrandt, but for others too. The confident manner in which the forms in the foreground of this painting are reserved in lead white-containing paint (in as far as this is visible in the X–radiograph) is characteristic of Rembrandt. The substance and malleability of this lead white-containing paint, evident in the paint surface as well as in the X-radiograph, is also typical for Rembrandt.

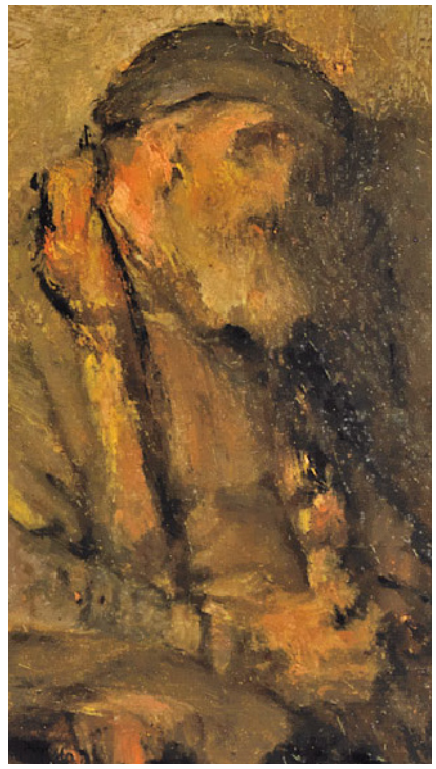


Fig. 4. Detail of **266**

– During the progress of a work, Rembrandt often introduced more or less radical changes. In this painting as well, a clear change has been introduced which is moreover typical for Rembrandt in the sense that it altered the relations of light within the painting. These changes that Rembrandt made often had to do with reducing the extent of the highest light. In this case, however, it seems to have been to strengthen the desired local concentration of the suggested light. A small window, placed high up next to the window we see now, has been painted out. It would seem that together with this *pentimento* the intensity of light on the uppermost part of the plaster wall was also reduced.
– With a painting like this (as also with **151** and **173** where the amount of entering light was also adjusted) one has what Rembrandt's ex-pupil Van Hoogstraten referred to as 'roomlight' ('*kamerlicht*') – a lighting problem that appears to have fascinated Rembrandt (Corpus V pp. 76-78; see also **85** and **86**). The challenge was one of assessing (or according to Van Hoogstraten 'calculating') the gradations of reduction of the tonal values in the room in relation to a visible window light. Unlike Vermeer, Rembrandt saw no possibility of achieving that effect other than by introducing numerous relatively dark tones. 'Roomlight' was not the only art-theoretical phenomenon in this painting that one can associate with Rembrandt: there is also the role of 'guided chance' (*Corpus* V pp. 33-34) that appears to have engaged him in this painting as in many of his other late works. This strikes one as soon as one tries, for example, to describe Tobit's head (**fig. 4**), but the same applies to many other passages.
– Despite the frequent use of chance, this small painting at first glance gives an impression of considerable detail that seems unusual for the late Rembrandt. But one observes this in other works with small-scale figures from the same period in a varied way **260**, **265**, **283**, **286**; it seems as though he temporarily reoriented his way of working toward greater detail. This is particularly the case in an etching from the same year – *Peter and John healing the lame man by the Temple gate* (B. 94) (**fig. 5**). Comparison of this etching with earlier prints from the 1650s demonstrates a stronger tendency towards detail than in e.g. the print series from 1654-56. The result of this more intricate way of working is that figures stand more freely in the picture space.
– There is a remarkable similarity of conception and posture between the lame man seen from the back in the etching mentioned above (B. 94) (**fig. 5**), and the figure of Anna in this painting. It is also striking that Anna sits on an elevation in the foreground, much like the step on which the cripple in the print is seated. In this context, the reader is referred to my remarks on Rembrandt's use of 'sprong' in Vol. V pp. 62-63 (i.e. the introduction of upward steps of the 'stage' on which a scene is played out) (see also the Note to **174**).
– The execution of the painting is characterized by a considerable variability and freedom in the execution of many details; there is also great control and precision evident in the definition of particular forms (e.g. in the execution of the construction of the

Fig. 2. Detail of Infrared reflectography of **266**

Fig. 3. Rembrandt, *Christ and the woman taken in adultery, c.* 1659-60, pen and different shades of brown ink (colours added by a later hand), 17 x 20.2 cm (detail). Munich, Graphische Sammlung (Ben. 1047).

Fig. 5. Rembrandt, *Peter and John healing the cripple at the gate of the Temple*, 1659, etching 18 x 21.5 cm (B. 94).

window or the chairs on which Tobit and Anna are seated). This variability in execution is typical of Rembrandt.

When taken together, the sheer multiplicity and variety in the nature of these mutually corroborating arguments, where each adds weight to the others, constitute a strong argument for the authenticity of the painting. In such a case, traditional connoisseurship is too subjective and fallible to be capable of refuting such a constellation of evidence.

Despite this, Dr. Giltaij, the then curator of the collection to which this painting belongs, who had disattributed the painting in his 1994 catalogue of the collection, maintained his standpoint that it was not a Rembrandt. It is worth looking critically at the arguments that he put forward during the debate in various media following publication of *A Corpus* Vol. V with its entry on the present painting (V 28). It is a classic example (of which there are more in this book) of futile – even irrational and sometimes mistaken – arguments deployed to maintain a conviction that a painting is not by Rembrandt while evidence to the contrary continues to accumulate (see also pp. 240-248, **221**, **230**, **259**).

During that discussion, Giltaij had already withdrawn his suggestion that the painting could be by Barent Fabritius, but his arguments for excluding the work from Rembrandt's oeuvre still need to be refuted. Many of them are trivial, but the aim of this refutation is not to diminish Giltaij, who is a very competent art historian; it is rather a matter of pointing out how art historians who consider themselves connoisseurs and other experts tend to base their opinions on their personal intuitive judgment rather than on evidence.

The objection repeatedly put forward as an argument by Giltaij – 'I don't see it' – is a typical example. What is apparently meant by this is that the painting does not correspond to Giltaij's fixed idea of Rembrandt's style. This fails to recognize that Rembrandt's paintings from this period can differ so essentially in scale and appearance that it is impossible to maintain the image of a uniform 'style'. Such intuitive connoisseurship as evinced by Giltaij turns out to be a most unreliable instrument when applied to this artist in this particular phase of his activities as a painter. When asked for more objective arguments, Giltaij's surprising response was that

> 'Tobit sits by the fire and yet the window is open. The painting therefore cannot be by Rembrandt.'

Before adopting that as a valid argument one ought to consult the sociologist Johan Goudsblom's book, *Fire and Civilization* (Goudsblom 1992). In an oral communication Goudsblom responded to this argument as follows: 'In the pre-industrial era (i.e. also Rembrandt's time) there was a fire permanently burning in every house. Anyone who found it too warm would undoubtedly open the window.' Giltaij's argument was evidently informed by a more modern experience of domestic temperature regulation.

Fig. 6. Detail of **266**

Another of Giltaij's arguments against the attribution to Rembrandt was:

> 'Rembrandt always painted and drew his hands such that you have the feeling that you could shake that hand'.

Giltaij had already raised this criticism of Anna's hands in his 1994 catalogue. In the first place this is to ignore the small scale and the bad condition of the painting. But more importantly, Giltaij appears not to have observed how the hands of a woman spinning actually function – it is after all something which today one could only rarely witness, whereas it must have been a common sight in Rembrandt's time. In this context see **figs. 6** and **7**. One sees in that painting how the wheel was driven manually, by flicking the spokes with the right hand. In the present painting Anna's right hand is shown as if striking the spokes of the wheel, while the left hand twists the fibre into a thread, with her fingertips pointing toward the spinner (**figs. 6** and **8**).

Fig. 7. M. van Heemskerck, *Portrait of Anna Codde*, 1529, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.

Fig. 8. D. Velázquez, *Fable of Arachne* (detail), *c.* 1655, Madrid, Prado.

Another of Giltaij's objections relates to the same point: the spokes of the spinning wheel, he argued, are not visible. Evidently he was unaware of a discussion current in Rembrandt's time over the artistic problem of movement, in which the (in)visibility of the spokes of a spinning wheel in motion features. The Leiden painter and art-theoretician Philips Angel (1616-1684/5) wrote about that problem in 1641 in connection with the problem of painting chariots drawn by galloping horses, where the wheels are painted with accurately rendered spokes. He wrote:

'… *thus they (certain painters) would have been able to avoid this mistake by closer observation of movement in reality, for one sees, whenever a car- or spinning wheel is set in motion with great force, that because of their rapid turning one cannot recognize any [individual] spokes, only a haze* …'.

Angel's comment could even have been occasioned by the chariot wheel in Rembrandt's *Abduction of Proserpina* from 1631 **49** (Bedaux 1992)**.** One may also compare Velázquez' *Fable of Arachne*, which originated *c.* 1655, where the spokes of the speeding spinning wheel are rendered as a transparent haze (**fig. 8**). In that painting the spinner's left hand is shown making a movement that is remarkably like Anna's hand in our painting (in so far as that is still intact, given its abraded state).

In a defense of his disattribution of the painting written to the present author, Giltaij also asserts that Rembrandt's etching with the blind Tobit (B. 42) displays more details than this painting, claiming that this argues against the authenticity of the latter. If one compares a painting with an etching one should take into account that in precisely that regard there is an essential difference between a painting and an etching: needless to say, given the thinness of an etching needle, an etching is constructed with many hundreds of fine scratches, whereas a comparable image in a painting is composed with the help of many fewer, more or less broad brushstrokes. As a result, the artist as a rule is compelled to incorporate (many) more details in an etching than in a painting (compare **215** and **260** with the relevant etchings reproduced in the Notes to those Plates

In a blatant confusion of different episodes from the (Apocryphal) book of Tobit, Giltaij also wrote that he missed the kid in this painting (cf. **12** and **201**). One has the impression here that Giltaij had neither read the book of Tobit, nor paid much heed to the relevant visual tradition – see, for instance, no. 4189 in the National Gallery in London, attributed to Gerard Dou.

This may all seem unnecessarily pedantic. However, the point is that Giltaij's original stance in this discussion 'I don't see it' is a clear demonstration of the (implicit) conception, widely accepted in the contemporary world of connoisseurship, that the only relevant aspects in judging a painting are those that do or do not conform to a preconceived, more or less vague, image of Rembrandt's 'style', while hereas any additional information tends to be judged to be of subsidiary importance, even information on the technique and workshop practice of the putative author of a work. Thus, Giltaij remarks on the fact that the painter of the Tobit and Anna did not first apply a paint- or ground layer to the still-life before he began painting the scene with *Tobit and Anna*, and takes this absence of an intermediate ground layer to be evidence against an attribution of the superimposed painting to Rembrandt. One may find a discussion on that topic in *Corpus* I p. 32-33 and *Corpus* IV pp. 96-98. As far as we have so far been able to observe, Rembrandt never applied an intermediate layer. Only in the Kassel *Self-portrait* from 1654 (painted over an unfinished portrait of a woman) does he introduce locally a flesh-coloured intermediate layer in the area of the face. It is not that such information is in itself of great weight; but when an argument is based on such a point, surely knowledge of the facts is indispensable.

267 Rembrandt, **Moses smashes the stone tablets with the covenant** (unfinished), 1659, canvas 168.5 x 136.5 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 25; Br. 527; Bauch 226; Gerson 347; Br./Gerson 527; Tümpel 27; see also Tümpel 1969, pp. 169 ff.; Berlin 1975 p. 340-341; *M/W* cat. 46; Shabar 1993.
Inscription: on the rock behind which Moses appears ‹*Rembrandt f 1659*›.

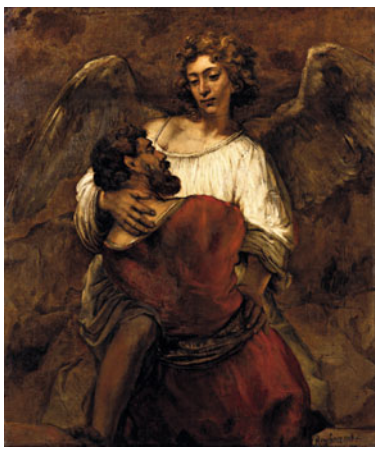
Tümpel made it clear that this is not the scene from Exodus in which Moses shows to the Jewish people the Tablets of the Covenant [Exodus 34:29], but the earlier scene when Moses smashed the first tablets on discovering that during his absence the people had gone over to worshipping the Golden Calf (Tümpel 1969).

Exodus 32: 15- 19 'And Moses turned and went down from the mountain, and the two tablets of the Testimony *were* in his hand. The tablets *were* written on both sides; on the one *side* and on the other they were written. Now the tablets *were* the work of God, and the writing *was* the writing of God engraved on the tablets. And when Joshua heard the noise of the people as they shouted, he said to Moses, "*There is* a noise of war in the camp." But he said: "*It is* not the noise of the shout of victory, Nor the noise of the cry of defeat, *But* the sound of singing I hear." So it was, as soon as he came near the camp, that he saw the calf *and* the dancing. So Moses' anger became hot, and he cast the tablets out of his hands and broke them at the foot of the mountain.'

In the theological and art-historical discussion related to this painting two themes are important: the question of the source that Rembrandt consulted for the (almost) faultless representation of the Hebrew text on the tablets (on this problem see Shabar 1993 and *Corpus* V 17 p. 502); and secondly, a question that long remained unresolved, whether the painting could be a fragment of a larger composition with a full-length Moses that Rembrandt could perhaps have painted for the new Amsterdam Town Hall (Heppner 1935). We now know that that is not the case: the X-radiographic images of the canvas show that this canvas still has its original format. The painting must therefore have been intended for another (unknown) destination.

On the question of whether the work is unfinished, albeit signed and dated, see *Painter at Work* pp. 205-210.

268 Rembrandt, **Jacob wrestling with the angel**, *c.* 1659, canvas 137 x 116 cm. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie. HdG 13; Br. 528; Bauch 36; Gerson 346; Br./Gerson 528; Tümpel 29; see also Berlin 1975 p. 345.
Inscription: on a piece of linen inserted in the bottom right corner of the painting that was possibly cut out (including the signature) from the remnants of the painting after it had been cropped ‹*Rembrandt.f*›. On the bottom edge of the piece of canvas can be seen the top part of a long loop of the <*f*> that merges with the top part of the cipher <*1*> of the year to the right, followed by the remains of a 6 and a 5. The painting must therefore have originated in the (late) 1650s.



Jacob is on his way to attempt a reconciliation with his brother Esau. Having sent his servants ahead to appease Esau with gifts, he then sends his family ahead whilst remaining behind.

Genesis 32: 23-32 'He took them, sent them over the brook, and sent over what he had. Then Jacob was left alone; and a Man wrestled with him until the breaking of day. Now when He saw that He did not prevail against him, He touched the socket of his hip; and the socket of Jacob's hip was out of joint as He wrestled with him. And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks." But he said, "I will not let You go unless You bless me!" So He said to him, "What is your name?" He said, "Jacob." And He said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed." Then Jacob asked, saying, "Tell me Your name, I pray." And He said, "Why is it that you ask about My name?" And He blessed him there. So Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved." Just as he crossed over Penuel the sun rose on him, and he limped on his hip. Therefore to this day the children of Israel do not eat the muscle that shrank, which is on the hip socket, because He touched the socket of Jacob's hip in the muscle that shrank.'

The introduced fragment with the signature and date and the horizontal seam that runs between the angel's mouth and nose raises the question of whether the painting perhaps could have been originally (much) larger, and whether (in view of the horizontal seam) it had a horizontal format.

The *Moses* **267** came into the Prussian Royal possession in 1764, the present painting only in 1821. The two paintings therefore probably did not originally belong together.

269 Rembrandt (and workshop?), **Posthumous portrait of Saskia van Uylenburgh as Flora**, *c.* 1660, canvas 100 x 91.8 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 202; Br. 114; Bauch 282; Gerson 288; Br./Gerson 114; Tümpel 111; see also *M/W* cat. 41; *R. not R. II* no. 12; *R. Women* no. 119; Liedtke 2007 no. 153.
Inscription: none

There are technical data that are significant for situating this painting within Rembrandt's oeuvre, mainly having to do with the support. The canvas comes from a bolt of linen, parts of which were used for paintings that originated in Rembrandt's studio around 1660 (*Corpus* IV 21 & 22). This could be important for dating the present painting (see below). The parts of the canvas to the right and the left of a vertical seam (14 cm from the left edge) come from the same bolt and both are prepared with a quartz ground. This shows that the two parts were sewn together before the canvas was primed with a material that was used exclusively in Rembrandt's workshop (Groen in *Corpus* IV Chapter IV).

The recurrent question about this painting has been whether or not the woman portrayed here as Flora could have been Hendrickje Stoffels or Saskia van Uylenburgh. In his 2007 catalogue, Liedtke gives short shrift to this whole discussion, by stating categorically that '…there was certainly no intention of depicting either woman. The figure is an ideal type that goes back to earlier pictures by Rembrandt.' On this point Liedtke also refers to Julia Lloyd Williams, who was of the same opinion (*R. Women* p. 208). However, the only example adduced by either of these authors to substantiate their view is the face of Susanna in **213**. But this less than convincing argument provides no answer to questions regarding the conception and possible *raison d'être* of this painting.

Whether or not Saskia is the intended subject of this painting, or merely provided a model for the figure of the goddess, it is clear that Rembrandt based this painting directly or indirectly on the earlier portrait of his deceased wife, now in Kassel **95** (**fig. 1**).

If Liedtke and Lloyd Williams were right, i.e. if one were to accept their assertion that this painting was intended *exclusively* as a depiction of the goddess Flora, it would be strange indeed for Rembrandt to base this goddess, albeit indirectly, on his own portrait of his first wife Saskia van Uylenburgh rather than develop an original invention. In the context of his entire oeuvre this would be for him a highly unusual, if not inconceivable, solution (see also *Corpus* V pp. 32-34 and pp. 53-64).

To understand fully the relation between this painting and the Kassel *Portrait of Saskia*, however, one must first turn to another painting, a copy after the latter portrait which is now in the Royal Museum of Fine Arts in Antwerp (**fig. 2**). Rembrandt worked on the Kassel *Portrait of Saskia* between *c.* 1633 and 1642, the year of Saskia's death. He must have kept that portrait for ten years after its completion, but in 1652 he sold it to Jan Six (*Doc.* 1652/7 and 1658/18). At some time, however, a copy (the Antwerp painting) had been made (**fig. 2**) in which the passages with the complex decoration of the blouse and the extremely detailed necklace were simplified. This copy, executed in a manner which comes close to Rembrandt's manner of the mid 1640s, may thus have been painted years before or after Jan Six acquired the original.

The Antwerp copy also differs appreciably from the Kassel prototype **95** in having a much livelier background and in the execution of the facial contour. However, one should take into account here

Fig. 1. **95**

Fig. 2. Copy after **95**. Panel transferred to canvas, 112 x 85,5 cm. Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten.

that when the panel of the Kassel prototype was cradled, probably in the early 19th century, new laths were added on either side, which also entailed overpainting the background as a whole. From the nature of the original brushwork of the background, still visible in relief at the surface of the overpainting and also evident in the X-radiograph, it is evident that this background originally displayed a livelier *peinture*, although by no means as lively as in the Antwerp copy (see *Corpus* II A 85 fig. 2 and p. 427).

Study of the X-radiographic image and microscopic investigation of the Kassel *Portrait of Saskia* revealed that in painting the new background minor changes were also introduced in the profile of the face; it is therefore well possible that the Kassel prototype and the Antwerp copy originally resembled each other more closely in this respect. Moreover, the face in the Kassel painting is virtually entirely overpainted; as with the background, a livelier *peinture* is hidden under this porcelain-like overpainting. The Antwerp copy shows a generally much freer and in places rough *peinture*, which leads one to think that the painting should be dated significantly later than its prototype. Given that it is a copy of a portrait, it would seem obvious that the Antwerp copy was produced specifically as an effigy of Saskia rather than as a mere exercise by a pupil.

The X-ray image of the Antwerp copy (**fig. 3**) shows another remarkable difference from the Kassel prototype: on the left there is a shape reserved in the background (later overpainted) which can best be read as the reserve for an outstretched arm, since this shape, which gets narrower to the left, widens out markedly close to the body. It has wavy contours suggesting draped material. Research in the Antwerp Museum with a view to a possible restoration of the painting has shown that it was originally 15 cm wider on the left side (**fig. 4**). The reserve of the outstretched arm could thus have ended in a hand. This lacuna in the original background of the Antwerp copy is not, as originally thought by the Antwerp restorers,

Fig. 3. X-ray of fig. 2.

Fig. 4. Detail of **95**

Fig. 5. Detail of fig. 2.

Fig. 6. Detail of **269**

a matter of major damage to the paint layer; it is certainly a reserve left open during the painting of the background (which as a rule in Rembrandt's studio would have been completed first). The course of the brushstrokes in the contours of this dark shape in the X-ray image demonstrates as much. But this reserved arm (and hand) probably never got further than the stage of a general sketch.

Nevertheless, this discovery is significant when one considers its relation to the painting we are dealing with here, for it would seem to indicate that, long before the origin of the present painting a formula had been considered for the Antwerp copy in which Saskia would be depicted *with outstretched hand*. This is the invention which would eventually be worked out in the present painting. (And yet the fact that the Antwerp copy manifests so much freedom compared with the Kassel prototype insistently raises the question again of whether the copy is perhaps, after all, not from Rembrandt's own hand.)

The Antwerp copy was an ambitious project (**fig. 7**). It was done on a panel comprising several planks and rounded above. (Later it was reduced in size and transferred to canvas.) It was originally larger both in height and width: according to the Antwerp investigation, it must have been *c.* 120 x 104 cm i.e. about of the same size as the Kassel prototype in its original state (see Note **95**).

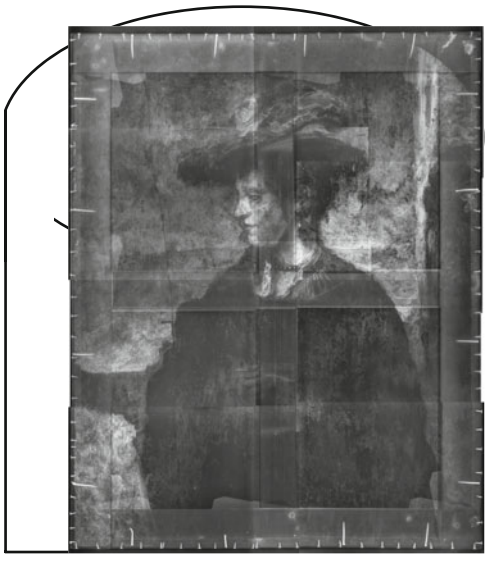


Fig. 7. X-radiograph of fig. 2. The traces of the rounded upper right corner of the original panel (the painting was transferred to canvas, probably in the early 19th century) and the fact that this rounded shape is missing at the top left corner provide the clues for a tentative reconstruction of the original shape and composition of the painting which is remarkably close to our reconstruction of the Kassel prototype (see Plate **95**).

The copy could well have been intended to replace the original in Rembrandt's house after the latter was sold. In turn, this would in various ways underpin the assumption that the Antwerp copy formed the basis for the *Flora* under discussion here. As argued above, it is unthinkable that Rembrandt would not have specifically developed a new conception for a new *Flora*, as he had done on earlier such occasions (see **125**, **138**, **181**). The fact that the present painting was most likely based on a copy that was probably conceived as a posthumous portrait of Saskia (**fig. 2**) can scarcely mean other than that the present *Flora* was also intended by its author, i.e. Rembrandt, as a posthumous portrait of his first wife.

Bauch and Tümpel dated the present painting to c. 1657; Liedtke placed it in 1654. His preference for this date is a product of his idea that 'the *Flora* may be said to have been painted as a reprise of the *Aristotle* in a lighter key' (Liedtke 2007 p. 661), an idea based on a similarity in the execution of the densely folded white sleeves in the two paintings. As the *Aristotle* originated in 1653, a slightly later dating for the *Flora* would then be the obvious choice. As mentioned before there is a technical detail from which a much later dating of the present painting may be inferred. Its canvas unquestionably comes from the same bolt of linen as the canvases on which two paintings from Rembrandt's workshop are painted (*Corpus* IV 21 and 22; see especially *Corpus* IV p. 529, figs. 3 and 4). Both are free variants based on self-portraits that Rembrandt painted in 1660 (**281** and **282**). The obvious inference that these variants were painted shortly after the origin of their prototypes is corroborated by an old inscription found on one of them: *<Remb…dt/f. 1660>* (*Corpus* IV 21). As far as is known, these are the only three paintings on that (rather unusual) type of canvas (see p. 32, fig. 40), which makes it likely that all three originated within a relatively brief timespan. From this one infers (with the usual reservation) that the present painting was created around 1660.

If one accepts that the Antwerp copy remained in Rembrandt's house (eventually to serve as the prototype for the present painting), one cannot help wondering whether at a certain moment there arose a specific need for a second posthumous portrait of Saskia. At some point Titus must have obtained a portrait of his mother, as the (probate) inventory of his widow Magdalena van Loo from 1669 lists *'een conterfeijtsel van des overledes schoonmoeder'*, (a portrait of the deceased's mother-in-law) i.e. of Saskia van Uylenburgh (HdG *Urk.* no. 310). Perhaps this was the present painting, or the Antwerp copy of **95**, so it is conceivable that both Titus and Rembrandt possessed portraits of Saskia. The Kassel version was to remain in the possession of the Six family until the 18th century, still designated *Rembrandt's wife painted by Rembrandt*. The fact that the present painting bears no signature may be counted as an indication that the painting was not for sale and as such may have had a special function within Rembrandt's family circle.

Whatever the light thrown on the relation between the subject of this painting and the Kassel portrait, there still remain questions to be answered: in particular, what is the reason for the conspicuous difference in quality between different parts of the present painting?

It is hard to imagine that the hand with the flowers could have been painted by Rembrandt. Not only are the position of the hand and its anatomy unconvincing, there is also hardly any satisfying light effect on the hand or on the flowers and foliage she is holding. One only need compare the flowers in Saskia/Flora's hand with the sovereign manner in which the flowers and foliage in the woman's headgear are executed to justify one's doubt that the hand with the flowers is authentic. There is therefore the possibility that the hand was added by another, less competent painter, who may have added this hand in place of another hand which originally occupied the place where there is now a large lacuna in the paint layer (**fig. 8**).

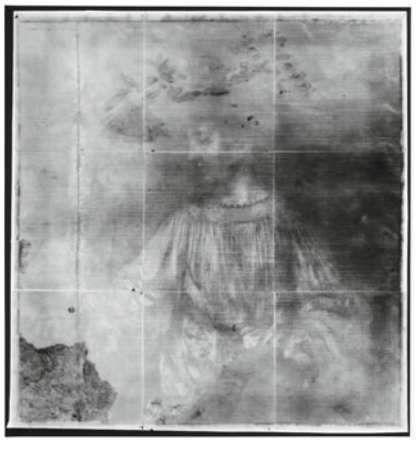


Fig. 8. Neutron activation autoradiograph showing the large lacuna in the original paint in the bottom left corner.

270 Rembrandt, **Portrait of a man as the apostle Paul**, 1659, canvas 102 x 85.5 cm. London, National Gallery. HdG 291; Br. 297; Bauch 224; Gerson 298; Br./Gerson 297; Tümpel 81; see also Brown 1991 no. 243; *Art in the making II* no. 16.
Inscription: right at the level of the head ‹*Rembrandt f 165* (9?)›.

The discussions over this painting mainly concern the question of whether it should be considered to be a *portrait historié* of an unknown man (Van Regteren Altena has suggested the famous Dutch poet Joost van den Vondel as the sitter) or as one painting deriving from a putative series of apostles (see Note **293**).

It would seem a more obvious possibility that the present painting is a portrait. The particular attention the painter has given to the definition and characterization of the man's facial features and hairstyle would certainly suggest that someone posed for this figure and that the painter was particularly concerned to capture an accurate likeness. The painting may therefore be included in the relatively large group of portraits that Rembrandt painted between 1656, the year of his bankruptcy, and 1662. One can also add that it is not the only *portrait historié* from this period (see **272** and **312**).

There is no question that the subject is shown as the apostle Paul. The book and the sword, Paul's two attributes, are given a prominent place in the painting. Of the two roundels shown as reliefs with painted scenes in the top corners of the painting only the left one can be identified: Abraham's sacrifice, which is seen by Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews 2:17 as a prefiguration of God's sacrifice of his only Son for the salvation of Mankind.

* **271** Rembrandt, **Oil sketch for 272**, *c.* 1660, canvas 68.5 x 55.5 cm. Copenhagen, Statens Museum. HdG 265; Br. 318; Bauch 243; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 318 (as a later derivative of **272**); Tümpel -; see also Copenhagen 2006 no. 16 and pp. 60-71.
Inscription: none

A man wearing a feathered beret with a physiognomy strikingly similar to that of the Gothenburg *Portrait historié of an unknown gentleman as St Bavo* from *c.* 1660 – the so-called 'Falconer' **272** – is shown almost frontally. The painting owes its commonly used title 'The Crusader' to the fact that the figure wears a large, vaguely rendered cross on an equally vaguely sketched shoulder.

The painting was for a long time thought to be a 19th-century copy. At first sight, it strikes one as an exercise by some 19th-century academy student trying to paint a variant in the style of Rembrandt after **272**. The head is life-size, exactly the same size as that of the 'Falconer', and for all its sketchiness is as soundly constructed as you might expect from a well-trained academy student. The romantic cross, which like the figure's gown turned out to be a later addition, contributes to this first impression. However, investigation using X-radiography has demonstrated that the painting must be much older. The way the paint had become brittle and flaked off from the edges of the canvas – folded over at some time in the past and later folded back – indicated that the painting has had a long and eventful history.

The accepted opinion on the work's origin and attribution was definitively changed by the results of chemical and microscopic investigations of the grey ground that is exposed in many places. Karin Groen found that the work had been painted on a quartz ground (Copenhagen 2006 p. 133). Groen's research demonstrated that such grounds are only found on the canvases of Rembrandt or of putative members of his workshop. It also turned out that the canvas came from the same bolt of linen as the canvas of **272**, **268** and of a painting that unquestionably originated in Rembrandt's workshop, the so-called 'Self-portrait' from *c.* 1659 in Stuttgart, painted by an unknown pupil of Rembrandt (*Corpus* IV no. 17).

We may therefore conclude that the present painting originated in Rembrandt's studio: but is it the work of a pupil or was it painted by Rembrandt himself? If it were by a pupil, it would most probably be a free variant after **272**; if by Rembrandt himself, the obvious suggestion is that we would be dealing with a preparatory sketch for that painting. In an article whose main thrust was a critique of connoisseurship (Van de Wetering 2008b pp. 85-86), I pointed out that many connoisseurial errors arise from taking at face value an illusion painted on a flat surface whilst remaining blind to the details of the pictorial means required to create that illusion of three-dimensionality. The *casus belli* was the present painting, which in Christopher Brown's opinion is 'in fact, a mediocre copy' (Brown 2006 p. 107).

If Brown's judgment were correct, viz. that **271** is a copy of **272** one would have to account for the fact that the head in the latter painting is represented strictly frontally whereas in **271** it is not. At first sight this might not seem to be an obstacle to the idea that the Copenhagen head is a (free) copy – it is after all only slightly turned to the right and tilted to the left in comparison with the head in **272**. If one simply accepts for what it is, the illusion that the painter has tried to realise, then this difference is negligible: there are simply two slightly differing versions of the same head (although the Copenhagen version is executed more cursorily). But if one considers the process of organizing the paint on the surface in order to achieve that illusory image, the difference is more radical: the way in which the nose in **271** is placed on the face turned slightly to the right, and the way in which the forehead, the eye sockets and the mouth are rendered in subtle foreshortening is far more complex than in the corresponding passages in **272**. The same holds for the root of the nose and the temple that are illuminated as the head turns. It is inconceivable that a mediocre copyist would introduce all these complicated changes and/or that he would be capable of executing them with no more than twenty or thirty telling brushstrokes. Since there are no reasons so far for doubting the authenticity of **272**, one is led to conclude that **271** is from Rembrandt's own hand and very possibly a preparatory oil study for the Gothenburg *portrait historié* **272**. (There remains the alternative possibility that Rembrandt and one of his pupils could have painted the same model from slightly different positions. But the difference between the sightlines is so small, we can exclude that explanation.) In any case, in style and quality the two faces betray the same hand.

If **271** is a preparatory oil study, the relation between this Copenhagen sketch and the Gothenburg painting **272** may be similar to that between the small *Portrait of Margaretha de Geer* in the National Gallery in London and the large *Portrait of Margaretha de Geer* in the same museum **296**, **297b**, the smaller (though life-size painting) of the two being an oil study after the old lady apparently in preparation for the actual portrait carried out in 1661. In the case of the Margaretha de Geer paintings, we know that the sitter lived in another part of Holland, in Dordrecht. Rembrandt may have captured her features there or during a visit by the old woman to Amsterdam (where her son lived). He must then have used that study when producing the monumental portrait of Margaretha de Geer **297b**. Comparable circumstances may have led Rembrandt to make a preparatory oil sketch of the man portrayed as St Bavo in the Gothenburg painting. In both cases, the putative preparatory study is turned somewhat *en trois quart* while in both of the final paintings the figure is shown strictly frontally (see also **82**, **83**, **84**).

272 Rembrandt, **'Portrait historié' of an unknown gentleman as St Bavo**, *c.* 1659, canvas 98.5 x 79 cm. Gothenburg, Kunstmuseum. HdG -; Br. 319; Bauch 242; Gerson 370; Br./Gerson 319; Tümpel 93; see also Tümpel 1971 p. 20; Bl. cat. 24; B. Fredlund in Stockholm 1992/93 pp. 210-213; Copenhagen 2006 no. 17.
Inscription: none

The question of whether the figure represented here (frequently referred to as 'The Falconer') is St Bavo or some other historical figure has been dealt with thoroughly and convincingly by Blankert (Bl. cat. no. 24):

> 'Bavo is said to have been a wealthy Flemish nobleman who lived in the seventh century. He abandoned a life of dissipation in Ghent to become a penitent hermit. He is the name saint and patron of the St Baaf cathedral in Ghent, and the patron of the bishopric and city of Haarlem. Bavo is generally portrayed as the aristocratic warrior of the days before his conversion.'

The decision to categorize the present painting here as a *portrait historié* is informed by the increasing frequency with which this type of portrait was produced in the Netherlands in the same period (Wishnevsky 1967) (cf. **269**, **270**, **312**; see also **279**). The decision was also influenced by the evidence that Rembrandt produced a portrait study **271** with a view to the present painting.

