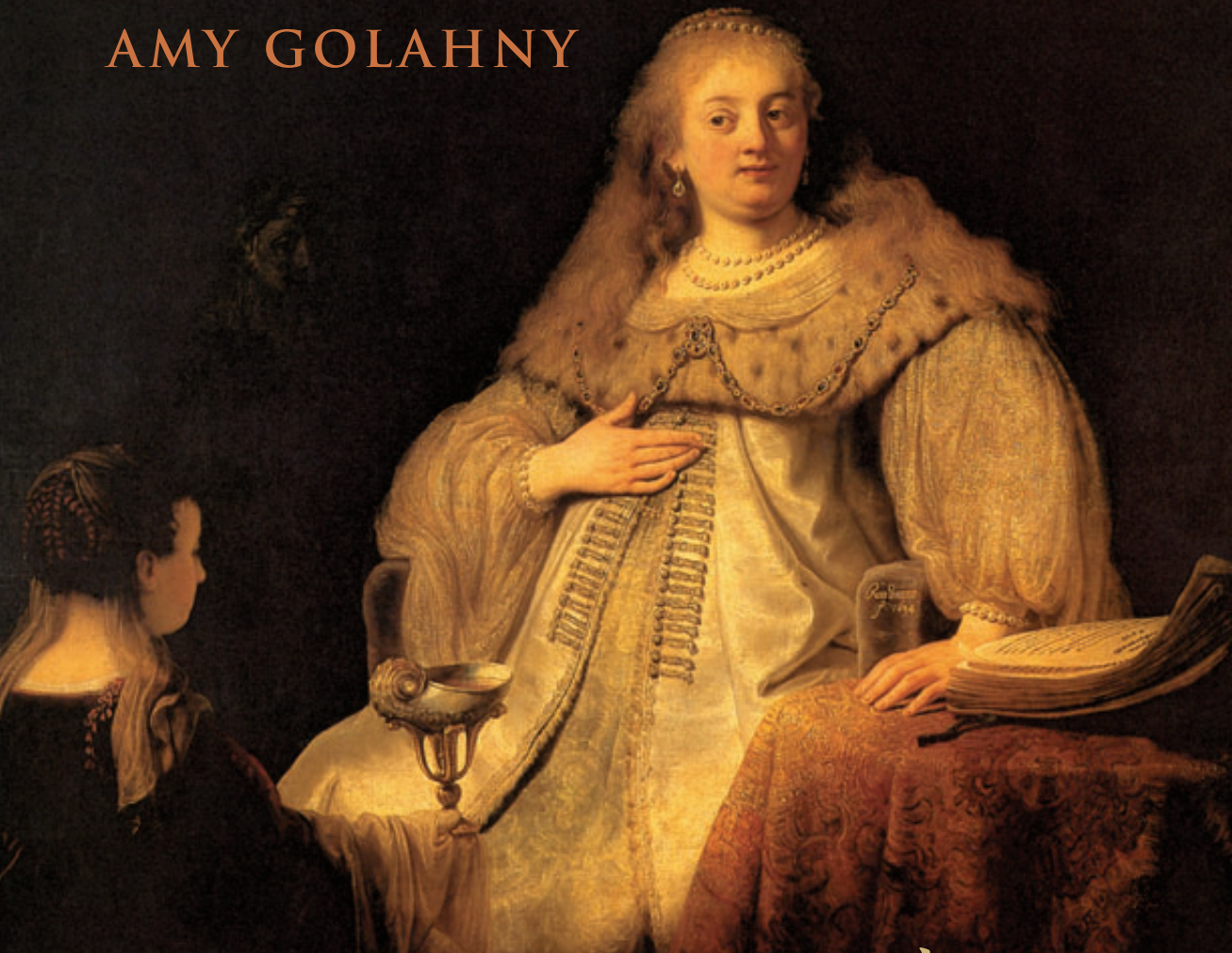


AMY GOLAHNY



REMBRANDT'S READING

*The Artist's Bookshelf of
Ancient Poetry and History*

AMSTERDAM UNIVERSITY PRESS

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My interest in Rembrandt's reading was prompted by Arnold Houbraken's seemingly contradictory statements that artists ought not to "bury their noses in books," yet ought to know histories well. After all, the craft of painting demanded expertise in the practice of art, not in the study of texts. I wondered how little Rembrandt needed to read in order to draw, paint, and etch his subjects from ancient poetry and history. In May 1996, I began to develop a limited reading list for Rembrandt. I have been fortunate to conduct research at the Houghton Library of Harvard University, the Butler and Avery Libraries of Columbia University, the New York Public Library, The Special Collections of The Pennsylvania State University Library, Biblioteca Nazionale Firenze, Universiteitsbibliotheek Amsterdam, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Plantin-Moretus Museum, Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie, Rijksprentenkabinet, The British Library, University of Michigan, The Warburg Institute, Bibliothèque Nationale, Fondation Custodia, Louvre, Musée des Beaux-Arts de Rennes, Herzog August Bibliothek, Herzog Anton Ulrich Museum, Berlin Kupferstichkabinett, and the Staatliche Graphischesammlung, Munich. The staffs of these libraries and museums generously and patiently filled my requests. At Lycoming College, Tasha Cooper, Rose DiRocco, Cathleen Hurwitz, Georgia Laudenslager, Marlene Neece, and Gail Spencer provided invaluable support with interlibrary loans and many other queries.

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NOTE TO THE READER

All translations are my own, unless otherwise noted; transcriptions keep to their original, often archaic, text. Pagination in early imprints differs among editions. Catalogue references for Rembrandt drawings, prints and paintings are provided in cases where the work is not illustrated, or in cases where a reference was considered important.

PREFACE

The Scope of the Study

This study addresses the question: What did Rembrandt read in order to create his subjects from ancient poetry and history? That question prompted two more: could there be established a somewhat limited reading list for this artist? How does Rembrandt's reading contribute to his art? The following chapters provide answers to the first question, and responses to the next two: a limited reading list may be ascertained, but reading alone hardly accounts for Rembrandt's conception, invention, execution, and interpretation of his historical themes. Rembrandt's greatness lies in his mastery of illusion in the service of narrative; it involves how he represented his themes as much as what they are. Rembrandt developed the stylistic means, in paint, pen, and print, to craft illusions of the material world and to communicate subtleties of expression; he developed a style that dazzled the beholder with technical skill and conveyed psychological complexities.

Rembrandt's reading list in ancient poetry and history would connect him to the general literate culture of his time, even if it is insufficient to account for his art. This study does not include the Dutch literature of emblems, theater, costume books and poetry; nor does it concern the Bible, dramatic productions, and artist manuals. Rembrandt was surely familiar with, if not expert in, this material. By examining Rembrandt's reading in ancient poetry and history, we gain one measure of the intellectual context of his time and his works, and we step closer to an understanding of how he visualized stories of human activity, emotional response, and moral associations.

Publications serve as known and often identifiable quantities in the measuring of knowledge available to Rembrandt. His acquaintances in Leiden, Amsterdam, and The Hague were literate if not erudite, and many were poets and scholars. A few of these had substantial libraries and art collections, to which Rembrandt may have had access. But his conversations with his acquaintances and chance encounters with others remain unknown quantities, even if we can trace some connections and speculate about their exchanges. Among the more notable of Rembrandt's works that depend more upon verbal exchanges than textual comprehension is the series of four etchings made for Menasseh ben Israel's *La Piedra Gloriosa*. From studying the changes in the prints, we understand that the artist collaborated closely with the author in making his imagery conform to the demands of the text. By accounting for the more certain relationship between Rembrandt and the printed text, we can also speculate more precisely about those aspects in Rembrandt's oeuvre outside its influence, and then indicate where friendship and ephemeral contacts may have contributed. The evidence gathered here is dependent upon print culture, and the analyses take into account Rembrandt's milieu, biographical circumstances, and contacts. My purpose has been to demonstrate what was commonly available and to recreate concisely the literary material that fueled Rembrandt's image-making process in his narrative secular themes.