273 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait**, 1657/1659, canvas 50 x 42.5 cm. Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland (on loan from the Duke of Sutherland). HdG 553; Br. 48; Bauch 327; Gerson 329; Br./Gerson 48; Tümpel 170; ***Corpus* IV 15** and **Chapter III pp. 281-288**; see also *R. Self* no. 74.
Inscription: in fairly thin dark grey paint at the bottom right in the background ‹*Rembrandt/f.165?*› The last digit has variously been interpreted as a 9 or a 7.

At first sight one has the impression that the painting has been reduced by later hands, specifically on the left side and bottom. But this is precisely where one observes conspicuous cusping in the canvas weave, indicating that the painting could never have been significantly larger than it is now.

Relative to the picture plane, the rather off-centre placement and scale of the head contribute to the curiously strong presence of the figure depicted here. As for the composition, the conspicuous placement of the head to the left in the picture plane lends the face a certain snapshot effect, as it were. Moreover, the scale of the head relative to the picture plane gives the viewer the impression of being very close to the sitter. This intimacy is further reinforced by the fineness of the painting's execution.

There is yet another aspect that contributes to the over-illusionistic quality of the head, viz. the illumination. In most of Rembrandt's self-portraits the contrast between light and dark is usually stronger, but this head is fairly evenly and also frontally lit. The way the eyes are set in the shadowed eye sockets, the unusually forceful plasticity of the nose (thanks to the small, emphatic shadow under the nose) together with the relatively modest progression in tonal values within the head, all contribute to the painting's unusual, 'photographic' character. The same can be said of the extraordinarily powerful spatial effect created by the light accents of the individual hairs in the locks above the ears, and the sensitive modelling of the velvet beret with its finely differentiated contour. The way the lit head rises up from behind the dark turned-up collar also plays a role in this heightening of the illusion in this extraordinary picture.

274 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait**, 1659, canvas 84.4 x 66 cm. Washington, National Gallery. HdG 554; Br. 51; Bauch 330; Gerson 376; Br./Gerson 51; Tümpel A72 (as from Rembrandt's workshop); ***Corpus* IV 18** and **Chapter III pp. 281-288**; see also Wheelock 1995 pp. 261-265; *R. Self* no. 73.
Inscription: left, in the background ‹*Rembrandt f.1659*›

The astonishingly open technique, with the rough, rather sketchy handling of the lit parts of the head does not fit our accustomed image of Rembrandt's late self-portraits. The execution of the rest of the painting, in particular the hands and the fur coat, is also decidedly sketchy. These elements reveal little structure in their form.

This painting is differently conceived from Rembrandt's other self-portraits, wherein he is usually seated facing right. In this painting he is turned to the left. The illumination also differs from that seen in most of his self-portraits; normally the light falls from above left, whereas here the figure is essentially frontally lit. One does not see in this painting the familiar play of light and dark on the face – specifically the strong shadow cast by the nose on the far side of the face and the zone of deep shadow along the contour of this side. Instead, the shadow of the nose falls on the upper lip and the light entering from above creates dark cast shadows in the recesses of the eye sockets. It is these differences that have led some, including Tümpel, to doubt that this work could have been painted by Rembrandt himself. If that is the case, is it a portrait of Rembrandt by another painter? Someone from his workshop? Against this possibility there is the evidence of Rembrandt's asymmetrical facial features (see *Corpus* IV pp. 94-96), indications that the painting originated in front of a mirror. The fact that a large red pimple is shown on the cheek to the right (as seen by the beholder) also contributes to the likelyhood that the arch-realist Rembrandt painted this self-portrait. The first time he painted his face life-size **19** he painted three small pimples on his jaw and chin, whereas the painter of the copy in MOA (**19** fig. 1) omitted them.

* **275** Rembrandt, **Self-portrait** (unfinished), *c.* 1659, panel 30.7 x 24.3 cm. Aix-en-Provence, Musée Granet. HdG 524; Br. 58; Bauch 336; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 58 (as an imitation); Tümpel -; ***Corpus* IV 16** and **Chapter III pp. 281-288**; see also *R. Self* no. 75.
Inscription: none

In his 1969 edition of Bredius' survey Gerson noted: 'I can only see in this sketchy portrait an imitation after Rembrandt.'

The unsatisfactory impression that Gerson recorded was to a significant extent due to the discolouration of the yellowish ground,

which lies exposed in many places, contrasting with the locally darkened paint. Plate **275a** gives a digitally reconstructed image of the painting. In *Corpus* IV 16 and on p. 281 ff. of that Volume, arguments are presented for an attribution of the painting to Rembrandt himself.

This self-portrait is unusually small. It could have been made for an art-lover, although the fact that it is unsigned would at first sight seem to conflict with this suggestion. However, the lack of a signature could indicate also that Rembrandt considered the painting to be unfinished. The cursory, rough nature of its execution lends support to this idea.

* **276** Rembrandt, **Lighting study with an old man as a model**, 1659, panel 38.1 x 26.8 cm. Milwaukee, Daniel and Linda Bader Collection. HdG 367; Br. -; Bauch 225; Gerson 379; Br./Gerson 295A; Tümpel -.
Inscription: right, in the background ‹*Rembrandt f.1659*›

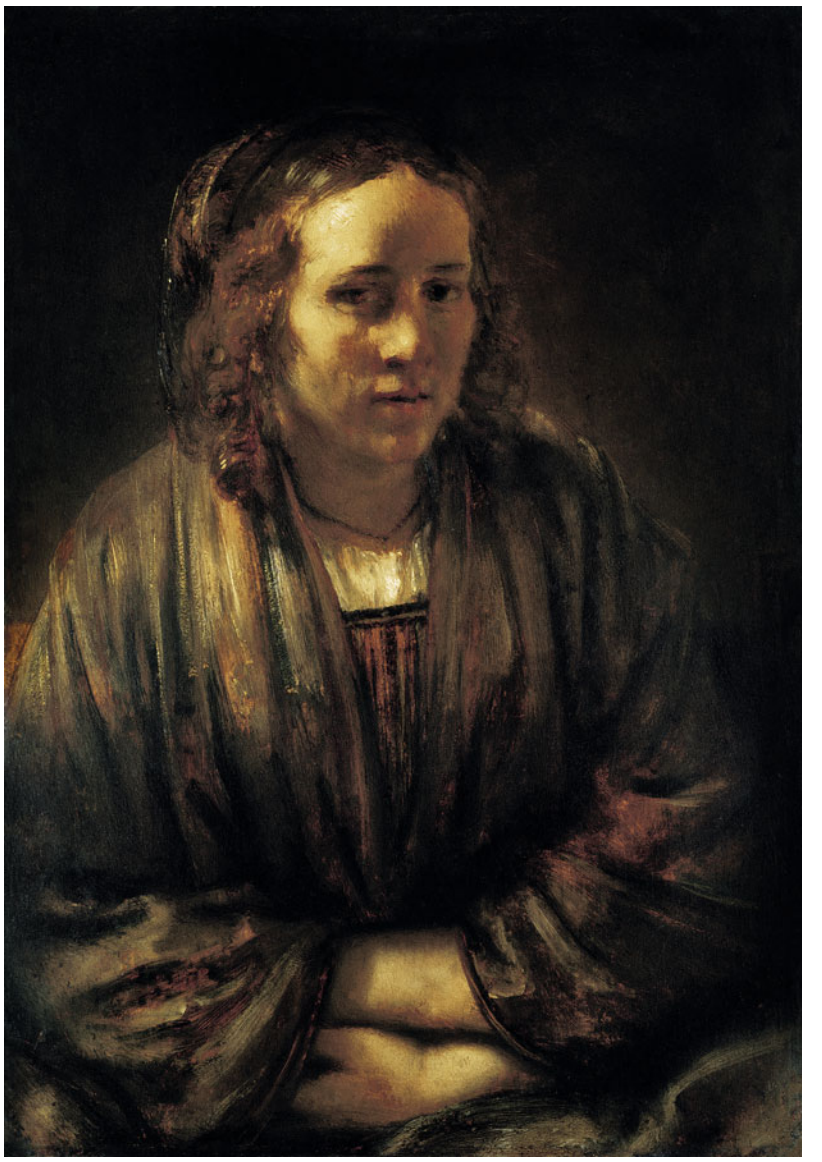
Here, as in the majority of Rembrandt's oil-sketches, the study of light was probably one of the main goals. There is both a strong incident light striking the figure from above left, and reflected light that illuminates the right half of the figure faintly. The accentuated shadow in the middle of the forehead, falling along the nose and beyond, has been applied to those parts of the face that are beyond the reach of either of the two sources of illumination.

The play of light has been handled in masterly fashion, particularly in the rendering of the different passages of wildly profuse hair and beard – the lit strands over the skull; the loose locks hanging in clotted shapes over the ears and down to the shoulders; the transition from the curly beard below to the mutton-chop whiskers of the lit part of the beard; and the vaguely lit hair of head and beard on the shadowed side, they each manifest their own colour and *peinture*. We are dealing here with an exceptional feat of observation, characterization and differentiation of the various parts in the hirsute mane of an ageing man.

One infers that this is a study, because of Rembrandt's summary manner of representing the torso, arms and hands, which even betrays a negligence over their proportions (relative to each other and to the head). The very high quality of those aspects of the study that apparently concerned Rembrandt is evident when one compares it with a free studio copy produced after it (**fig. 1**).

Fig. 1. Studio copy after **276**, panel 26.2 x 20.3 cm. Miami, Saban collection.

* **277** Rembrandt, **Lighting study with Hendrickje Stoffels in a silk gown as a model**, *c.* 1659, panel 72.5 x 51.5 cm. Frankfurt, Städelsches Kunstinstitut (on loan from the Federal Republic of Germany (BRD)). HdG 718; Br. 115; Bauch 517; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 115 (as an imitation of the 19th century); Tümpel -; see also Krempel 2005; Quodbach 2011.
Inscription: along the top edge ‹*Rembandt* (sic)›



This painting disappeared entirely from the Rembrandt literature after 1969 when Gerson labelled it a 19th-century imitattion. The painting lives on in the depot of the Städelsches Kunstinstitut in Frankfurt. The fact that it is included in this book will surprise many – not least the present author.

I was able to study this painting in reality in May 2011, in the restoration workshop of the Städel, out of its frame, under good lighting and under magnification. An infrared reflectogram was made on the spot (**fig. 1**). Plans for a subsequent scientific investigation of the paint, ground and signature were overtaken by Karin Groen's extended illness and untimely death. The wood of the panel had already been subject to dendrochronological investigation before my visit in 2011.

I had always been intrigued by the reproduction of this painting in Bredius' illustrated survey of 1935, a reproduction that I must have seen hundreds of times whilst browsing through that book. I found the assessment of Gerson and of my colleagues Bruyn and Levie, who saw the painting on 10th June 1968, not entirely convincing. Like Gerson, Bruyn and Levie judged it to be a later imitation.

It has to be admitted that the painting is wholly unlike the other 'Hendrickjes' (see Note **223**). However, confronted by the painting, the difficulty of imagining how a 19th-century painter could have fabricated such an unusual 'Rembrandt' was immediately obvious

– the same problem, in fact, that had vexed the author of the relevant entry in the Städel catalogue (Krempel 2005). The painting was attributed there to an anonymous pupil of Rembrandt, thereby tacitly conceding that it was impossible to attribute it plausibly to any of Rembrandt's known pupils.

The recent history of 277

The first known location of the painting was in the collection of Georg Ráth in Budapest, in whose possession it was first mentioned in 1893 (Michel 1893 p. 559; Moes *Icon. Bat.* No. 7603.4).

From the moment that the Von Ráth collection came on the market, there has been unease over this painting. On the basis of her research on Henry Clay Frick's activities as a collector of Rembrandt paintings, Esmée Quodbach reports that despite the best efforts of the art dealer Colnaghi, not one of the great American Rembrandt-collectors could be moved to purchase the work (Quodbach 2011 p. 13). Colnaghi therefore turned to the European market in 1901, beginning with the greatest Rembrandt-collector of the time, Wilhelm von Bode, director of the Berlin Gemäldegalerie. Bode, however, declined to acquire the painting for his museum. Eventually, in 1905 it was purchased by the banker Robert von Mendelssohn – in Quodbach's words, 'one of Bode's many collecting protegées' – in whose collection it remained until 1933. From 1933 to 1938 it was relegated to the depot of the Mendelssohn bank. In 1935 the painting was included by Bredius in his survey of Rembrandt's paintings as no. 115 – although as Gerson recalled: 'Bredius wrote an informal note – which was eventually disregarded – to the editors of the first edition of his book [among whom the young Gerson himself]: "perhaps genuine, but I have always felt uneasy about it."' Bredius was thus voicing the feeling that many had had (and would continue to have) on seeing the painting. Via the German dealer Karl Haberstock, the Mendelssohn Bank sold the painting to the German Reich in 1940 for 900.000 RM, the intention being that it would be included in the Führermuseum in Linz (Backes 1988 pp. 106 and 108).

The director of the Rijksmuseum at the time, the Rembrandt expert and admirer F. Schmidt Degener, evidently thought positively of the painting. In 1937 he had unsuccessfully tried to get the Mendelssohn widow to place the work with the Amsterdam Mannheimer Collection (Luijten 1984); in 1940 he attempted, again without success, to exchange the painting with the German occupiers for a 'more German painting by Hans Baldung Grien'. Subsequently, via the collecting points of the Allies, the painting passed into the possession of the BRD, and eventually in 1967 landed up in the Städel's depot in Frankfurt, where it has been ever since.

This is probably where Horst Gerson saw the painting, between 1967 and '68. In his 1969 edition of Bredius' survey of Rembrandt's oeuvre he added an unusually lengthy dissenting note (whose arguments will be contested below). Gerson wrote:

> 'I am convinced that the picture, with its sketchy technique and heavy, almost overpowering composition, is an imitation of the 19th century, with whose conception of Rembrandt it is fully in accord. Weak in construction and insensitive in handling, the painting does not convey that sense of inner conviction and certainty that is to be found in authentic works. The partially covered hands, in particular, are empty and inexpressive.'

The Städel catalogue text reports that the museum staff had fetched it from the depot at the time of a Rembrandt exhibition held in Frankfurt in 2005, in order to compare it with the Rembrandts on show. In the entry partly based on that comparison, Gerson's opinion (that the painting was a 19th-century imitation) was not relayed (see above) (Krempel 2005 pp. 144-150).

In the course of my own investigation of the painting on 9 May 2011 I noted several features of the work that had been remarked neither by Gerson nor by the author of the Städel catalogue entry. While these characteristics at first sight might seem to support the disattribution from Rembrandt, in fact they open up unexpected new points of view that argue for a revision of the disattribution.

In the first place, the work is painted on a highly unusual support.

The panel

The dendrochronologists who investigated the panel had already observed that the plank concerned is atypical of Rembrandt's panels in several respects. They were unable to date the panel – which in itself is not altogether unusual (see *Corpus* IV Table pp. 648-659).

One would expect such a large painting in the style of Rembrandt's late fifties, with a life-size hip-length figure, to be painted on canvas. In the 1650s and 1660s Rembrandt painted only exceptionally on panel and then only with small paintings, which by that time were very rare (nos. **265** (mahogany support for a history piece); **266** (re-used small panel from another studio); **275** (small oak panel with grain running in the 'wrong' direction); **276** (a small lighting study); **285** (idem); **288** (preparatory study for a painting); **309** (presumed preparatory study for an etching); **310** (idem for a painting). All his other paintings from that period are on canvas.

But this painting is on a large oak panel comprising a single plank (72.5 x 51.5 cm). This panel differs in an important respect from all other panels that Rembrandt ever used, whether large or small: it has warped. As a rule, 17th-century panels (including Rembrandt's) do not warp even if they are not cradled. (Cradling of 17th-century paintings on oak panels is generally not necessary. This treatment was frequently carried out in the 19th and 20th century in order to enhance the status or market value of the painting concerned.) 17th-century oak panels as a rule do not warp because they are cut from the tree radially, i.e. not only longitudinally, but also along a radius toward the pith of the trunk. The growth rings thus run at *c.* 90° to the surface of the panel, with the consequence that there arises no – or scarcely any – difference in tension between front and back that would otherwise cause the panel to warp. According to the dendrochronologists the panel of the present painting is, however, not sawn radially but, unusually tangentially ('ungewöhnlich perifer aus dem Stamm genommen'). Planks sawn tangentially like this are inferior to those sawn radially. The skewed course of the annual rings in a tangentially sawn plank generates over time considerable tension between front and back and ultimately causes it to warp. The wood biologists moreover pointed out that the wood used for this plank has widely spaced annual rings, and that it was taken from the trunk close to the roots, and therefore, for an oak panel, is of additionally inferior quality.

For an understanding of the painting under discussion here it is also significant that when the panel was used there was still sapwood on both sides of the plank; 17 rings were measured on the left of the underside. Sapwood is the most recent growth on the outside of the trunk and is still relatively soft: the sap rises from the roots through these new rings. Sapwood was therefore avoided as far as possible by panel-makers. The fact that sapwood is present here on both sides of the plank means that the plank was sawn, not only peripherally but also obliquely from the full width of the trunk. In every respect therefore, this large plank is of inferior quality.

Not only is this *c.* 1 cm thick plank warped, the edges are also unusually thick (*c.* 7 mm). Panels are usually much thinner than this on the edges in order to fit them into the rebate of a frame. Sapwood must therefore have been removed on the two vertical sides after the plank had been painted. From this one may infer that the woman's left contour had originally been included completely within the painting. The tiny fragment of the lit chair-back at this edge does suggest that the plank was substantially wider on the left. The placing of the figure in the frame would then not have been (in Gerson's words) so 'heavy, almost overpowering' as he observed. The fact that such a large painting, with a subject and with stylistic characteristics that one associates with Rembrandt's late period, is not painted on canvas but on a warped panel may go some way to explain the doubts that have beset this painting.

Ground and ageing

The fact that the painting was executed on panel can in another respect contribute to the unusual impression it gives. Optically, a painting on canvas from this period gives an essentially different impression. With paintings on canvas, if the ground is left exposed in places, it is not seen as ground but as part of the paint skin of the painting as a whole. With paintings on panel, the optical effect of

parts that are left uncovered in this way is significantly different, because the ground on panels is constructed entirely differently. On a thin, smoothly sanded layer of chalk primer, '*plamuur*', (where in this case even the grain of the wood is visible at the surface) is applied a very thin semi-transparent coat of yellow-brown oil paint – what was known in 17th-century Dutch painting as the '*primuursel*'. With ageing, the chalk primer on a panel and the '*primuursel*' become somewhat lighter than when the first tonal sketch for the image is applied (with panels this is usually for the most part a transparent brown (see **238** and **275**). The effect of this is to enhance the difference between the paint introduced during the painting process on the one hand, and the ground and brown sketch on the other. And in addition the brushes with which the image is executed stroke more easily over this smooth underlayer than in paintings on canvas. For these reasons and others a painting on panel looks significantly different from a painting on canvas, and this is certainly the case when one is dealing with a painting as large as the present painting. A rather thinly executed work on panel (such as this) displays hardly any – or even no – craquelure. This may well have (perhaps unconsciously) influenced Gerson's opinion that he was looking at a fairly recent imitation. In any case, it did play a role in the negative judgment of Bruyn and Levie in 1968.

The image

The woman portrayed in this painting displays the features of Hendrickje Stoffels, Rembrandt's common law wife who in 1647 entered Rembrandt's household as a servant. After 1654 the couple lived as man and wife (see Note **235a/b**). She may have begun modelling for Rembrandt in 1651/2 (see **223**). Hendrickje and Rembrandt's son Titus set up an art dealing business in 1660 as protection against creditors. The paintings for which Hendrickje modelled, besides the *Hendrickje with fur wrap* **223**, are **229**, **232**, **235b**, **251**, **278**. The woman's features in the present painting correspond sufficiently with the physiognomy in those paintings for one to assume that the sitter is Hendrickje as she would have looked around 1660 (see Note **223**).

Sketches and other paintings not intended for sale

The fact that the painting is executed on an unusual and moreover inferior support, certainly unsuitable for sale by 17th-century standards, and secondly the loose brushwork, suggest that this is a sketch, albeit an unusually large one. We encounter inferior supports combined with the application of a sketchy technique in Rembrandt's oeuvre more frequently than is often realized. It always seems to concern works that were not intended for sale and which one has good grounds for thinking were made with a different purpose in mind, for example with a view to a specific subsequent work. But the latter does not always have to be the case with all such sketches. They could also have served as exercises towards a solution to a specific artistic problem.

Rembrandt's grisailles for the large, never fully completed series of etchings of the Passion from the mid-thirties belong to the first category **108**-**114**. These are sometimes sketched on paper, sometimes on pieces of linen cloth cut from unused areas of canvases. They could also be painted on a leftover piece of an original panel. The use of inferior material, as already said, is also found in cases of works from the 1630s that were apparently not intended for sale, e.g. **161**, from the '40s e.g. **194** and from the '50s e.g. **230** or around 1660 **280**. In all probability the main reason would have been to economize with materials, a normal practice for the time.

This painting could well have belonged to this category. Having mooted this idea, the ground is now laid for a reattribution of the painting to Rembrandt based on arguments of other kinds. At the very least, the above should be sufficient to put Gerson's conviction that this is a much later imitation in a very different perspective.

Arguments in favour of an attribution to Rembrandt

Several characteristics of this painting have been analyzed above and, for instance, connections with Rembrandt's workshop practice were outlined. More specifically, Rembrandt's common law wife Hendrickje Stoffels could well have served as a model for a study, like in **223**, and there is much to indicate that the present painting could be a study, in the usual sense that this term is used for Rembrandt. There are further indications which enhance the likelihood that the painting was produced by Rembrandt himself:

– ***Distribution of light***

My hypothesis is that the *raison d'être* of this painting should be sought in Rembrandt's recurrent need to practise what had always preoccupied him over the years and always in different ways: the study of faces under unusual lighting. Such problems had already engaged him early in his career as a painter of history pieces. After all, painters of histories are as a rule confronted with the fact that in any particular situation the protagonists involved are placed in different positions usually illuminated by light shining from the same direction, as a result of which each figure is lit differently from the other(s). See for example **23**, probably made in connection with the lighting study painted before the mirror **20**; see also **182** and **183**; **285** and **286**.

In the case of the present painting the light falls fully from the left, such that even the figure's left shoulder catches a bit of the incident light (a solution that is not unusual with Rembrandt (nos. **198**, **212** (with David), **221**, **245** (with Joseph), **261**, **276**, **293**). When the head like in this painting is turned slightly to the right this kind of illumination gives rise to a complex play of light and shadow, such that it seems as though the face is lit obliquely from behind. The transitions from light to shadow on the forehead, cheek and nose reveal anatomical features – physiognomic characteristics even – with a plasticity that is essentially different from the conventional 17th-century manner of lighting a face obliquely from the front. Whilst it is fairly easy for a well-trained painter to render a conventionally lit face from memory, to be able to paint a head such as that in the present painting, where the course of boundaries between light and shadow is much harder to predict, requires the help of a suitable posing model (cf. **20**).

It is inconceivable that Gerson's 19th-century imitator would have been able to render a head with the facial features of Hendrickje Stoffels so unusually lit and in such a credible manner; but even more to the point, he could scarcely have hit on the idea of trying to depict that specific face in such an unusual lighting situation – unusual even for Rembrandt himself.

– Earrings

In view of the probability that Hendrickje served as a model for this study, the fact that she is wearing the same pendulous droplet-shaped earrings worn by Hendrickje in the various guises in other paintings for which she posed, surely argues for an attribution of the present painting to Rembrandt (see **223**, **229**, **231**, **232**, **235b**, **251**, **278**). The point is not that they are so identical in those paintings that they could serve as Hendrickje's hallmark; one often finds earrings with large droplet-shaped pearls with Rembrandt's women, both in portraits and with historical figures. In the present painting they are painted on the left as well as the right side of the face, but they are so much in shadow that one hardly sees them. Only with closer study of the paint surface and a sharp digital image can they be discerned. One can assume that Gerson's imitator would not have included such details in such a manner in his fake creation. The fact that they are indicated in this painting, and moreover in such discrete compliance with the light/shadow conditions, is entirely consonant with the idea that this is a lighting study and consequently adds to the probability that it is from the hand of Rembrandt.

– The 'partly covered, empty and inexpressive hands'

As already remarked, Rembrandt in his studies mainly concentrated on a single pictorial problem: in this case the unusual lighting of a face (with the shoulders and breast sharing the same illumination). This would explain why the hands and wrist in this painting are so summarily indicated – just as in the *Lighting study with an old man* **276**. The painting of one of two wholly exposed hands is in itself a considerable project to which Rembrandt only applied himself if he attributed a specific pictorial role to them or if he considered them of narrative significance.

In this context, it may be worth pointing out that like the work discussed here, the sketch with the old man **276** from 1659 also manifests what Gerson referred to as a 'heavy, overpowering composition' – perhaps even more so. In general, Rembrandt's oil sketches with single figures (see **19**, **20**, **182**, **197**, **215**, **285**) fill the pictorial plane more than in his detailed compositions with solitary figures, where the figure concerned is usually given more compositionally relevant space.

– The costume

In his verdict on the present painting Gerson spoke of 'the weak construction' and 'insensitive handling' of the painting. The target of this disparaging comment, no doubt, included the rendering of clothing and anatomy

It is evident that the woman is wearing a loosely falling silk gown. It was already observed in the Städel catalogue that silk was depicted here. The material hangs more supply over the shoulders than we are used to seeing in other paintings by Rembrandt with other dress materials, often worsted or linen. (The treatment of costume here may be compared with that in the earlier discussed lighting study of an old man, where the material of a different nature is even more summarily characterized **276**.) On and around the woman's forearm the material falls in loose folds so wide that one is reminded of a shapeless, kimono-like garment (**fig. 1**). Only over the lit shoulder is the material texture summarily rendered. The silky sheen of the material in which various colours seem to be reflected is suggested with minimal means, evidently executed at high speed. The only other example of a silk garment painted by Rembrandt is found in the New York *Self-portrait* from 1660 **282**, where one finds similar effects in the loose kimono-like garment hanging over the shoulders. But in that painting the paint layer has suffered badly from over-cleaning (see *Corpus* IV p. 20). In the present painting the paint with which the silk material is rendered has remained in very good condition. The long, thin grazing brushstrokes over the underlayer contribute in a singular way to the impression of sheen without it seeming that the painter intended this rendering of material texture in itself to be a main objective. Gerson evidently did not recognize this suggestion of silk, which not only contributed to his dismissal of the larger part of the painting as 'weak in construction and insensitive in handling' but also to his opinion that it lacked 'inner conviction and certainty'. But when one studies the infrared reflectogram one is struck by how bold and confident the sketch lines that indicate the costume are rendered.

– The infrared reflectographic image

Rembrandt's paintings have been investigated with this technique only to a limited extent, as it quickly became apparent after the development of infrared examination that the process revealed little in the way of specific images. Rembrandt did not make underdrawings with black chalk or other drawing materials. From early on he sketched his composition with a brush. Neutron autoradiographic images confirm that in later paintings he continued to develop the image by sketching with the brush (*Art and Autoradiography*). Yet it would lead to a misunderstanding if one compared the autoradiograms where parts of the sketched underpainting are visible with the IRR image of the present painting. With sketches on canvas (and in the neutron activation programme in New York mainly canvases were investigated) Rembrandt often used bone black, i.e. phosphorus-containing paint for his first sketch, which is also often found in details at the surface of the painting, so that the neutron activation images show details from different phases, making it very difficult to isolate an image of the underpainting only (cf. Note **259** figs. 2 and 4).

With sketches on panels Rembrandt used a brown, semi-trans-

Fig. 1. P.P. Rubens, *Man in Korean Costume* (detail), about 1617, black chalk with touches of red chalk, 38.4 x 23.5 cm. Los Angeles, The J. Paul Getty Museum.

Fig. 2 Infrared reflectogram of **277**

parent paint (see **238**) with organic ingredients such as Cologne earth or bitumen (*Painter at Work* p. 24). Traces of free, broad brushstrokes are visible in the IRR image (**fig. 2**) which sometimes (but not always) correspond with the visible surface image. Such lines, which are sometimes straight and do not always correlate with the folds on the surface of the present painting, evidently belong to the first design. (Such lines are also seen in the *Unfinished portrait of a boy* **243**.) They are typical of Rembrandt's use of the brush in setting out the design of a painting, but here they are mainly hidden under the fluent brushstrokes with which the silk is suggested.

– The signature

Along the top edge the painting bears a signature with a conspicuous spelling mistake <*Rembandt*> that is also found on the sketch with the smiling Titus in Baltimore, from 1660 **280** fig. 1. It is wholly unclear what this short-lived bout of dyslexia might signify. Perhaps microscopic investigation of the build-up of paint layers in both signatures could further elucidate the problem.

– Conclusion

It is thus possible to offer plausible explanations that would account for several of Gerson's objections to the authenticity of this painting; I hope these counter-arguments will not be found unduly forced. My alternative views constitute an argument for considering this work as a lighting study of a face in which no more energy than necessary was expended on the costume and on the hands. My request of the reader, in any case, is to see this text as a plea to look at this painting differently than Gerson did, and to consider whether the observations and arguments presented here are sufficient to reattribute the painting to Rembrandt.

As far as Gerson's relegation of the painting is concerned, the question remains: what 19th-century school or specific painter could have led him to decide that it had to be of 19th-century origin, and what could have led him to assert that the painting was 'fully in accord' with the 19th-century conception of Rembrandt?

One could think of painters like Adolph Menzel (1815-1905), Lovis Corinth (1858-1925) or Anders Zorn (1860-1920).

278 Rembrandt, **Hendrickje Stoffels**, *c.* 1660, canvas (transferred from an earlier canvas) 78.4 x 68.9 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 720; Br. 118; Bauch 522; Gerson 382; Br./Gerson 118; Tümpel 189; see also *Art and Autoradiography* pp. 72-76; Sonnenburg in *R. not R. I* p. 54; Liedtke in *R. not R. II* no. 16; *R. Women* no. 127; Liedtke 2007 pp. 669-677.

Inscription: right, in the background above the shoulder ‹*Rembrandt / f 1660*›; applied by a later hand to a later overpainting.

For a discussion of the carousel of innumerable suggestions for the function and significance of this very poorly preserved painting, and of its complex genesis, see Liedtke 2007 pp. 669-677.

279 Rembrandt, **Titus van Rijn as St Francis**, 1660, canvas 79.5 x 67.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. HdG 193; Br. 306; Bauch 227; Gerson 377; Br./Gerson 306; Tümpel 91; see also *R. Caravaggio* pp. 114-115.
Inscription: left next to the upper arm ‹*Rembrandt f. 1660*›

The young man in the Franciscan habit shows the facial features of Rembrandt's son Titus (see the Note to **242**). Should the painting be considered to be a portrait of Titus or did Titus merely serve as a model for the painting of a picturesque garment? Are we dealing with a *portrait historié* of Titus as St Francis or a portrait of St Francis in which the saint has acquired the features of Titus? Tümpel thought he could discern the stigmata on the figure's hands and therefore opted for the latter, adding the comment: 'There was [with Rembrandt] no hard and fast distinction between role portraits and historical figures painted after known models.'

In Rembrandt's painted oeuvre after 1651 (the beginning of his late period) one finds a considerable number of paintings that fall into this richly varied transitional category. With these works it seems as though Rembrandt saw artistic possibilities within the portrait genre, or perhaps the chance to give his historical figures an explicit physiognomic identity.

As far as the artistic possibilities were concerned, the costume as well as the posture and gestures allowed the figures in such paintings to take on a specific presence – as though lifted out of their own time. Moreover, for Rembrandt and the putative purchasers of such works, in their different ways such paintings seem to make for themselves a place within the art historical spectrum, of which Rembrandt must have had a sophisticated knowledge. The obvious corollary of this is that those self-portraits in which, as is nowadays acknowledged, Rembrandt refers to his great predecessors by means of his costuming should also be counted among this varied group (see also the Note to **264**).

* **280** Rembrandt, **A smiling young man** (**Titus**), 1660, canvas 81.5 x 78.5 cm. Baltimore, The Baltimore Museum of Art. HdG 707; Br. 124; Bauch 430; Gerson -; Br/Gerson 124 (as doubtful); Tümpel -; see also Bl. cat. 18.
Inscription: on the arm of the chair on the right <*Remban* (sic)*/f*(.) *1660*> the worn signature is incomplete due to the cropping of the canvas; like in the case of **277** the <r> between <b> and <a> was omitted (**fig. 1**).

Fig. 1. IR image of the signature of **280**

As with so many of the paintings discussed in this book, a note by Horst Gerson conveying some doubt as to its authenticity led to what one might call the painting's temporary eclipse.

Albert Blankert, who in 1997 was determined to rehabilitate the painting, described the course of that eclipse as follows (quoted from Bl. cat. 18 p. 146):

> 'This piece has been unanimously accepted as a first-rate autograph Rembrandt ever since John Smith wrote the first *catalogue raisonné* of Rembrandt's paintings in 1836. In 1927, for example, the present work was the highlight of an auction in New York, where it fetched $US 250,000 [an enormous price for those days]. (…) The tide turned in 1969, when Gerson placed a question mark beside his reference to the signature, thereby implying that he was doubtful about its authenticity. He also observed that 'the picture [was] heavily restored, partly over-painted and partly very thin', and concluded that 'a definitive judgement about its original quality and character is impossible'. The painting has not been included in the Rembrandt canon since. It does not appear in the books by Schwartz (1984) or Tümpel (1986), both of which purport to present Rembrandt's complete oeuvre of paintings. The view expressed by Peter Sutton in 1986 thus reflects a *communis opinio*: 'If genuine – and the possibility seems remote …'. The only exception has been Slatkes, who in 1992 described the piece as 'possibly partly autograph'.'

Blankert continued:

> 'The various opinions took no account of the painting's condition. The work had been examined in 1967 and restored by Kay Silberfeld, who published a detailed report in 1972 (Siberfeld 1972). She had found a paint surface 'disfigured by the natural resin varnish which had become slightly yellowed and darkened and was extremely cloudy over the dark areas of the painting'.

Gerson had evidently seen the piece in the same state. However, once most of the old varnish had been removed [in Kay Silberfeld's words] 'the painting appeared free of any major areas of restoration'.

Blankert ends this section of his detailed catalogue entry from 1997 with the connoisseur's self-assuredness:

> 'The piece is without any doubt an outstanding, autograph late Rembrandt'.

During my own recent (first) investigation of the painting in November 2011, I noted various indications which convinced me that this is a strong and very interesting late work by Rembrandt. Admittedly, there is no such thing as a typical Rembrandt; each painting is unusual in its own way. But this painting is more unusual than others. Its exceptional character can perhaps best be described as a combination of extreme informality in the figure's posture, with his rather quirky smile, the mouth pushed slightly out of shape by the hand on which the chin rests, and the remarkable local shadowing on the face. There can be no doubt, however, that it is a 17th-century painting, as there is an accurate drawn copy by Matthijs van den Bergh (1617-1687), signed and dated 1682 (**fig. 2**). The drawing is discussed at length by Blankert (see Bl. cat. 18 p. 149 and Note 17).

Fig. 2. Matthijs van den Bergh, copy after **280**, pen and ink 25.2 x 19.9 cm, signed and dated Vbergh f 1682. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

The impression of cursoriness in the representation of the figure is mainly due to the strangely irregular patch of shadow on the left part of the forehead and the adjacent eye socket and eye, which recalls the passing shadow of a cloud that could change at any moment. But there is also the casual manner in which the figure relaxes in an armchair, the smiling face partly obscured by the hand supporting the chin while this hand seems to be actually moving as the result of a scarcely disguised *pentimento* of the thumb. The part of the subject's shirt collar on the (beholder's) left is remarkably casual, suggested with some rather wiggly lines as though the painter was in two minds as to whether he should show that part of the collar in shadow or not; meanwhile the other side of the collar is surprisingly strongly lit, precisely where one would expect that part of the jaw and collar to be in shadow.

The way a lock of hair on the right of the face is unexpectedly light contributes to the restless looseness of the image, while the figure's left, stovepipe-like upper arm and shoulder play a curious role in the image as a whole. Here we have to contend with the effects of time: that lock of hair and the adjacent shoulder and upper arm are thinly, partly transparently painted over the light yellow ground of the canvas, which one suspects now shows through more strongly than was the case when the painting was first completed.

Also contributing to an impression of the casual, transitory nature of the picture are the tiny, strong lights on the white of the young man's left eye and the curls – and their shadows – falling on his right cheek.

The X-radiograph (**fig. 3**) provides an explanation for some of the unusual characteristics described here: The figure must originally have been depicted without a beret. In the X-radiograph, the reserve of the long locks of hair hanging to the left is vaguely visible in the place of the beret. The left contour of the uncovered head of hair shows on the X-radiograph because the background round the hair in its first form was somewhat radio-absorbent. In the angle where the contours of the beret and shoulder meet, a subsequently darkened triangle can be seen at the paint surface, further evidence that the painter later replaced the exposed head of hair in part with a beret.

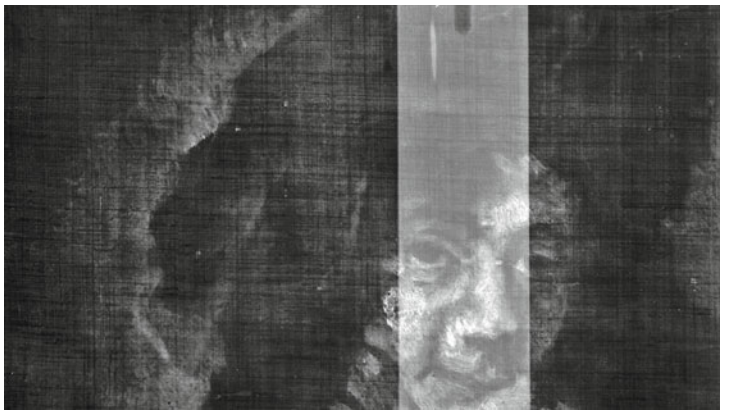


Fig. 3. X-ray (detail) of **280**

In the X-radiograph one can also see that the sitter's right eye was initially more clearly defined. The upper and bottom eyelids and the white of that eye are clearly defined in the X-ray image, at least more clearly than the now visible surface would lead one to expect. The forehead and cheekbone are also somewhat more clearly visible in the X-radiograph. It seems likely that the beret was introduced before the face had been wholly completed, in which case it is likely that the forehead was also then further worked out with radio-absorbent paint. But at that stage the painter was apparently content to take the yellow ground as the basic colour for the forehead.

At an early stage of the painting's genesis, therefore, the decision must have been taken to add the beret and to heighten the lighting of the background along its contour. Only at that stage would the highlights have been applied to the face. However, it must have been these intervening changes that led the painter to paint the unusual shadow over the left upper half of the face and to leave the eyelid largely in shadow. It could be that the curious indication of the collar to the left of the hand is a remnant from the first design and has subsequently remained unfinished.

The eventful genesis of this painting, the nature of the locally visible underpainting, the great variety in the *peinture*, the combined play of drawing and painting, the unusual lighting, the surprising plasticity and presence of parts of the face, particularly the nose,

the fact that the sitter looks so much like Titus (see Note **242**): all these aspects argue for an attribution of the painting to Rembrandt.

However, there is further evidence pointing in the same direction: the way in which the expression of the mouth and the attitude of the hand are shown, the way the body slumps obliquely to the right, all witness to an unusually strong interest in affect and attitude. From his early years, Rembrandt was intensely preoccupied with human posture and movement as well as the facial expression of emotions, which in 17th-century art theory belong to the '*gronden*' – the basic aspects of the art of painting (see *Corpus* V pp. 49-52 and 65-70). It is conceivable that in his *Self-portrait as the laughing Zeuxis* in Cologne **302** Rembrandt identified with the painter who in classical antiquity was considered to be the greatest portrayer of human emotions (*Corpus* IV 25 pp. 559-560). The present painting can therefore justifiably be seen as an intentional demonstration of Rembrandt's mastery in this area – just as the so-called portrait of *Titus reading* in Vienna **307** can be considered a demonstration of a developed ability in another specific aspect, that of light reflection.

Tests with solvents in the laboratory of the Fogg Art Museum in Cambridge demonstrated that the signature 'Remban[dt]/f(.) 1660' was unquestionably part of the original painting (**fig. 1**). (Examined on March 3, 1949 by Rutherford J. Gettens, then at the Dept. of Conservation, Fogg Museum of Art.) This worn signature, whose last two letters are cut off has the peculiarity that between the letters b and a, the letter r is missing. But the omission of a letter during the application of this sturdy inscription is not the only such occurrence. There is a letter missing in the similarly robustly placed signature on **277** from the same period as the present painting.

Blankert rejected the identification of the portrayed subject as Titus, who was 19 years old in 1660. He estimated the sitter's age to be more advanced than that. Yet it is highly probable that it was Titus who posed for this painting. The physiognomy, indeed all the facial characteristics suggest the same: the relatively large eyes, the very dark eyebrows tracing a wide arch, the indented transition from the forehead to the nasal bone, the robust nose with prominent, rounded tip, the relatively short upper lip and the small mouth with strikingly red lips and clearly marked paramedial points of the Cupid bow. One finds precisely these characteristics in **242** from 1655, **257** from *c.* 1657, **288** from *c.* 1661 and **315** from *c.* 1668. That does not necessarily mean that we are dealing with a portrait (in the strict sense) of Titus. It is more probable that Titus posed for one of Rembrandt's pictorial 'adventures' for which there may have been interest in the circles of art-lovers.

The canvas on which this work is painted deserves comment. From the spread of the horizontal threads and the character of the weave it may be inferred that the warp runs vertically. Only along the left edge cusping is clearly visible, with cusps of 9 – 10 cm height that extend *c.* 10 cm deep into the weave. The distortions on this side of the canvas are so conspicuous that nothing can be missing there. In view of the placing of the figure in the image plane, there can be little missing from the right side either, even though the position of the sitter's left arm raises the question of whether there may once have been an armrest on which the sitter's left hand rested (but then the painting would have to have been cut down before 1682, for in the drawing by Matthijs van den Bergh the figure is framed in exactly the same way (see fig. 2)). The total absence of cusping on the right side rather gives the impression that the canvas is a fragment of a probably much wider piece of linen, since no cusps are evident at the top or bottom sides either.

It would therefore appear that the painting was painted on a remnant of a much greater canvas, which may be taken as an indication that it originated in an 'informal' context – like **277** for instance – even though the signature suggests that the painting was intended for sale – perhaps to an art-lover who, as in the case of Rembrandt's *Self-portrait as Zeuxis* **302**, could have been interested in Rembrandt's ability, already legendary in his own lifetime to depict the human affects (see Houbraken I, pp. 258, 270).

281 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait at the easel**, 1660, canvas 110.9 x 90.6 cm. Paris, Louvre. HdG 569; Br. 53; Bauch 333; Gerson 389; Br./Gerson 53; Tümpel 173; ***Corpus* IV 19** and ***Corpus* IV pp. 288-294**; see also *R. Self* no. 79; Foucart 2009 p. 214.
Inscription: lower right ‹*Rem / f.1660*›
For a discussion of this painting, see *Corpus* IV no. 19 pp. 288-294.

282 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait with silk gown**, 1660, canvas 81 x 67.6 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 562; Br. 54; Bauch 332; Gerson 381; Br./Gerson 54; Tümpel A73; ***Corpus* IV 20** and **Corpus IV pp. 288-294**; see also *R. Self* no. 80; Liedtke 2007 pp. 687-693.
Inscription: lower right ‹*Rembrandt/f 1660*›

For a discussion of this painting, see *Corpus* IV pp. 288-294 and no. 20; see also the Notes to **277** and **294**.

283 Rembrandt, **Esther, Ahasuerus and Haman**, between *c.* 1655 and *c.* 1665, canvas 71.5 x 93 cm. Moscow, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts. HdG 46; Br. 530; Bauch 37; Gerson 351; Br./Gerson 530; Tümpel 30 (with doubts); ***Corpus* V 29**; see also *Soviet Museums* no. 26; Weber 1991.
Inscription: below left in dark brown <*Rembrandt f.1660*> difficult to see, the last letters decreasingly legible; the extension below of the *f* is destroyed. It appears that the letters and digits have been partly enhanced. The paint with which the *0* is written appears to run over craquelure, so that one has to place a question mark against the painting's current dating to 1660.

The scene is based on the text of

> **Esther 7: 1-7** 'So the king and Haman went to dine with Queen Esther. And on the second day, at the banquet of wine, the king again said to Esther, "What *is* your petition, Queen Esther? It shall be granted you. And

what *is* your request, up to half the kingdom? It shall be done!" Then Queen Esther answered and said, "If I have found favor in your sight, O king, and if it pleases the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request. For we have been sold, my people and I, to be destroyed, to be killed, and to be annihilated. Had we been sold as male and female slaves, I would have held my tongue, although the enemy could never compensate for the king's loss." So King Ahasuerus answered and said to Queen Esther, "Who is he, and where is he, who would dare presume in his heart to do such a thing?" And Esther said, "The adversary and enemy *is* this wicked Haman!" So Haman was terrified before the king and queen. Then the king arose in his wrath from the banquet of wine *and went* into the palace garden; but Haman stood before Queen Esther, pleading for his life, for he saw that evil was determined against him by the king.'

The painting is in poor condition. It underwent its first transfer to a new canvas in 1819. Because of the poor attachment to this new canvas, new restorations were required in 1829 and on various subsequent occasions. During the most recent intervention, in 1973-1974, the painting was again transferred to a new support.

Sections of the following text are taken from entry no. 29 in *Corpus* V, partly written by Michiel Franken.

In 1662 the collected poems of Jan Vos (1610-1667) were published in Amsterdam. That volume contained eight *beeldgedichten* – poems describing paintings – from the collection of Jan Jacobsz Hinloopen (1626-1666), Alderman of Amsterdam. The first of these is titled: '*Haman by Hester en Assueer te gast & door Rembrandt geschildert*' (Haman visiting Esther and Ahasuerus painted by Rembrandt):

'*Here we see Haman dining with Asueer and Hester. But in vain: his heart is filled with remorse and sorrow. He bites into Hester's food, but deeper into her heart. The King is possessed by rage and revenge. Enraged, a Monarch's wrath is terrible. Which threatens all men, when by a woman aroused. Thus one plunges from the heights to the valley of misfortunes. Gradual revenge employs the most cruel punishment.*' (Translation: *Doc.* p. 521)

With reference to this poem by Vos, Hofstede de Groot observed that of all the works by Rembrandt that have been preserved, the Moscow painting was the only one to which the poem could refer (HdG *Urk.* no. 247). He did, however, add that in 1657 another painting, no longer known, with '*een Hester ende Assuerus van Rembrant van Rhijn*' was entered as no. 306 in the inventory of the estate of Johannes de Renialme (*Doc.* 1657/2).

Strong support for Hofstede de Groot's suggested identification of the Moscow painting with the work in the Hinloopen collection whose praises were sung by Jan Vos comes from the catalogue of a sale held in 1760 (Dudok van Heel 1969b pp. 234-235). However, the relation between the Moscow *Esther, Ahasuerus and Haman* and the painting eulogized by Jan Vos still raises questions. It has often been observed that there is no sign at all in the Moscow painting of the powerful feelings described by Jan Vos – such as, for example, Haman '*full of remorse and distress*' and Ahasuerus '*filled with rage and revenge*'. Also, in the painting, Ahasuerus does not '*bite into Hester's food*'. This description might be explained by the use of poetic license. Of course it should be acknowledged here that parts of the painting that are most important for the protagonists' expressions, such as the head of Ahasuerus, have been badly damaged and reworked.

Nevertheless, Gerson assumed that the poem by Jan Vos referred to the Moscow painting, and with regard to the differences between painting and poem he opined that the poem demonstrates how

'Rembrandt's contemporaries were much more sensitive than we are to the suppressed emotions of characters in history paintings.' (Gerson p. 416).

In the literature dealing with this case the question of the earliest provenance of this painting remains unresolved – which also means that the dating of the painting is uncertain. Of those paintings after 1660 that could provide us with a stylistic point of reference to situate the present painting within Rembrandt's late oeuvre, the Amsterdam *Jewish Bride* **312** is the first to be considered. This undated painting is placed by most around the mid-sixties, by others in the late sixties. An analysis of the pictorial aspects of the present painting demonstrates a rich texture of the paint surface – grown from the bottom up, as it were – and comparable to that in the *Jewish Bride*, taking into account the differences in the scale of the figures.

Another possibility would be to date it before 1660. If the present painting was in fact in Renialme's possession in 1657 we should have to date it even earlier, between such works as the *Joseph and Potiphar's wife* **237** and the *Polish rider* **236**, paintings in which the scale of the figures is comparable to that in the present painting. The conspicuously elongated proportions of the figures in the present painting are also encountered in these two paintings. (Rembrandt's rendering of human proportions is discussed in *Corpus* V pp. 35-48.) One also finds in that period (*c.* 1655) the rendering of coloured light like the red light here reflected by Esther's skirt, e.g. the yellow light (of the rising or setting sun) that illuminates the Polish rider from the left or the diffuse red reflection between the red chair on which Potiphar's wife is seated and the adjacent part of her dress.

But, any argument regarding the dating of the present painting that is based, to whatever extent, on the possibility of a predictable stylistic development within Rembrandt's late oeuvre is perhaps best ignored.

284 Rembrandt, **The denial of Peter**, 1660, canvas 154 x 169 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. HdG 121; Br. 594; Bauch 92; Gerson 353; Br./Gerson 594; Tümpel 71; *R. Caravaggio* pp. 79-85; see also **286**.

Inscription: below the upper edge of the stone structure on which the soldier is sitting ‹*Rembrandt 1660*›

The work is based on:

Luke 22: 54-62 'Having arrested Him, they led Him and brought Him into the high priest's house. But Peter followed at a distance. Now when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat among them. And a certain servant girl, seeing him as he sat by the fire, looked intently at him and said, "This man was also with Him." But he denied Him, saying, "Woman, I do not know Him." And after a little while another saw him and said, "You also are of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not!" Then after about an hour had passed, another confidently affirmed, saying, "Surely this fellow also was with Him, for he is a Galilean." But Peter said, "Man, I do not know what you are saying!" Immediately, while he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how He had said to him, "Before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." So Peter went out and wept bitterly.

From early in his career Rembrandt must have been fully aware of Karel van Mander's writing on the subject of candle light:

'*Candles as source of light, which is after all not such an everyday subject [in painting], are difficult, and it is an art to paint them.*'

Van Mander continues with this advice:

'it is a good idea to have a figure in the dark in front [of the composition], *shaded from top to toe and the light only allowed to touch the contour of naked flesh, hair or clothing.'*

Ending this passage on painting candle light he observes that:

'taking the light source as the mid- or starting point, the shadow has to seek

its direction everywhere away from that point.' (see *Corpus* V p. 71)

Rembrandt's *Rich man of the parable* – his first thoroughly worked out study of candle light **14** can be related to this last remark of Van Mander. In his *Interior with figures* **22** and a year later in the *Supper at Emmaus* **25** the silhouetting of '*a figure in the dark in front'* plays a major role in the suggestion of candle light. The extent to which the specific character of candle light would continue to engage Rembrandt is evident from his perceptual psychological experiment in an etching with a scholar seated at a table with an open candle from *c.* 1642 (B. 148) (see Note **14** fig. 1), compare to (B. 130) from *c.* 1641. In a commentary on these prints Samuel van Hoogstraten wrote:

'Rembrant has depicted the strength of candlelight to the best of his abilities in several dark prints, but if one covers these small lights, the rest of the work remains dark: just as, when someone shows us something by candle-light, we usually hold our hand in front of the light so that it does not prevent our eyes from discerning everything in as much detail and as recognizably as possible'.

Rembrandt's experiment could be seen as an answer to the Caravaggisti who often included an open candle flame in their scenes (as the young Rembrandt had also done in his very early *Operation* **3**) and later again in an etching (B. 130).

In the present painting Rembrandt pursues further this search for the possibilities of redering the effects of candle light in painting. He introduces a second, invisible, light source, in this case undoubtedly a candle or some other kind of flame in the foreground but out of the picture. Thanks to this invisible light source Rembrandt was able to illuminate the soldier in the foreground sufficiently to make out clearly the complexity of his attire and weapons and of the exposed parts of his skin.

The light of the candle the servant girl is carrying maintains its full intensity because it is hidden behind her hand, while Peter's light cloak and the dark shadows cast on it by her left hand accentuate the relative strength of the candle's light. (The stark white of her blouse recalls the white of the collar in **14**.)

The illusion of the strength of candle light in this painting is further enhanced by the way Rembrandt has rendered the translucency of the flesh of the servant girl's right forefinger such that it appears to glow, and as though itself radiating a red light into the space around it.

Some art historians have expressed the view (in verbal communications) that the present painting was not – or not entirely – painted by Rembrandt because its *peinture* is not so grainy and rough as one would expect in a late Rembrandt, but this is explicable if the rendering of the texture of materials and the so-called 'kenlijkheid' – the roughness of the paint used for objects in the foreground – in this painting are subordinated to the many different and subtle effects of light.

(For the original size of **284** see Note **286** fig. 1.)

* **285** Rembrandt, **Lighting study of an old man in profile, probably painted in preparation of 286**, *c.* 1661, panel 24.8 x 19.1 cm. Agnes Etherington Art Centre, Queens University, Kingston, Ontario, Gift of Isabel and Alfred Bader 2006. HdG 366; Br. 261; Bauch 245; Gerson 395; Br./Gerson 261; Tümpel -; see also *Quest* pp. 179-207 esp. 182-186.
Inscription: none

This small painting, which is evidently related to Rembrandt's *Circumcision of Christ in the stable* from 1661 in Washington **286**, originated rather late in Rembrandt's career. In the *Circumcision*, several old men – including the Mohel who carries out the operation and a man who writes in a book – are depicted in roughly the same way as the man in this study. Bredius had already designated this work as a study of a head, even though he was not aware that it was connected to a specific painting. Subsequently, the painting's authenticity was increasingly put in question, although Bauch and Gerson, neither of whom had seen it, gave it the benefit of the doubt. In 2006, during the exhibition *The Quest of a Genius* it was reattributed.

Now that it has been freed of its thick layers of discoloured varnish, it can be seen as a little masterpiece, both as regards colour and *peinture*. It has been executed at a high tempo, wet in wet. For all its dynamic quality, it betrays such an astonishing control of the pictorial means available and, as a result, such a supreme sense of form on the part of its author, that one can scarcely imagine it could have been painted by a pupil. Nor could it be a free copy, executed by a pupil, after one of the figures in the Washington *Circumcision*. The visual 'information' in the *Circumcision* is simply too scant for that.

This case also corroborates the contention raised in Notes **20** and **277**: that in a head unusually lit – in this case obliquely from behind – the rendering of light and shade with correct and convincing boundaries and transitions between them constitutes a problem that could only be solved with the help of a posing model. The back, the shoulder, the neck and the back and top of the cap catch the full light. The locks of hair protruding from beneath the cap are fully lit too, but they screen part of the face (the ear, the cheek, the temple) from the directly incident light. The main part of the beard remains in the shadow of the shoulder and trunk, while the side-whiskers again catch a strong light from behind. The forehead, the root of the nose and the moustache are dimly lit by reflected light that sustains the legibility of the forms in shadow.

In its execution and colour scheme the present painting shows a striking resemblance to Rembrandt's *Self-portrait as Paul* from 1661 in the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum **294**. Confrontation between these two paintings leaves no room for doubt as to the study's authenticity. On this basis alone, it may also be assumed that the study originated around 1661, the year in which the Washington *Circumcision* was painted.

286 Rembrandt, **The Circumcision in the stable**, 1661, canvas 56.5 x 75 cm. Washington, National Gallery. HdG 82; Br. 596; Bauch 93; Gerson 350; Br./Gerson 596; Tümpel A12 (as from the studio of Rembrandt); ***Corpus* V 30**; see also Wheelock 1995 pp. 270-276.
Inscription: not seen by us (see *Corpus* V 30). According to Wheelock <*Rembrandt f. 1661*> at the lower right.

The work is based on

Luke 2: 21 'And when eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, his name was called JESUS, which was so named of the angel before he was conceived in the womb.'

Fig. 1. The hypothetical position of the present painting in the missing strip from the *Denial of Peter*, **286**

Whether the Washington *Circumcision in the stable* can be attributed to Rembrandt, as was done almost unanimously in the older art historical literature up to and including Gerson, or to an assistant in Rembrandt's workshop, as suggested by Schwartz (Schwartz 1984 p. 325 no. 376) and Tümpel (Tümpel no. A 12) partly depends on how one assesses its condition. Although Hofstede de Groot noted that the painting had been poorly preserved (Hofstede de Groot 1899 p. 163), for a long time its condition was not taken into account when considering the question of attribution. Recently, Wheelock (see above) remarked that the condition is so poor that an attribution cannot be based primarily on the execution of the work. He believes that its appearance is determined not only by wear and flattened impasto but to a large extent by (old) overpaintings and (what he took to be) drastic changes in size (see, however, below).

A link between the present painting and the mention of a *Circumcision* by Rembrandt in a document of 1662 (*Doc.* 1662/6) was posited long ago and has been used to support an attribution to Rembrandt. It concerns an agreement of 28 August 1662 between Rembrandt and Lodewijk van Ludick which mentions '*two paintings, a "Nativity" and a "Circumcision", which van Rhijn had sold to van Ludick for f. 600,-*.'

Linking the *Circumcision* referred to in this document to the present painting, however, is not without its problems. With regard to the *Circumcision* the document also states '… *that van Rijn shall be obliged to repaint the circumciser in the aforementioned panel [bortie] and improve it as is proper.*' In arguing that the work in Washington was Van Ludick's painting, Wheelock pointed out that there is a prominent pentimento visible in the X-radiographic image, namely an enlargement of the mohel's yellow cloak. He suggested that this could be the alteration to the circumciser mentioned in the agreement between Van Ludick and Rembrandt, which would indeed make the identification of the Washington painting with the *Circumcision* named in the document extremely likely.

We too believe that a link between the Washington painting and this document – though problematic – is plausible (see *Corpus* V 30).

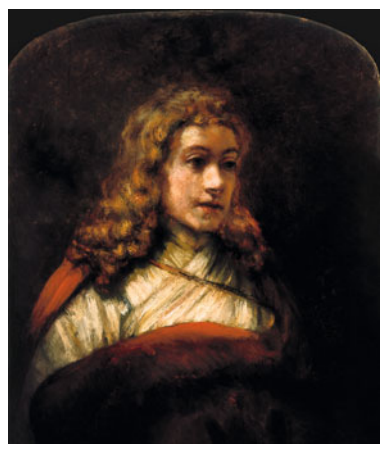
There are strong indications that the present painting was superimposed on a fragment cut from the right side of the *Denial of Peter* in Amsterdam **284**, apparently after the latter painting had been wholly or partly finished. Because Arthur Wheelock and the Washington Conservation Laboratory were unaware of this possibility, some of their interpretations need to be treated with caution (for example, with regard to the painting's original format, the technique of the painting and the extent to which it has been overpainted).

For a hypothetical reconstruction of the relation between the canvases of the two paintings, see *Corpus* V 30 and **fig. 1**. On the basis of this reconstruction one could surmise that the fragment of **284** on which the present painting was painted was so small that it would not have been possible to stretch it in the usual manner. It was probably glued to a panel (which was later removed); hence the reference in the document mentioned above to a 'bortie' (panel).

287 Rembrandt, **Virgin of Sorrows**, 1661, canvas 107 x 81 cm. Epinal, Musée départemental des Vosges. HdG 189; Br. 397; Bauch 283; Gerson 367; Br./Gerson 397; Tümpel 85; see also *R. Women* no. 137A; *Religious Portraits* no. 14.
Inscription: center right ‹*Rembrandt f 1661*›

This painting is in such a poor condition that so far it has proved impossible to give an unequivocal interpretation of the image. An important question is whether the rosary in the woman's right hand is a later addition or a radical reconstruction of traces of one that was perhaps originally present. It should be possible to resolve this question by technical research in the future.

* **288** Rembrandt, **Titus posing for a study of an angel** (**possibly painted in preparation for 289**), *c.* 1661, panel 40.6 x 34.9 cm. Detroit, Institute of Arts. HdG 787h; Br. 125; Bauch 230; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 125 (not seen by Gerson); Tümpel -; see also Detroit 2004.
Inscription: none



The correspondence of the features of this young man to the physiognomy of Rembrandt's son Titus known to us from the portraits and other images tells us that the model here again is Titus (see Note **242**). The scale, assuredness and economy of the execution of the face alone make

the conclusion almost unavoidable that we have here a small-scale study by Rembrandt in which Titus served as model. I now can scarcely understand why I had this painting reproduced in the *Quest of a Genius* catalogue (*Quest* p. 152) as a work from Rembrandt's studio. When I saw the painting in 1972 as a young member of the RRP team on a working visit to Detroit with Simon Levie, I was troubled by the disturbing manner in which the angel was covered over by a shapeless and *peinture*-less red cloak. It often happens that a single strange element in a painting can exert an excessive influence on the assessment of the painting as a whole. This red form is probably to be understood as an indication of part of a long cloak that is held together in front by a cord (cf. the angel on the right in the background of Rembrandt's etching *Death of the Virgin Mary* (B. 99)). A possible explanation for the way in which the cloak in the present painting runs over the angel's body may be found in the function for which this work was intended – as a preparation for the angel in **289** who dictates into the ear of the evangelist St Matthew his Gospel. See in this context *Jacob wrestling with the angel* in **268** and the similar way in which the similarly *peinture*-less red shoulder of Jacob stands out against the white robe of the angel.

Rembrandt eventually opted for a different solution for rendering the angel – one in which the light-management in the final painting as a whole was more daring (see Plate **289**).

The proposed re-attribution to Rembrandt of this sketch rests on few arguments: the quality of the execution of the face and the facial likeness to Titus (see the Note to **242**). In addition, the execution of the long curly hair is similar to the lumpy way Rembrandt painted such curls in e.g. **276** and **285**, where they are even more summarily indicated (whereas with the angel in **289**, the end result of Rembrandt's efforts devoted to the Matthew project, they are painted in a more undulating manner).

It is interesting that the structure of the ground (with vertical surface structure in relief) is strongly reminiscent of a similar kind of ground in, for example, the *Small Vienna self-portrait* **256**. It would seem that in this period there was a growing preference for that type of uneven ground on panels, possibly with the aim of a better binding of paint to ground (see *Corpus* IV 13 esp. p. 458).

289 Rembrandt,
The apostle St Matthew (part of a series with **290-294**), 1661, canvas 96 x 81 cm. Paris, Louvre. HdG 173; Br. 614; Bauch 231; Gerson 359; Br./Gerson 614; Tümpel 88; see also *M/W* cat. 47; Bl. cat. 22; Foucart 2009 p. 212; *Religious Portraits* no. 7.
Inscription: centre right
‹*Rembrandt f. 1661*›

For commentary on the series **289**-**294**, see Note **293** and the text on p. 425.

290 Rembrandt,
The apostle Bartholomew (part of a series with **289**, **291-294**), 1661, canvas 87.5 x 75 cm. Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum. HdG168; Br. 615; Bauch 235; Gerson 366; Br./Gerson 615; Tümpel 83; see also *Religious Portraits* no. 8.
Inscription: lower right
‹*Rembrandt.f. 1661*›

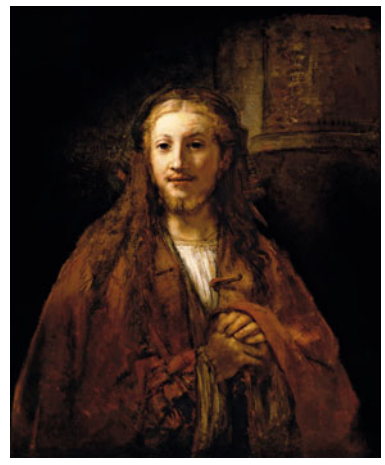
291 Rembrandt,
The apostle Simon (part of a series with **289**, **290** and **292-294**), 1661, canvas 98.5 x 79 cm. Zürich, Kunsthaus. HdG -; Br. -; Bauch 237; Gerson 362; Br./Gerson 616A; Tümpel 84; see also *Religious Portraits* no. 10.
Inscription: on the saw
‹*Rembrandt f. 1661*›

For commentary on the series **289**-**294**, see Note **293** and the text on p. 425.

292 Rembrandt,
The apostle James the Greater (part of a series with **289-291** and **293**, **294**), 1661, canvas 92.1 x 74.9 cm. Private collection. HdG 170; Br. 617; Bauch 236; Gerson 361; Br./Gerson 617; Tümpel 82; see also Bl. cat. 21; *Religious Portraits* no. 9.
Inscription: lower right
‹*Rembrandt f. 1661*›

For commentary on the series **289**-**294**, see Note **293** and the text on p. 425.

* **293** Rembrandt,
The apostle James the Less (part of a series with **289-292** and **294**), 1661, canvas 94.5 x 81.5 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 164; Br. 629; Bauch 241; Gerson 369; Br./Gerson 629; Tümpel 86; see also Valentiner 1920/21; *R. not R. I/II* no. 37; Liedtke 2007 pp. 766-771 (as by a follower of Rembrandt); *Religious Portraits* no. 12; Berlin 2006 nos. 76 and 77.
Inscription: centre right
‹*Rembrandt f./1661*›



Few can have had the privilege of being able to spend several hours a day for almost a week with the paintings assembled here under nos. **289**-**294**, in a single exhibition room, with a ladder at hand, strong artificial lighting and the facility to magnify details of the images. Arthur Wheelock allowed me this privilege during the exhibition *Rembrandt's Late Religious Portraits* in Washington (2005). During those sessions I worked together with the versatile research conservator Melanie Gifford.

At first sight it seems to be a heterogeneous group of paintings. In the course of our investigation, however, the six paintings gradually came to form a coherent group. The principal key to this grouping was that on all six works could be found the (traces of) broad, dark markings for a planned framing. In most cases these indications had already been discovered earlier. These lines make it highly likely that the six works were intended to be framed in frames of identical size. The relevant markings (in five cases with black paint, in the sixth **294** with scratches in the wet paint) corroborated the long-held suspicion that a considerable group of apostles, evangelists and Christ figures (and perhaps also a figure of the Virgin **287**) constituted one or more series (Valentiner 1920/21; Tümpel 1968 pp. 339-343). In so far as these six paintings

have been investigated using physical scientific methods, material and technical kinship connections are evident within the group – **289** and **291** are from the same bolt of linen, **293** and **294** have identical grounds, and **290** and **292** are from another identical bolt of linen. This is of course insufficient to count as proof that they originated in a single production process, but these connections were enough to lend further support to the idea of a coherent group, a hypothesis which is supported by the fact that all six paintings are dated 1661.

There is still another remarkable fact, albeit not decisive for the series-hypothesis, which was the more conspicuous because we were able to investigate all six works at more or less the same time and under similar conditions: all of them must have been executed in extreme haste. This had already struck me when in 1997 I investigated the *Self-portrait as Paul*. In the case of that work **294** I even entertain the idea that it had not been painted in front of the mirror but that the face had been copied by Rembrandt after the New York *Self-portrait* from 1660 **282** in a slightly tilted position, with the unusual lighting subsequently added to suggest that Paul was in a prison cell (see Note **294** figs.1 and 2).

With the present painting **293**, which is iconographically somewhat enigmatic, some signs of that haste, e.g. the long scratches in wet paint, played a role in the discussions over the attribution – whether to Rembrandt, Rembrandt and a pupil/assistant, or to an assistant (see Liedtke 2007 pp. 766-771). I belief it to be autograph.

Another issue concerning this painting is not without its significance: does it depict Jesus or James the Less? Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians (1:19) refers to this James as the brother of Jesus. According to legend, he looked so much like Jesus that it had been feared that during Jesus' nocturnal capture at the Garden of Gethsemane he might be confused with Christ. Judas' kiss of the real Jesus, according to this legend, was intended to prevent this potential misidentification. It is evident that the man depicted in this painting is not Jesus but James from the fact that he is shown with a relatively short club (James met his death by stoning and finally being clubbed to death with a fuller's club) whereas Jesus was sometimes represented with a longer staff or banner. Rembrandt was therefore confronted with the remarkable task of portraying someone who looked like Jesus but was not him. He must have taken this challenge seriously for he gave this figure slightly different features and a different hair colour than one sees in Rembrandt's Jesus figures. (For Rembrandt's possible ideas concerning the rendering of Jesus Christ, see the Note to Plate **217**.)

294 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait as St Paul** (part of a series with **289-293**), 1661, canvas 93.2 x 79.1 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. HdG 575; Br. 59; Bauch 338; Gerson 403; Tümpel 175; Br./Gerson 59; Tümpel 175; ***Corpus* IV no. 24**; see also *Religious Portraits* no. 11.
Inscription: at the left next to the shoulder ‹*Rembrandt.f /1661*›

For commentary on the series **289**-**294**, see Note **293** and the text on p. 425.

See also *Corpus* IV p. 294 and Note **293** of the present book, where it is suggested that this self-portrait may not have been painted in front of the mirror. The shadowed parts of the face are cursorily indicated, while the unusual lighting from above left is such that it almost looks like a modern spotlight has been used. The build, fullness and physiognomy of the faces in **282** and **294** correspond so closely that it could well be the case that Rembrandt copied the main shape of his *Self-portrait* painted in 1660 **282** in a slightly canted position and added these unusual patches of light (**figs. 1** and **2**) whose intention, it would seem, was to suggest that Paul is illuminated by light entering from an imagined prison window high up in the wall.