Two approaches are blended here to reconstruct Rembrandt's reading. One is based on his paintings, drawings, and prints, and proceeds from the works themselves that depend upon poetic or historical texts. The other is documentary, and examines the 1656 inventory of Rembrandt's possessions in order to discuss named titles and to suggest several more that he may have owned. I suggest these additional titles on the evidence in Rembrandt's own work; I discuss the historical subjects in a roughly chronological order, with the 1656 inventory as a convenient division between the earlier and later works.

Beyond the scope of this study are single figure compositions, allegorical imagery, and portraits, which often carry allusions to published sources, and surely reflect the parameters of reading knowledge

similar to Rembrandt's narratives. The puzzling 1626 History Painting, too, is a work I leave for another project.

Chapter 1 reviews the status of reading and literary theory in the Netherlands during the seventeenth century. The Dutch had the highest literacy rate in Europe during this time; their production of books was a major industry. The educational process at the highest level was the humanist emphasis on ancient literature and theory as the foundation for all learning; within the popular culture, the same process was diluted and accessible in the vernacular. Rembrandt belonged to a fairly specific humanist culture.

Chapter 2 surveys Rembrandt's education and training. Latin school, which Rembrandt attended for at least several years, usually led to further study and a career in law, medicine, or theology. However, it was not unusual for artists to receive a good education. Rembrandt's two teachers, Jacob van Swanenburgh and Pieter Lastman, were well read; several of Rembrandt's pupils attended Latin school. Finally, Rembrandt's academic training would have prepared him to converse with his acquaintances and patrons, of whom the two most learned were Constantijn Huygens and Jan Six.

Chapter 3 analyzes how the 1656 inventory lists Rembrandt's books. The inventory is a record of his possessions at that time, and includes 22 books. This document is only a guide to the possessions of the artist, who had already sold some of his print collection. Nonetheless, it is a worthwhile starting-point for reconstructing his "library." Two books in it were illustrated by Callot and Dürer, and kept among the folios of prints and drawings; these two books may have been valued as much for their illustrations as for their words. The rest of the books were kept together in a small room, much like a closet, in which various paraphernalia, collectibles, coins, and small statues were also kept.

Chapter 4 examines the mythological and historical subjects painted or drawn by Rembrandt during the 1630s and later. The texts that served these images were probably small books, without illustrations. The resultant works demonstrate how the artist read one or more passages in a text, or even more than one text, in order to formulate

unique images. These books were not obscure titles, but rather, the mythologies in the vernacular and two brief Latin passages in the works of well-known classical authors who were not translated into Dutch.

Chapter 5 focuses on three folio histories that are grouped together in the inventory. One of these, Josephus with Stimmer woodcuts, is an established source for Rembrandt. Two others can be suggested: Livy and a historical compendium. These may have served as teaching tools in the studio. These three folios, probably all in German, may have been useful for both text and illustration.

Chapter 6 concerns the later historical subjects by Rembrandt that depend upon textual accounts in Tacitus, Plutarch, and other writers. After the 1656 inventory and sales of his possessions, Rembrandt continued to collect art works; presumably, he also picked up a few books and other paraphernalia useful in his profession.

Chapter 7 compares the library of Rembrandt to libraries of other artists of his time. His lifetime reading must have exceeded the nearly two dozen books that appear in the 1656 inventory. However, 22 books would have been sufficient to support his profession as a history painter. After dispensing practical observations, writers on art most often repeated this advice to the artist: know the histories well, in order to avoid error. That Rembrandt did so is evident in his work.

CHAPTER 1

BOOK CULTURE



FIG. 1 – Rembrandt, *Cornelis Claes Anso*. Etching, 1641

The Image of the Reader in Rembrandt's Art

REMBRANDT'S OWN ATTITUDE TO READING may be illuminated by his many portrayals of readers. His portraits of men often include books to give tangible signs of the sitter's profession, as preacher, accountant, or author. When the book is a Bible, it carries meaning invested in the divine word. The act of interpreting the divine word is a dynamic process; it involves the person portrayed and the viewer. In Rembrandt's portraits of the Mennonite preacher and merchant Cornelis Claes Anslo, the prominent books are as significant as the figures. In the 1641 etching, Anslo sits at a table; upon the table are the tools of his task as interpreter of the word: four books, an inkwell, and a pen case [FIG. 1]. He holds the pen in one hand, which rests upon a closed book standing on its spine, and he gestures to an open folio, itself resting upon two more volumes. Open-mouthed as if speaking, he looks off to the side, addressing an unseen audience. His reading involves the immediate consultation of two volumes, and the reference of two more. He takes notes, as if to emphasize that his process of reading relates directly to his writing and preaching. Thus Anslo compares several texts and communicates his interpretation of them. Anslo's method of reading by comparing passages in several volumes was standard practice for cross-referencing, in theology, history, law, and literature. The act of reading involves a process of absorption, cogitation, and expression; the act then affects the beholder – himself the listener.



FIG. 2 – Rembrandt, *The Mennonite Preacher Cornelis Claes Anslo and his Wife Aeltje Gerritsdr. Schouten*, 1641

Rembrandt's grand double portrait of Anslo and his wife, also of 1641, makes an even stronger connection between the divine word and the active roles of interpreter and listener [FIG. 2]. A large Bible, opened to show the source of Anslo's wisdom and authority, carries as much pictorial weight as either of the sitters. The Bible rests upon a wooden lectern, and another smaller volume lies nearby; a bookshelf, half-curtained, holds volumes of various sizes. The books, as well as the carpet and cloth covering on the table and the attentive spouse, amplify the character, scholarship, wealth, social position, and morality of the Mennonite preacher and cloth dealer.¹

Vondel wrote a short poem about Rembrandt's portrayal of Anslo; this famous quatrain becomes the intermediary between the sitter and viewer:²

O Rembrandt, paint Cornelis' voice,
His visible parts are the least of him.
The invisible is perceived through the ears alone.
He who would see Anslo must hear him.

Vondel's exhortation to the beholder to "hear" the voice of Anslo is an emphatic, appropriate response: the image conveys only part of the message of the man. A challenge to the artist, Vondel's poem was well within the critical response not only of the rivalry between painting and poetry, but also of the expectations of portraiture. Rembrandt's lively portrayals of Anslo meet the challenge that an image must convey the full presence of the sitter: the image must be both seen and "heard" – that is, it evokes in the viewer the imagined voice of the depicted person.³ Essential to interpreting scripture, Anslo's reading is a public act, one that demands an audience.

Rembrandt also portrayed the act of reading as a solitary pastime; in his etched portrait of Jan Six of 1647, Rembrandt presented reading as an introverted activity [FIG. 3]. The preparatory sketches demonstrate how Rembrandt first drew an extroverted Six, with his dog jumping against his leg.⁴ Only in developing this portrait did Rembrandt arrive at the wholly inward mood of this seriously quiet image. Every aspect of the final composition reflects the literary and artistic interests. Even the light, as paper tone untouched by ink, is a refined participant; it is the "open" space of the window, and the agent by which Six reads. This light illuminates the head and hand of Six, the sword hilt upon the table, and the pile of books, the top one opened, on a bench in the left corner. Here, as in many other works by Rembrandt, the books are extensions of the sitter's character, and light, as symbolic and natural illuminator, reveals these possessions with the modulations so essential to Rembrandt's art.⁵