Fig. 1. Detail of **282**

Fig. 2. Detail of **294**. The head is tilted in vertical position.

295 Rembrandt, **Two negroes**, 1661, canvas 77.8 x 64.5 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis. HdG 336; Br. 310; Bauch 539; Gerson 390; Br/Gerson 310; Tümpel 145; see also De Vries et al. 1978 pp. 140-147.
Inscription: top right ‹*Rembrandt / f 1661*›

During the restoration carried out by Carol Potasch it was noted that the painting's present appearance differs from the original in several respects. The red glaze used in the modelling of the face of the right-hand figure has faded over the course of time, and the smalt or ground glass incorporated in the paint used in the left-hand figure has since degraded, with the result that there is now a greyish hue over the face. This figure's clothing was over-cleaned during an earlier treatment, with the result that today a greenish layer has in places disappeared. Indeed, the painting has suffered over-cleaning throughout its surface.

The ingenious composition of the painting, the graphic execution of large parts of it, the grazing brushwork in the details of the attire of the foremost figure, a repentir in his scarf, visible in the x-radiograph (see De Vries et al. 1978 p. 143), the exploratory manner of working on and around the foremost figure's lips resulting in the brilliant evocation of a smiling, slightly open mouth, the crucial role of the patch of light on his shoulder etc. – everything in this painting betrays Rembrandt's mastery. There is no reason to doubt the authenticity of this unusual painting nor that it originated in 1661, as the worn signature and dating are a constituent part of the original paint.

This painting can probably best be considered as part of the documentation that Rembrandt the history painter was accumulating for his own use with a view to future projects. A major part of this collection, which as a result of his bankruptcy was auctioned in 1656 (together with his files with sketches and drawings ordered according to subject), had until then served this purpose. It is important to point out that in this inventory, among the series of classical heads, there was *'een moor, nae 't leeven afgegooten' [a Moor, cast from life*] and among the paintings in the 'large studio (schilderkamer)' '*Twee mooren in een stuck van Rembrandt' [Two Moors in one painting by Rembrandt]*. The coincidence of the latter record and the existence of the present painting has repeatedly led to discussion of whether the painting mentioned in the inventory was identical with the work in the Mauritshuis. This, of course, would give rise to a dating problem, for if the two works were one and the same the present painting would have to have been painted before 1656, i.e. earlier than indicated by the heavily worn inscription 1661 at the right upper corner of the painting. If one assumes that a painter of history pieces would have had to have at his disposal in the 'image archive' needed for his work a model (in whatever form) of a Moor, then it

is perfectly conceivable that Rembrandt, after his earlier models had been sold, had seized the opportunity to provide himself with two new models for future use by means of this painting. After all, negroes were probably not so readily available to pose whenever one needed one, e.g. for an *Adoration of the Magi* **109** or for a *Baptism of the Eunuch* **9**.

296 Rembrandt, **The small Margaretha de Geer** (sketch for **297b**), 1661, canvas 73.5 x 60.7 cm. London, National Gallery. HdG 863; Br. 395; Bauch 524; Gerson 385; Br./Gerson 395; Tümpel 246; see also Brown 1991 pp. 367-369; *Art in the Making II* no. 19 (as a work by Rembrandt).
Inscription: on the left below the level of the shoulder ‹*Rembrandt f 1661*›
See Note **297a/b**.

297a Rembrandt, **Portrait of Jacob Trip** (companion piece to **297b**), *c.* 1661, canvas 130.5 x 97 cm. London, National Gallery. HdG 393; Br. 314; Bauch 429; Gerson 383; Br./Gerson 314; Tümpel 218; see also Bl. cat. 23; *Art in the Making II* no. 17.
Inscription: on the right above the level of the sitter's left hand ‹*Rembr*›. Accordingly the canvas of this painting and its companion piece must have been slightly cut down on the right side.

297b Rembrandt, **Portrait of Margaretha de Geer** (companion piece to **297a**), *c.* 1661, canvas 130.5 x 97 cm. London, National Gallery. HdG 857; Br. 394 ; Bauch 523; Gerson 384; Br./Gerson 394; Tümpel 245; see also Brown 1991 pp. 350-353; Bl. cat. 23; *Art in the Making II* no. 19; Dutch Portraits cat. 58/59.
Inscription: none (may originally not have been signed, see Note **297a**)

Jacob Trip (1576-1661) was a wealthy Dordrecht merchant. In 1603 he married Margaretha de Geer (1583-1672). It seems likely that Rembrandt painted their monumental portraits **297a/b** after Jacob's death. For his likeness, Rembrandt may have based himself on one of the earlier portraits of Jacob Trip made by other painters. In *Art in the Making II* and *Dutch Portraits*, the authors for various reasons were convinced that Margaretha de Geer posed for her large portrait **297b**. There is, however, much to be said for the idea that Rembrandt painted the small portrait **296** as a sketch in preparation for **297b**. In this context, see Notes **82**-**84**, **271** and **272**.

298 Rembrandt, **The conspiracy of the Batavians under Claudius Civilis** (fragment), *c.* 1661-1662, canvas 196 x 309 cm. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum. HdG 225; Br. 482; Bauch 108; Gerson 354; Br./Gerson 482; Tümpel 101; see also Van de Waal 1956; Blankert 1995; Stockholm 2005 no. 418; Van de Wetering 2011.
Inscription: none

The painting depicts the moment in the year 69 AD when the Batavians, incited by Claudius Civilis, swear their allegiance to the revolt against the Romans that Civilis has planned.

Tacitus *Histories* 4 14-15:

> 'Civilis collected at one of the sacred groves, ostensibly for a banquet, the chiefs of the nation and the boldest spirits of the lower class. When he saw them warmed with the festivities of the night, he began by speaking of the renown and glory of their race, and then counted the wrongs and the oppressions which they endured, and all the other evils of slavery. "There is," he said, "no alliance, as once there was; we are treated as slaves. Only dare to look up, and cease to tremble at the empty names of legions. For we have a vast force of horse and foot; we have the Germans our kinsmen; we have Gaul bent on the same objects.". Having been listened to with great approval, he bound the whole assembly with barbarous rites and the national forms of oath.'

This painting is merely a fragment; the original painting was presumably the largest that Rembrandt ever made (*c.* 5.50 x 5.50 m). He painted it on commission for Amsterdam's monumental, new Town Hall (now the Royal Palace on Dam Square). The occasion of the construction of this enormous, richly decorated building was the Dutch victory in the 80-years war fought by the Seven Provinces of the Netherlands against Spain, a conflict that was finally settled at the Peace of Munster in 1648. The story represented by Rembrandt was chosen because the Amsterdammers saw parallels between the war of liberation fought by the Batavians against the Romans (which ended in a temporary Roman defeat) and the war waged between the Seven Provinces and Spain.

But within a year, and for reasons that are unclear, Rembrandt's painting was removed and hurriedly replaced by a provisional painting by Jürgen Ovens, painted in time for the visit to the Town Hall by the Archduke of Cologne. It has been suggested that Rembrandt's painting was taken down because the Batavians (pre-figuring the Hollanders) in the painting were represented as a lot of barbarians (Van de Waal 1956). Moreover, Claudius Civilis was placed frontally, with the result that his blind eye (ascribed to him by the Roman historian Tacitus) is clearly visible. Claudius Civilis was usually only shown in profile for precisely this reason, so perhaps it was felt that Rembrandt, with his arch-naturalism, had offended against decorum. (In the version designed by his former pupil Govaert Flinck, Claudius was indeed portrayed in profile.) Albert Blankert has suggested that the painting was removed because the scale of the figures round the table was much smaller than in the equally large-format canvases that Jacob Jordaens and Jan Lievens had produced for the same gallery (Blankert 1975). Whatever the truth of the

Fig. 1. Rembrandt, *The conspiracy of Claudius Civilis* (1661), pen, ink and washes, 19.2 x 18,1 cm. Munich, Grafische Sammlung.

Fig. 2. Reconstruction of **298** in its original shape based on: fig. 1; **298** and on the measurements of the shallow recess, half-rounded above, for which the original painting was intended.

matter, Rembrandt got his painting back. Presumably he then cut the fragment that now remains from the enormous canvas and kept it rolled up in his workshop for years.

Fortunately a drawing that Rembrandt made during the work on the actual painting has survived. The surviving fragment has been projected into this sketch and a digital reconstruction has been created (**fig. 1**).

299 Rembrandt, **Portrait of the Syndics of the Amsterdam Clothmakers' Guild**, **known as the 'Staalmeesters'**, 1662, canvas 191.5 x 279 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. HdG 928; Br. 415; Bauch 540; Gerson 404; Br./Gerson 415; Tümpel 256; see also Van de Waal 1956; *M/W* cat. 48.

Inscription: The first inscription is integral with the knotted design of the tablecloth ‹*Rembrandt f. 1662*› ; later inscribed <*Rembrandt f. 1661*> to the right on a later overpainting of the plastered wall

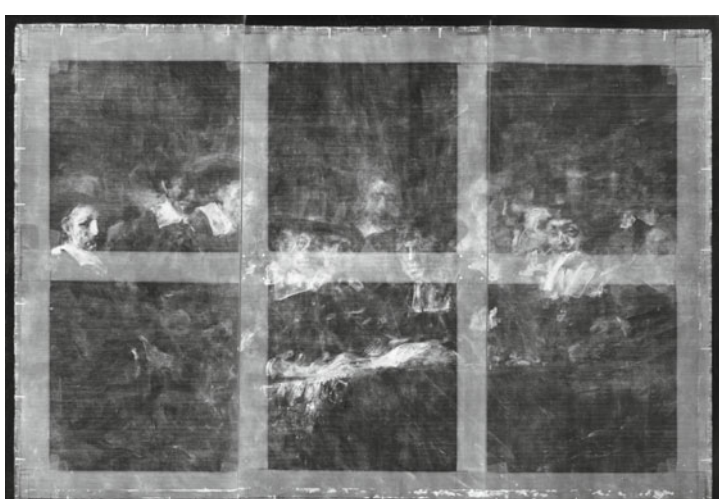


Fig. 1. X-ray of **299**

Five samplers and a servant of the Clothmakers' Guild are combined in a group portrait. It is evident from the X-radiograph of the painting that Rembrandt expended considerable effort in search of a satisfactory solution for the placing, attitudes and sight-lines of his sitters (**fig. 1**). It was usual for the sitters in a 17th-century group portrait to be looking in different directions, but here they look directly at us. This penetrating gaze has given rise to the idea that the painting depicts a particular moment. According to this speculation the samplers had been holding a meeting and were on the point of leaving when a sudden awkward question from the hall caught their attention. But this explanation for their common gaze will not do: if the samplers had been officially meeting there would have been no public present. Why then is their gaze directed at a single point?

In his history pieces, Rembrandt tried to achieve a consistent and convincing dramatic unity in the action he was representing (*Corpus* V pp. 62-63). He also tried to achieve a similar unity in his group portraits. Wherever possible, he showed the portrayed figures united by a coherent action **76** and **89**. In the case of the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* **76** this action mainly consisted of the intense common gaze of three of the men in the portrait focused on the dissection being performed. It is this common gaze that gives the paintings its special dynamic.

One could speculate that Rembrandt has repeated this concept in the present painting, but now even more convincingly. It seems that he has turned the group of concentrating spectators at the centre of the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* through almost 90° and made it a group of six, all the subjects of the one group portrait. Their common gaze is now directed at us, as a result of which we automatically think that something special has happened. Rembrandt must have realized that a gaze is itself also an action. A common gaze directed at a single point therefore brings extra action into the scene without that action having to be made explicit.

300 Rembrandt, **Portrait of a young man with a black beret**, *c.* 1662, canvas 80 x 64.7 cm. Kansas City, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art. HdG 780; Br. 322; Bauch 443; Gerson 408; Br./Gerson 322; Tümpel 224; see also Bl. cat. 26.
Inscription: below left in the background ‹*Rembrandt f. 1666*›, evidently applied by another hand in an unusual handwriting.

Because of the nature of the inscription, and in view of the style of the painting, no significance can be attached to the date <1666>. This splendid portrait would seem to have been painted earlier, at the beginning of the '60s.

301 Rembrandt, **Homer dictating his verses** (mutilated by fire), 1663, canvas 108 x 82.4 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis HdG 217; Br. 483; Bauch 224; Gerson 371; Br./Gerson 483; Tümpel 112; see also De Vries et al. 1978 no. XII; Giltaij 1999.
Inscription: on the left edge ‹*…andt f. 1663*›

This work was painted for the Sicilian art-lover and collector Antonio Ruffo as a pendant for the *Aristotle with the bust of*

Fig. 1. Detail of of **301**

Homer **228** and for a (now lost) *Alexander* (see Notes **239**, **253**). The painting originally had the same format as the other two paintings (8 x 6 palms; see below) but was badly damaged on all sides in a fire and subsequently cropped, so that what remains is a large rectangular fragment of the original. In an inventory (1737) made up of Ruffo's collection Homer is mentioned as being in the company of '*2 discepoli*' (two pupils) (Ruffo 1916 p. 318). (The blind Homer had become tutor to the children of the man who had taken pity on him on the island of Chios.) The minimal remains of one of these pupils are still evident in the bottom right-hand corner. Judging by the relations between a writing pad, two fingertips holding a pen and the remains of an inkwell visible there, this figure was originally seen obliquely from behind, writing (**fig. 1**).

As a student I spent some time trying to reconstruct the painting, basing my proposal on two existing visual documents, a drawing by Rembrandt (**fig. 2**) and a painting by Aert de Gelder (**fig. 3**). Given the formats of these two works I first had the idea that the present painting might have had a horizontal format as well. In the end, in the light of all other existing information on the series of three paintings ordered by Ruffo, this option grew more and more unlikely.

Fig. 2. Rembrandt, *Homer dictating to a scribe* (*c*. 1662), pen, ink and washes, 14.5 x 16.7 cm. Stockholm, National Museum.

Fig. 3. Aert de Gelder, *Homer dictating his verses* (*c*. 1700), canvas 101 x 127,5 cm, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts.

Below follows an account of my much later final attempt to reconstruct the painting. There are several different starting points for this reconstruction. First of all there is Rembrandt's drawing (fig. 1) showing Homer with only one pupil or scribe. The precise function of that drawing is unclear, but it is evident that there is some connection with **301**. Then there is the original format of the canvas, which measured 8 : 6 'palmi'. Admittedly our knowledge here is imprecise: a 17th-century Sicilian palm was a somewhat variable measurement of around 25 cm. Jo Kirby discusses its possible sizes in a note on the 17th-century 'palmo' in the context of Don Antonio Ruffo's collection" (Kirby 1992).

Moreover, the traces of the figure in the right foreground seen from the back may be extended to a form that is not unlike the man with the tazza seen from behind in Rembrandt's painting of the *Conspiracy of Claudius Civilis* **298**, on which Rembrandt was working around the same time.

The paper on which this (for the most part excised) disciple wrote is painted by Rembrandt in a tone that is considerably darker than the highest lights in the face and clothes of Homer. One infers from this that the writer seen from behind was rendered as a shadowed figure. This would fit the trend of Rembrandt's ideas when painting figures in the near foreground. Apparently, and for obvious reason, the figure of Homer caught the strongest light. The second writer could well have been based on the young writer in the Stockholm drawing (**fig. 2**). He is largely blocked out by the figure seen from the back in the foreground, but his posture and his gaze, in addition to the position he adopts in the drawing with respect to Homer allows one plausibly to situate this figure in the little space that is left for him (**fig. 4**).

Fig. 4. Hypothetical reconstruction of **301**

302 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait as the laughing Zeuxis while painting an old woman**, *c.* 1663, canvas 82.5 x 65 cm. Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum. HdG 560; Br. 61; Bauch 341; Gerson 419; Br./Gerson 61; Tümpel 177; ***Corpus*** **IV 25** and **pp. 288-301**; see also Blankert 1973.
Inscription: ‹none›

This painting has been reduced on all sides as a result of which some of the information it originally contained has been lost, or in its present mutilated condition is hardly intelligible. For example, the maulstick with its glossy knob and several brushes with red and brown paint just protruding above the present bottom edge. These remnants nevertheless make it clear that the laughing Rembrandt has rep-

resented himself whilst painting. The shadowy figure in the top left-hand corner may therefore be taken to be part of a painting that he is working on.

The honour falls to Albert Blankert to have found the crucial key to the iconography of this painting which had hitherto (and even subsequently) given rise to so many wild speculations. An important part of Blankert's argument concerned the role of a painting by Rembrandt's pupil Aert de Gelder (**fig. 1**). As with other works by this artist, De Gelder's painting could very well have been based on a work by his master that he had previously seen painted during his apprenticeship – in this case the present painting.

Fig. 1. Aert de Gelder, *Self-portrait as Zeuxis* (1685), canvas 142 x 169 cm. Frankfurt, Städelsches Kunstinstitut.

As argued in *Corpus* IV 25, however, we are not in agreement with Blankert's final conclusion, which is based on his suggestion that Rembrandt and Gerard de Lairesse had discussed the issue of idealism and realism in art in the year 1665 while Rembrandt was painting his *Portrait of Gerard de Lairesse* (1640-1711). Following this hypothetical discussion (according to Blankert), Rembrandt's *Self-portrait as Zeuxis* could have been conceived as a response to the art theoretical implications of a well-known anecdote concerning Zeuxis (5th century BC). According to this anecdote, which we owe to Pliny, Zeuxis used five beautiful women as models for a painting of Helen that he painted for a commission from the city of Croton. By combining the most beautiful parts of the five women, he was able to represent the ideal beauty of Helen.

Blankert claimed that De Lairesse would have seen in this anecdote an important justification for the then current rise of idealizing classicism. Accordingly, Rembrandt wanted to demonstrate with his *Self-portrait as Zeuxis* that Zeuxis was also willing to represent reality in all its ugliness; for in his *Self-portrait as Zeuxis* Rembrandt is undoubtedly referring to another anecdote according to which Zeuxis painted an ugly old woman shortly before he died of a fit of laughing. Thus, in the same Zeuxis who served as an icon for the rules of art defended by De Lairesse, Rembrandt is supposed to have found the legitimization of his own realism, which at the time was thought to be too extreme (Blankert 1973 p. 38).

In contrast to Blankert's hypothesis, however, we now believe that the *Self-portrait as Zeuxis* did not originate *after* 1665, the date on Rembrandt's portrait of De Lairesse, but as early as 1662/63, several years *before* the young De Lairesse came to The Netherlands. We base this earlier dating on the fact that Aert de Gelder's free variants on the paintings of his teacher were as a rule based on paintings on which Rembrandt was working during De Gelder's apprenticeship (1661 to *c.* 1663) (for this discussion, see *Corpus* IV 25). In addition, we believe that this relatively early dating is also corroborated by the striking similarities of style and technique between the Cologne *Self-portrait as Zeuxis* and the *Homer* in The Hague **301** which originated in 1662/63. As an alternative to Blankert's proposed art-theoretical discussion between Rembrandt and De Lairesse, I suggest, on the basis of Van Hoogstraten's remarks on Zeuxis (SvH p. 110), that Rembrandt may have identified himself with the Greek painter, as Zeuxis was also said to have excelled in the rendering of the human passions (see *Corpus* IV 25 *Comments*).

303 Rembrandt and workshop, **Equestrian portrait of Frederick Rihel**, 1663, canvas 294.5 x 241 cm. London, National Gallery. HdG 772; Br. 255; Bauch 440; Gerson 410; Br./Gerson 255; Tümpel 220; see also Bruyn 1990; Brown 1991 pp. 358-362; *Art in the Making II* no. 20; Wieseman 2010.
Inscription: there are faint remains below left ‹*R..brandt/1663*›

This gigantic equestrian portrait was commissioned from Rembrandt by the Amsterdam merchant Frederick Rihel. Rihel had the work painted to commemorate his participation in the ceremonial procession that escorted Mary Stuart and the young Prince William III of Orange during their visit to Amsterdam on 15 June 1660. In the left background is a coach whose occupants are partly visible.
There is discussion as to whether Rembrandt himself executed the painting in its entirety. It has been suggested (rightly, in my view) that the horse would have been painted by a painter in Rembrandt's studio, possibly his son Titus (Bruyn 1990), while Rembrandt painted the magnificent rider.

With the recent X-radiograph of the painting (Wieseman 2010) [see the image opposite Plate 303 in the present book], it was a great surprise to discover that under the now visible painting there is another painting. If one tilts the X-radiograph through a quarter turn one sees a standing life-sized man, apparently in a landscape with a few trees to the left. This was probably an earlier portrait of the same Frederick Rihel, as it seems also to have been painted by Rembrandt.

Jaap van der Veen discovered in the inventory of Frederick Rihel that beside the present painting a second portrait of Rihel is listed with the accompanying gloss '*daer hij te voet gaet*' ('in which he is walking') (see Wieseman 2010 p. 110 note 19). From this description one infers that Rihel was portrayed full-length in that painting and, of course, outdoors rather than in an interior room: in short, in a situation comparable to that seen in the underlying painting revealed in the X-radiograph (of the present painting). One might speculate that it was a sketch or vidimus made as preparation for the present painting in its first state. In which case, the obvious inference would be that Rembrandt was the likely author of that second portrait

304 Rembrandt, **Bust of a bearded young man with a skullcap**, 1663, canvas 65.8 x 57.5 cm. Fort Worth, Kimbell Art Museum. HdG 407; Br. 300; Bauch 435; Gerson 392; Br./Gerson 300; Tümpel 146; see also Robb 1978; Bl. cat. 25.
Inscription: upper right ‹*Rembrandt f. 1663*›

When one surveys Rembrandt's portraits in this book, it appears that the conventions relied on to categorize portraits were quite rigid – from the bust piece via several intermediate forms to full-length portraits. As a rule, these are formal portraits and with sitters in formal dress, the figures placed in front of an ample background, their portraits serving as a means of representation and usually in their own homes.

In some cases we know of intermediate forms of portraits where the question is whether they actually originated as formal commissions – as for example in the case of the portrait of Jeremias de Decker **250** '*painted strictly as a favour … for love of art*' (see Note **250**). What strikes one in De Decker's half-length portrait is that it is of a relatively smaller format and more modest in its arrangement than the commissioned portraits from the same period. This also holds true for the portrait of Arnout Tholinx **249** which is similarly characterized by the same modesty. Tholinx belonged to that circle of art-lovers who rated Rembrandt's work so highly. Rembrandt produced for him a masterly etched portrait in *c.* 1656 (B. 284). It is possible that they were friends.

The question that arises is whether in such cases one ought to call them portraits *of* and/or *for* Rembrandt's friends and relatives. This also applies, for the same reason, to the portraits of Herman Doomer and his wife Baertje Martens **177a/b**. Also Rembrandt's portraits of Hendrickje and himself from 1654 **235a/b** may be assigned to this category of portraits 'for personal use' – as well as the portrait of Titus which I tentatively refer to as 'Titus' wedding portrait' **315**, the possible pendant of the woman's portrait from Montreal, reduced in size by later hands **316**.

Perhaps the painting under discussion here also belongs to this group of portraits of personal friends or portraits of individuals otherwise related to the painter. With its modest lay-out and special attention to the sitter's physiognomy, his unusually strong presence and the unusual costume it is quite different from the all too often arbitrarily chosen category of *tronies* (see '*tronie*' in the Glossary). On the category of portraits discussed in this Note, see also **318**.

305 Rembrandt, **Portrait of a young woman with a lapdog**, *c.* 1665, canvas 81 x 64 cm. Toronto, Art Gallery of Ontario. HdG 852; Br. 398; Bauch 527; Gerson 398; Br./Gerson 398; Tümpel 247.
Inscription: none

An unknown chic young lady had herself painted by the ageing Rembrandt. All her expensive jewellery is on display, as well as her darling lapdog, so light that it can be supported by the lady's finger. Is that a typical work of the mythical 'Late Rembrandt'? The question must have plagued many an art historian. When preparing our *Quest* exhibition in 2006 it was discovered that this was the first time the loan of this painting had ever been requested for an exhibition in Europe. It is a delicious painting, in which, as X-radiographs revealed, Rembrandt changed a great deal during the course of working on it, evidently continuing to seek the way that light and colour should be organized in the bottom half of the image. And it is precisely in that part of the painting that one sees the 'Late Rembrandt' at his best.

Should the fact that the painting is unsigned, and that the woman is turned toward the left, her face fully lit, be taken to mean that it was once accompanied by a male companion piece which has since been lost? Or was there once a signature which has disappeared with the large-scale overpainting in the background?

306 Rembrandt, **Old man in an armchair, possibly a portrait of Jan Amos Comenius**, *c.* 1665, canvas 104 x 86 cm. Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi. HdG 380; Br. 285; Bauch 431; Gerson 391; Br./Gerson 285; Tümpel 143; see also Breen 1920; Amsterdam 1956 no. 76; Den Herder 1970.
Inscription: ‹*Rembrandt f 166*(.)›

This painting in Rembrandt's late style, usually referred to as the *Old man in an armchair*, was probably already in the late 17th century in the Medici collection. For a long time it was difficult to make out beneath thick yellowed layers of varnish. These varnish layers were partly removed in Florence with a view to the *Quest* exhibition in 2006.

In 1926 J. Zwarts suggested that it could be a portrait of Rabbi Haham Saul Levy Morteyra (Zwarts 1926), but the idea met with no response. Gerson placed it among the portraits of anonymous greybeards of which Rembrandt and his workshop painted so

Fig. 1. Wenceslas Hollar, Portrait of J.A. Comenius, engraving, 1652.

many in the 50s and 60s. Gerson did however leave the possibility open that it could have been one of the putative series of Apostles (a hypothesis which at the time was beset by many more unanswered questions than now – see **298**-**294**), and on that basis he dated the work to *c.* 1661.

What distinguishes the painting from the Apostles group is that it has the character of a portrait. The alert pose of the sitter, his strong gaze directed toward the painter (or beholder) certainly puts one in mind of a portrait. Arguing against this, however, is the costume: a skull-cap, a long cloak and an unusually long beard. This is not what one imagines with a portrait of an elderly Dutch gentleman around 1660.

In 1916 a Czech named Gamma (possibly a pseudonym) published an article in the journal *Novina* in which it was argued that the old man in the present portrait was the Moravian theologian and renowned 'pansophist' pedagogue Komensky – internationally famous in his own time as Johannes Amos Comenius (1592-1670) – who lived in exile in Amsterdam since 1656 until his death in 1670. The identification of the man shown in the painting rests in particular on a print by Wenceslas Hollar (1607-1677) (**fig. 1**). Not only is the physiognomy – the build of the face, the long narrow nose, the heavy eyelids – much as in the above-mentioned work, but also the type of beard, the skullcap, the long cloak over a 17th-century gentleman's attire. In the numerous prints with Comenius' image he is always dressed in the same manner.

In addition, there is circumstantial evidence that supports the identification of the sitter in Rembrandt's painting as Comenius. For this it is necessary to look briefly at Comenius' complicated biography and the fact that he resided and worked in the Netherlands for the latter part of his life (Den Herder 1970).

Comenius, who came from Moravia, east of Brno, became a great theologian, philosopher and theoretician in the field of education. His importance as a pedagogue is acknowledged to this day. He was exiled following the defeat of the protestant nobility of Bohemia and Moravia in the Battle of the White Mountain in 1620 and the subsequent annexation of the Czech lands into the Catholic Habsburg Empire. Because of these historical developments, the protestant refugees already had close contacts with the Netherlands, including the Bohemian king, Frederick V, the so-called 'Winter King', and his family who were granted asylum in the Netherlands. Comenius would later write his *Unum Necessarium* (1668) for Prince Rupert, one of the sons of the Winter King.

Over the years he was supported by the De Geer/Trip family. The fact that various members of this family had their portraits painted by Rembrandt **169**, **184b**], **296**, **297a/b** suggests the possibility (tentatively advanced here) that they also had Comenius portrayed by Rembrandt. Toward the end of the 17th century, the painting came either into the possession of Grand Duke Cosimo III or his son Ferdinando di Cosimo III de' Medici (1663-1713) and hence into the collection of Cardinal Leopoldo de' Medici.

307 Rembrandt, **Titus reading** (**study in direct and reflected light**), *c.* 1660/1665, canvas 70.5 x 64 cm. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum. HdG 238; Br. 122; Bauch 418; Gerson 335; Br./Gerson 122; Tümpel 185.
Inscription: none

If this painting is in the first place approached from the point of view of the subject, as we are inclined to do, many will get the impression that Titus (if the sitter is indeed Rembrandt's son, which seems highly likely, see Note **242**) was a young man with a passion for reading.

But when one realizes that Rembrandt on different occasions used a book or a piece of paper, or some other light-reflecting surface held by the subject to light up the shadows in the face of a head lit obliquely from behind, then one has to consider the possibility that this painting could have had a rather different *raison d'être* (see also the Note to **241**).

The fact that the painter opted for complex lighting here invites the speculation that it was a deliberately chosen *tour-de-force*; Rembrandt's demonstration of his skill in being able to represent credibly a complex lighting situation, with direct and indirect light coming from different directions. We know from the book on the art of painting written by Rembrandt's pupil, Samuel van Hoogstraten (1627-1678), that Rembrandt had a particular interest in the rendering of the way light is reflected from an illuminated surface into the shadow of another form. Hoogstraten wrote:

> *'Our Rembrant (sic) acquitted himself wonderfully in reflections; yes it seemed as if this choice for the secondary reflection of light was his element'* (SvH p. 273).

308 Rembrandt, **Portrait of Gerard de Lairesse**, 1665, canvas 112 x 87 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Robert Lehman Collection. HdG 658; Br. 321; Bauch 441; Gerson 407; Br./Gerson 321; Tümpel 222; see also Haverkamp-Begemann 1998; Liedtke 2007 p. 706.
Inscription: below left ‹*Rembrandt f. 1665*›

Gerard de Lairesse (1640-1711) was an extremely gifted painter of history pieces, ceiling pieces and wall decorations. He was also a brilliant art-theoretician. He came to Amsterdam from Liege around 1665 and immediately found work as a painter in the firm of Gerrit Uylenburgh (son of Hendrick Uylenburgh). Shortly thereafter he had his portrait painted by Rembrandt.

According to his first biographer, Arnold Houbraken (Houbraken vol. 3 pp. 109-110) De Lairesse's peculiar and unfortunate facial deformity, specifically the very short nose, was congenital. Modern medics have considered that this is a symptom of congenital syphilis, a diagnosis supported by the fact that he rather suddenly went blind in 1690, ending his career as a painter. His blindness, however, did not prevent him from dictating a voluminous treatise on painting. His *Groot Schilderboek* was published in 1707, a book that was widely used by painters into the 19th century and was translated into German, English and French.

* **309** Rembrandt, **Portrait of Jan Boursse, sitting by a stove; probably painted in preparation of an unrealized etched portrait**, *c.* 1666, panel 47 x 40.5 cm. Winterthur, Museum Oskar Reinhart 'Am Römerholz'. HdG -; Br. 298; Bauch 432; Gerson 393 (as a work from the Rembrandt school); Br./Gerson 298 (attribution not convincing); Tümpel -; see also Winterthur 2003 no. 32.
Inscription: none

This small painting, which only surfaced on the art market in 1921 and shortly thereafter was acquired by Oskar Reinhart as a work by Rembrandt, has until now received little attention in the art historical literature. In 1969, the painting was dismissed by Gerson as 'a painting from the Rembrandt-school'. Since then it has been ignored in the Rembrandt literature.

There is reason to question Gerson's verdict. One of the arguments vital to a reattribution of the work to Rembrandt is that this almost monochrome painting (only face and hands are in colour) may be regarded as a sketch for a printed portrait that was never executed. This would explain several of the painting's peculiar characteristics. It needs to be said, first of all, that the painting is in poor condition and furthermore badly restored. The X-ray image shows, for instance, that the poorly painted, hanging hand is an awkward reconstruction by a restorer.

The reason for thinking that we are looking here at an oil sketch made with a view to a print is that the background has been elaborated in considerable detail. Such a complex play of moderately light and deep, dark tones in the background is quite normal for Rembrandt's portrait etchings. The choice of such solutions may have had to do with the etching medium, where a uniformly or only slightly varied, neutral dark background, as in most of Rembrandt's painted portraits, would appear to produce technical problems, not only with regard to the work with the etching needle but possibly also with the inking and printing of the plate. Apart from B. 272 (1651, 'Clement de Jonge'), where the background is indicated by a few lines, the background in all Rembrandt's other etched portraits is worked up in some detail, either by the addition of objects of various kinds, or parts of an interior behind or next to the subject (see B. 266 (1634, Jan Cornelis Sylvius); B. 279 (1635, Johannes Uytenbogaert); B. 281 (1639, Jan Wtenbogaert); B. 271 (1641, Cornelis Claesz Anslo); B. 280 (1646, Jan Cornelis Sylvius); B. 285 (1647, Jan Six); B. 278 (1647, Ephraim Bueno, see **215**); B. 277 (*c.* 1648, Jan Asselyn); B. 274 (*c.* 1655, Thomas Haaringh, 'Old Haaringh'); B 275 (1655, Jacob Haaringh, 'Young Haaringh'); B. 284 (*c.* 1656, Arnold Tholinx); B. 276 (1656, Jan Lutma); B. 273 (*c.* 1656, Abraham Francen); B. 282 (*c.* 1658, Lieven Willemsz van Coppenol, 'The small Coppenol'; B. 283 (1658, Lieven Willemsz van Coppenol, 'The large Coppenol', see **260**); B. 264 (1665, Jan Antonides van der Linden)).

This phenomenon and the correspondence with Rembrandt's other two known oil sketches for etched portraits – of Ephraim Bueno and Lieven Willemsz van Coppenol **215** and **260** – argue that the painting under discussion may indeed have been intended as a preliminary sketch for an etching that was never executed. Furthermore, as in well-nigh all preparatory sketches by Rembrandt for etchings, the painting is not signed. The (putative) planned print could have been on a smaller scale than the present painting, as in the case of the etched *Portrait of Ephraim Bueno* from 1648 **215**.

The usual title of the *Portrait of a man before a smelting oven* suggests that the sitter could be a metalworker – for example a silversmith. He is indeed sitting in front of an oven-like structure with what would appear to be the chimney mantel above the man's head. One could compare this with Rembrandt's portrait etching of the goldsmith Jan Lutma (B. 276), but in that print a burning fire is shown under the mantel and the tools of a smith are clearly on view. Indeed, one may justifiably ask whether the structure in this painting actually needs to be seen as a metalworker's oven at all. Firstly, there is the lack of any clear evidence of such a craft: the shapes on the 'oven' are more likely to be the result of over-cleaning of the dark paint in that part of the painting rather than deliberately painted tools or other objects that might be connected with the sitter's occupation. But more significantly, the historian Jaap van der Veen (verbal communication) has proposed an altogether different identification of the sitter as someone who had nothing to do with metalworking.