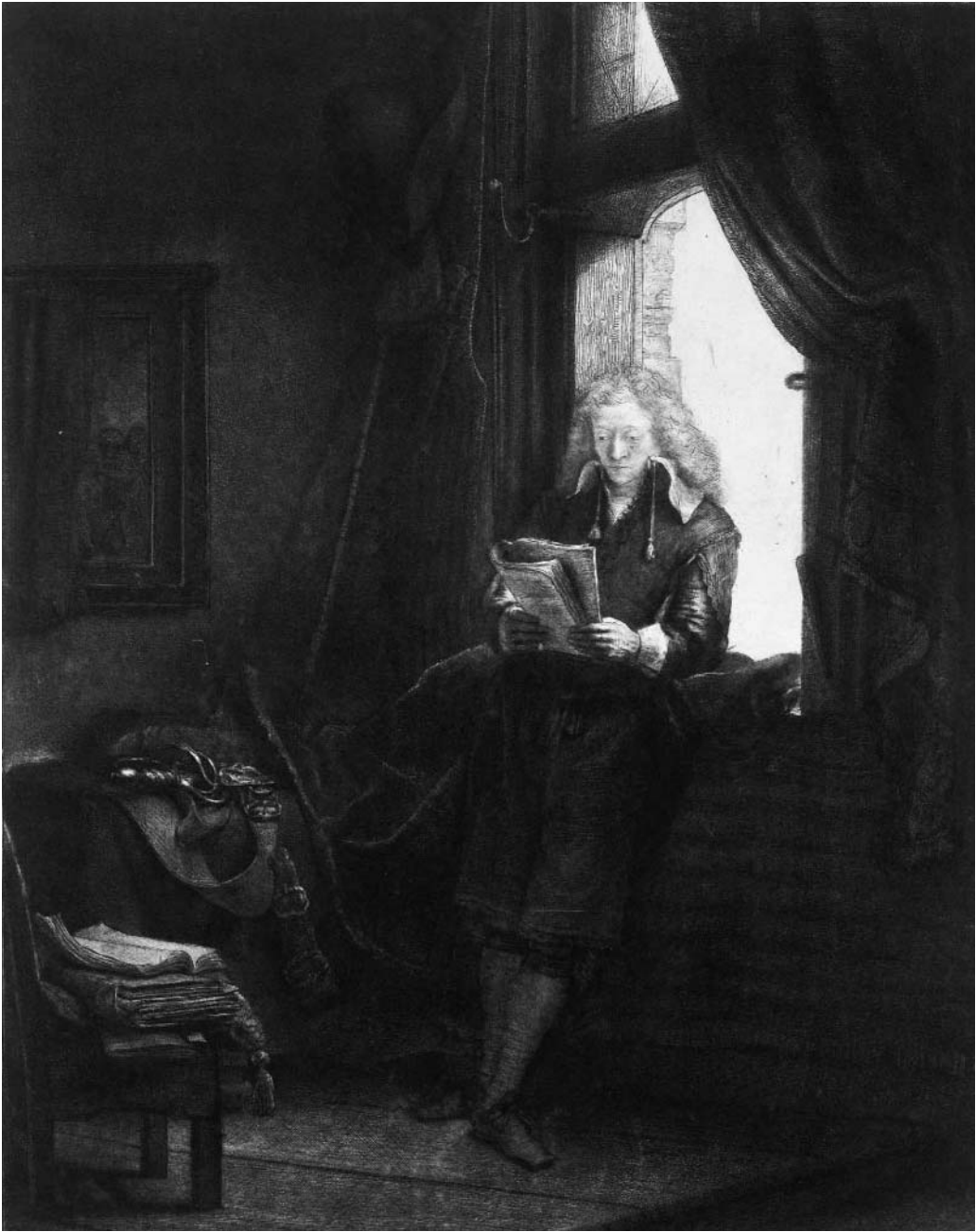


FIG. 3 – Rembrandt, *Jan Six in his Study*. Etching, 1647

However compellingly Rembrandt portrayed reading – either as an act of interpreting divine word or as a solitary pastime – he never shows himself engaged in it. He presented himself as an elegant gentleman, a costumed warrior, or a practicing artist. In the singular case in which Rembrandt portrayed himself with an artifact of writing and reading, he took on the identity of the Apostle Paul. In the 1661 *Self-Portrait as St. Paul*, Rembrandt shows himself with manuscript and sword, which are Paul’s major attributes: the letter to the Ephesians that is a foremost interpretation of the Christian faith and the sword that is the agent of Paul’s martyrdom.⁶ Rembrandt’s identification with Paul may be understood on several levels. Rembrandt’s long-standing fascination with the apostle and his teaching is evident from among his earliest works.⁷ He may have taken on Paul’s role as interpreter of Christian salvation by faith as an analogy to the artist’s own role of visual interpreter of the Bible. After all, Rembrandt’s emphasis throughout his work was on the Old and New Testaments, and often on those themes that concerned miracles and tests of faith. Significantly, Rembrandt adopts the creative and active message of Paul as author of the epistle, thereby underscoring the parallel between apostolic writer and creative artist.

Books are otherwise conspicuous by their absence in Rembrandt’s self-portraits. The absence of books is an extraordinary circumstance in comparison to the works by some artists close to Rembrandt. Gerard Dou, Rembrandt’s first pupil, consistently demonstrated his own learnedness in self-portraits that proclaimed the unity of practice and theory by including art materials and books. According to Dou, the artist derived knowledge and status from booklearning. And indeed, depictions of scholars, hermits, saints and others with books are prevalent in the works of Dou and other artists associated with Rembrandt. These depictions inextricably link scholarship and spirituality.⁸ Rembrandt, however, seems to proclaim in his art that the act of painting was superior to its sources, both pictorial and textual. Although Rembrandt certainly benefitted and used the information he gained from publications, he most often chose to suppress their display in his presentation of himself.

Rembrandt as Rag-picker and Book-hunter?

Rembrandt's passion was for art collecting, rather than book-hunting. He bought prints and drawings at auction, and acquired costumes, weapons, and exotic items at the Amsterdam markets. His art collection was kept alongside the miscellany of useful paraphernalia in his house, according to the 1656 inventory.⁹ His habit of acquiring old clothes and tools was noted by several early writers. Filippo Baldinucci, whose biography of Rembrandt was published in 1686, wrote:¹⁰

He often went to public sales by auction, and acquired clothes that were old-fashioned and shabby...; he hung these on the walls of his studio among the beautiful curiosities which he also took pleasure in possessing, such as every kind of old and modern arms, arrows, halberds, daggers, sabres, knives, and so on...

These clothes and armaments indeed appear in Rembrandt's work as exotic costumes. According to Roger de Piles, Rembrandt had a quantity of "old weaponry, instruments, old head-coverings, and a great deal of old embroidered fabrics," which he called his "antiquities."¹¹ De Piles mocked these things as antiques. He considered Rembrandt ignorant of ancient art and classical precepts. On the other hand, Rembrandt himself may have been ironic when regarding his old rags as valuable antiquities. Rembrandt may have been a "pack-rat" who picked up what he liked and what he could use in his work. His browsing through the auctions and markets would have been a habit. Andries Pels reported:¹²

He searched avidly through the entire city, on its bridges and in corners, in the New and North Markets, for weaponry, helmets, Japanese daggers, fabrics, and rags, which he found picturesque, and often he passed a Scipio with a Roman physique, or one with the noble bearing of a Cyrus.

Pels implied that Rembrandt sought exotic costumes to help fire his imagination in the rendering of historical figures. But in searching the markets, Rembrandt noted people in the street whose appearance might call to mind historical characters. Pels made the connection between experience and imagination. Rembrandt's historical figures wear fancy robes and armor, of the sort that he would find in the markets. In Rembrandt's reputation, books did not have the aura of the mysterious junk of old brocades and daggers, yet books belonged to the commercial public markets of Amsterdam. Although Rembrandt picked up a quantity of cloth and weaponry, he brought home very few books. As he rummaged through the second-hand goods, he would have also browsed among books, in the market and shops.

The Ubiquitous Book

A brief survey of the role of the book in the Netherlands helps to explain how books were intrinsic to the material culture surrounding Rembrandt. The history of publishing is inseparable from the culture and international commercial development of the United Provinces. The claim that printing was invented in Haarlem by Laurens Coster in the fifteenth century may have been discredited relatively recently; during the Republic, it generated pride in the culture of print. This claim also fostered the Dutch industry's rivalry with Germany for improving printing techniques, for publishing in quantity, and for writing and illustrating as thriving professions.¹³ When Florence and other court cities of Italy resisted printed book-production, in favor of protecting the craft of manuscripts, other cities quickly developed as publishing centers; a few entrepreneurs, taking advantage of the courtly resistance, soon began producing books for the markets and trade. Thus, it was no accident that in Italy Aldus Manutius established his press in Venice, somewhat removed from the resistant courts of Renaissance Italy, and that the new processes flourished in Germany and the Netherlands.¹⁴