In one of the countless probate inventories in the Amsterdam City Archive, Van der Veen found a description of a painting: *'een kontrefeytsel van zalr. Jan Boursse sittende voor een kachel'* ('a likeness of the late Jan Boursse sitting before a stove.') No other example of any such description as this is known in seventeenth-century documents, while at the same time a portrait of a man sitting before a stove is also unique. That the object in the painting is indeed a domestic stove is confirmed by Dr. Willemijn Fock's research on 17th-century stoves (verbal communication). The painting mentioned in the inventory is not listed specifically as a work by Rembrandt or by any other painter, but the correspondence between the title of the painting referred to in the document and the unusual subject of the present painting certainly raises the possibility that they are one and the same work.

Jaap van der Veen assembled the following information on Jan Boursse. He was born in Amsterdam in 1622 and established as a chartered estate agent and dealer in pens. He was domiciled in a house in the St. Anthonisbreestraat where his parental house had also stood and where Rembrandt lived and worked from 1631 to 1635, again from 1639 to '58. Until 1662, when he married Machtelt Bronswinckel, Jan Boursse was a bachelor and wealthy. On his death in 1671 he left a well-provided estate with a considerable number of paintings, a collection of art on paper and a library. On these grounds, he can be characterized as a lover of the arts and sciences. It is not known for certain whether members of the Boursse family had had direct contact with Rembrandt, though there are strong indications that this was the case. Jan Boursse owned an art book in 1671 '*almost filled with drawings and prints done by Rembrandt van Rijn*' together with a second album *'partly filled with drawings and prints done by Rembrandt van Rijn'*. Together with the painter and collector Jan van de Capelle, Boursse was one of the earliest owners of a substantial collection of Rembrandt drawings.

There is other documentary evidence of his interest in Rembrandt's work: a drawing after Rembrandt's *Naughty child* (Ben. 40) bears the inscription *"I:Bourse fecit"*. Whether this signature – crossed out by a subsequent owner of the sheet – referred to Jan Boursse or his brother Jacques cannot be certain; but given what we already know about Jan Boursse, he may have been the owner of that drawing and therefore the more likely copyist.

The attribution of the painting to Rembrandt, which has so far (in the above text) been based on documents, is also supported by stylistic arguments. The specific character of the *peinture*, which although cursive nevertheless convincingly renders the forms and the relations between light and shadow, argues strongly for Rembrandt's authorship. The same is true of the freedom with which the forms, in so far as they are legible in the X-ray image, assume a more precise definition. The block-like shapes in the details of the clothing are characteristic of the late Rembrandt (see **308**, **317**, **318**).

Dendrochronological investigation by the Zurich 'Office for Archaeology' gave an earliest possible date of *c.* 1665 for painting the panel.

* **310** Rembrandt, **A presumed sketch for the male sitter in the 'Jewish Bride'**, mid-1660s, panel 38.4 x 31.1 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 411; Br. 296; Bauch 426; Gerson -; Br./Gerson 296 (the attribution to Rembrandt is not convincing); Tümpel -; see also Liedtke 2007 pp. 755-757 (as painted by a minor pupil).
Inscription: in the lower right background *‹Rembr/f. 1659›* [there was no place for the rest of Rembrandt's name]. The inscription is undoubtedly applied by another hand than Rembrandt's.

Since Gerson in 1969 stated that 'the attribution of this little painting to Rembrandt is not convincing', no author has defended its previously universally accepted attribution to Rembrandt. In 1976 Bruyn was reminded of Sir Joshua Reynold's studio (quote from Liedtke's 2007 entry) and in 1980, at the suggestion of Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann, the Museum's attribution was changed from 'Rembrandt' to 'style of Rembrandt, probably eighteenth century'. Others, like Sumowski, have attributed the painting to Willem Drost (Sumowski *Gemälde* V p. 3090 no. 2038). In *Rembrandt/Not Rembrandt* (II no. 33) Liedtke also opted for Drost as the possible author, an attribution denied by Jonathan Bikker (Bikker 2005 pp. 150-151 no. R. 19). In his *Dutch Paintings in The Metropolitan Museum of Art*, Liedtke grouped it among works in the 'Style of Rembrandt', thus implying that he did not consider it to be an authentic work by Rembrandt (nor by Drost) (Liedtke 2007 pp. 755-757).

Given the paint surface and its ageing, it would seem that this painting must be a 17th-century work. Moreover, it is painted on an oak panel which, like most panels used by Rembrandt, comes from the Polish Baltic region. According to Klein, '… an earliest felling date can be derived for the year 1640. With the median of 15 sapwood rings and a minimum of 2 years for the storage time of the wood used, an origin for the painting is plausible from 1658 onwards.' (see *Corpus* IV p. 656).

The painting's first design was introduced in translucent brown, freely brushed, on the yellowish ground that was usual in Dutch 17th-century paintings on panel. Parts of this first sketch can be seen, for example, in the background on the right, next to the beret, in large parts of the shadowed area of the face and in the eye-socket on the lit side, in the hair, locally in the red cloak where a red translucent paint, partly stippled, is applied over the brown sketch with the yellow ground showing through it. This type of underpainting was the method commonly used by Rembrandt and his workshop (see **238**). The part of the costume below the red cloak takes its tone from a series of parallel, curved scratches in the dark brown paint – apparently made by the hairs of a dry brush. It evidently also belongs to the first, rough design. The fleeting but accurately placed licks and touches of opaque paint – aimed mainly at introducing the lights, suggesting plasticity and capturing the likeness of this effigy – typify the fugitive nature of the execution of this small portrait.

There are further indications that we are not dealing here with an independent work of art, but rather a sketch made with a view to some other purpose. For instance, the vague manner in which the indication of the hand in the bottom right corner is executed also points to this. So too does the speed of execution of passages such as the brown costume (mentioned above), the red cloak laid over it and the summarily painted beret. In addition, the way the sitter's right temple, visible between falling strands of hair, is lit. The quick scratches in the hair and the cursory manner in which the white collar is suggested below the chin to the right also point to the same conclusion.

The inscription in the shadow of the right background is in an unusual script. In fact, it is so unreliable that one may safely state that this small painting was originally unsigned – which is consistent with the hypothesis that the painting is a preparatory sketch.

If the suggestion implied here regarding the function of this small oil sketch is correct, it would imply indirectly that we are in fact dealing with an autograph work by Rembrandt. Other arguments reinforce this conclusion. Time and again one finds a different *peinture* applied to a particular passage, yet always demonstrating a freedom and variety such as one finds only with Rembrandt. Also in the handling of the light in the face, the collar and the cloak one observes a rightness and adequacy that are typical of Rembrandt. In this context it is striking how cursory (at the same time highly effective) is the detailing applied to the man's hair: at the top left, loose hairs are suggested by a combination of hatched scratches and licks of thick, light paint. Beneath this area generous curls are indicated with modelling sweeps and next to the cheek a few scratches for individual hairs. At the bottom, where the thick masses of hair disappear in the space behind the head, these locks are indicated with thin, opaque paint.

Fig. 1. Detail of **310**

Fig. 2. Detail of **312**

It has been noted that the sitter in this sketch has the same features as the male sitter in the 'Jewish Bride' **312**: both have long noses which show the unusually prominent nasal bone, a small mouth and narrow chin, the same kind of longish dimple in the cheek, and the same hairdo (compare **figs. 1** and **2**).

Admittedly in the present sketch the eyes are wider apart, but one only has to compare Rembrandt's self-portraits **224** and **256** to realize how difficult it could be – and certainly for Rembrandt – to get the distance between the eyes correct. It has to be said that rendering a convincing likeness was actually not one of Rembrandt's strongest points (see also *Doc.* 1654/4 and *Corpus* II A 56). Given the proposed function of the present sketch, the resemblance between the two sitters lends further weight to the arguments for a reattribution of **310** to Rembrandt.

If the man depicted here is indeed the same as portrayed in the *Jewish Bride*, then presumably the two paintings would have originated during the same period of the 1660s; a more precise dating within that decade, however, is impossible to estimate.

311a Rembrandt, **Portrait of a man with a magnifying glass**, **possibly Pieter Haaringh** (companion piece to **311b**), *c.* 1665, canvas 91.4 x 74.3 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 755; Br. 326; Bauch 447; Gerson 417; Br./Gerson 326; Tümpel 223; see also Liedtke 2007 pp. 693-703.
Inscription: none

311b Rembrandt, **Portrait of a woman with a carnation**, **possibly Lysbet Jansdr Delft** (*c.* 1620-1679) (companion piece to **311a**), *c.* 1665, canvas 92.1 x 74.6 cm. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. HdG 869; Br. 401; Bauch 529; Gerson 418; Br./Gerson 401; Tümpel 249; see also Liedtke 2007 pp. 704-705
Inscription: none

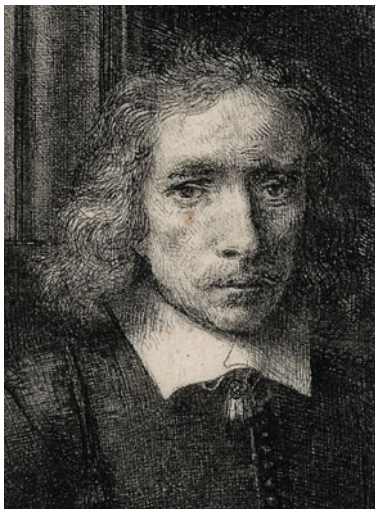


Fig. 1. Detail of B. 275. Mirror image.

For a long time it was impossible to establish the identity of this subtly painted pair in 'antique' dress. At the 2006 Rembrandt Symposium in Berlin, Walter Liedtke suggested that the man could be Pieter Haaringh (1609-1685), a lawyer from Utrecht, an etched portrait of whom was made by Rembrandt in 1655 (**fig. 1**). One recognizes the same narrow face with striking features: on either side of a relatively small, narrow chin sharp creases run almost vertically (parallel to the jaw); he has pronounced eyebrows and rather widely set eyes, while the hairline above the forehead is the same in both etching and painting.

Pieter Haaringh was an auctioneer of estates in Amsterdam. His uncle Thomas Haaringh, portrayed in an etching by Rembrandt (B. 274), supervised the various sales of Rembrandt's property from 1656 to at least 1659. As Liedtke pointed out, the fact that the sitter in Rembrandt's painting holds a magnifying glass in his right hand could refer to 'his responsibility as connoisseur and auctioneer in service to the city of Amsterdam.'

Pieter Haaringh was married in 1641 to Lysbet Jansdochter Delft (*c.* 1620-1679), who was then 21 years old. The portraits would appear to have been painted considerably later, around 1665. The carnation held by Lysbet could well be a symbol of love.

312 Rembrandt, '**Portrait historié' of a couple as Isaac and Rebecca** (**known as** '**The Jewish Bride**'), *c.* 1665, canvas 121.5 x 166.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. HdG 929; Br. 416; Bauch 38; Gerson 356; Br./Gerson 416; Tümpel 32; see also Tümpel 1967 pp. 36-53.
Inscription: on the balustrade below the vase ‹*Rembrandt f./16*›

Fig. 1. Rembrandt, *Isaac and Rebecca spied upon by Abimelech* (mid 1660s), pen and ink, 14.5 x 18.5 cm. New York, Private collection (Ben. 988).

Fig. 2. S. Badalocchio, *Isaac and Rebecca spied upon by Abimelech* (1606), engraving after Raphaël's fresco in the Vatican, 13.2 x 17.8 cm.

Fig. 3. Crispijn van de Passe the Elder, *Isaac and Rebecca spied upon by Abimelech* (1612), engraving *c.* 8.5 x 12.7 cm.

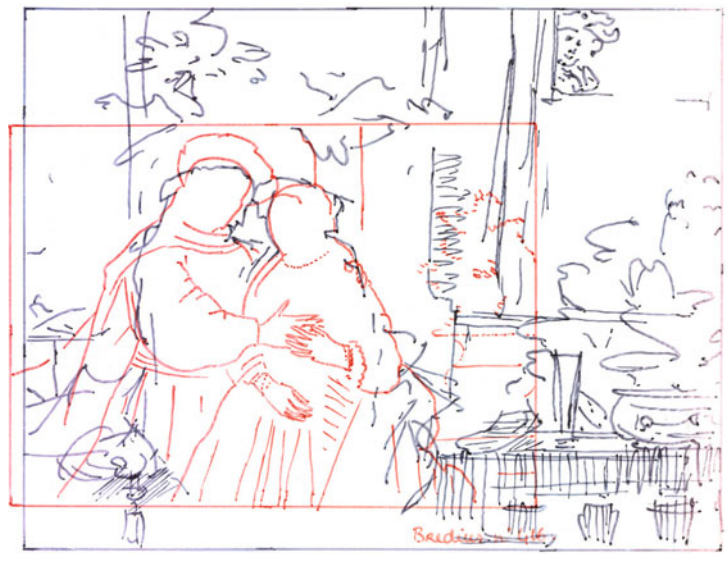


Fig. 4. 'The Jewish Bride' (in red), projected on fig. 1 (black) (reconstruction on the basis of fig. 1 by Laurence Aëgerter).

The commonly accepted title of this painting, *The Jewish Bride*, which first came into vogue during the 19th century, in fact has no basis in any 17th-century document nor in any Jewish tradition that Rembrandt could have known about. Several indications suggest rather that it is a *portrait historié* in which the subjects had themselves portrayed as Isaac and Rebecca. Christian Tümpel, who first proposed that the man and the woman were Isaac and Rebecca (Tümpel 1967 pp. 36-52), based his interpretation *inter alia* on the existence of a drawing attributed to Rembrandt in which a similar loving couple is spied on by someone from a window, top right (**fig. 1**), a drawing which fits into the visual tradition of the relevant scene from the Old Testament (see e.g. **fig. 2** and **3**). Abraham's son Isaac and his wife Rebecca are described in Genesis 24:67 as a devoted couple who set out on a journey to Egypt during a famine. On the way,

God advises Isaac to remain in the land of the Philistines, where King Abimeldech rules.

> **Genesis 26: 6-11** 'So Isaac dwelt in Gerar. And the men of the place asked about his wife. And he said, "She is my sister"; for he was afraid to say, "She is my wife," because he thought, "lest the men of the place kill me for Rebecca, because she is beautiful to behold." Now it came to pass, when he had been there a long time, that Abimelech king of the Philistines looked through a window, and saw, and there was Isaac, showing endearment to Rebecca his wife. Then Abimelech called Isaac and said, "Quite obviously she *is* your wife; so how could you say, 'She is my sister'?" Isaac said to him, "Because I said, 'Lest I die on account of her.'" And Abimelech said, "What *is* this you have done to us? One of the people might soon have lain with your wife, and you would have brought guilt on us." So Abimelech charged all *his* people, saying, "He who touches this man or his wife shall surely be put to death."

The fact that the two figures were originally depicted seated and that (according to the X-radiograph) Rebecca originally had her right leg placed over Isaac's left leg would seem to confirm that the couple was having a sexual encounter.

Technical evidence, specifically the different widths of the three strips of linen joined vertically and the presence or absence of cusping along the edges of the linen support, suggests that the originally larger painting conformed to the scene as shown in **figs. 1** and **4**.

313 Rembrandt, **Family portrait**, *c.* 1665, canvas 126 x 167 cm. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum. HdG 931; Br. 417; Bauch 541; Gerson 416; Br./Gerson 417; Tümpel 257; see also Klessmann 1983 no. 238.
Inscription: the inscription <*Rembrandt.f*> in gracefully joined letters on the basket with petals is so utterly different from the inscriptions that Rembrandt applied to his paintings that one can exclude any possibility that this signature is authentic.

This is a heart-warming portrait of a family. A mother holds a little boy on her knee where, with her head bent lovingly over him, she steadies him with her left hand. The child reaches for her breast with one hand while the other grasps a rattle. A smiling girl, her face fully lit, gazes at her elder sister who appears to have just arrived with a basket of multicoloured petals. She stands with her back to the light coming from top left so that her face is mostly in shadow and only recognizable because of the light reflected back from her sister's face and her flower basket. The man stands behind his family, looking out contentedly. In his right hand he holds a red flower.

There is a festive harmony of the merging pink, the glowing red and the deep, dark reds of the mother and baby that seem to dominate the image and is yet held in balance by the subdued greens of the girls, dresses and the intense black of the man's attire against the deep, dark greys of the background. The most intriguing aspect of the painting is Rembrandt's differentiated brushwork in the clothes of the mother and her child. Within the simplicity and stability of the forms of these figures, the clouds of loose, rhythmically placed brushstrokes, seemingly guided by chance, invite us to continue working on the painting ourselves. The role of chance in the execution of the painting and the concreteness of the pastose paint lying at the surface gives the image a remarkable material presence.

It is perhaps surprising that any patron would have his wife and children painted in this rough manner. It certainly says something about the reception of the late Rembrandt by his contemporaries – although what exactly it says remains at present something of an enigma. The adventurous lighting of the girl to the left could perhaps indicate that the patron may have been an art-lover, who admired Rembrandt's play with reflected light (see in this connection the Notes to **216**, **241**, **307**).

314 Rembrandt, **Lucretia**, 1666, canvas 111 x 95 cm. Minneapolis, Institute of Arts. HdG 220; Br. 485; Bauch 286; Gerson 372; Br./Gerson 485; Tümpel 115; see also Golahny 2003 pp. 148-156; *R. in America* no. 50.
Inscription: bottom left ‹*Rembrandt f 1666*›

As recounted in Livy's *The History of Rome* Bk 1: 57-60, it was the incident depicted in this painting that precipitated the overthrow of the Roman monarchy in 509 BC and the creation of a Republic. During a lull in the Roman siege of Ardea led by the ruling tyrant, Tarquinius Superbus, the royal princes were feasting together and boasting of the merits of their respective wives. Collatinus in his turn extolled the virtues of his wife Lucretia. It was decided to pay their wives back home a surprise visit to see for themselves whom they prized most and indeed they found the modest Lucretia the most beautiful and virtuous of all. Inflamed by lust, the king's youngest son Sextus Tarquinius returned by night and raped Lucretia, threatening to lay a slave with his throat cut beside her, whom he would pretend to have killed to avenge her husband's honour. A messenger is sent to call her husband Collatinus and her father with trusted friends. Lucretia tells them what has happened, promising that "it is only the body that has been violated, the soul is pure; death shall bear witness to that", whereupon she kills herself.

The following quote is based on a German translation of Livy with woodcut illustrations by Tobias Stimmer (1539-1584) (**fig. 1**), a book which Rembrandt is believed to have possessed and consulted (Gohlany 2003 p. 154 and Chapter V note 30).

> 'She took a knife, which she had hidden under her clothing, and [thrust it] into her heart, felt the wound [and] dropped to the ground and began to die. While her husband and father lamented, her brother Brutus removed the bloody knife from her body; they then vowed revenge.'

Fig. 1. Tobias Stimmer, *The Death of Lucretia*, woodcut (reproduced without the decorative framing).

Fig. 2. Detail of **314**

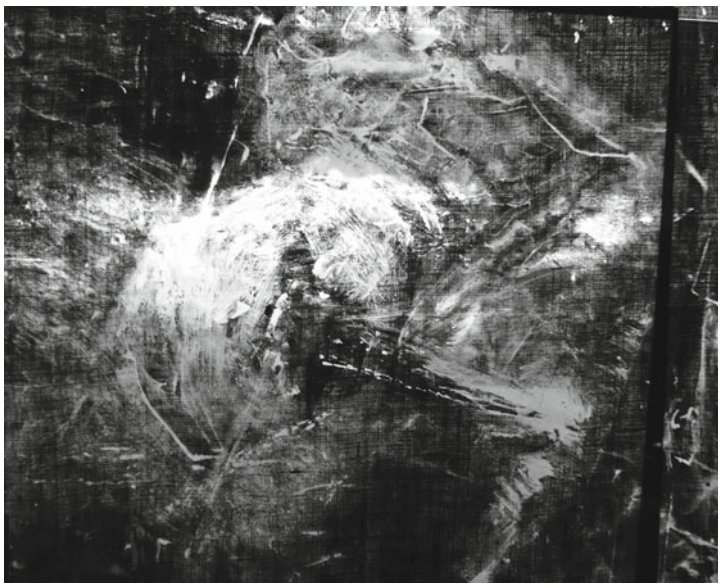


Fig. 3. X-ray of **314**. Detail corresponding to fig. 2.

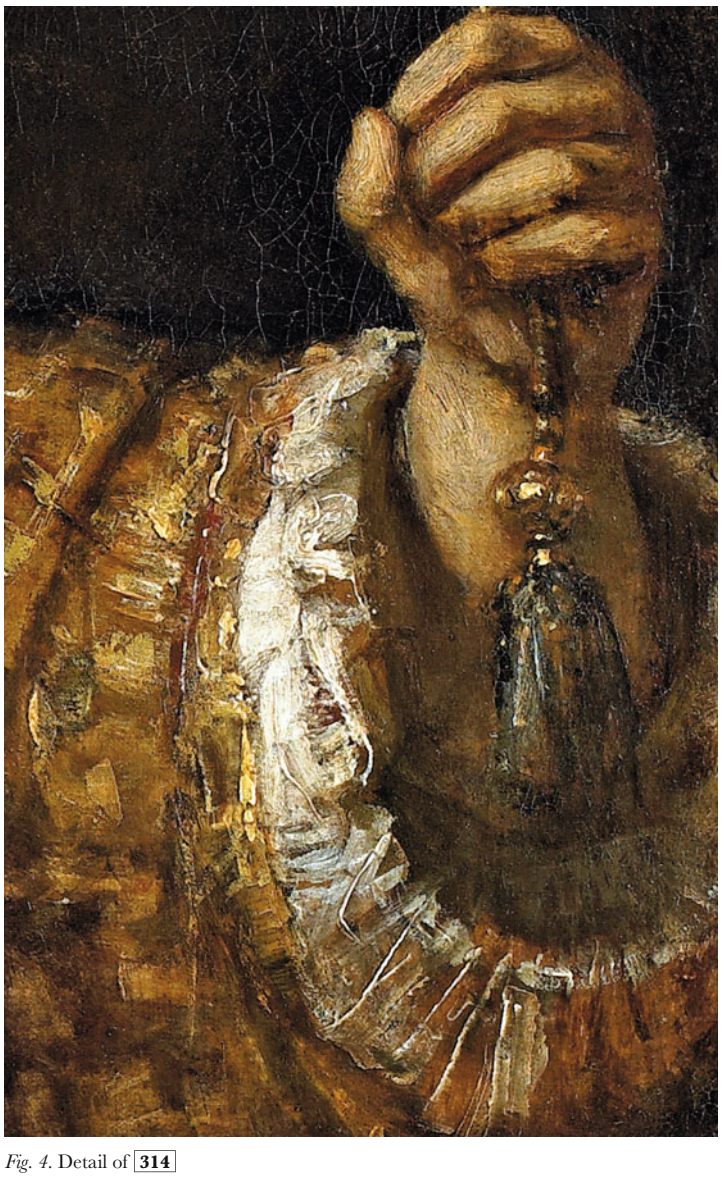


Fig. 4. Detail of **314**

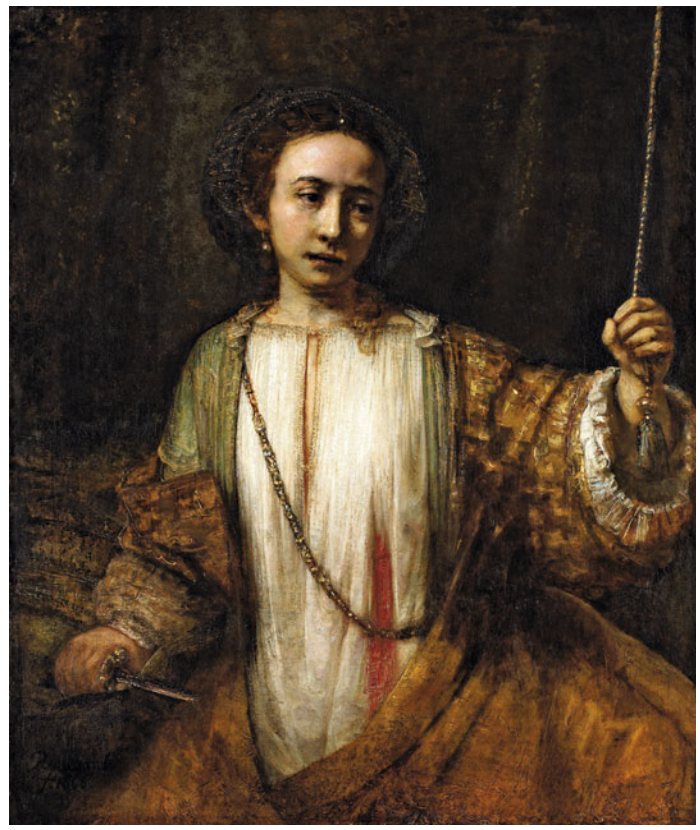
Fig. 5. X-ray of **314**. Detail corresponding to fig. 4.

The appreciation of this painting is seriously hampered by the execution of the hands, especially Lucretia's right hand with the dagger. Our study of the complete X–radiograph of the painting *in situ* provided a possible explanation for these disturbing features (see below).

Confronting the painting itself, specifically the paint surface, with the X-radiographic image reveals that this work was executed with extraordinary speed and directness. This is particularly striking in view of the life-size scale of the figure. For the most part it was executed with a pallet knife and very broad brushstrokes. Only the execution of the face shows a modest degree of refinement.

The X-radiographic image also shows that both hands were originally indicated with an extraordinarily free yet accurate handling of brush and knife. They were probably left in this state, which may have led a later painter to 'finish' them in a disturbingly clumsy manner (**figs. 2**, **3** and **4**, **5**). In this respect it would seem that the present case is comparable to the right hand of the wading woman in the *Callisto in the wilderness* **229**, which was left in a sketchy state

Fig. 6. Pupil of Rembrandt, *Lucretia*, 1664, canvas 116 x 99 cm. Washington, The National Gallery.



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by Rembrandt and was 'completed' by a much later painter (see *Corpus* V 19 figs 24 and 23).

There is a second painting, in Washington, of the same subject in Rembrandt's late style, that has traditionally been attributed to Rembrandt (**fig. 6**). The formal properties and the execution of that painting, I am convinced, exclude the possibility that it could be an autograph work by Rembrandt. The treatment of form recalls the work of Aert de Gelder. Whatever the case, there is a clear relation between the Washington *Lucretia* and the swiftly executed painting discussed here. One is led to speculate that there must have been a relationship between the maker of the Washington painting and Rembrandt, even though the nature of that relationship may not be entirely clear.

Perhaps we have a situation here comparable to that discussed in *Corpus* V pp. 240-241 concerning the origin and function of a drawing depicting the *Return of the Holy Family from Egypt*, attributed to Rembrandt's occasional pupil Constantijn Daniel van Renesse (1626-1680) (**fig. 7**). It is possible that this drawing is a free variant of a drawing by Rembrandt with the same subject (**fig. 8**); but it is much more probable, as has been cautiously suggested by Holm Bevers (Los Angeles 2009, pp. 190-191), that Renesse's drawing first originated as a study assignment, and that Rembrandt's critical commentary was noted (possibly by Renesse himself) on the back of his drawing. It reads as follows:

> *'As for changes, it would be better if the ass were seen from behind rather than having all three heads facing out of the picture. Also more foliage should be depicted around the tree. 1. Joseph is lifting too forcibly and rudely. 2. Mary has to hold the child with greater care, for a tender child does not like being held so tightly. Joseph is too short and thick, his head grows out of his [trunk], and both of their heads are too big'.*

Fig. 7. Constantijn Daniel van Renesse, *The return from Egypt, c.* 1652, black chalk, pen and brown and grey ink, brush and grey wash, 19.5 x 22.3 cm. Dresden, Kupferstichkabinett.

Fig. 8. Rembrandt, *The return from Egypt, c.* 1652, reed pen and brown ink, 19.3 x 24.1 cm. Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett (Ben. 902).

Fig. 9. Constantijn Daniel van Renesse, *Daniel in the lion's den,* 1649-52, black chalk, pen and brown wash, heightened with white, 20.6 x 32 cm. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen.

Fig. 10. Rembrandt, *Daniel in the lion's den*, *c.* 1650, reed pen and brown ink, wash, 22.2 x 18.5 cm. Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet (Ben. 887).

Bevers suggested that Rembrandt not only criticized the drawing verbally, but also demonstrated his alternative ideas in a drawing of his own (**fig. 8**). The correlation between the content of the inscription and Rembrandt's drawing is so striking that it would seem to confirm Bevers' suggestion. To understand this particular case fully it is important to know that the young Renesse was not a regular apprentice but rather an external pupil who seems to have taken occasional lessons from Rembrandt. Apparently he was given an assignment each time which was subsequently discussed by Rembrandt, who, perhaps in Renesse's presence, then sketched an alternative (better) solution. This may also have been the case with Rembrandt's *Daniel in the lions's den* (**figs. 9** and **10**).

In any case, whether or not the Washington *Lucetia* was painted by De Gelder, its relation to the present, swiftly executed painting could well have been due to its proposed origin in a similar pedagogical context.

315 Rembrandt, **Portrait of a white-haired man**, 1667, canvas 108.9 x 92.7 cm. Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria. HdG 743; Br. 323; Bauch 445; Gerson 414; Br./Gerson 323; Tümpel 226; see also Bl. cat. 27.
Inscription: above centre ‹*Rembrandt f. 1667*›

To date, it has not been possible to establish the identity of this man (holding his wide-brimmed hat in his left hand). To understand the sitter's pose, and particularly the transection of the right hand, it is important to know that round the painting a strip of the originally unpainted edge of the canvas has been preserved, from which we can conclude that the painting still has its original format, and that the transected right hand must therefore have been intentional (see also **222** and **316**).

316 Rembrandt, **Portrait of an elderly man seated**, **possibly Pieter de la Tombe**, 1667, canvas 81.9 x 67.7 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis. HdG 829; Br. -; Bauch 444; Gerson 409; Br./Gerson 323A; Tümpel 147; see also Bl. cat. 28; Van der Veen in Amsterdam 1999 p. 144.
Inscription: centre left ‹*Rembrandt f. 1667*›

In Note **304** it was suggested that among Rembrandt's portraits a special category could be singled out: portraits of and for family members and friends. These portraits can be distinguished by their smaller format and sometimes also smaller scale compared with the formal portraits (varying from bust pieces to full-length portraits) that Rembrandt painted for his wealthy patrons.

This short introduction is relevant in the present context because Jaap van der Veen has suggested that this unusual painting could possibly be a portrait of Pieter de la Tombe (1593-1677), an art dealer, bookbinder and bookseller, graphic artist and longtime friend – or at least business acquaintance – of Rembrandt (*Doc.* 1650/4; 1656/12 no. 109; 1658/27). In his 1671 testament Pieter de la Tombe left two portraits of himself painted by Rembrandt (which cannot be identified with certainty) from '*both his young and elderly days*' ('sijn jonge als oude dagen') (Van der Veen in Amsterdam 1999 p. 144). Van der Veen thinks it possible that the painting discussed here could be De la Tombe's portrait from his 'e*lderly days*'; in 1667, the date on the painting, Pieter de la Tombe would have been 70 years old.

There is much evidence to suggest that we are indeed dealing

with one of Rembrandt's friend-portraits. If one compares it with **315** it is conspicuous that the sitters in both portraits have the same posture, but that the man in the present painting is placed in a much narrower frame (the canvas unquestionably still has its original format) and that the execution of **316** is much freer and looser than that of **315**. It is also significant that both the fabric of the support and the material used as a ground are of very poor quality, which, however, is not evident on the surface. From the X-radiograph it appears that the support is a rough burlap, while the ground largely consists of red and brown ochres, chalk (all inexpensive pigments) and very little of the much more costly lead white (Groen 2005, *Corpus* IV Table III p. 670). Since it was not unusual for the sitter himself to provide the support (*Painter at Work* p. 19), it is very well possible that De la Tombe picked up the cheapest possible canvas from a local primer – on his way, as it were, to have his portrait painted. The execution of the portrait is unusually hasty: considerable parts of the green/grey ground remain exposed and there is far more use of scratching in the wet paint for detailing in the costume and hair than in any other painting by Rembrandt. But there is also no other portrait by Rembrandt in which the sitter is shown so informally relaxed as in the present painting. All this was evidently sufficient for Bredius to consider this work a 19th-century Belgian Rembrandt-forgery (Bredius 1921 p. 151). In an unusual turnaround, Gerson (following Hofstede de Groot, J. G van Gelder and Rosenberg) disagreed with Bredius' rejection, stating that the painting was "genuinely signed and dated" and "matches perfectly the other commissioned portrait of 1667" **315**.

317 Rembrandt, **Portrait of Titus van Rijn** (companion piece to **318**?), *c.* 1668, canvas 72 x 56 cm. Paris, Louvre. HdG 709; Br. 126; Bauch 427; Gerson 375; Br./Gerson 126; Tümpel A77 (as from Rembrandt's school); see also Foucart 2009 p. 216.
Inscription: none

For other paintings for which Titus probably posed, see **242**.

318 Rembrandt, **Portrait of a young woman**, **possibly Magdalena van Loo** (companion piece to **317**?), *c.* 1668, canvas 56.3 x 47.5 cm. Montreal, Museum of Fine Arts. HdG 503; Br. 400; Bauch 520; Gerson 337; Br./Gerson 400; Tümpel 248.
Inscription: a signature and date may have been lost with the pieces cut from the painting on all sides

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318

The authenticity of **318** has never been questioned. Few authors have failed to notice similarities between this work and the *Woman with a Pink (Lijsbet Jansdr Delft?)* at the Metropolitan Museum in New York **311b**. Horst Gerson even supposed that the two paintings were painted after the same model. Although the postures of the heads of the two women show striking similarities, their physiognomic features are markedly different. The nose, the position of the eyes, the eyelids and the forehead of the subject depicted in the present painting differ significantly from those in the New York painting. It rather seems that Rembrandt in his female portraits from around the mid-1660s followed an ideal of female beauty that one also finds in the *Jewish Bride* **312**, the woman in the Braunschweig *Family portrait* **313** and the *Portrait of a lady with a lap dog* **305**. Each of these women is portrayed with large, relatively wide-set eyes. They also share a prominently rendered, more or less protruding forehead which is emphasized by a slight bending of the head. For the following reasons it is highly unlikely that the present portrait still has its original format: a) the unusual, nearly square proportions of the painting; b) the absence of cusping along all four edges; and c) the way an incomplete buckle-like object on her waist is placed in relation to the lower edge. The painting must originally have been larger, certainly along the bottom edge, but probably the other three sides as well.