The Netherlands was the most literate country of Europe in the seventeenth century. One major reason for this was the mercantile economy. Those engaged in commerce needed a basic education in math and reading, and those involved in international business needed training in languages and geography. To meet these varying requirements, three kinds of schools were established: city schools (Nederduitse scholen) for the most basic studies; French schools (Franse scholen) for a broader curriculum that included French; and Latin schools. For domestic, low-level trade, the city schools sufficed. For those engaged in international commerce, the French schools, where accounting and geography were taught, provided more training. The Latin schools offered more rigorous training in classics, religion, and geography. The city and French schools accepted both boys and girls, but the Latin schools accepted only boys.¹⁵

The general literacy rate of the Netherlands varied according to the region, and between urban and rural areas. Amsterdam's literacy rate has been estimated at seventy percent during the later seventeenth century – this rate indicates those Amsterdammers able to read at least the Dutch language.¹⁶ The levels of literacy varied, as did the material that was read; for the more skilled of the general populace, the reading material likely comprised simple novels, household manuals, and the Bible; for the less adept, reading material may have been limited to almanacs, pamphlets, and the Bible. The two best-selling publications of the seventeenth century were Jacob Cats' *Houwelijk* (1625), a guide to marriage and the family, and Adriaen Valerius' *Nederlandsche Gedenck-clanck* (1626), a history of the Dutch Republic. Both were often reissued, and, along with the Bible, may well have constituted the main reading matter for an average family.¹⁷

For Rembrandt and his immediate family, reading proficiency varied. Rembrandt attended a Latin school, but his siblings probably attended a city or French school. No books appear in the inventories of his mother and sister, but they very likely were among the average literate Netherlanders.¹⁸ Saskia van Uylenburgh, a Frisian burgomaster's daughter, was literate but not learned. Of the two other women in Rembrandt's life,

Geertje Dirckx, the widow of a ship's trumpeter, could evidently sign her name, and Hendrickje Stoffels signed her name with a cross.¹⁹ Titus could read and write Dutch, and must have received some education, probably at home, since Rembrandt did not seem to have the means for formal schooling. Although books were among the furnishings of Rembrandt's household, they were not used by all of the occupants.

In the seventeenth century, small unillustrated books indeed were cheap, but larger publications, especially with illustrations, were relatively expensive. The many small editions in Latin, often intended for use in the schools, were available for a few stuivers. One consequence of the 1625 school reform act was the publication of the basic classical and modern authors in inexpensive editions. Some booksellers specialized in supplying schools with history, poetry, philosophy, and the natural sciences.²⁰ The selling prices of these books were predictable, for they were determined by the cost of paper and the wages of the compositors and printers.²¹ For grand volumes, often with illustrations in woodcut or copper plate, the costs were significantly higher. Illustrated volumes in folio or quarto typically cost 2 to 5 guilders.²² During the course of the seventeenth century, the prices of books sold at auction fluctuated, and probably depended on provenance, condition, and availability – books were, after all, commodities. For example, the Delft painter Pieter Jansz Saenredam had a very substantial library, one which rivalled in size and scope that of a learned humanist. In his 1667 annotated sale catalogue, the estimated price for Dutch translations of ancient authors was around 5 guilders; in fact, the actual sale price was often higher. Two illustrated folios that brought prices above the estimates are a 1607 Josephus, estimated at 5 guilders 10 stuivers and sold for 8 guilders, and a 1603 Plutarch estimated at 5 guilders and sold for 6 guilders and 10 stuivers.²³ These sale prices may reflect the taste and competition of the auction's attendees, or a more general interest in older editions of essential authors.

Rembrandt was born and raised in Leiden, then trained in Amsterdam; he travelled to The Hague early in his early career. He would have been familiar with the different characters of these cities, for both their book markets and art auctions. The professional associa-

tion between artists and booksellers was close, for painters, booksellers, and printers belonged to the Guild of St. Luke. Each city in the United Provinces had its own regulations about the book trade except Leiden, which therefore attracted dealers who were unfettered by guild rules. Leiden University was undoubtedly a major reason for the extraordinary flourishing of the book business there; the Leiden publishers tended to specialize in fields of study at the university, and were strong in science, history, language, and theology. The book business in The Hague reflected the central judicial and political role of that city, and also its peculiar double standard of regulations. The Guild of St. Luke regulated the book trade in the municipality, but the Court of Holland controlled the Binnenhof, an area of free-market trade open to merchants from other cities without local supervision. The Binnenhof included a large gallery of shops, situated in the Grote Zaal, in which booksellers had permanent booths and held auctions. A large proportion of the book production and trade in The Hague depended upon its international, legal, and political pre-eminence; publishers specialized in law books, with science, medicine, and pamphlets making up a large portion of their business. In contrast, the printers of Amsterdam generally tended to produce more elaborate and illustrated volumes; for example, the firm Blaeu specialized in cartography and also produced inexpensive school editions.²⁴

For Rembrandt, and for the literate population in the large cities, the book business was an integral part of city life. In Leiden, an estimated 35 printers, booksellers, and binders were active in 1600, but in 1650, that number had grown to about 100.²⁵ The population of The Hague was 18,000 in 1627, and between 1630 and 1634, there were 32 book sellers and publishers; about 8 of these were situated in the Grote Zaal, and the rest, in the municipality.²⁶ In The Hague, one could walk within a small central area, and observe all stages of book production, distribution, and consumption. In Amsterdam, with a population about six times larger, there were over forty publishers, with many more small firms involved in the auxiliary businesses of printing, bookbinding, and selling. The printers, binders, and bookshops were concentrated in a relatively small, central area along and near the Dam,

near the main areas of commerce and government. For Amsterdam book and print publishers, there was stiff competition; one of the reasons Hendrick Hondius left Amsterdam to establish himself in The Hague was the less competitive nature of publishing in that city.²⁷

Foreigners came to Amsterdam to commission prints, to buy books, or merely to browse. One eyewitness ranked the book business above food and drink. Philips von Zesen, a German who lived in Amsterdam for many years, marveled at the bookshops on the Damrak, for they were “in all languages and in great quantity.”²⁸ In his 1664 description of Amsterdam, he listed the commercial establishments of the city:²⁹

40 publishers, with too many booksellers and bookbinders to
count;
4 meat-halls;
3 fish-markets, with other markets;
22 breweries;
50 bakeries.

The very importance of books in the commercial life of Amsterdam justified Von Zesen’s hierarchy. The proliferation of bookshops indicated that one did not need to purchase books to have access to them, for one could find nearly everything in the bookstores.

The Humanist Library and its Organization

Rembrandt could have had access to books not only in the markets, but also in the public library of Amsterdam and the personal libraries of his acquaintances. Since the foundation of the Dutch Republic and Leiden University, book collecting on a grand scale was an on-going process, as is evidenced by the holdings of the Orange-Nassau family and the university.³⁰ Amsterdam was one of the first cities with a public library. In 1578, the Municipal Library of Amsterdam was founded; in 1612, its first published catalogue of several hundred volumes indicated

basic holdings for the main subjects of theology, law, medicine, history, mathematics, and languages. By the time the second catalogue was issued in 1668, the library's holdings had more than doubled. The 1612 and 1668 catalogues were essentially shelf-lists, and organized by subject and location among the rows of bookcases with reading benches. The few Dutch books in either catalogue were of didactic significance, and included Calvin's *Onderwijsinghe in de Christelicke Religie*.³¹ Primarily, the library served the Latin school that was founded in 1632.

Rembrandt was surely familiar with at least one noteworthy private library, that of Jan Six, for the artist sketched Six reading in his study. In its general character, Six's library belongs to those extensive private libraries of the well educated and wealthy. Such libraries are often known by their book catalogues, which were compiled for estate sales. These libraries were arranged in the categories of Theology, Law, Medicine, and Miscellaneous, and also by size: folio, quarto, octavo, and duodecimo. Books were further grouped by language; in general, those in Spanish, German, English, or French were kept together. The category of Miscellaneous included poetry, history, cartography, travel, philosophy, rhetoric, costume, the arts, medals, agriculture, and *et cetera*. The organization of libraries is inseparable from the educational system at the university and the Latin school. A vernacular library was organized according to the same system as one that emphasized the use of Latin and Greek. The library of Saenredam, who did not read the classics in their original languages, is typical. His books are organized according to the three faculties and the miscellaneous category. Rembrandt's books, which probably were all in the Miscellaneous category, were evidently grouped by size.