In his *Rembrandt: Catalogo completo* (no. 192) Leonard Slatkes suggested that the Montreal painting was not meant to be a formal portrait. The sketchy execution of the woman's dress led him to wonder whether the painting had a different function than e.g. the *Woman with a pink* in New York **311b**. The woman in the present painting wears a black gown with slashes through which white fabric protrudes. The seeming cursoriness with which these details are executed was taken by Slatkes as an indication that the painting could have served as a sketch. On the other hand, the fact that the painting must originally have been larger and the meticulousness with which the face has been executed argue against that idea. The cursory brushwork in the gown certainly accords with Rembrandt's late style. Comparison between the visible image of these details and the X-radiograph shows that the slashes went through stages of elaboration, especially along the woman's neck and her right arm. A pentimento in the neck also betrays the attention paid by Rembrandt to the conception of this work.

The placing of the sitter in **318** almost certainly implies that there must have been (or at least have been planned) a male pendant. It would be worthwhile to consider the possibility that Rembrandt's portrait of his son Titus (1642-1668) at the Louvre **317** might be the original pendant. The placing of Titus within the painting surface further suggests the existence of a pendant (cf. **235a/b**); he is positioned differently from the way Rembrandt placed single young men in portraits e.g. **71**, **115** or **257**. The supports and grounds of **317** and **318**, could not be closely investigated for the technical evidence that could support the possibility that the two paintings may be in fact pendants. If that would be the case the woman portrayed would be Magdalena van Loo, Titus's wife. In that case the two paintings should be dated 1668, the year the couple married.

Magdalena van Loo (1642-1669) married Titus van Rijn on 10 February 1668 (*Doc.* 1668/2). Magdalena's parents had long been friends of Rembrandt and Saskia (*Doc.* 1659/13). Titus died early in September 1668 and was buried in Amsterdam's Westerkerk on 7 September. Titia, the daughter of Titus and Magdalena, was born on 22 March 1669. Magdalena died in October 1669 and was buried on 21 October, two weeks after Rembrandt's funeral. For comment on the modest size of the portrait of Titus and the presumed size of Magdalena' portrait, see note **304**.

319 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait with two circles** (unfinished), *c.* 1665/1669, canvas 114.3 x 94 cm. London, Kenwood House, The Iveagh Bequest. HdG 556; Br. 52; Bauch 331; Gerson 380; Br./Gerson 52; Tümpel 174; ***Corpus* IV 26** and **pp. 303-311**; see also *M/W* cat. 49; *R. Self* no. 83.
Inscription: none

This unfinished self-portrait, with its complicated genesis, has given rise to much speculation, mainly concerning the two partially visible circles on the wall behind. For a survey of the attempts to interpret the two circles in various contexts, one should refer to the exhibition catalogues *M/W* cat. 49 and *R. Self* no. 83. So far no satisfactory solution to this enigma has been found.

An analysis of the genesis and the pictorial qualities of the painting as well as its possible art-theoretical and perceptual-psychological background is to be found in *Corpus* IV 26 and pp. 303-311.

320 Rembrandt and other hand(s), **The return of the prodigal son**, *c.* 1660/1665, canvas 262 x 206 cm. St Petersburg, Hermitage, HdG 113; Br. 598; Bauch 94; Gerson 355; Br./Gerson 598; Tümpel 72; see also *Soviet Museums* no. 28.
Inscription: near the son's feet, left <*Rf Rynf.*> This inscription is, no doubt, faked.

Luke 15: 20-24 "And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. And the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son.' "But the father said to his servants, 'Bring out the best robe and put *it* on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on *his* feet. And bring the fatted calf here and kill *it*, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' (see also Note **107**)

To date there has been no thorough technical investigation of this large painting, so loved by so many. Along with the *Mona Lisa* and the *Night Watch*, for example, it belongs to the exclusive group of museal icons that must remain on permanent display for the public, and as a result cannot be removed for the length of time needed for a full investigation and, if necessary, restoration. A few X-radiographs from different parts of the painting taken during the Soviet period are the only available material for (strictly limited) scientific investigations (see *Soviet Museums* no. 28). It is therefore scarcely possible to get any insight into the painting's genesis or material history.

What is certain, however, is that a *c.* 10 cm wide strip has been added along the right edge, possibly to replace a missing part of the painting. And it is not improbable that the top edge was originally rounded. On the other hand, on the basis of the style, way of working and depiction of the figures involved, it is highly unlikely that the seated young man and the young woman standing in the background are from the same hand as the three main figures in the painting. One cannot avoid similar doubt over the raised plateau on which the meeting between father and prodigal son is staged. A close study of such remarkable discontinuities in the execution of this painting (combined if possible with a replacement of the thick, yellowed varnish and any necessary restorations) might provide insight into the painting's genesis and possibly even answer the question of whether the painting was perhaps left unfinished and was completed by another hand.

The painting also raises other more fundamental questions, mainly concerning two aspects of what might be called the pictorial language employed by the original painter. In the first place, in terms of composition, the frontal placing of the main figures in the image plane is surprising; the result is that the remarkable differences in scale and proportions of the figures become even more

Fig. 1. Pupil of Rembrandt, painted on an unfinished work of Rembrandt from circa 1633/35, *Mordechai kneeling at the feet of Esther and Ahasverus*, 2nd half 1650s, canvas 235 x 190 cm.

pronounced (specifically, the father's head being too small when compared with the man standing to the right).

In the execution of the draperies and their contours one is also struck by a for Rembrandt unusual preference for concavity, whereas in the shapes and folds of Rembrandt's (other) paintings (cf. the *Claudius Civilis* and other paintings from the 50s and 60s) an evident preference for convexity is characteristic. Confronting this painting with the *Claudius Civilis* or, say, the *Jewish Bride*, it seems as if in the handling of paint and form a different language is being spoken.

I am well aware of the fact that if I, on the basis of these observations, allow myself to be tempted to doubt the authenticity of the main parts of this painting, I could be committing myself to the same kind of connoisseurship that I have criticized so vehemently elsewhere in this book. After all, if the image of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre presented here is correct, one must accept that the variation in the use of his pictorial means is both unpredictable and more extreme than in the case of his contemporaries (see Ch. I).

We should therefore postpone judgment until the painting has been restored and can be investigated in depth, and also until we have more circumstantial evidence regarding its attribution. Until such investigation has been carried out, however, it is worth pointing out that, certainly up to 1663, when Aert de Gelder returned to Dordrecht, one or more pupils or assistants (including his son Titus) may have been active in Rembrandt's studio and that such workshop associates also sometimes made very large paintings employing Rembrandt's style and technique with more or less success; see for example the almost equally large *Esther en Ahasverus* from Bucharest (Br. 522), where someone from the workshop in the (late?) fifties remade a painting in Rembrandt's late style that had probably been left unfinished, rolled up in Rembrandt's studio or store room, since *c*. 1635 (**fig. 1**) (see *Corpus* III B 9, *Corpus* V pp. 200-201 and RM Bulletin). In the same context, one should refer to the *Equestrian portrait of Frederick Rihel*, dated 1663, which is even larger than the present painting. I suspect that the horse in the Rihel portrait may not have been executed by Rembrandt himself, whereas the portrayal of Rihel himself (see opposite Plate **304**) is one of Rembrandt's most brilliant portraits.

Given the large size of these and several other of Rembrandt's paintings probably made after 1658, when he moved to the modestly sized rented house on the Rosengracht, we can only assume that he must have had access to a large studio space other than the one in his house at the Rozengracht to be able to paint such large works (or have them – partly – executed by pupils/assistents).

321 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait**, 1669, canvas 86 x 70.5 cm. London, National Gallery. HdG 551; Br. 55; Bauch 339; Gerson 415; Br./Gerson 55; Tümpel 178; ***Corpus* IV 27** and **pp. 303-315**; see also Brown 1991 pp. 336-337; *R. Self* no. 84; *Art in the Making II* no. 21.
Inscription: at the lower left, next to the back of the sitter ‹[*t*] *f.1669*›

It is a commonly held belief that Rembrandt began painting in a fine technique and ended up with a rough manner. The *Self-portrait* in Kenwood **319** seems to confirm this idea. If one compares that work with the painting under discussion here, one could conclude that the execution in the present painting is relatively refined. The course of light and shadow in the figure – from the lit forehead to the hands – and the fine shading in the background adjusted to it, are of great subtlety. With reference to this painting Marieke de Winkel noted in 1999 that:

Fig. 1. H. Cock, *Dieric Bouts*, engraving in: D. Lampsonius, *Pictorum Aliquot Celebrium Germaniae Inferioris Effigies*, Antwerp 1572.

> 'Rembrandt was still drawing inspiration from the prints [with effigies of his great predecessors] in his self-portrait of 1669 [the present painting]. The fifteenth-century doublet with high fur collar and button has many affinities with the portrait of Dieric Bouts (1400?-1475) by Hieronymus Cock (**fig. 1**). The resemblance is heightened when one examines the X-radiograph of Rembrandt's painting (**fig. 2**) which reveals that he originally held a brush in the right hand just as Bouts does.' (*R. Self* p. 71) (see also **178**).

Fig. 2. X-ray of **321**

322 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait with beret**, 1669, canvas 71 x 54 cm. Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi. HdG 540; Br. 60; Bauch 340; Gerson 399; Tümpel 176; Br./Gerson 60; Tümpel 176; ***Corpus* IV 28** and **pp. 303-315**; see also Langendijk 1992 pp. 148-152; *R. Self* no. 85.
Inscription: not observed, perhaps originally on a subsequently excised part.

Fig. 1. V. de Greys and assistants, drawing of the De' Medici's Self-portrait gallery between 1753 and 1765. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. min. 51, fol. 6. The present self-portrait is in the 4th vertical row from the left.

In its present state this painting is a mere shadow of what it must once have been. In many places it appears to have been overpainted by later hands. A thick yellowed and degraded layer of varnish covers these overpaintings, as well as what is left visible of the original paint. There are various indications that the canvas may originally have been substantially larger. The painting's present, relatively narrow, format coincides with what one sees in a detailed drawing, made between 1753 and 1765, of (part of) the collection of self-portraits in the Medici's gallery of self-portraits (fig. 1). It is likely that the present painting was one of the first – if not the first – acquisition for this collection and was probably ordered or bought in 1669 when Duke Cosimo de Medici III visited Amsterdam for the second time (see *Corpus* IV pp. 583-584). This collection was displayed in such a compact way that the paintings were adapted to space left between fixed vertical borders (**fig. 1**), which might explain why the painting had to be cut on both sides. It seems also to have been cropped both at top and bottom in order to re-adjust the proportions of the format (compare the present composition with that of **321** from which even a strip of *c.* 7 cm is missing along the left edge).

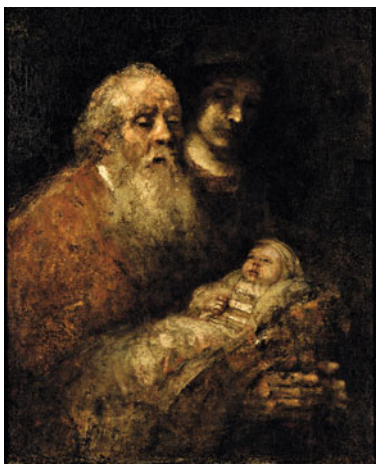
323 Rembrandt, **Self-portrait**, 1669, canvas 63.5 x 57.8 cm. The Hague, Mauritshuis. HdG 527; Br. 62; Bauch 342; Gerson 420; Br./Gerson 62; Tümpel 179; ***Corpus* IV 29** and **pp. 303-315**; see also De Vries et al. 1978 no. XIII; *M/W* cat. 51; *R. Self* no. 86.
Inscription: left centre *‹Rembrandt / f.1669›*

For a long time this work was considered to be the only self-portrait from the last year of Rembrandt's life and as such it was taken to be a unique and tragic document of the terminus of Rembrandt's eventful life. The work's execution, which is rather hesitant in places, as well as Rembrandt's aged physiognomy and the physical condition of his face, compared with his other late self- portraits, would seem to confirm this impression (in this context, compare **319**).

We can, however, be certain that in the same year he created two other self-portraits: **321** and **322**. What stands out from a study of the X-radiographs of all three paintings is that Rembrandt was always in search of the optimal solution for the organization of light (and associated costuming and compositional problems) in his paintings right up to the very last year of his life (see **321** fig. 2).

With a fair degree of certainty, we know of four paintings from the year of Rembrandt's death: the three self-portraits mentioned here **321**-**323** and the probably unfinished *Simeon's song of praise* **324**. The three self-portraits are not – as one might think – to be seen as a last burst of self-reflection on the part of the artist, who after all was only 63 years old at the time. There are strong indications that the Florence painting **322** was made on commission for Duke Cosimo de Medici III in Florence, a commission that might confirm Rembrandt's continued fame abroad. The other two self-portraits from 1669 were probably also painted in response to requests or commissions from art-lovers. When Rembrandt died on 4 October 1669 he must have been fully aware of his international fame.

324 Rembrandt, **Simeon's song of praise**, 1669, canvas 98.5 x 79.5 cm. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum. HdG -; Br. 600; Bauch 95; Gerson 358; Br./Gerson 600; Tümpel 73; see also Stockholm 2005 pp. 413-416.
Inscription: none



For the relevant biblical text see the Note to **16**.

A document has survived which gives us a glimpse into Rembrandt's studio in the months just before his death. It is a notarial report drawn up in 1671. Two witnesses, the landscape painter Allart van Everdingen (1621-1675) and his son Cornelis van Everdingen (1646-1692), also a painter, were called upon, in connection with the present painting; the painting was described by the two artists as 'the painting with Simeon' ('*het schilderij met Simeon*'). At the time of Rembrandt's death the painting evidently stood on his easel, as Cornelis had seen it there on several occasions.

The reason for the meeting with the notary was the question of the rightful ownership of the painting. Cornelis van Everdingen relates:

> '*that he was various times in Rembrandt's studio and that he had seen there on several occasions the painting with Simeon and had seen and closely scrutinized the said painting and discussed it with Rembrandt and that the latter had told him that the painting belonged to Dirck van Kattenburgh* [a gentleman dealer and collector (see Van der Veen in Amsterdam 1999 p. 142)]. *Rembrandt also told him that he was working on polished etching plates belonging to Kattenburgh, making a Christ's Passion.*' (Bredius 1909 pp. 214-220)

Fig. 1. **324** before restauration.

According to the Bible, Luke 2: 22-35 (see Note **16**), Simeon – ancient and almost blind – wished to remain in the Temple until, before his death, he had seen the Christ child, the Anointed One. Rembrandt's *Simeon* remained unfinished. It is assumed that another artist added the woman. Later still, someone treated the painting so roughly that it is a ruin now (**fig. 1**).

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Chronological Register, in the sequential order of the Plates

(Where there appears to be a second hand in the execution of a work, this is given as: Rembrandt and ……. . In all other cases it may be assumed that Rembrandt is the sole author.)

The Leiden period (1624-1631), Rembrandt's research of the *gronden*

1. *The spectacles pedlar ('Sight')*, *c.* 1624. Leiden, Lakenhal
2. *Three singers ('Hearing')*, *c.* 1624. Private collection
3. *The operation ('Touch')*, *c.* 1624. Private collection
4. *Christ driving the money-changers from the Temple*, 1624/1625. Moscow, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts
5. *The stoning of St Stephen*, 1625. Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts
6. *Bust of a man wearing a gorget and plumed beret*, *c.* 1626. Private collection
7. *History painting* (subject still under discussion), 1626. Leiden, Lakenhal
8. *David with the head of Goliath before Saul*, 1626/1627. Basle, Kunstmuseum
9. *The baptism of the Eunuch*, 1626. Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent
10. *Balaam and the ass*, 1626. Paris, Musée Cognacq-Jay
11. *Musical allegory*, 1626. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
12. *Tobit accusing Anna of stealing the kid*, 1626. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
13. *The flight into Egypt*, 1627. Tours, Musée des Beaux-Arts
14. *The rich man from the parable*, 1627. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
15. *The apostle Paul in prison*, 1627. Stuttgart, Staatsgalerie
16. *Simeon in the Temple*, *c.* 1628. Hamburg, Kunsthalle
17. *The foot operation*, 1628. Switzerland, Private collection
18. *Rembrandt laughing*, *c.* 1628. Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum
19. *Study in the mirror (the human skin)*, *c.* 1627/1628. Indianapolis, Museum of Art
20. *Lighting study in the mirror*, *c.* 1628. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
21. *Bust of a man wearing a turban*, *c.* 1628. Private collection
22. *Interior with figures, called 'La main chaude'*, *c.* 1628. Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland
23. *Judas repentant returning the pieces of silver*, 1629. Private collection
24. *The painter in his studio ('Idea')*, *c.* 1628. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts
25. *The supper at Emmaus*, 1629. Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André
26. *An old man asleep by the fire (perhaps typifying 'Sloth')*, 1629. Turin, Galleria Sabauda
27. *Two old men disputing (Peter and Paul)*, 1628. Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria
28. *The apostle Paul at his writing desk*, *c.* 1629/1630. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum
29. *Self-portrait with plumed beret*, 1629. Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum
30. *Self-portrait with a gorget*, *c.* 1629. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum
31. *Self-portrait lit from the left*, 1629. Munich, Alte Pinakothek
32. *Self-portrait*, *c.* 1630. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
33. *Self-portrait with beret and gathered shirt ('stilus mediocris')*, 1630. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum
34. *Bust of an old woman at prayer ('stilus gravis')*, *c.* 1630. Salzburg, Residenzgalerie
35. *Laughing soldier ('stilus humilis')*, *c.* 1630. The Hague, Mauritshuis
36. *Bust of an old man*, *c.* 1630. Private collection
37. *Samson betrayed by Delilah*, *c.* 1628-1630. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
38. *David playing the harp for King Saul*, *c.* 1630. Frankfurt am Main, Städelsches Kunstinstitut
39. *Jeremiah lamenting the destruction of Jerusalem*, 1630. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
40. *St Peter in prison*, 1631. Jerusalem, Israel Museum
41. *Andromeda*, *c.* 1630. The Hague, Mauritshuis
42. *The Good Samaritan,* 1630. London, Wallace Collection
43. *Bust of an old man wearing a fur cap*, 1629. Innsbruck, Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum
44. *Oil study of an old man*, *c.* 1630. Kingston, Queen's University, Agnes Etherington Art Centre
45. *Oil study of an old man*, *c.* 1630. Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst
46. *Bust of an old man*, *c.* 1630. The Hague, Mauritshuis
47. *Simeon in the Temple*, 1631.The Hague, Mauritshuis
48. *The raising of Lazarus*, *c.* 1630-1632. Los Angeles, County Museum of Art
49. *The abduction of Proserpina*, *c.* 1631. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
50. *The rape of Europa,* 1632. Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum
51. *An old woman reading, probably the prophetess Anna,* 1631. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
52. *Christ on the cross*, 1631. Le Mas d'Agenais, Église Saint-Vincent
53. *The artist in oriental costume, with a dog at his feet*, 1631 (the dog added in late 1632 or early 1633). Paris, Musée du Petit Palais
54. *Minerva in her study*, *c.* 1631. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
55. *Bust of an old man with a cap and gold chain*, *c.* 1631. Private collection
56. *A man wearing a gorget and plumed cap, c.* 1631. Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum
57. *Bust of a young man wearing a plumed cap*, 1631-*c.* 1635. Toledo, Museum of Art
58. *Half-figure of a man wearing a gorget and plumed hat*, *c.* 1631. Chicago, The Art Institute

The first Amsterdam period (1631-1635), Rembrandt working for Hendrick Uylenburgh

59. *Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts*, 1631. New York, Frick Collection
60. *Portrait of a man at a writing desk, possibly Jacob Bruyningh*, 1631. St Petersburg, Hermitage
61. *Portrait of a couple in an interior*, 1632. Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (stolen)

62a. *Portrait of a man* (companion piece to 62b), *c.* 1632. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

62b. Rembrandt and (mainly) workshop, *Portrait of a woman* (companion piece to 62a), *c.* 1632. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

63a. *Portrait of a man* (companion piece to 63b), 1632. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

63b. Rembrandt and (mainly) workshop, *Portrait of a woman* (companion piece to 63a), 1632. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

64a. *Portrait of a man trimming his quill* (companion piece to 64b), 1632. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie

64b. Rembrandt (and workshop?), *Portrait of a woman seated* (companion piece to 64a), 1632. Vienna, Gemäldegalerie der Akademie der bildenden Künste
65a. G. van Honthorst, *Portrait of Prince Frederik Hendrik of Orange* (companion piece to 65b), 1631. The Hague, Huis ten Bosch (Dutch Royal Collection)
65b. *Portrait of Amalia van Solms* (companion piece to 65a), 1632. Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André
66. *Self-portrait of the artist as a burger*, 1632. Glasgow, Burrell Collection
67. *Portrait of Maurits Huygens*, 1632. Hamburg, Kunsthalle
68. *Portrait of Jacques de Gheyn III*, 1632. London, Dulwich Picture Gallery
69. *Self-portrait*, 1632. Private collection
70. *Portrait of Joris de Caullery*, 1632. San Francisco, Fine Arts Museum
71. *Portrait of a young man*, 1632. Aachen, Suermondt-Ludwig-Museum
72. *Portrait of Marten Looten*, 1632. Los Angeles, County Museum of Art
73. *Portrait of a 40-year-old man*, 1632. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
74. *Portrait of a 39-year-old woman*, 1632. Nivå, Nivaagaards Malerisamling
75. *Portrait of a 62-year-old woman, possibly Aeltje Pietersdr Uylenburgh*, 1632. Private collection
76. *The anatomy lesson of Dr Nicolaes Tulp*, 1632. The Hague, Mauritshuis
77a. Rembrandt and (almost entirely) workshop, *Portraits of Jean Pellicorne and his son Casper* (companion piece to 77b), 1632. London, Wallace Collection
77b. Rembrandt and (in the main parts) workshop, *Portraits of Susanna van Collen and her daughter Anna* (companion piece to 77a), 1632. London, Wallace Collection
78. *Bust of a young woman*, 1632. Private collection
79. *Bust of a young woman wearing a plumed cap*, 1632. Private collection
80. *Half-figure of a young woman in profile with a fan*, 1632. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum
81. *Bearded old man,* 1632. Cambridge Mass., Fogg Art Museum
82. *Study of an old man with a gold chain*, 1632. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie
83. *The apostle Peter*, 1632. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum
84. *Knee-length figure of a man in oriental dress ('The Noble Slav')*, 1632. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
85. *A scholar near a window (a study in 'kamerlicht')*, 1631. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum
86. *Interior with a window and a winding staircase (a study in 'kamerlicht')*, 1632. Paris, Louvre
87a. *Portrait of a man* (companion piece to 87b), 1632. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum
87b. *Portrait of a woman* (companion piece to 87a), 1633. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum
88a. Rembrandt and (perhaps) workshop, *Portrait of a man rising from a chair* (companion piece to 88b), 1633. Cincinnati, Taft Museum of Art
88b. *Portrait of a young woman with a fan* (companion piece to 88a), 1633. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
89. *Portrait of the shipbuilder Jan Rijcksen and his wife Griet Jans*, 1633. London, Royal Collection
90. Rembrandt and workshop, *Portrait of the minister Johannes Wtenbogaert*, 1633. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
91. Rembrandt and/or workshop?, *Portrait of a man,* 1633. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie
92. *Portrait of a man wearing a red doublet*, 1633. Private collection
93. *Portrait of a young woman*, 1633. Houston, The Museum of Fine Arts
94. *Portrait of Saskia smiling*, 1633. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie
95. *Half-length portrait of Saskia van Uylenburgh*, *c.* 1633-1642. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie
96. *Self-portrait with gold chain*, 1633. Paris, Louvre
97. *Self-portrait with beret and gold chain*, 1633. Paris, Louvre
98. *Bust of a young woman*, 1633. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
99. Rembrandt and pupil (?), *Man in oriental costume*, *c.* 1633/1634. Washington, National Gallery
100. *A young woman (Esther? Judith?) at her toilet*, 1633. Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada
101. *Bellona,* 1633. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
102. *Daniel refuses to worship the idol Baal*, 1633. Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum
103. *Bust of an old man* (grisaille), 1633. Private collection
104. *Bust of a man in oriental dress*, 1633. Munich, Alte Pinakothek
105. *Christ in the storm on the Lake of Galilee*, 1633. Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum (stolen)
106. *The Raising of the cross* (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik, see p. 178), 1633. Munich, Alte Pinakothek
107. *The Descent from the cross* (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik, see p. 178), 1632/1633. Munich, Alte Pinakothek
108. *Joseph telling his dreams* (grisaille), *c.* 1634. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
109. *The adoration of the Magi* (grisaille), *c.* 1633. St Petersburg, Hermitage
110. *John the Baptist preaching* (grisaille), *c.* 1633/1634. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
111. *Christ and his disciples in Gethsemane* (drawing on paper), 1634. Haarlem, Teylers Museum
112. *Ecce Homo* (grisaille), 1634. London, National Gallery
113. *The Lamentation* (grisaille), *c.* 1633/1634. London, National Gallery
114. *The Entombment* (grisaille), *c.* 1633/1634. Glasgow, Hunterian Museum
115. *Portrait of a young bachelor*, 1634. St Petersburg, Hermitage
116. *Portrait of an 83-year old woman* (*possibly Aechje Claesdr, mother of Dirck Jansz Pesser*), 1634. London, National Gallery
117a. *Portrait of Dirck Jansz Pesser* (companion piece to 117b), 1634. Los Angeles, County Museum of Art
117b. *Portrait of Haesje Jacobsdr van Cleyburg* (companion piece to 117a), 1634. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
118a. Rembrandt and mainly workshop, *Portrait of a man in a broad-brimmed hat* (companion piece to 118b), 1634. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts
118b. *Portrait of a woman* (companion piece to 118a), 1634. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts
119a. *Portrait of a 41-year-old man, possibly Pieter Sijen* (companion piece to 119b), 1633. Pasadena, Norton Simon Museum
119b. *Portrait of a 40-year-old woman, possibly Marretje Cornelisdr van Grotewal* (companion piece to 119a), 1634. Louisville, Speed Art Museum
120a. *Portrait of Marten Soolmans* (companion piece to 120b), 1634. Paris, Private collection
120b. *Portrait of Oopjen Coppit* (companion piece to 120a), 1634. Paris, Private collection
121a. *Portrait of the minister Johannes Elison* (companion piece to 121b), 1634. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts
121b. *Portrait of Maria Bockenolle* (companion piece to 121a), 1634. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts
122. *Oval self-portrait with shaded eyes*, 1634. Private collection
123. *Self-portrait with a cap and fur-trimmed cloak*, 1634. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
124. *Cupid blowing a soap bubble,* 1634. Vienna, Liechtenstein Museum
125. *Flora*, 1634. St Petersburg, Hermitage
126. *The Descent from the Cross*, 1634. St Petersburg, Hermitage
127. *The incredulity of Thomas*, 1634. Moscow, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts
128. *Sophonisba receiving the poisoned cup*, 1634. Madrid, Prado
129. *A scholar, seated at a table with books*, 1634. Prague, Národní Gallery

130. *Diana bathing with her nymphs, with the stories of Actaeon and Callisto*, 1634. Anholt, Museum Wasserburg
130A. *The flight into Egypt*, 1634. Private collection
131. *The Holy Family*, *c.* 1634. Munich, Alte Pinakothek
132a. Rembrandt and workshop, *Portrait of Philips Lucasz* (companion piece to 132b), 1635. London, National Gallery
132b. Rembrandt and workshop, *Portrait of Petronella Buys* (companion piece to 132a), 1635. Whereabouts unknown
133a. Rembrandt and/or workshop, *Portrait of a man in a slouch hat and bandoleer* (companion piece to 133b), 1635. Sakura, Kawamura Memorial Museum of Art
133b. Rembrandt and mainly workshop, *Portrait of a young woman* (companion piece to 133a), 1635. Cleveland, Museum of Art

The second Amsterdam period (1635-1642, from leaving Uylenburgh to the completion of the Night Watch

134. Rembrandt (and workshop?), *Self-portrait*, 1635. Buckland Abbey, Gardens and Estate, National Trust
135. *Self-portrait as the prodigal son in the tavern*, *c.* 1635. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie
136. *Abraham's sacrifice*, 1635. St Petersburg, Hermitage
137. *The rape of Ganymede*, 1635. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie
138. *Flora,* 1635. London, National Gallery
139. *Minerva,* 1635. Private collection
140. *Samson threatening his father in law*, *c.* 1635. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
141. *Bust of a man in oriental dress*, 1635. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
142. *Bust of a bearded old man in fanciful costume*, 1635. London, Royal Collection
143. *Belshazzar's feast*, *c.* 1635. London, National Gallery
144. *Susanna bathing*, 1636. The Hague, Mauritshuis
145. *The Ascension* (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik, see p. 178), 1636. Munich, Alte Pinakothek
146. *Self-portrait transformed into a 'tronie'*, *c.* 1633-1636. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
147. *The standard-bearer*, 1636. Private collection
148. *The blinding of Samson*, 1636. Frankfurt am Main, Städelsches Kunstinstitut
149. *Danae*, *c.* 1636-*c.* 1643. St Petersburg, Hermitage
150. *The angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family*, 1637. Paris, Louvre
151. *The parable of the labourers in the vineyard*, 1637. St Petersburg, Hermitage
152. *River landscape with ruins*, *c.* 1637-*c.* 1645. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie
153. *The Concord of the State* (grisaille serving as a design for a political print which was never realized), *c.* 1637. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen
154. *Self-portrait*, *c.* 1637. London, Wallace Collection
155. *Man in Russian costume*, 1637. Washington, National Gallery of Art
156. *Portrait of the preacher Eleazar Swalmius*, 1637. Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten
157. *Bust of a man with plumed cap*, *c.* 1637. The Hague, Mauritshuis
158. *The risen Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene*, 1638. London, Royal Collection
159. *Landscape with the Good Samaritan*, 1638. Cracow, Muzeum Narodowe
160. *The wedding of Samson*, 1638. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie
161. *Woman with a mirror* (oil sketch), *c.* 1638. St Petersburg, Hermitage
162. *The Entombment* (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik, see p. 178), 1635-1639. Munich, Alte Pinakothek
163. *The Resurrection* (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik, see p. 178), 1639. Munich, Alte Pinakothek
164. *King Uzziah stricken with leprosy*, *c.* 1639/1640. Chatsworth
165. *Two dead peacocks and a girl*, *c.* 1639. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
166. *A dead bittern*, 1639. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie
167. *Portrait of a man holding a hat*, *c.* 1640. Los Angeles, Armand Hammer Museum
168. *Portrait of a man standing, possibly Andries de Graeff*, 1639. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie
169. *Portrait of Aletta Adriaensdr*, 1639. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, on loan from the Van der Vorm Foundation
170. Rembrandt and workshop?, *Self-portrait*, *c.* 1640. Paris, Louvre
171. *Bust of a young woman*, *c.* 1640. Washington, National Gallery, Widener Collection
172. *Self-portrait*, *c.* 1639. Pasadena, Norton Simon Museum of Art
173. *The Holy Family with St Anne*, 1640. Paris, Louvre
174. *The Visitation*, 1640. Detroit, Detroit Institute of Arts
175. *Landscape with a stone bridge*, *c.* 1638/1640. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
176. *Mountain landscape with approaching storm*, *c.* 1640. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum
177a. *Portrait of Herman Doomer* (companion piece to 177b), 1640. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
177b. *Portrait of Baertje Martens* (companion piece to 177a), *c.* 1640. St Petersburg, Hermitage
178. *Self-portrait*, *c.* 1640. Madrid, Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza
179. *Self-portrait*, 1640. London, National Gallery
180. Rembrandt and workshop, *Portrait of a woman, possibly Anna Wijmer,* 1641. Amsterdam, Six Foundation
181. *Saskia as Flora*, 1641. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie
182. *Oil study of a woman lit obliquely from behind*, *c.* 1640. Private collection
183. *Portrait of Cornelis Anslo and his wife Aeltje Schouten*, 1641. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
184a. Rembrandt workshop, *Portrait of a man (Balthasar Coymans?)* (companion piece to 184b), 1641 (?). Private collection
184b. Rembrandt and the painter of 184a, *Portrait of a woman (Maria Trip?)* (companion piece to 184a), 1641 (?). Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
185. *A scholar at a writing desk*, 1641. Warsaw, Royal Castle
186. *Girl in fanciful costume in a picture frame*, 1641. Warsaw, Royal Castle
187a. *Portrait of Nicolaes van Bambeeck in a picture frame* (companion piece to 187b), 1641. Brussels, Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten
187b. *Portrait of Agatha Bas in a picture frame* (companion piece to 187a), 1641. London, Royal Collection
188. *David's parting from Jonathan*, 1642. St Petersburg, Hermitage
189. *Self-portrait*, 1642. Windsor Castle, Royal Collection
190. *The Night Watch* (actually: *'The painting in the great hall of the Kloveniers Doelen in which the young Lord of Purmerland* [Frans Banninck Cocq] *as Captain, gives the order to his Lieutenant, the Lord of Vlaerdingen* [Willem van Ruytenburgh] *to march off his Company of Citizens',* as the painting is called in the family album of Frans Banninck Cocq), 1642. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum

The third Amsterdam period (1643-1650); the turbulent 1640s

191a. Rembrandt and workshop, *Portrait of a man with a hawk* (companion piece to 191b), 1643. Private collection
191b. Rembrandt and (mainly) workshop, *Portrait of a woman with a fan* (companion piece to 191a), 1643. Private collection
192. *An old man in rich costume (Boas?)* (possibly companion piece to 193), 1643. Woburn Abbey
193. *Bust of a woman (Ruth?)* (possibly companion piece to 192), 1643. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

194. *Sarah waiting for Tobias, c.* 1643. Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland
195. *Portrait of a man with a steel gorget*, 1644. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
196. *Christ and the woman taken in adultery*, 1644. London, National Gallery
197. *A weeping woman* (oil sketch in preparation for 196), *c.* 1644. Detroit, Institute of Arts
198. *The Holy Family with angels*, 1645. St Petersburg, Hermitage
199. *Self-portrait with beret and red cloak*, *c.* 1645/1648. Karlsruhe, Staatliche Kunsthalle
200. *Girl leaning on a stone window sill*, 1645. London, Dulwich Picture Gallery
201. Rembrandt and pupil, *Tobit and Anna*, 1645. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
202. Rembrandt and (mainly) pupil. *Joseph's dream in the stable at Bethlehem*, 1645. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
203. *Old man with fur coat*, 1645. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
204. *Old man with a stick*, 1645. Lisbon, Museu Calouste Gulbenkian
205. *Landscape with a castle* (unfinished), *c.* 1645. Paris, Louvre
206. *The Mill*, *c.* 1645. Washington, National Gallery
207. *Winter landscape*, 1646. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie
208. *Abraham serving the three angels*, 1646. Private collection
209. *The Holy Family with painted frame and curtain*, 1646. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie
210. Rembrandt?, *The prophetess Anna in the Temple*, 1650 or *c.* 1646. Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland

211a. *The Nativity* (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik, see p. 178), 1646. Munich, Alte Pinakothek

211b. Studio copy after a lost *Circumcision* (which was part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik, see p. 178), in or after 1646. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum

212. *Saul and David*, *c.* 1645 and *c.* 1652. The Hague, Mauritshuis
213. *Susanna and the elders, c.* 1638-1647. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
214. *Nocturnal landscape with the Holy Family*, 1647. Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland
215. *Preparatory oil sketch for the etched portrait of Dr Ephraim Bueno* (B. 278), before 1647. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
216. *Portrait of a man reading by candlelight*, 1648. Williamstown, Clark Institute

217a. Rembrandt or pupil, *Oil study of Christ*, *c.* 1648. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

217b. Rembrandt or pupil, *Oil study of Christ*, *c.* 1648. Private collection

218. *The supper at Emmaus*, 1648. Paris, Louvre
219. *Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene, 'Noli me tangere'*, 1650 or slightly later. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum

The 'late Rembrandt', first phase (1651-1659)

220. *Girl at a window*, 1651. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum
221. *Old man in an armchair*, 1652. London, National Gallery
222. *An old man in fanciful costume*, 1651. Chatsworth
223. *Hendrickje with fur wrap*, *c.* 1652. London, National Gallery
224. *The so-called large Vienna self-portrait with beret*, 1652. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum
225. *Portrait of a man*, *c.* 1651. Buscot Park, Faringdon Collection
226. *Portrait of Nicolaes Bruyningh*, 1652. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie
227. *Half-figure of a bearded man with beret*, *c.* 1653. London, National Gallery
228. *Aristotle with the bust of Homer*, 1653. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
229. *A woman wading in a pool (Callisto in the wilderness)*, 1654. London, National Gallery
230. *Oil study of an old man with a red hat*, *c.* 1654. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
231. *Bathsheba at her toilet*, 1654. Paris, Louvre
232. *Woman at an open half-door*, *c.* 1654. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
233. *Portrait of Jan Six*, 1654. Amsterdam, Six Foundation
234. *The Standard-Bearer (Floris Soop)*, 1654. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

235a. *Self-portrait* (companion piece to 235b), 1654. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie

235b. *Portrait of Hendrickje Stoffels* (companion piece to 235a), *c.* 1654. Paris, Louvre

236. *The Polish Rider* (partly unfinished, locally completed by later hand), *c.* 1655. New York, Frick Collection
237. *Joseph accused by Potiphar's wife* (with possible additions by another hand), 1655. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
238. *Oil sketch of an old man*, *c.* 1655. Private collection
239. *Man in armour*, *c.* 1655. Glasgow, City Art Gallery and Museum
240. *A slaughtered ox*, 1655. Paris, Louvre
241. *Old woman reading (study in lighting effects)*, 1655. Drumlanrig Castle, Duke of Buccleuch Collection
242. *Titus at a desk*, 1655 (?). Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen
243. *Unfinished portrait of a boy*, *c.* 1656. Pasadena, Norton Simon Museum
244. *Man with beret and tabard (a falconer?)*, *c.* 1656. Toledo, Museum of Art
245. *Jacob blessing the sons of Joseph*, 1656. Kassel, Gemäldegalerie
246. *The anatomy lesson of Dr Joan Deyman* (fragment that survived a fire), 1656. Amsterdam, Amsterdam Museum
247. *A young man seated at a table*, *c.* 1656. Washington, National Gallery

248a. *Portrait of a gentleman with a tall hat and gloves* (companion piece to 248b), *c.* 1656. Washington, National Gallery

248b. *Portrait of a lady with an ostrich-feather fan* (companion piece to 248a), *c.* 1656. Washington, National Gallery

249. *Portrait of a man, possibly Arnout Tholincx*, 1656. Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André
250. *Portrait of the poet Jeremias de Decker*, 1656. St Petersburg, Hermitage
251. *Venus and Cupid* (possibly part of a tripartite series with 252 and 253), *c.* 1657. Paris, Louvre
252. *Juno* (possibly part of a tripartite series with 251 and 253), *c.* 1657-1665. Los Angeles, Armand Hammer Museum
253. Rembrandt and pupil, *Pallas Athene* (possibly part of a tripartite series with 251 and 252), *c.* 1657. Lisbon, Museu Calouste Gulbenkian
254. Rembrandt and workshop, *The apostle Paul at his writing desk*, *c.* 1657. Washington, National Gallery
255. *The apostle Bartholomew*, 1657. San Diego, Timken Museum of Art
256. *The so-called small Vienna self-portrait* (fragment of larger painting), *c.* 1657. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum
257. *Portrait of Titus van Rijn*, *c.* 1657. London, Wallace Collection
258. *Portrait of Catharina Hoogsaet*, 1657. Wales, Penrhyn Castle
259. *Portrait of an unknown scholar* (also known as '*The Auctioneer*'), 1658. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
260. *Preparatory oil sketch for the etched portrait of Lieven Willemsz van Coppenol* (B. 283), before 1658. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
261. *Portrait of a man with arms akimbo*, 1658. Private collection
262. *The risen Christ*, *c.* 1658. Munich, Alte Pinakothek
263. *Portrait of the dyke reeve Dirck van Os*, *c.* 1658. Omaha, Joslyn Art Museum
264. *Self-portrait*, 1658. New York, Frick Collection
265. *Philemon and Baucis*, 1658. Washington, National Gallery, Widener Collection
266. *Tobit and Anna*, 1659. Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen (on loan from the Willem van der Vorm Foundation)
267. *Moses smashes the stone tablets with the covenant* (unfinished), 1659. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
268. *Jacob wrestling with the angel*, *c.* 1659. Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
269. Rembrandt (and workshop?), *Posthumous portrait of Saskia van Uylenburgh as Flora*, *c.* 1660. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

270. *Portrait of a man as the apostle Paul*, 1659. London, National Gallery
271. *Oil sketch for* 272, *c.* 1659. Copenhagen, Statens Museum
272. *'Portrait historié' of an unknown gentleman as St Bavo*, *c.* 1659. Göteborg, Kunstmuseum
273. *Self-portrait*, 1657/1659. Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland (on loan from the Duke of Sutherland)
274. *Self-portrait*, 1659. Washington, National Gallery
275. *Self-portrait* (unfinished), *c.* 1659. Aix-en-Provence, Musée Granet
276. *Lighting study with an old man as a model*, 1659. Milwaukee, Daniel and Linda Bader Collection
277. *Lighting study with Hendrickje Stoffels in a silk gown as a model*, *c.* 1659. Frankfurt, Städelsches Kunstinstitut

The 'late Rembrandt', second phase (1660-1669)

278. *Hendrickje Stoffels*, *c.* 1660. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
279. *Titus van Rijn as St Francis*, *c.* 1660. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
280. *A smiling young man (Titus)*, Baltimore, The Baltimore Museum of Art
281. *Self-portrait at the easel*, 1660. Paris, Louvre
282. *Self-portrait with silk gown*, 1660. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
283. *Esther, Ahasuerus and Haman*, between *c.* 1655 and 1665. Moscow, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts
284. *The denial of Peter*, 1660. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
285. *Lighting study of an old man in profile, probably painted in preparation for* 286, *c.* 1661. Kingston, Ontario, Queens University, Agnes Etherington Art Centre
286. *The Circumcision in the stable*, 1661. Washington, National Gallery
287. *Virgin of Sorrows*, 1661. Epinal, Musée départemental des Vosges
288. *Titus posing for a study of an angel (possibly painted in preparation for* 289*)*. Detroit Institute of Arts
289. *The apostle St Matthew* (part of a series with 290-294), 1661. Paris, Louvre
290. *The apostle Bartholomew* (part of a series with 289, 291-294), 1661. Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum
291. *The apostle Simon* (part of a series with 289, 290 and 292-294), 1661. Zürich, Kunsthaus
292. *The apostle James the Greater* (part of a series with 289-291 and 293, 294), 1661. Whereabouts unknown
293. *The apostle James the Less* (part of a series with 289-292 and 294), 1661. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art
294. *Self-portrait as St Paul* (part of a series with 289-293), 1661. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
295. *Two negroes*, 1661. The Hague, Mauritshuis
296. *The small Margaretha de Geer* (sketch for 297b), 1661. London, National Gallery

297a. *Portrait of Jacob Trip* (companion piece to 297b), *c.* 1661. London, National Gallery

297b. *Margaretha de Geer* (companion piece to 297a), *c.* 1661. London, National Gallery

298. *The conspiracy of the Batavians under Claudius Civilis* (fragment), *c.* 1661-1662. Stockholm, Nationalmuseum
299. *Portrait of the Syndics of the Amsterdam Clothmakers' Guild, known as the 'Staalmeesters'*, 1662. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum
300. *Portrait of a young man with a black beret*, *c.* 1662. Kansas City, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art
301. *Homer dictating his verses* (mutilated by fire), 1663. The Hague, Mauritshuis
302. *Self-portrait as the laughing Zeuxis while painting an old woman*, *c.* 1663. Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum
303. Rembrandt and workshop, *Equestrian portrait of Frederick Rihel*, 1663. London, National Gallery
304. *Bust of a bearded young man with a skullcap*, 1663. Fort Worth, Kimbell Art Museum
305. *Portrait of a young woman with a lapdog*, *c.* 1665. Toronto, Art Gallery of Ontario
306. *Old man in an armchair, possibly a portrait of Jan Amos Comenius*, *c.* 1665. Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi
307. *Titus reading (study in direct and reflected light)*, *c.* 1660/1665. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum
308. *Portrait of Gerard de Lairesse*, 1665. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Robert Lehman Collection
309. *Portrait of Jan Boursse, sitting by a stove; probably painted in preparation of an unrealized etched portrait*, *c.* 1666. Winterthur, Museum Oskar Reinhart 'Am Römerholz'
310. *A presumed sketch for the male sitter in the 'Jewish Bride'*, mid-1660s. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

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311b. *Portrait of a woman with a carnation, possibly Lysbet Jansdr Delft* (companion piece to 311a), *c.* 1665. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art

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314. *Lucretia*, 1666. Minneapolis, Institute of Art
315. *Portrait of a white-haired man*, 1667. Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria
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45. *Oil study of an old man*
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86. *Interior with a window and a winding staircase (a study in 'kamerlicht')*
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Locations of Rembrandt Paintings

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71. *Portrait of a young man*

Aix-en-Provence, Musée Granet
275. *Self-portrait* (unfinished)

Amsterdam

Amsterdam Museum
246. *The anatomy lesson of Dr Joan Deyman*

Rijksmuseum
11. *Musical allegory*
12. *Tobit accusing Anna of stealing the kid*
20. *Lighting study in the mirror*
39. *Jeremiah lamenting the destruction of Jerusalem*
51. *An old woman reading, probably the prophetess Anna*
90. Rembrandt and workshop, *Portrait of the minister Johannes Wtenbogaert*
98. *Bust of a young woman*
108. *Joseph telling his dreams* (grisaille)
117b. *Portrait of Haesje Jacobsdr van Cleyburg* (companion piece to 117a: Los Angeles, County Museum of Art)
141. *Bust of a man in oriental dress*
165. *Two dead peacocks and a girl*
175. *Landscape with a stone bridge*
184b. Rembrandt and the painter of 184a, *Portrait of a woman (Maria Trip?)* (companion piece to 184a: Private collection)
190. *The Night Watch* (actually: *The painting in the great hall of the Kloveniers Doelen in which the young Lord of Purmerland* [Frans Banninck Cocq] *as Captain, gives the order to his Lieutenant, the Lord of Vlaerdingen* [Willem van Ruytenburgh] *to march off his Company of Citizens*)
215. *Preparatory oil sketch for the etched portrait of Dr Ephraim Bueno* (B. 278)
279. *Titus van Rijn as St Francis*
284. *The denial of Peter*
294. *Self-portrait as St Paul* (part of a series with 289: Paris, Louvre, 290: Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, 291: Zürich, Kunsthaus, 292: whereabouts unknown, 293: New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art)
299. *Portrait of the Syndics of the Amsterdam Clothmakers' Guild, known as the 'Staalmeesters'*
312. *'Portrait historié' of a couple as Isaac and Rebecca (known as 'The Jewish Bride')*

Six Foundation
180. Rembrandt and workshop, *Portrait of a woman, possibly Anna Wijmer*
233. *Portrait of Jan Six*

Anholt, Museum Wasserburg
130. *Diana bathing with her nymphs, with the stories of Actaeon and Callisto*

Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten
156. *Portrait of the preacher Eleazar Swalmius*

Baltimore, The Baltimore Museum of Art
280. *A smiling young man (Titus)*

Basle, Kunstmuseum
8. *David with the head of Goliath before Saul*

Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie
14. *The rich man from the parable*
37. *Samson betrayed by Delilah*
49. *The abduction of Proserpina*
54. *Minerva in her study*
110. *John the Baptist preaching* (grisaille)
123. *Self-portrait with a cap and fur-trimmed cloak*
140. *Samson threatening his father in law*
146. *Self-portrait transformed into a 'tronie'*
183. *Portrait of Cornelis Anslo and his wife Aeltje Schouten*
193. *Bust of a woman (Ruth?)* (possibly companion piece to 192: Woburn Abbey, Duke of Bedford)
201. Rembrandt and pupil, *Tobit and Anna*
202. Rembrandt and (mainly) pupil, *Joseph's dream in the stable at Bethlehem*
203. *Old man with fur coat*
213. *Susanna and the elders*
217a. Rembrandt or pupil, *Oil study of Christ*
230. *Oil study of an old man with a red hat*
232. *Woman at an open half-door*
237. *Joseph accused by Potiphar's wife* (with possibly additions by another hand)
267. *Moses smashes the stone tablets with the covenant* (unfinished)
268. *Jacob wrestling with the angel*

Boston

Museum of Fine Arts
24. *The painter in his studio ('Idea')*
118a. Rembrandt and mainly workshop, *Portrait of a man in a broad-brimmed hat* (companion piece to 118b)
118b. *Portrait of a woman* (companion piece to 118a)
121a. *Portrait of the minister Johannes Elison* (companion piece to 121b)
121b. *Portrait of Maria Bockenolle* (companion piece to 121a)

Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum
29. *Self-portrait with plumed beret*
61. *Portrait of a couple in an interior* (stolen)
105. *Christ in the storm on the Lake of Galilee* (stolen)

Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum
87a. *Portrait of a man* (companion piece to 87b)
87b. *Portrait of a woman* (companion piece to 87a)
176. *Mountain landscape with approaching storm*
211b. Studio copy after a lost *Circumcision* (the lost original was part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik)
219. *Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene, 'Noli me tangere'*
313. *Family portrait*

Brussels, Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten van België
187a. *Portrait of Nicolaes van Bambeeck in a picture frame* (companion piece to 187b: London, Royal Collection)

Buckland Abbey, Gardens and Estate, National Trust
134. Rembrandt (and workshop?), *Self-portrait*

Buscot Park, The Faringdon Collection
225. *Portrait of a man*

Cambridge (Mass.), Harvard Art Museums, Fogg Museum
81. *Bearded old man*

Chatsworth House, The Duke of Devonshire Collection
164. *King Uzziah stricken with leprosy*
222. *An old man in fanciful costume*

Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago
58. *Half-figure of a man wearing a gorget and plumed hat*

Cincinnati, Taft Museum of Art
88a. Rembrandt and (perhaps) workshop, *Portrait of a man rising from a chair* (companion piece to 88b: New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art)

Cleveland, Cleveland Museum of Art
133b. Rembrandt and mainly workshop, *Portrait of a young woman* (companion piece to 133a: Sakura, Kawamura Memorial Museum)

Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum
302. *Self-portrait as the laughing Zeuxis while painting an old woman*

Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst
45. *Oil study of an old man*
271. *Oil sketch for* 272 (Göteborg, Kunstmuseum)

Cracow, Muzeum Narodowe
159. *Landscape with the Good Samaritan*

Detroit, Detroit Institute of Arts
174. *The Visitation*
197. *A weeping woman* (oil sketch in preparation for 196: London, National Gallery)
288. *Titus posing for a study of an angel* (possibly painted in preparation for 289: Paris, Louvre)

Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister
94. *Portrait of Saskia smiling*
135. *Self-portrait as the prodigal son in the tavern*
137. *The rape of Ganymede*
160. *The wedding of Samson*
166. *A dead bittern*
181. *Saskia as Flora*

Drumlanrig Castle, The Duke of Buccleuch Collection
241. *Old woman reading (study in lighting effects)*

Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland
22. *Interior with figures, called 'La main chaude'*
214. *Nocturnal landscape with the Holy Family*

Edinburgh, National Galleries of Scotland
194. *Sarah waiting for Tobias*
210. Rembrandt?, *The prophetess Anna in the Temple*
273. *Self-portrait* (on loan from the Duke of Sutherland)

Épinal, Musée Départemental des Vosges
287. *Virgin of Sorrows*

Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi
306. *Old man in an armchair, possibly a portrait of Jan Amos Comenius*
322. *Self-portrait with beret*

Fort Worth, Kimbell Art Museum
304. *Bust of a bearded young man with a skullcap*

Frankfurt am Main, Städelsches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie
38. *David playing the harp for Saul*
148. *The blinding of Samson*
277. *Lighting study with Hendrickje Stoffels in a silk gown as a model*

Glasgow, The Burrell Collection
66. *Self-portrait of the artist as a burger*

Glasgow, Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum
239. *Man in armour*

Glasgow, University of Glasgow, The Hunterian Museum
114. *The Entombment* (grisaille)

Göteborg, Konstmuseum
272. *'Portrait historié' of an unknown gentleman as St Bavo*

Haarlem, Teylers Museum
111. *Christ and his disciples in Gethsemane* (drawing on paper)

The Hague, Koninklijk Kabinet van Schilderijen Mauritshuis
35. *Laughing soldier ('stilus humilis')*
41. *Andromeda*
46. *Bust of an old man*
47. *Simeon in the Temple*
76. *The anatomy lesson of Dr Nicolaes Tulp*
144. *Susanna bathing*
157. *Bust of a man with plumed cap*
212. *Saul and David*
295. *Two negroes*
301. *Homer dictating his verses* (mutilated by fire)
316. *Portrait of an elderly man seated, possibly Pieter de la Tombe*
323. *Self-portrait*

Hamburg, Hamburger Kunsthalle
16. *Simeon in the Temple*
67. *Portrait of Maurits Huygens*

Houston, The Museum of Fine Arts
93. *Portrait of a young woman*

Indianapolis, Indianapolis Museum of Art
19. *Study in the mirror (the human skin)*

Innsbruck, Tiroler Landesmuseum Ferdinandeum
43. *Bust of an old man wearing a fur cap*

Jerusalem, The Israel Museum
40. *St Peter in prison*

Kansas City, The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art
300. *Portrait of a young man with a black beret*

Karlsruhe, Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe
199. *Self-portrait with beret and red cloak*

Kassel, Museumslandschaft Hessen Kassel, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister
64a. *Portrait of a man trimming his quill* (companion piece to 64b: Vienna, Gemäldegalerie der Akademie der bildenden Künste)
82. *Study of an old man with a gold chain*
91. Rembrandt and/or workshop?, *Portrait of a man*
95. *Half-length portrait of Saskia van Uylenburgh*
152. *River landscape with ruins*
168. *Portrait of a man standing, possibly Andries de Graeff*
207. *Winter landscape*
209. *The Holy Family with painted frame and curtain*
226. *Portrait of Nicolaes Bruyningh*
235a. *Self-portrait* (companion piece to 235b: Paris, Louvre)
245. *Jacob blessing the sons of Joseph*

Kingston, Queen's University, Agnes Etherington Art Centre
44. *Oil study of an old man*
285. *Lighting study of an old man in profile* (*probably painted in preparation for 286:* Washington, National Gallery)

Leiden, Museum De Lakenhal
1. *The spectacle pedlar ('Sight')*
7. *History painting* (subject still under discussion)

Lisbon, Museu Calouste Gulbenkian
204. *Old man with a stick*
253. Rembrandt and pupil, *Pallas Athene* (possibly part of a tripartite series with 251: Paris, Louvre, and 252: Los Angeles, Hammer Museum)

London

Dulwich Picture Gallery
68. *Portrait of Jacques de Gheyn III*
200. *Girl leaning on a stone window sill*

Kenwood House, The Iveagh Bequest
319. *Self-portrait with two circles* (unfinished)

The National Gallery
112. *Ecce Homo* (grisaille)
113. *The Lamentation* (grisaille)
116. *Portrait of an 83-year old woman* (*possibly Aechje Claesdr, mother of Dirck Jansz Pesser*)
132a. Rembrandt and workshop, *Portrait of Philips Lucasz* (companion piece to 132b: whereabouts unknown)
138. *Flora*
143. *Belshazzar's feast*
179. *Self-portrait*
196. *Christ and the woman taken in adultery*
221. *Old man in an armchair*
223. *Hendrickje with fur wrap*
227. *Half-figure of a bearded man with beret*
229. *A woman wading in a pool (Callisto in the wilderness)*
270. *Portrait of a man as the apostle Paul*
296. *The small Margaretha de Geer* (sketch for 297b)
297a. *Portrait of Jacob Trip* (companion piece to 297b)
297b. *Margaretha de Geer* (companion piece to 297a)
303. Rembrandt and workshop, *Equestrian portrait of Frederick Rihel*
321. *Self-portrait*

The Royal Collection
89. *Portrait of the shipbuilder Jan Rijcksen and his wife Griet Jans*
142. *Bust of a bearded old man in fanciful costume*
158. *The risen Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene*
187b. *Portrait of Agatha Bas in a picture frame* (companion piece to 187a: Brussels, Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten)
189. *Self-portrait*

The Wallace Collection
42. *The Good Samaritan*
77a. Rembrandt and (almost entirely) workshop, *Portraits of Jean Pellicorne and his son Casper* (companion piece to 77b)
77b. Rembrandt and (in the main parts) workshop, *Portraits of Susanna van Collen and her daughter Anna* (companion piece to 77a)
154. *Self-portrait*
257. *Portrait of Titus van Rijn*

Los Angeles

The Armand Hammer Museum
167. *Portrait of a man holding a hat*
252. *Juno* (possibly part of a tripartite series with 251: Paris, Louvre, and 253: Lisbon, Museu Calouste Gulbenkian)

Los Angeles County Museum of Art
48. *The raising of Lazarus*
56. *A man wearing a gorget and plumed cap*
72. *Portrait of Marten Looten*
117a. *Portrait of Dirck Jansz Pesser* (companion piece to 117b: Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum)

The J. Paul Getty Museum
18. *Rembrandt laughing*
50. *The rape of Europa*
56. *A man wearing a gorget and plumed cap*
102. *Daniel refuses to worship the idol Baal*
290. *The apostle Bartholomew* (part of a series with 289: Paris, Louvre, 291: Zürich, Kunsthaus, 292: whereabouts unknown, 293: New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 294: Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum)

Louisville, The Speed Art Museum
119b. *Portrait of a 40-year-old woman, possibly Marretje Cornelisdr van Grotewal* (companion piece to 119a: Pasadena, Norton Simon Museum)

Lyon, Musée des Beaux-Arts
5. *The stoning of St Stephen*

Madrid

Museo Nacional del Prado
128. *Sophonisba receiving the poisoned cup*

Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza
178. *Self-portrait*

Le Mas d'Agenais, Église Saint-Vincent
52. *Christ on the Cross*

Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria
27. *Two old men disputing (Peter and Paul)*
315. *Portrait of a white-haired man*

Milwaukee, Daniel and Linda Bader Collection
276. *Lighting study with an old man as a model*

Minneapolis, Minneapolis Institute of Arts
314. *Lucretia*

Montreal, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts
318. *Portrait of a young woman, possibly Magdalena van Loo* (companion piece to 317?: Paris, Louvre)

Moscow, The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts
4. *Christ driving the money-changers from the Temple*
127. *The incredulity of Thomas*
283. *Esther, Ahasuerus and Haman*

Munich, Alte Pinakothek
31. *Self-portrait lit from the left*
104. *Bust of a man in oriental dress*
106. *The Raising of the Cross* (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik)
107. *The Descent from the Cross* (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik)
131. *The Holy Family*
145. *The Ascension* (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik)
162. *The Entombment* (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik)
163. *The Resurrection* (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik)
211a. *The Nativity* (part of the Passion series for Frederik Hendrik)
262. *The risen Christ*

New York

The Frick Collection
59. *Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts*
236. *The Polish Rider* (partly unfinished, locally completed by a later hand)
264. *Self-portrait*

The Metropolitan Museum of Art
32. *Self-portrait*
63a. *Portrait of a man* (companion piece to 63b)
63b. Rembrandt and (mainly) workshop, *Portrait of a woman* (companion piece to 63a)
73a. *Portrait of a 40-year-old man*
84. *Knee-length figure of a man in oriental dress ('The Noble Slav')*
88b. *Portrait of a young woman in an armchair with a fan* (companion piece to 88a: Cincinnati, Taft Museum of Art)
101. *Bellona*
177a. *Portrait of Herman Doomer* (companion piece to 177b: St Petersburg, Hermitage)
195. *Portrait of a man with a steel gorget*
228. *Aristotle with the bust of Homer*
234. *The Standard-Bearer (Floris Soop)*
259. *Portrait of an unknown scholar (also known as 'The Auctioneer')*
260. *Preparatory oil sketch for the etched portrait of Lieven Willemsz van Coppenol* (B. 283)
269. Rembrandt (and workshop?), *Posthumous portrait of Saskia van Uylenburgh as Flora*
278. *Hendrickje Stoffels*
282. *Self-portrait with silk gown*
293. *The apostle James the Less* (part of a series with 289: Paris, Louvre, 290: Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, 291: Zürich, Kunsthaus, 292: whereabouts unknown, 294: Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum)
308. *Portrait of Gerard de Lairesse*
310. *A presumed sketch for the male sitter in the 'Jewish Bride'*
311a. *Portrait of a man with a magnifying glass, possibly Pieter Haaringh* (companion piece to 311b)
311b. *Portrait of a woman with a carnation, possibly Lysbet Jansdr Delft* (companion piece to 311a)

Nivå, Nivaagaards Malerisamling
74. *Portrait of a 39-year-old woman*

Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum
28. *The apostle Paul at his writing desk*
30. *Self-portrait with a gorget*

Omaha, Joslyn Art Museum
263. *Portrait of the dyke reeve Dirck van Os*

Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada
100. *A young woman (Esther? Judith?) at her toilet*

Paris

Musée Cognacq-Jay
10. *Balaam and the ass*
Musée Jacquemart-André
25. *The supper at Emmaus*
65b. *Portrait of Amalia van Solms* (companion piece to 65a: The Hague, Huis ten Bosch, Dutch Royal Collection)
249. *Portrait of a man, possibly Arnout Tholincx*
Musée du Louvre
86. *Interior with a window and a winding staircase (a study in 'kamerlicht')*
96. *Self-portrait with gold chain*
97. *Self-portrait with beret and gold chain*
150. *The angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family*
170. Rembrandt and workshop?, *Self-portrait*
173. *The Holy Family with St Anne*
205. *Landscape with a castle* (unfinished)
218. *The supper at Emmaus*
231. *Bathsheba at her toilet*
235b. *Portrait of Hendrickje Stoffels* (companion piece to 235a: Kassel, Gemäldegalerie)
240. *A slaughtered ox*
251. *Venus and Cupid* (possibly part of a tripartite series with 252: Los Angeles, Hammer Museum, and 253: Lisbon, Museu Calouste Gulbenkian)
281. *Self-portrait at the easel*
289. *The apostle St Matthew* (part of a series with 290: Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, 291: Zürich, Kunsthaus, 292: whereabouts unknown, 293: New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 294: Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum)
317. *Portrait of Titus van Rijn* (companion piece to 318?: Montreal, Museum of Fine Arts)
Musée du Petit Palais
53. *The artist in oriental costume, with a dog at his feet*

Pasadena, Norton Simon Museum
119a. *Portrait of a 41-year-old man, possibly Pieter Sijen* (companion piece to 119b: Louisville, Speed Art Museum)
172. *Self-portrait*
243. *Unfinished portrait of a boy*

Penrhyn Castle
258. *Portrait of Catharina Hoogsaet*

Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen
153. *The Concord of the State* (grisaille)
169. *Portrait of Aletta Adriaensdr* (on loan from the Van der Vorm Foundation)
242. *Titus at a desk*
266. *Tobit and Anna* (on loan from the Van der Vorm Foundation)

Prague, Národní Galerie
129. *A scholar, seated at a table with books*

Sakura, Kawamura Memorial DIC Museum of Art
133a. Rembrandt and/or workshop, *Portrait of a man with a slouch hat and bandoleer* (companion piece to 133b: Cleveland, Museum of Art)

Salzburg, Residenzgalerie
34. *Bust of an old woman at prayer ('stilus gravis')*

San Diego, Timken Museum of Art
255. *The apostle Bartholomew*

San Francisco, Fine Arts Museum of San Francisco
70. *Portrait of Joris de Caullery*

Stockholm, Nationalmuseum
33. *Self-portrait with beret and gathered shirt ('stilus mediocris')*
80. *Half-figure of a young woman in profile with a fan*
83. *The apostle Peter*
85. *A scholar near a window (a study in 'kamerlicht')*
220. *Girl at a window*
298. *The conspiracy of the Batavians under Claudius Civilis* (fragment)
324. *Simeon's song of praise*

Stuttgart, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart
15. *The apostle Paul in prison*

St Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum
60. *Portrait of a man at a writing desk, possibly Jacob Bruyningh*
109. *The Adoration of the Magi* (grisaille)
115. *Portrait of a young bachelor*
125. *Flora*
126. *The Descent from the Cross*
136. *Abraham's sacrifice*
149. *Danae*
151. *The parable of the labourers in the vineyard*
161. *Woman with a mirror* (oil sketch)
177b. *Portrait of Baertje Martens* (companion piece to 177a: New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art)
188. *David's parting from Jonathan*
198. *The Holy Family with angels*
250. *Portrait of the poet Jeremias de Decker*
320. Rembrandt and other hand(s), *The return of the prodigal son*

Toledo, The Toledo Museum of Art
57. *Bust of a young man wearing a plumed cap*
244. *Man with beret and tabard (a falconer?)*

Toronto, Art Gallery of Ontario
305. *Portrait of a young woman with a lapdog*

Tours, Musée des Beaux-Arts
13. *The flight into Egypt*

Turin, Galleria Sabauda
26. *An old man asleep by the fire (perhaps typifying 'Sloth')*

Utrecht, Museum Catharijneconvent
9. *The baptism of the Eunuch*

Vienna

Gemäldegalerie der Akademie der bildenden Künste Wien
64b. Rembrandt (and workshop?), *Portrait of a woman seated* (companion piece to 64a: Kassel, Gemäldegalerie)
Kunsthistorisches Museum
62a. *Portrait of a man* (companion piece to 62b)
62b. Rembrandt and (mainly) workshop, *Portrait of a woman* (companion piece to 62a)
224. *The so-called large Vienna self-portrait with beret*
256. *The so-called small Vienna self-portrait* (fragment of larger composition)
307. *Titus reading (study in direct and reflected light)*
Liechtenstein Museum
124. *Cupid blowing a soap bubble*

Warsaw, Royal Castle
185. *A scholar at a writing desk*
186. *Girl in fanciful costume in a picture frame*

Washington, National Gallery of Art
99. Rembrandt and pupil (?), *Man in oriental costume*
155. *Man in Russian costume*
171. *Bust of a young woman*
206. *The Mill*
247. *A young man seated at a table*
248a. *Portrait of a gentleman with a tall hat and gloves* (companion piece to 248b)
248b. *Portrait of a lady with an ostrich-feather fan* (companion piece to 248a)
254. Rembrandt and workshop, *The apostle Paul at his writing desk*
265. *Philemon and Baucis*
274. *Self-portrait*
286. *The Circumcision in the stable*

Williamstown, The Sterling and Francis Clark Art Institute
216. *Portrait of a man reading by candlelight*

Winterthur, Museum Oskar Reinhart 'Am Römerholz'
309. *Portrait of Jan Boursse, sitting by a stove; probably painted in preparation for an unrealized etched portrait*

Woburn Abbey, The Duke of Bedford Collection
192. *An old man in rich costume (Boas?)* (possibly companion piece to 193: Berlin, Gemäldegalerie)

Zürich, Kunsthaus Zürich
291. *The apostle Simon* (part of a series with 289: Paris, Louvre, 290: Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, 292: whereabouts unknown, 293: New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art), 294: Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum)

Private collections
2. *Three singers ('Hearing')*
3. *The operation ('Touch')*
6. *Bust of a man wearing a gorget and plumed beret*
17. *The foot operation*
21. *Bust of a man wearing a turban*
23. *Judas repentant returning the pieces of silver*
36. *Bust of an old man*
55. *Bust of an old man with a cap and gold chain*
69. *Self-portrait*
75. *Portrait of a 62-year-old woman, possibly Aeltje Pietersdr Uylenburgh*
78. *Bust of a young woman*
79. *Bust of a young woman wearing a plumed cap*
92. *Portrait of a man wearing a red doublet*
103. *Bust of an old man* (grisaille)
120a. *Portrait of Marten Soolmans* (companion piece to 120b)
120b. *Portrait of Oopjen Coppit* (companion piece to 120a)
122. *Oval self-portrait with shaded eyes*
130A. *The flight into Egypt*
139. *Minerva*
147. *The standard-bearer*
182. *Oil study of a woman lit obliquely from behind*
184a. Rembrandt workshop, *Portrait of a man (Balthasar Coymans?)* (companion piece to 184b: Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum)
191a. Rembrandt and workshop, *Portrait of a man with a hawk* (companion piece to 191b)
191b. Rembrandt and (mainly) workshop, *Portrait of a woman with a fan* (companion piece to 191a)
208. *Abraham serving the three angels*
217b. Rembrandt or pupil, *Oil study of Christ*
238. *Oil sketch of an old man*
261. *Portrait of a man with arms akimbo*

Whereabouts unknown
132b. Rembrandt and workshop, *Portrait of Petronella Buys* (companion piece to 132a: London, National Gallery)
292. *The apostle James the Greater* (part of a series with 289: Paris, Louvre, 290: Los Angeles, J. Paul Getty Museum, 291: Zürich, Kunsthaus, 293: New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art), 294: Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum)

Concordance

In the second column (W) are the Plate and Note numbers of the present book.
(c) indicates a copy