Jan Six's books are well documented, both from some of his purchases and from the sale catalogue of 1706. An avid antiquary and natural scientist, Six collected rare manuscripts as well as incunables. A manuscript of Caesar, *De bello gallico*, purchased from the Amsterdam antiquary Jan Gruterus in 1650 was among his most prized possessions.³² In the category of Miscellaneous, which included poetry and history, Six's holdings were remarkable. Six possessed multiple editions of

Homer, Aristotle, Livy, Tacitus, Virgil, and Plutarch. He owned exceptional illustrated editions of some authors, including Cicero and Ovid. He also collected modern authors, including Descartes and various writers on architecture, art, costume, and travel. In addition, Six had a good collection of modern literature in Spanish, Italian, Dutch, French, and English; he had only two German books, a Latin-German dictionary and a 1531 illustrated Cicero.³³ One woodcut in this Cicero translation may well have contributed to Bol's early design of *Pyrrhus and Fabricius*, and it may have been indicated to Bol by Rembrandt, familiar with this edition of Cicero from his visits to Six's library. Having visited Six in his library, Rembrandt may have known of its rarities.

Rembrandt's 22 books do not compare in number with private humanist libraries that are known by their published catalogues. Yet these libraries shared some common interests, at least in poetry and history, and reflected their owner's personal preferences. The humanist libraries of the Amsterdam educated elite ranged in size from a relatively modest 250 to a rare 2000 volumes.³⁴ The largest, belonging to Adriaen Pauw (1585-1653), was truly extraordinary in its 16,000 volumes.³⁵ Two exceptional Amsterdam book collectors with a strong interest in art were Filip de Flines and Michiel Hinloopen. The library of the merchant Filip de Flines contained over 400 titles, as listed in the sale catalogue of 1700. His library was especially strong in the Miscellaneous category: history, travel, philosophy, literature, language, art, mathematics, agriculture, poetry, in French, Latin, Dutch, and Italian. De Flines' library was comprehensive on the subject of painting, and included both 1550 and 1568 editions of Vasari, Carlo Dati's 1667 *Vite de' Pittori Antichi*, and many other publications that would have appealed to a specialist. A few art items were added in pen to the copy in the Amsterdam archives, as if they were last-minute addenda: these include two books by Perrier (*statuen* and *bas reliefs*) and one by Bellori (*Vite*). De Flines commissioned Gerard de Lairese to decorate his house and collected Italian art. He owned two of the most stunning north Italian paintings in Amsterdam: Veronese's *St. Helena* (London, National Gallery) and Alessandro Turchi's *Omnia vincit amor* (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum/Het Loo). De Flines' library supported his passion for art.³⁶

A collector's art possessions often took precedence over books in the inventory process, as happened in Rembrandt's 1656 inventory where art works overwhelm other objects, in both specificity of description and quantity. Michiel Hinloopen arranged his 52 print albums systematically by theme. These print albums were listed carefully in the inventory made of his house at his death in March 1708. But his 800 books were grouped together by size and location on a series of shelves, in an attic room called the *bibliotheecq camertje* (small library room). This room was furnished with only a reading table, a chair, and tobacco pipes; clearly, this space was dedicated to the pursuit of reading. In a room on the main floor with miscellaneous household furnishings and four paintings were "49 oude boeken soo clijn als groot" (49 old books, small as well as large). This might indicate that this group of old books was kept somewhat more carefully than those in the attic room that served as a library. Hinloopen's library reflected broad humanist interests, but his art collecting focused on the visual presentation of knowledge, geography, and art in folios of prints.³⁷

If Six, De Flines, and Hinloopen represent the elite of bibliophiles, they were followed by a range of devoted readers of more moderate means. One exceptional schoolmaster, David Beck (1594-1634), was born in Cologne, and came with his family to the Netherlands in 1612; by 1617, the family was settled in The Hague. Beck established his own French school there until 1625, when he moved to Arnhem. Beck kept a diary for the complete year of 1624. He wrote daily, ostensibly as "een soete gedachtenisse voor mijn lieve kinderen" (a sweet record for my beloved children), but undoubtedly also as a part of the healing process of mourning for his young wife, who had died in childbirth the previous December.³⁸ His notes concerned his daily activities, including the purchases of books and discussions with friends about books. These discussions usually took place at dinner. Although Beck often noted the menu, he did not record the conversations about reading. He read Dutch, French, German, Latin, and Italian, and wrote the diary mainly in Dutch. During 1624, his reading was primarily in Dutch and French, and consisted of an assortment of books on history, religion, and poetry, and manners manuals. He read Karel van Mander

on painting, and Ronsard's poetry. On January 20, he purchased a French Bible, and wrote that he spent many evenings reading in it before going to sleep. He took occasional trips to Delft, Leiden, and elsewhere just to look in the bookshops.

Beck commenced each day's entry with a sentence about the weather, and wrote about his school tasks, his walks around The Hague, the shops he visited, and the celebrities he saw along his way. On January 5, a calm and beautifully sunny day, his brother Steven brought him the catalogue of a book auction to be held on January 8, "op de sael," in The Hague; on the morning of January 8 he went to the Grote Zaal for that sale. On March 14, he spent the morning with friends wandering around The Hague, and they spent a half-hour in the great hall of books. His entry for August 1, 1624, "hot, with a light wind," recounts how he sat upon a bench on the Voorhout and read a newspaper, then walked along the Denneweg and passed the house of Frederick V and Elizabeth of Bohemia. As he watched, the queen and her entourage climbed into their carriages for a ride toward the Voorhout; Beck then turned toward the Binnenhof and to the Groot Zaal to browse among the books.³⁹ Beck may be typical of the better educated Dutch population that was not expert in classical languages. His background was German, and his expertise as an educator was French. He translated some Latin, but inclined toward the vernacular; his Greek was limited to the alphabet. His activities during 1624 emphasized reading and book-browsing, pastimes that also were shared with his friends and family.

Rembrandt neither amassed a comprehensive collection of books nor kept a diary, but he recorded his reading through his imagery. Rembrandt owned some books, and he, like Beck, may have been more of a browser than a buyer in the shops. "Booking" – browsing in shops and at auction, whether purchasing or not – was an activity integrated into the lives of those who read avidly and who collected books on a grand or small scale.

The Process of Reading

Anslo, Six, and Beck represent a range of readers and professions: merchant, preacher, playwright, and schoolmaster. They would have regarded books as sources for historical information, religious meditation, moral guidance, classical studies, and pleasure. Each of these individuals brought expectations and conditions to his understanding of a text. Anslo consulted several theological texts in order to compose his own sermons, Six studied Greek drama to write his Dutch *Medea*, and Beck read French for pleasure. The methodical reading of these men developed from the educational process, established at Latin schools from the Renaissance onward. These schools fostered systematic reading and the organization of material into fixed categories, and provided emphatic training in cross-referencing, note-taking, and translation.⁴⁰ The method of humanist schooling in textual analysis has its counterpart in the way artists developed a visual vocabulary for art from the past.

It is now a well-accepted premise that Rembrandt's knowledge of the visual arts was strong, especially in the areas of antiquity, the Renaissance, and Baroque. Many of his own images make reference to art of his predecessors. Just as Anslo read and cross-referenced several texts in writing his own sermons, so Rembrandt studied and made reference to motifs, compositions, or concepts known from images by Dürer, Raphael, and Rubens, among others. The process of reading of Anslo, Six, and Beck is analogous to Rembrandt's process of studying past art and inventing his own images. The processes of reading, writing, and making images involve careful study, assimilation, and incorporation into a new work. Both derive from rhetorical methods, but have different results. Here, however, our attention is not to the techniques of visual appropriation, but to the act of reading and its consequences for imagery.

The contemporary theorist H.R. Jauss termed these individual conditions the "horizon of expectations" in order to set forth how each reader could uniquely approach a text.⁴¹ As W. Iser noted, "In reading we are able to experience things that no longer exist and to understand things that are totally unfamiliar to us; and it is this astonishing process

that now needs to be investigated.” Iser discussed that process of reading as an evocation of sympathy in the reader’s mind.⁴² E.H. Gombrich discussed the parallel concerns of the reader and viewer, and their variable expectations and conditions, which they bring to bear in reading a text or looking at a work of art.⁴³ But how artists read texts is a topic only sporadically investigated. Rembrandt’s purposes in reading were not unusual, but the results of his study of texts were unique: he conveyed psychological complexity, speech and actions developing in time, and combination of textual sources.

Rembrandt, like most other artists of his time, read in order to gain information about the setting, characters, and action of a given history. Rembrandt was not different in this respect from other painters, but he created markedly different results. His reading gave him the experience of “things that no longer exist,” in order to achieve the heightened expressiveness unique to his imagery. Rembrandt’s art demands “a horizon of expectations” of verbal explanation in three main ways. Firstly, as in the portraits of Anselmo, Rembrandt showed his contemporaries as if they were speaking, so that communication to the viewer is implicit; occasionally, an attached verse enhanced the personality and presence of the sitter, as in the case of Vondel’s poem on the Anselmo portrait. Even without a verbal attachment, Rembrandt’s portraits often imply speech and therefore appeal to the viewer to supply words.⁴⁴

Secondly, as in his oeuvre in general and paintings of Judas and Samson in particular [FIGS. 7, 48 and 49], Rembrandt portrayed historical figures gesturing and as if speaking. Recognizing those figures in the image, and, familiar with the text upon which their actions were based, the viewer would supply the narrative for plot and spoken word. This relationship of Rembrandt’s images to a text occurs in most of his historical subjects. We first encounter it here with respect to *The Ship of Fortune*, an illustration that gives voice to a main character, and relates to a single passage of text.

Less obviously, is the third and more unusual relationship of an image to a text. Rembrandt referred to several literary passages in unprecedented ways, so that the viewer must gather these references and apply them to the image in order to recover its subtleties. This method

of using text in novel ways is the most complex, and is particularly evident in several of Rembrandt's early mythological subjects, the *Artemisia*, and some later histories; we discuss it below with respect to the etching *Medea*.

Reading to Illustrate:

Rembrandt's Ship of Fortune and Medea

Rembrandt read for information in order to illustrate a text, and to give voice to the figures portrayed. On another level, Rembrandt's overriding concern was to sharpen the meaning of the relevant text. The prints *The Ship of Fortune* and *Medea* compress multiple activities into single frames, and compete with their respective texts for the communication of action and meaning. *The Ship of Fortune* concerns a brief passage in a book, while the *Medea* relates to multiple episodes related to a play.

For the rambling history of the world through the lense of navigation by Elias Herckmans, Rembrandt made his earliest illustration, *The Ship of Fortune*, of 1633 [FIG. 4]. The book's 17 other etchings were made by Willem Basse.⁴⁵ Herckmans wrote his verse history in six books, copiously annotated with historical facts and mythological allusions. Herckmans' information was found in most histories that covered antiquity through recent developments in the United Provinces and his concerns were topical. His main purpose was to glorify the Dutch naval industry in the world, particularly in the East and West Indies and along the Rijn and Maas rivers. One of his secondary purposes was to express the desire for peace with the Spanish, in order to bring about a conclusion to the negotiations that were underway in 1633.⁴⁶ According to Herckmans, one consequence of peace is the flourishing of the arts of painting and poetry.⁴⁷ Herckmans' book, today noted primarily for Rembrandt's contribution, is a masterpiece of the printer's art, with complicated juxtaposition of typography and imagery.

Rembrandt meticulously rendered the beginning of the third book of this poetic treatise. His etching corresponds to the text, which



FIG. 4 – Rembrandt, *The Ship of Fortune*. Etching, 1633

concerns the Roman peace introduced by the emperor Augustus at the naval battle of Actium. After the battle, four men strenuously close the doors of the temple of Janus to signify peace, and a priestly entourage oversees the process. The ship, just setting forth with a billowing sail held by the nude goddess Fortune, sets sail to other lands where mercantile interests rule; Neptune, regally seated in the stern, seems to hold the rudder. The soldiers to the left disarm, and one figure plays a flute, a peacetime activity. Some ships and clouds of smoke, possibly indicating a final battle, are visible on the horizon to the right.

The theme of peace is emphatic and pragmatic, “For each one takes advantage of peace while he has it.”⁴⁸ The emperor Augustus, seated upon the kneeling horse, wears a laurel crown; his open arms seem to proclaim, “Let Peace begin.”⁴⁹ The statue of Janus has one face that is rough and unformed, looking backward, and another, looking forward, that is restored; the first indicates the “rowe manier van



FIG. 5 – Rembrandt, *Bellona*, 1633

leven” (rough and primitive way of life) and the other, “verniewt” (restored and renewed), as Herckmans explained in the footnote. Rembrandt portrays the main events of Herckmans’ passage as occurring simultaneously: the temple doors close, peaceful pursuits of music and commerce begin, and the emperor opens his arms as his horse kneels. In the gesture and seeming vocalization of the emperor, Rembrandt goes beyond Herckmans’ text to dramatize the moment.

Yet Rembrandt’s interest in the Herckmans chapter may not have been limited to the etching he made for it. In the first line to this chapter, Herckmans invoked Bellona as the sister of Mars, and stressed her readiness to fight:⁵⁰

Bellona, who is fully prepared to bear the hammered iron, for protection, on her belly and breast...

In a footnote, Herckmans, crediting Seneca, explained that disputants who cannot settle by negotiation, may invoke Mars and Bellona, god and goddess of war, and go to battle, with the strongest winning and gaining the right to impose law.

Herckmans’ description of Bellona may be relevant to Rembrandt’s painting of 1633, inscribed on the shield “Beloon,” the Dutch name for the goddess of war [FIG. 5].⁵¹ Herckmans’ explicit description of the armor as protecting the goddess’s breast and belly may have contributed to Rembrandt’s emphatically body-contoured breastplate. Rembrandt’s Bellona is prepared for battle, bearing full armor, sword, helmet, and shield. In the background, massed spears accentuate the military alertness. The rusticated stone setting evokes a fortress or armory. Rembrandt, given the task of providing an illustration for a sea history, did so with precise attention to the particulars of the task. His reading of the Herckmans text carried over into the *Bellona*.

Rembrandt’s second successful illustration was commissioned nearly twenty years later by Jan Six for the title page of his play *Medea* [FIG. 6]. Six’s play was performed in October 1647 at the Amsterdam Stadschouwburg. The tragedy was published twice, in 1648 and again in

1679; Rembrandt's frontispiece appeared in the first edition, and in some examples of the second one.⁵² The play is about Medea murdering her children, and omits the reason for her madness: Jason's rejection of her and his marriage to Creusa. The quatrain inscribed beneath the etching emphasizes Medea's state of mind:⁵³

Creusa and Jason here pledge their troth
Medea Jason's wife, unjustly cast aside,
Becomes inflamed by spiteful fury, desire for revenge spurs
her on.
Alas! Unfaithfulness, how dear you cost!

Rembrandt crafted a composition that conveys not only the horror of Medea's actions but also her motivation. He did not merely put a scene from the play into visual form; he invented a divided image in order to demonstrate cause and effect. The main scene is of a grand temple, with an altar to Juno, in which Jason weds Creusa; the secondary scene is of Medea holding a dagger, in the right corner. Rembrandt enhanced the text with an image that encapsulated its very meaning: Medea vows vengeance because Jason has cast her off and married Creusa.⁵⁴ Medea is not a witness to the marriage, but is motivated by it to commit her vengeful acts. Rembrandt devised a way to present two scenes in a single frame, so that the viewer must interpret both in order to understand the whole. The etching therefore goes beyond the action as presented in Six's play, thus referring to the extended story of Jason's marriage to Creusa.