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12		I A 33	IV Corr.
13		I C 39	
14		I C 40	
15		I C 33	
16	53	I A 40; II Corr.	
17	66	II A 58	
18	96	II A 71	
19	97	II A 72	
20		III B 11	
21	123	II A 96	
22		II A 97	IV Corr.
23	146	II C 56	IV Corr.
24	157	III C 98	
25	134	III C 92	IV Corr.
26		III C 99	
27	154	III C 96	IV Corr.
28			
29	170	III B 10	IV Corr.
30	135	III A 111	
31	166	III A 133	
32	172	III C 97	IV Corr.
33		III C 93	
34	179	III A 139	
35			IV 3
36	178		IV 2
37	189		IV 1

Br.-Br/G	*W*	*Corpus I-III*	*Corpus IV-V*
38	199		IV 5
39			IV 6
40			IV 4
41			IV 7
42	224		IV 8
43	235a		IV 9
44			IV 11
45			IV 12
46			IV 10/4
47			IV 10/2
47A			IV 10/3
48	273		IV 15
49	256		IV 13
50	264		IV 14
51	274		IV 18
52	319		IV 26
53	281		IV 19
54	282		IV 20
55	321		IV 27
56			IV 21
57			IV 22
58	275		IV 16
59	294		IV 24
60	322		IV 28
61	302		IV 25
62	323		IV 29
63	34	I A 27	
64		I C 42	
65		I C 43	
66			
67		I C 41	
68		I C 19	
69	51	I A 37	
70		I A 32; II Corr.	
71		III C 89	
72	21		IV Add. 3
73		I C 20	
74		I C 29	
75			
76	43	I A 29	
77	46	I B 7	
78		I C 30	
79	56	I B 4	
80		I C 28	
81	58	I A 42	
82	55	II A 40a	
83			
84	79	II C 61	IV Corr.
85	80	II A 49	
86		II C 59	
87		II C 57	
88		II C 58	

Br.-Br/G	*W*	*Corpus I-III*	*Corpus IV-V*
89	78	II A 50	
90			
91			
92			
93			
94	98	II A 75	
95		II C 60	
96	171	III C 103	
97	94	II A 76	
98			
99	65b	II A 61	
100			
101	95	II A 85	
102	125	II A 93	
103	138	III A 112	
104		III C 95	
105			
106			
107			
108	181	III A 142	
109	193		
110	194		
111	235b		
112			
113	223		
114	269		
115	277		
116	232		
117	251		
118	278		
119	243		
120	242		
121			
122	307		
123	257		
124	280		
125	288		
126	317		
127			
128			
129			
130			
131			
132	6	I A 8	
133		I C 21	
134	35	I B 6	IV Corr.
135		I C 32	
136	45	I C 27	
137		I C 31 (c)	
138		I C 31 (c)	
138A		I C 31	
139			
140	(36)	I C 25 (c)	

Br.-Br/G	*W*	*Corpus I-III*	*Corpus IV-V*
141		I C 26	
142		II C 54	
143	57	I A 41	II Corr.
144		II C 55	
145	59	II A 43	
146	60	II A 44	
147	81		
148		I C 24	
149			
150			
151			
152	82	II C 53	IV Corr.
153			
154		II C 74	
155	71	II A 60	
156		I A 23; II Corr.	
157			IV Add. 1 (c)
158			
159	87a	II C 70	
160	73	II A 59	
161	67	II A 57	
162	68	II A 56	
163	62a	II A 45	
164	64a	II A 54	
165		II C 75	
166	72	II A 52	
167	63a	II C 68	
168			
169	84	II A 48	
170	70	II A 53	
171	91	II A 81	
172	88a	II A 78	
173	90	II A 80	
174		II C 76	
175		II C 77	
176	92		IV Add. 4
177	119a	II A 86	
178	104	II A 73	
179	164	III A 128	
180	99	II B 8	
181		II C 52	
182			
183	103	II A 74	
184			
185	192		
186		II C 63	
187			
188			
189			
190		II C 62	
191		II C 64	
192			
193			
194	117a	II A 102	
195			
196	115	II C 78	
197	118a	II C 72	
198			
199	120a	II A 100	
200	121a	II A 98	
201	133a	III C 104	
202	132a	III A 115	
203	156	III C 108	
204			

Br.-Br/G	*W*	*Corpus I-III*	*Corpus IV-V*
205		III C 100	
206	141	III C 101	IV Corr.
207	142	III C 102	
208			
209			
210			
211	155	III A 122	
212			
213			
214		III C 109	
215			
216	168	III A 129	
217	177a	III A 140	
218	187a	III A 144	
219	185		
220			
221			
222	184a	III C 110	
223			
224	191a		
225			
226			
227			
228	238		
229			
230			
231			
232			
233			
234	195		
235			
236	203		
237			
238	216		
239	204		
240			
241			
242			
243			
244			
245			
246			
247			
248			
249			
250			
251		III C 106	
252	215		
253			
254			
255	303		
256			
257			
258			
259			
259A			
260			
260A			
261	285		
262			
263			
264			
265	225		
266	222		
267	221		

Br.-Br/G	*W*	*Corpus I-III*	*Corpus IV-V*
268	226		
269	230		
270			
271			
272			
273			
274			
275	234		
276	233		
277			
278	244		
279	236		V 20
280			
281	249		
282			
283	227		
284			
285	306		
286			
287			
288			
289			
290	261		
291	260		
292			
293			
294	259		
295			
295A	276		
296	310		
297	270		
298	309		
299			
300	304		
301			
302			
303			
304			
305			
306	279		
307			
308			
309			
310	295		
311			
312	247		
313			
314	297a		
315	263		
316			
317			
318	271		
319	272		
320	250		
321	308		
322	300		
323	315		
323A	316		
324			
325			
326	311a		
327	248a		
328		I C 44	
329			
330	64b	II A 55	

Br.-Br/G	*W*	*Corpus I-III*	*Corpus IV-V*
331	63b	II C 69	
332	62b	II C 80	
333	75	II A 63	
334	74	II A 62	
335		II A 83	
336		II C 79	
337		II C 81	
338	87b	II C 71	
339		II A 82	
340	93	II A 84	
341	88b	II A 79	
342	120b	II A 101	
343	116	II A 104	
344	119b	II A 87	
345		II C 82	
346	118b	II C 73	
347	121b	II A 99	
348		III C 112	
349	132b	III C 111	
350	133b	III C 105	
351		III C 115	
352			
353			
354	117b	III A 103	
355	169	III A 132	
356	184b	III A 131	
357	177b	III A 141	
358	180	III C 113	
359	186		
360	187b	III A 145	
361			
362			
363	191b		
364			
365			
366	197		
367			
368	200		
369		III C 114	
370		III C 107	
371			
372			
373			
374			
375			
376			
377	220		
378			
379			
380			
381			
382			
383			
384			
385	241		
386			
387	161		
388			
389			
390			
391	258		
392			
393			
394	297b		
395	296		

Br.-Br/G	*W*	*Corpus I-III*	*Corpus IV-V*
396			
397	287		
398	305		
399			
400	318		
401	311b		
402	248b		
403	76	II A 51	
404			
405	61	II C 67	
406	77a	II C 65	
407	77b	II C 66	
408	89	II A 77	
409	183	III A 143	
410	190	III A 146	
414	246		
415	299		
416	312		
417	313		
419	24	I A 18	
420	14	I A 10	
421	2	I B 1	IV Corr., p. 627
421A	3	I B 2	IV Corr., p. 627
sub 421A	1	I B 3	IV Corr., p. 627
422	17	I C 11	V Corr.
423	27	I A 13	
424		I C 13	IV Corr.
425		I C 18	
426		I C 18 (c)	
427		I C 14	
428	26	I A 17	
429		I C 15	
430	85	I C 17	
431	86	II C 51	V Corr.
432	129	II A 95	
433	147	III A 120	
434			
435		III C 91	
436			
437	229		V 19
438			
439		III C 116	
440	175	III A 136	
441	176	III A 137	
442	159	III A 125	
443		III C 117	
444		III C 121	
445		III C 118	
446		III C 120	
447			
448			
449			
450	205		
451		III C 119	
452	207		
453			
454	152	III B 12	
455			
456	165	III A 134	
457	240		V 21
458		III C 122	
459			
460	7	I A 6	
461			

Br.-Br/G	*W*	*Corpus I-III*	*Corpus IV-V*
462	41	I A 31	
463	49	I A 39	
464	50	II A 47	
465		I C 9	
466	54	I A 38	
467	101	II A 70	
468	128	II A 94; III Corr.	
469	139	III A 114	
470	124	II A 91	
471	137	III A 113	
472	130	II A 92	
473			
474	149	III A 119	
476	153	III A 135	
477			
478	228		
479	253		
480	239		
481	265		V 27
482	298		
483	301		
484			
485	317		
486	12	I A 3	
487	10	I A 2	
488	8	I A 9	
489	37	I A 24	
490	38	I A 25	
491	102	II A 67	
492		II C 45	
493			
494	100	II A 64	
495			
496			
497	143	III A 110	
498	136	III A 108	
499	140	III A 109	
501	148	III A 116	
502		III C 86	
503	150	III A 121	
504	108	II A 66	
505	144	III A 117	
506			
507	160	III A 123	
508		III C 85	
509		III C 83	
511	188	III C 84	V Corr.
513			V 2
514	201		V 7
515	208		V 9
516	213		V 1
518			
519			
520	266		V 28
521	231		
522		III B 9	
523			V 23
524	237		V 22
525	245		
526	212		
527	267		
528	268		
530	283		V 29
531			

Br.-Br/G	*W*	*Corpus I-III*	*Corpus IV-V*
531A	5	I A 1	
532	4	I A 4	
532A	13	I C 5	V Corr.
533		I C 10	
534		I C 8	
535	16	I A 12	
536		I C 7	
537		I A 30 (c)	
538	48	I A 30	
539	25	I A 16	
539A	23	I A 15	
540		I C 6; II Corr.	
541		II C 46 (c)	V Corr.
542			
543	47	I A 34	
543A	52	I A 35	
544	131	II A 88	
545	42	II C 48	V Corr.
546	112	II A 89	
547	105	II A 68	
548	106	II A 69	
550	107	II A 65	
551	126	II C 49	V Corr.
552	127	II A 90	
552A	130	II C 47	
554	114	III A 105	
555	110	III A 106	
556		I C 12	
557	145	III A 118	
558	151	III C 88	V Corr.
559	158	III A 124	
560	162	III A 126	
561	163	III A 127	
562	174	III A 138	
563	173	III C 87	
564			
565	113	III A 107	
566	196		V 3
568			V 5
569	202		V 8
570	198		V 4
572	209		V 6
574	211a		V 11
575			V 12
576	214		V 13
577	210		V 17
578	218		V 14
579			V 15
580			
581			
582			
583	219		V 18
584		II C 49 (c)	
586			
588			V 25
589			V 24
590			
591			
592			
592A			V 26
593			
594	284		
595			
596	286		V 30
597			V 16
598	320		
600	324		
601	15	I A 11	
602	28	I A 26	
603			
604	39	I A 28	
605		I C 16	
606			
606A			
607	40	I A 36	
608		II C 50	
609	83	II A 46	
610		III C 90	
611			
612	254		
613	255		
614	289		
615	290		
616			
616A	291		
617	292		
618			
619			
620			
621			
622	217a		
623	11		
624			
625	217b		
626			
627			
628			
629	293		
630	262		
631		I C 2	
632		I A 7	
633	44	I C 22	IV Corr.
634			
635			
636		I C 23	
637			
638			
639	252		

In the first (W) column are Plate and Note numbers in the present book. Br.: Bredius; Br.-G: Bredius/Gerson.

W	*Br.*	*Br.-G.*
1		sub 421A
2	421	421
3		421A
4	532	532
5		531A
6	132	132
7	460	460
8	488	488
9		
10	487	487
11	632	632
12	486	486
13		532A
14	420	420
15	601	601
16	535	535
17	422	422
18		
19	3	3
20		
21	72	72
22		
23		539A
24	419	419
25	539	539
26	428	428
27	423	423
28	602	602
29	8	8
30		
31	2	2
32	10	10
33	11	11
34	63	63
35	134	134
36		
37	489	489
38	490	490
39	604	604
40	607	607
41	462	462
42	545	545
43	76	76
44	633	633
45	136	136
46	77	77
47	543	543
48	538	538
49	463	463
50	464	464
51	69	69
52		543A
53	16	16
54	466	466
55	82	82
56	79	79
57	143	143
58	81	81
59	145	145
60	146	146
61	405	405
62a	163	163
62b	332	332
63a	167	167
63b	331	331
64a	164	164
64b	330	330
65a		
65b	99	99
66	17	17
67	161	161
68	162	162
69		
70	170	170
71	155	155
72	166	166
73	160	160
74	334	334
75	333	333
76	403	403
77a	406	406
77b	407	407
78	89	89
79	84	84
80	85	85
81	147	147
82	152	152
83	609	609
84	169	169
85	430	430
86	431	431
87a	159	159
87b	338	338
88a	172	172
88b	341	341
89	408	408
90	173	173
91	171	171
92	176	176
93	340	340
94	97	97
95	101	101
96	18	18
97	19	19
98	94	94
99	180	180
100	494	494
101	467	467
102	491	491
103	183	183
104	178	178
105	547	547
106	548	548
107	550	550
108	504	504
109		
110	555	555
111		
112	546	546
113	565	565
114	554	554
115	196	196
116	343	343
117a	194	194
117b	354	354
118a	197	197
118b	346	346
119a	177	177
119b	344	344
120a	199	199
120b	342	342
121a	200	200
121b	347	347
122		
123	21	21
124	470	470
125	102	102
126	551	551
127	552	552
128	468	468
129	432	432
130	423	423
130A		552A
131	544	544
132a	202	202
132b	349	349
133a	201	201
133b	350	350
134	25	25
135	30	30
136	498	498
137	471	471
138	103	103
139	469	469
140	499	499
141	206	206
142	207	207
143	497	497
144	505	505
145	557	557
146	23	23
147	433	433
148	501	501
149	474	474
150	503	503
151	558	558
152	454	454
153	476	476
154	27	27
155	211	211
156	213	213
157	24	24
158	559	559
159	442	442
160	507	507
161	387	387
162	560	560
163	561	561
164	179	179
165	456	456
166	31	31
167		
168	216	216
169	355	355
170	29	29
171	96	96
172	32	32
173	563	563
174	562	562
175	440	440
176	441	441
177a	217	217
177b	357	357
178	36	36
179	34	34
180	358	358
181	108	108
182		
183	409	409
184a	222	222
184b	356	356
185	219	219
186	359	359
187a	218	218
187b	360	360
188	511	511
189	37	37
190	410	410
191a	224	224
191b	363	363
192	185	185
193	109	109
194	110	110
195	234	234
196	566	566
197	366	366
198	570	570
199	38	38
200	368	368
201	514	514
202	569	569
203	236	236
204	239	239
205	450	450
206		
207	452	452
208	515	515
209	572	572
210	577	577
211a	574	574
211b		
212	526	526
213	516	516
214	576	576
215	252	252
216	238	238
217a	622	622
217b	625	625
218	578	578
219	583	583
220	377	377
221	267	267
222	266	266
223	113	113
224	42	42
225	265	265
226	268	268
227	283	283
228	478	478
229	437	437
230	269	269
231	521	521
232	116	116
233	276	276
234	275	275
235a	43	43
235b	111	111
236	279	279
237	524	524
238	228	228
239	480	480
240	457	457
241	385	385
242	120	120
243	119	119
244	278	278
245	525	525
246	414	414
247	312	312
248a	327	327
248b	402	402
249	281	281
250	320	320
251	117	117
252	639	639
253	479	479
254	612	612
255	613	613
256	49	49
257	123	123
258	391	391
259	294	294
260	291	291
261	290	290
262	630	630
263	315	315
264	50	50
265	481	481
266	520	520
267	527	527
268	528	528
269	114	114
270	297	297
271	318	318
272	319	319
273	48	48
274	51	51
275	58	58
276		295A
277	115	115
278	118	118
279	306	306
280	124	124
281	53	53
282	54	54
283	530	530
284	594	594
285	261	261
286	596	596
287	397	397
288	125	125
289	614	614
290	615	615
291		616A
292	617	617
293	629	629
294	59	59
295	310	310
296	395	395
297a	314	314
297b	394	394
298	482	482
299	415	415
300	322	322
301	483	483
302	61	61
303	255	255
304	300	300
305	398	398
306	285	285
307	122	122
308	321	321
309	298	298
310	296	296
311a	326	326
311b	401	401
312	416	416
313	417	417
314	485	485
315	323	323
316		323A
317	126	126
318	400	400
319	52	52
320	598	598
321	55	55
322	60	60
323	62	62
324	600	600

Glossary

For a useful survey of materials and techniques in the history of painting, see the series *Art in the Making* published by The National Gallery, London. The first volume of this series, by David Bomford, Chritopher Brown and Ashok Roy, is devoted exclusively to Rembrandt. The lemmas marked with a • have been taken from the relevant Glossary with permission from the National Gallery.

Aemulatio *Latin*: striving to do as well as another.

Aerial perspective Changes in colour and tone of an object in a given (picture) space due to (presumed) atmospheric influence on the visibility of the object.

Alterstil The late style of certain older artists who have developed to a point where they no longer conform to any style currently prevalent. Such a style is subsequently often experienced as visionary. A classic example from music is the late string quartets of Beethoven. Also Rembrandt had an Alterstil.

Assistant see Pupil/Assistent.

Autograph retouches See retouching.

B. See Bibliography Bartch.

Batten A thin strip of wood.

Bayesian approach see p. 65.

Ben. See Bibliography Benesch

Bevelling In panel-making: (giving) a sloped or slanted edge to a panel board in order to fit in a frame.

Binding medium Ingredient of a paint which binds the pigment particles into a cohesive layer and attaches it firmly to the ground, at the same time influencing the structure of the paint surface.

Bolt A roll of woven fabric, usually of a defined length e.g. 28 ells.

•Bone black A black pigment made from carbonised bone, which gives a warmer black than does wood charcoal.

Br. See Bibliography Bredius 1935

Brushability The behavior of a paint under the brush.

•Carbon black A black pigment made from wood or other vegetable matter or carbonised bone (see charcoal, bone black).

•Chalk A natural form of calcium carbonate. Mixed with oil, it becomes translucent, and can be used to stiffen glazes without rendering them opaque; it is also used as a cheap extender for lead white, whose opacity it reduces, and as one of the materials of grounds.

•Charcoal Carbon made by burning wood. Sticks of charcoal are used for sketching. Wood charcoal, powdered and used as a pigment, has a bluish-black colour.

Coloured ground A ground whose colour serves as an intermediate tone over which both light and dark passages can be worked.

•Cool Of a colour: tending towards the blue end of the spectrum. Cool colours tend to seem farther away from the spectator than warm colours, a phenomenon used to create perspective effects.

Cortegiano *Italian*: courtier.

Cradling system A system of battens attached to the back of a panel to prevent it from warping. This system, developed in the 18th century, was widely used until the 20th century. The damage caused by the practice of planing and cradling has destroyed much information from the backs of panels.

•Craquelure The network of cracks that develops in the surface of a picture as the paint layers age.

•Cross-section By examining minute samples of paint in cross-section under the microscope, the layer structure of the painting, including the ground layers, can be determined for that sample point. Samples are mounted in a block of cold-setting resin, then ground and polished to reveal the edge of the sample for examination in reflected (incident) light under the optical microscope.

•Cusping Wavy distortion of the weave at the edge of a canvas, caused by its being held taut with cords while the canvas was primed. Lack of cusping on an edge is sometimes a sign that a painting has been cut down in size.

•Dead colour Monochrome or dull colours used to build up the light and dark areas of a painting before further colour is applied on top.

•Dendrochronology A technique used to date wooden objects, including panel paintings, by examining annual growth rings in the wood. Trees grow faster in favourable summers, giving wider rings than those formed in bad summers. A sequence of ring widths has been worked out reaching many centuries into the past, so that dates can usually be calculated for when a tree was alive. The year in which it was cut down can be known precisely only if the final ring, just under the bark, is present, but an estimation of the felling date can usually be made.

Disattribution Rejection of the previously presumed authenticity of a painting.

•Drier See siccative.

•Earth pigment One of a range of natural pigments mined in various parts of the world. They consist of a mixture of clay and various oxides of iron in different proportions, and other substances, and are yellow, red, brown or even black in colour.

•Ell A unit of measurement traditionally used for the width of fabric. A Flemish ell, as used in the Netherlands in the seventeenth century, is 69 cm (but an English ell is 114 cm).

•**Etching** A method of making prints. A copper plate is coated with an acid-proof wax or varnish, known as a resist, and then drawn on with a stylus to scratch through the resist. Acid is applied to eat away the exposed metal, forming small indentations. After this, the resist is removed. To make a print, the plate is inked and then wiped, leaving ink only in the indentations. When the plate is pressed on to paper, this ink prints a picture which is a reversed, mirror-image version of the original drawing.

•**Glaze** A layer of translucent paint applied over other paint to modify its colour, or to give depth and richness of colour.

•**Grisaille** The process of painting in different shades of grey or near-monochrome; a painting so executed.

•**Ground** A preparatory underlayer, its colour sometimes giving a prevailing tone to the paint applied over it. Two different layers may be used (a double ground).

•**Half-tones** The transitional regions between light and dark areas of a painting.

Houding Dutch term for the creation of a convincing spatial effect in a painting by an appropriate gradation of colours and tones in the different planes of the picture space.

Idea Not used in the sense as today. For Plato: the Forms or Ideas are those entities which are not accessible to the senses. In the 17th century, on the contrary, 'ideas' were 'given' in experience, they were received by the mind, *either* from sensory perception *or* by inner reflection.

Illusionism The use of pictorial techniques to create in an artwork the illusion of reality. See also trompe 'oeil.

•**Impasto** Thickly applied paint which stands out from the surface in relief.

Imprimatura A thin layer of oil paint applied as a final layer to a ground in order to determine its colour.

•**Infrared** A form of radiation similar to visible light, but slightly too long in wavelength for the eye to see. However, it can be photographed. Two apparently similar colours may look quite different when photographed under infrared. Some materials opaque to ordinary light are transparent to infrared, so that otherwise invisible underlayers of paint or drawing may be seen. *Pentimenti* and underdrawing containing black show particularly clearly in an infrared photograph; on light ground pictures the structure of the brushstrokes often appears accentuated because of the greater penetration of infrared radiation to the reflecting layers underneath.

Invention Art theoretical term for the development of a composition or, in the case of historical painting, a narrative concept, in the mind and/or by sketches.

Kenlijkheyt *Dutch*, *obsolete*: perceptibility. The term was used to refer to the way that pictorial space is perceived in a surface image as a result of visual cues. Roughness in the surface structure focuses the eye and leads the viewer to perceive forms thus painted as foreground.

•**Lake** A pigment made by precipitation on to a base from a dye solution – that is, causing solid particles to form, which are coloured by the dye. Lakes may be red, yellow, reddish brown or yellowish brown and are generally translucent pigments when mixed with the paint medium. Often used as glazes.

•**Lay-in** To underpaint as a rough basis for some feature of the painting; such an area is known as a lay-in.

Lead white Basic lead carbonate, one of the oldest manufactured pigments, dating back to the earliest European (and Chinese) civilizations. Used in oil paints, it is a good drier, has excellent brushing qualities and forms a tough, lasting paint film.

•**Lead-tin yellow** A yellow opaque pigment made by heating lead or a lead compound with stannic (tin) oxide, pale to dark yellow according to the temperature of preparation.

Lining In the conservation of paintings, the process of fixing fresh linen to the back of an old canvas that has deteriorated through age. The ground and paint layers need to be re-attached to the old canvas, and in some techniques this is accomplished in the process of lining.

Loom A machine in which yarn is woven into fabric.

Maulstick or Mahlstick A light, wooden rod, about one metre long, used by the painter as a support to steady the hand in the execution of fine or detailed work.

•**Medium** The binding agent for pigments in a painting; see also oil.

•**Neutron activation autoradiography** A method of forming images of the different types of pigment used in a painting. The painting is bombarded with neutrons in a nuclear reactor, so that all the materials in it become temporarily faintly radioactive, emitting electrons and other radiation which will produce an image on special photographic film. Different substances lose their radioactivity at different rates. Film is laid on the painting and changed at regular intervals, so that a series of images is obtained. For example, a few hours after bombardment the most strongly radiating element is manganese, revealing an image of all the umber in the painting. Four days afterwards, the main emitter is phosphorus, giving an image of passages carried out in bone black.

•**Ochre** An earth pigment (q.v.) of a dull red, orange, yellow or brown colour.

•**Oil** The oils used in oil paint are drying oils – that is, oils which dry naturally in air – such as linseed, walnut and poppyseed oil. Pigments are ground in this oil medium to make paint.

Ordineren *Dutch*: arranging. As distinct from composition, the arrangement of figures, objects, buildings etc. in a given picture space.

Ordonnantie See ordineren.

•**Pastose** Of paint: mixed to a stiff texture, so that it can be used to create impasto (q.v.).

Peinture Specific quality of the brushwork of a painter.

Pentimento (plural ***pentimenti***) (also **repentir**) The change by the artist in a given passage of a painting. Such changes may show up at the surface due to the increasing transparency of the top layers with age.

Planing down In this context, the smoothing of the rough surface of a panel back with a plane, before applying a **Cradling System**.

Primer The white Ground or coating applied over a coat of size to a surface to prepare it for painting. See priming.

Priming Application of a primer, or white Ground before beginning painting. This provides a white base and stable structure, and gives suitable texture and absorbency on which to paint. The term is also sometimes used as a synonym for Ground, but throughout this book a distinction is implied between the main application of primer and subsequent Imprimatura or Primuersel.

•Primuersel A thin layer of oil paint applied to the ground before beginning to paint, particularly in the context of a white chalk ground bound in glue for a panel painting. This layer modifies the colour of the ground and also, in the case of a chalk ground, makes it less liable to absorb oil from the paint layers above.

Pupil/assistant In the Notes to the Plates one will sometimes encounter references to Rembrandt's assistants which, at first sight, appear unambiguous but on further consideration can cause confusion. They are referred to in the present book as either pupil or assistant and sometimes also as pupil/assistant.
Rembrandt's pupils were always (very) young men who already had the first stage of their training behind them. They came to learn and acquire for themselves Rembrandt's technique and style. Their position during their time with Rembrandt can be best compared with that of a modern-day intern, engaged in a combination of learning, gaining experience and participation in the production within the tradition, or way of working, in a particular firm.
There are also journeymen, young travelling painters (*gezellen*) who could not yet, or were not yet allowed to establish themselves as masters. A place was sought for them with a local master by the Lucasgilde (St Luke's Guild) of the city where they arrived: a temporary sojourn with an established master where in a certain sense they continued their training, obtained new experience and also worked for their living. I believe it is possible that the painters who worked on parts of 77a/b and 184a/b could well have belonged to this category of pupil/assistants.
(In this context, see also the use of the term 'satellites' on p. 56).

Quartz The crystalline mineral silica, or silicon dioxide, which is the main constituent of sand. In powdered form, silica is used as an inert pigment in grounds for canvas. See silica.

Quartz ground A type of ground, consisting of c. 60% mulled quartz mixed with pottery clay and brown earth pigments, prepared with a generously used drying oil. This ground was only found in paintings by Rembrandt and from his studio. Rembrandt seems to have used it for the first time on the canvas for the *Night Watch*. About 40% of his later works on canvas are painted on a quartz ground. No other paintings with this ground by other artists have been found until now (see Groen in *Corpus* IV pp. 325-334).

Rabbet In joinery: a slot, shoulder or ledge cut along the edge or face in one member of a construction, e.g. the back of a frame, to receive the edge or end of another member, e.g. a panel.

Radioabsorbent Irradation of a painting results in the particular wavelength passing through some materials (pigments, binding media etc.) and being absorbed by others. Radioabsorbent paint shows up in X-radiographs. Layer of lead white or lead-tin yellow, but also thick layers of less radioabsorbent paint may thus be studied by X-radiography independently of their visibility at the paint surface.

•Radiograph An image created on photographic film by X-rays (or occasionally by other forms of radiation). The process is known as radiography. See X-rays.

•Raking light A technique for revealing surface details of a painting by casting light across it at a low angle.

Red lakes Organic red pigments used in glazing technique. See Glaze.

Refractive index The ratio between the speed of light in air and its speed in the substance. The greater the difference between the r.i. of a paint layer and the medium above, the more light will be reflected at the interface and the less absorbed. A significant factor in determining the colour value of a paint.

•Reline To reinforce the original canvas support with a secondary canvas support stuck to the back.

Repentir See Pentimento.

Reserves Darkish form in X-radiographs resulting from the painter working round these shapes while executing passages that lie further back in the pictorial space of the painting.

Retouching Making changes or adding details to a finished picture by going over it with fresh paint. In the case of autograph retouching, this work is done by the original artist himself. In restoration retouching, it is the restorer who retouches damage in the paint surface.

RKD Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie (Netherlands Institute for art history).

Rough manner *Dutch*: *ruwe manier*: a 17the century term referring to a way of painting in which the brushstrokes are visible and sometimes crude or casual. See also Sprezzatura.

RRP Rembrandt Research Project.

Schutters The members of a citizens' shooting association founded originally as a vigilante organization for the protection of the community.

Selvedge The edge of a woven fabric.

Sfumato From the Italian word *fumo*, smoke or vapour. The creation of an atmospheric effect in a painting by blurring the outlines of shapes.

•Siccative Having a drying effect; a material which has such an effect (also known as a drier).

Signature See p. 65.

•Silica Silicon dioxide, naturally found as quartz or sand. Powdered, it is used in certain grounds.

Smooth manner *Dutch*: *fijne manier*: a 17th century term referring to a way of painting in which a high degree of finish is aimed at and the brushstrokes are (almost) invisible.

Sprezzatura Apparent carelessness in a painting; giving it the effect of having been executed without effort.

Standard sizes Fixed sizes used in the 17th century production of panels and canvases.

•Strainer A fixed wooden frame on which a canvas is mounted to hold it taut.

•Stretcher Strictly, a wooden frame which may be expanded with wedges or keys, and on which a canvas is mounted to hold it taut; an eighteenth-century invention, not used by Rembrandt himself. The term is often, but wrongly, used for a fixed strainer (q.v.).

•Stretching frame A temporary frame to which a canvas is attached with cords to hold it taut while a ground is being applied or it is being painted.

Strip width The width of cloth as it comes from the loom.

•Support The canvas, wood panel or other material on which a painting is executed.

•tacking edge The margins of a canvas where it has been turned around and tacked to the edges of a strainer or stretcher.

Thread density The number of threads per cm in both warp and weft of a fabric.

•Transfer To remove the original support (whether canvas or panel) from the back of the paint and ground, and replace it with a new support. The ground may also be partially or completely removed during the process, and a new ground applied to the back of the paint layers.

Trompe l'oeil *French*: deception of the eye; painting that uses perspective and other means, e.g. placing the subject parallel to the picture space, so as to create an illusion of depth which fools the viewer into thinking he is looking at real rather than painted objects.

Tronie Literally, a face. In the 17th century Netherlands, portraits or paintings with anonymous or unidentified figures were sometimes referred to as *tronies*. In modern art historical practice the term is typically reserved for paintings with individuals as a rule not intended to be identifiable, the allusions of which may be of very different kinds like transitoriness (vanitas), piousness, martiality etc..

•Turbid medium effect The production of a cool, bluish tone by superimposing a lighter semi-translucent layer of colour over a darker, warmer underpaint. Cool half-tones in flesh paints can be achieved by brushing the light skin colour thinly to overlap the dark undermodelling for the shadows.

Twill canvas Canvas that has a diagonal weave rather than a square one.

Ultima maniera *Italian*: literally, 'last style'. See Alterstill.

•Ultra-violet A form of radiation similar to visible light, but slightly too short in wavelength for the eye to see. Some substances, when illuminated with ultra-violet, fluoresce – give off visible light – allowing details not otherwise visible to become apparent.

•Umber An earth pigment (q.v.) containing black manganese dioxide, giving it a dark brown colour. Umber may be used as it is – raw- or burnt, that is, heated in a furnace to make the colour warmer.

Underdrawing Sketch or more detailed drawing done by the painter directly on the ground. The term came into use when it became possible through infra-red radiography to make these drawings, which are normally hidden beneath paint, visible.

•Undermodelling Preliminary painting of features to suggest their shape and shading, before colour and details are added.

Underpainting The first coat of paint applied to a prepared surface, preliminary to working up. See Deadcolouring, Lay-in.

Vanitas *Latin*: the transitoriness of all things.

•Vermilion Mercuric sulphide, usually synthetic but sometimes the ground natural mineral cinnabar; used as a pigment.

Vidimus Design for a given work of art to show to a patron for his approval.

•Warm Of a colour: tending towards the red end of the spectrum. Warm colours tend to seem nearer to the spectator than cool colours, a phenomenon used to create perspective effects.

Warp and weft In weaving: the threads extended lengthwise in the loom are the warp, usually twisted harder than the weft with which these are crossed to form the fabric.

•Wet-into-wet Laying down one colour next to or on to another before the first is dry, so that some intermixing occurs.

Working-up Execution of the final stage of a painting, bringing it to a desired finish. [The Dutch term used here is 'opmaken', literally, to finish. Many paintings might be left at the underpainting stage until a client requested one, which would then be 'worked up'].

•X-rays A form of radiation which passes through solid objects, but is obstructed to differing degrees by differing materials. The larger the atoms of which a substance is made, the more opaque it is to X-rays. Lead compounds are particularly opaque, those containing lighter metals less so. Thus in an X-ray image (known as a radiograph) of a painting, areas of paint containing lead pigments will appear almost white, areas containing iron pigments will appear in an intermediate grey, and areas containing lighter materials will appear dark.

In interpreting X-rays it should be remembered that all layers are superimposed: thus the image of a stretcher and features on the back of a painting may seem to overlie the image of the paint itself. Details of the weave of a linen canvas and the grain of a wood panel would normally not register significantly in a radiograph: they are, however, made visible in the X-ray image by a radioabsorbent ground which lies directly on them and which takes on the imprint of their surface structure. Thus a prominent thread in a canvas weave will appear dark in the radiograph because there is an absence of ground in this region. Even when a canvas is removed by transfer, the X-ray image of the weave often remains, imprinted in the ground layers. Except in the case of very small paintings, several X-ray plates have to be used. The plates are pieced together to form an X-ray mosaic.

XRF scanning X-ray Spectrometric Fluorescence (XRF) Scanning. In XRF-scanning the painting is irradiated with a fine beam of X-rays, as a result of which the elements present in the paint emit secondary (fluorescent) X-rays with characteristic energy. On the basis of the energy of these fluoresced X-rays, the elements can be identified. Knowing these elements, the pigments in the painting can in turn be identified.

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