Rembrandt could well have attended one of the five performances of *Medea* in the autumn of 1647. Noting the theatricality of the costumes and the similarity of the architecture to the Stadsschouwburg, J. Konst posited that Rembrandt's frontispiece may reflect an actual performance. Between acts, *tableaux vivants* were often staged, and one suitable subject might have been the marriage scene between Jason and Creusa. Rembrandt may have incorporated that aspect of an actual performance into his etching.⁵⁵ Although he portrayed an important

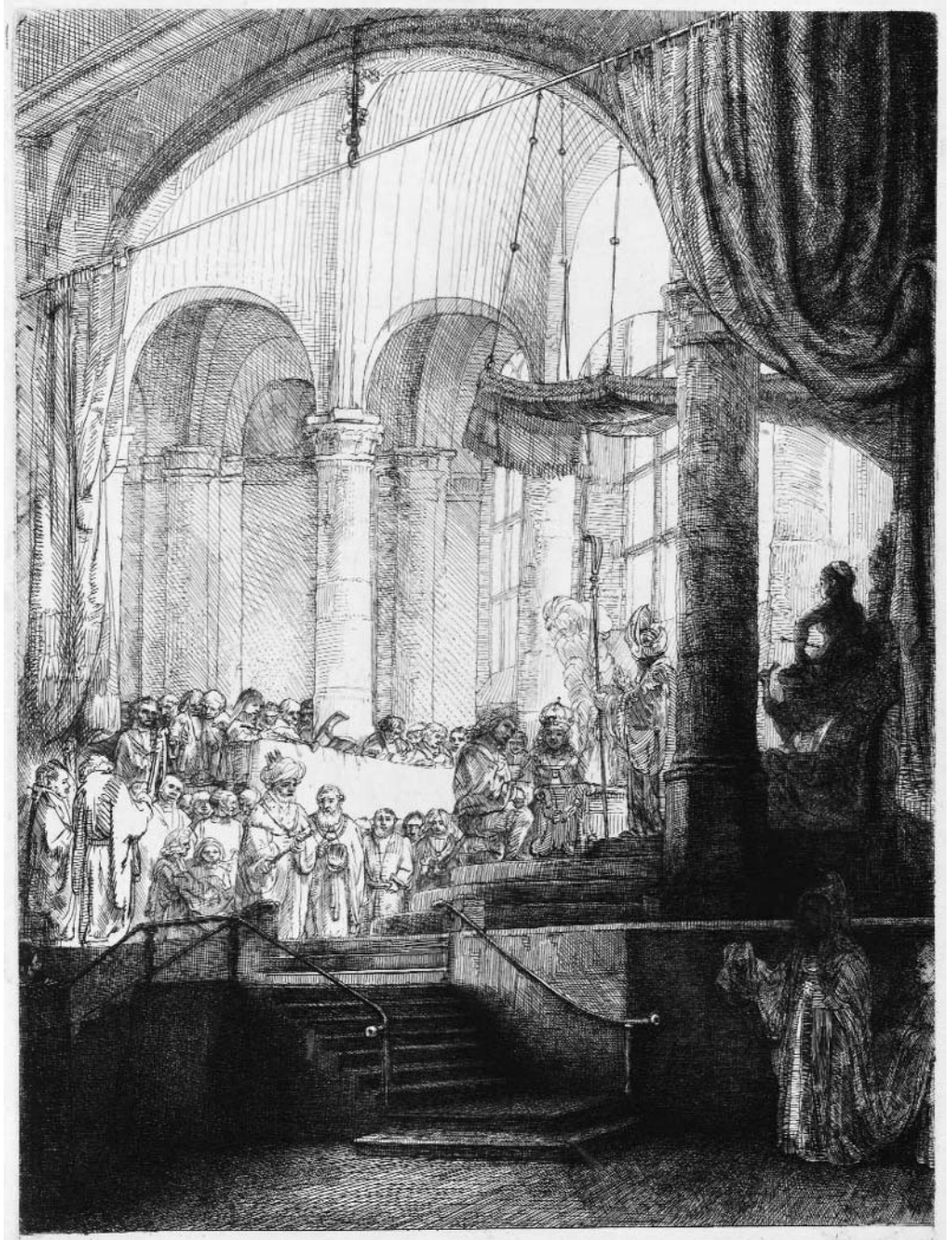


FIG. 6 – Rembrandt, *Medea or The Wedding of Jason and Creusa*. Etching, 1648

episode of the story that was absent from the published text, he may have done so with justification from the theatrical practice; thus, he put the transient display into permanent form.

The Ship of Fortune is the earliest etching made by Rembrandt for a book; it was followed by *La Preciosa* (B. 120), which may have been intended for a Dutch version of a Cervantes play, the *Medea* and four etchings for Menasseh ben Israel's *La Piedra Gloriosa* (B. 36).⁵⁶ Of these, only the *Ship of Fortune* and *Medea* were successfully and consistently incorporated into their intended publications. Rembrandt's many biblical etchings attest to his interest in making a text vivid through the means of printing. His interest in sequential illustration is apparent in several loose groups of similarly-sized etchings of the early and later life of Christ.⁵⁷ Just as Rembrandt identified with St. Paul as an interpreter of the gospel, he most intensely related image and text in the biblical context.

Observations on Literary Theory and Painting

Our recognition of the ways in which Rembrandt uses texts in inventing his imagery leads to the central position of rhetoric and literary theory within the visual arts and the paragone of painting and poetry. The application of rhetorical theory to the visual arts has been a most fruitful approach in the study of Dutch art and Rembrandt in particular.⁵⁸ Before discussing Rembrandt's *Judas Returning the Silver*, I will briefly review several aspects of Dutch art and rhetorical concerns.

Karel van Mander adapted rhetorical and poetic theory for the artist, in an abbreviated and pithy form, in the introductory portion *Den Grondt* of his *Het Schilder-Boeck* of 1604.⁵⁹ These rules of art were amplified and refined by later art writers, who elaborated upon some of Van Mander's statements, and gave more or less emphasis to the poetic and rhetorical rules of antiquity. Philips Angel (1642) and Samuel van Hoogstraten (1678) were practicing artists whose aims included the elevation of painting above poetry, and whose observations mixed rhetorical theory and practical experience. Franciscus Junius (1637), a

theoretician and classical scholar, distilled from ancient authors those precepts and exempla he believed most useful to connoisseurs and collectors; he considered his primary audience the learned non-artists. When his *De pictura veterum* was translated into Dutch in 1641, its extensive analogies between the visual and verbal arts became accessible to the practicing artist.⁶⁰ Andries Pels (1681) applied literary theory to the visual arts in order to establish common rules of decorum for writers and painters. Joachim von Sandrart (1675), an artist and scholar, considered his writings equally relevant for the collector and scholar as for the painter. In the early eighteenth century, Gerard de Lairese expressed theoretical concerns of art methodically in the Dutch language. The Dutch writers on art tended to follow the lead of the later seventeenth-century developments in France, led by Roger de Piles (1668). De Piles and other academicians began to put forth aesthetic judgments and rules that would be programmatic and comprehensively theoretical.⁶¹ For much of the seventeenth century, the French artists and writers applied literary theory as they found it suitable for the visual arts. Van Mander, Angel, Van Hoogstraten, and Von Sandrart presented, with differing aims and emphases, the concepts of Aristotle, Horace, Cicero, and Quintilian. They packaged for their own time the dual importance of idea and execution, and rules for creating and evaluating the visual arts. Their applications may have been selective, but they were sufficient in any case. Dutch art theory adapted aspects of rhetoric and literary theory as convenient and useful, and artists crafted images that fulfilled some of the same goals and rules that applied to rhetoric and poetics.

The underlying and shared presumptions of Dutch art and rhetoric may have been so commonly known that there was not a pressing demand for more writing on art during most of the seventeenth century, between the publications of Van Mander (1604) and De Lairese (1707). Philips Angel's 1642 booklet, which records his speech on St. Luke's Day in Leiden the previous year, is a loose compilation of precepts which, when taken together, present a synopsis of those approaches most essential to the practice of art by Dutch artists. Angel remarked

in passing on a number of writers who were authorities; these were useful either for establishing the essential nature of painting and professionalism of artists, or for providing artists with guides and information for representing various subjects. Hardly a complete theoretical treatise, Angel's booklet nevertheless offered a summary of those qualities required in an artist: a good judgment, confident drawing, abundant invention, excellence in depicting light and shade, skillful portrayal of natural things, a fine understanding of perspective, expert knowledge of histories, excellence in handling the colors, and a strong knowledge of anatomy.⁶² In a broadside of 1649, Pieter de Grebber summarized for the Dutch artist all he needed to know in eleven rules. The first of these was to consider the intended location of a painting before commencing work on it, the second was to know the histories, and the rest were practical observations about perspective, composition, light, and the appropriate characterization in gesture, posture, and dress of individual figures.⁶³ De Grebber's *Regulen* sensibly and succinctly reinforced Van Mander's lengthier *Den Grondt*. But brevity seemed to count for a lot. The rarity of De Grebber's broadside, which survives in a unique example, very likely indicates that it was read by artists, and the copies were worn out from use. Arnold Houbraken's *Groote Schouburgb* (1718) continued Van Mander's *Het Schilder-Boeck* with a mix of artists' lives and digressions about various theoretical issues. Brevity was not Houbraken's strength, yet he attempted to contain within three volumes the twin concerns already established by Van Mander: biographies and practical advice. Houbraken emphasized that the artists should be educated in the histories.⁶⁴ All Dutch writers on art, from Van Mander, Angel, De Grebber, Van Hoogstraten, De Lairese, to Houbraken, agreed on one obvious piece of advice: the artist should know history. The function of history was to provide adornment that was often didactic. In house decoration, poetical subjects may have been favored for visual delight. In civic programs, as well as house decoration, Roman histories often were selected for their presentation of exemplary behavioral and moral qualities.⁶⁵

The poet presented the human experience in verbal form, the painter presented it in imagery. The rules that applied to poetry and

painting consisted of the general formal and moral patterns that developed from ancient literary practice. The process of educating the young poet or painter had moral associations, for these practitioners had the power to influence others. Having innate talent was only the beginning of art: the young painter/poet had to become expert through training and practice. According to Aristotle, raw nature needed to be shaped by teaching and diligent practice; he expressed the process of training the artist through the terms *natura*, *ars*, and *exercitio*.⁶⁶ Horace reinforced Aristotle's ideas, and stated that the purpose of poetry, and by extension the visual arts, was to teach, to move, and to please.⁶⁷

Rhetoric was the art of persuasion; it had no particular material belonging to it but concerned everything, for it was a process of speech, according to Cicero and Quintilian.⁶⁸ Poetry was the art of imitative evocation. From Cicero and Quintilian, the rules were established for writing oratory and poetry in their widest applications; both authors provided formulaic patterns that the Dutch adapted, in Latin and the vernacular. A poet's progress could be measured by how well he copied worthy models, assimilated them into his own language, and improved upon them. Imitative exercises, variations, and novel solutions were part of the educational process at Latin school. In rhetoric, the terms *translatio*, *imitatio*, and *aemulatio* (copying, varying, and surpassing) were applied to the practical adaptation of models in order to arrive at original and worthy oratory.⁶⁹

With his *Aenleiding* of 1650, translation of Horace of 1653, and other writings, Vondel served as an art theorist.⁷⁰ His ideas, as he set them forth to establish standards and precepts for the Dutch theatre, apply to the artists of his own time. Just as the poet described actions, setting, and psychological states in words, so the painter did with imagery. Vondel distilled the rudiments of theory and form from Aristotle, whom he regarded as the authority for crafting a verbal performance that unfolded in time. Aristotle's theory of drama, applied to painting, involved calling up to the viewer the past, present, and future actions. Pertinently, Aristotle articulated the force of the turnaround moment (*peripeteia*), at which the plot's development was at its most uncertain,

but when a moment of recognition would cause resolution. Vondel articulated how the painter should apply the principle of *peripeteia* to the visual arts, and thereby create an image that could convey plot development at a glance. A clever painter would invent a scene so that it focused upon a most intense moment of conflict within the narrative, just before resolution; the knowledgeable viewer would reconstruct earlier and later moments. Vondel, in his introductory remarks to his play *Jeptha* (1659), packaged this theory for the Dutch stage as *Staetverandering*:⁷¹ “Both principal rules of embellishment, called by the ancients *peripeteia* and *agnitio*, or pivotal moment and recognition, function together...”

Vondel further explained that this moment signaled the resolution of the plot, and the moment when the characters’ emotional expressions changed from one state into its opposite. The maxim *ut pictura poesis*, taken from Simonides of Ceos through Horace, facilitated the analogy between imagery and poetry. It allowed the comparison between image and text to become a friendly rivalry. The mutual dependence and respect among the practitioners of the arts that developed out of a common culture, fostered competition among them. Vondel’s adaptation of this comparison became famous in the phrase “Twee susters soet van aart” (two sisters sweet in nature), and the concept became a cliché in Amsterdam literary circles. The phrase *ut pictura poesis* encapsulated these concepts, which were allegorized in Vondel’s “twee susters.” He noted that “everyone now proclaims that painting is mute poetry, that poetry is speaking painting, because the painter expresses his thoughts with strokes and colors, the poet with words.”⁷²

Rembrandt’s Judas

Rembrandt learned the rhetorical and poetic principles at school, and put them into practice in his paintings. His early panel *Judas Returning the Silver*, of 1629, conveys the emotional torment of the main character and the reactions of the elders with the poetic principle of vivid effect [FIG. 7]. Constantijn Huygens’ famous passage reveals how im-



FIG. 7 – Rembrandt, *Judas Returning the 30 Pieces of Silver*, 1629

pressed he was with Rembrandt's depiction of the conflicting emotions of Judas in their physical manifestation. The reception of Rembrandt's painting may, in this case, be measured in a rhetorical response. The picture *moved* the viewer:⁷³

That single gesture of the desperate Judas – that single gesture, I say, of a raging, whining Judas groveling for mercy he no longer hopes for or dares to show the smallest sign of expecting, his frightful visage, his hair torn out of his head, his torn garment, his arms twisted, the hands clenched bloodlessly tight, fallen to his knees in a heedless outburst – that body, wholly contorted in pathetic despair, I place against all the tasteful art of all time past.

In his letter of January 12, 1639 to Huygens Rembrandt stated his artistic goal:⁷⁴ “...in these two pictures [of the Passion series] the greatest and most natural movement (die meeste ende die naetuerelste beweeghgelickheyt) has been expressed, which is also the chief reason why they have taken so long to execute...” Although the phrase “die meeste ende die naetuerelste beweeghgelickheyt” has been translated variously, it literally means “the greatest and most natural movement.”⁷⁵ The *beweeghgelijckheyt* is both physical and psychological. The term indicates that the inner thoughts and feelings of the figures are conveyed convincingly through outward manifestation, that is, gesture, expression, and posture. Underlying this statement are assumptions of the artist’s innate ability, application of judgment, and skill (*ingenium, ars, exercitatio*). But ultimately, the purpose of art, as Rembrandt inferred, goes back to Aristotle: the picture recreates an event vividly so that it has an effect upon the viewer. In achieving this effect, the picture also conveys the passage of time: the action unfolds, much as a theatrical production, so that the characters become cognizant of one activity and its consequences.

The painting *Judas* also indicates another aspect of Rembrandt’s work, the unique invention. Most of his subjects are from well-known texts in the Bible, mythology, and history, and are related to mainstream pictorial tradition. Within these common references, Rembrandt often sought an original way of depicting a well-known theme, even if he combined several textual passages. Occasionally he represented subjects never before, or extremely rarely, depicted. The biblical text concerning the *Judas* is lean, though well known (*Matthew 27:3-9*), and the subject is obscure in pictorial tradition.⁷⁶ Rhetorical theory exhorted the speaker to seize upon a strong and fresh idea as a key requirement of good oratory. This extended to poetry and by analogy to painting, and may account for Rembrandt’s inclination toward unusual subjects, familiar through written texts. Rembrandt’s interest in Judas’ torment seems rooted in the desire to depict a rare theme in an affecting manner.

CHAPTER 2

REMBRANDT'S
TRAINING

Academic Studies

REMBRANDT'S FORMAL EDUCATION AND apprenticeships would have brought him in contact with a broad range of knowledge and expert practice, and are here worth discussing for the humanistic background to his art. It is surprising how Rembrandt's education is evaluated in the critical literature: either negatively or not at all. Critics who regarded Rembrandt's nudes as evidence of the imperfect and non-ideal placed Rembrandt among those who were uneducated, who followed imperfect nature, and who rejected ideal standards of beauty. Von Sandrart, Pels and other late seventeenth-century writers aimed their classicistic critique at Rembrandt. For them, Rembrandt's art came to signify the triumph of raw nature over cultivated perfection. Von Sandrart castigated Rembrandt for promoting the unbeautiful, and observed that Rembrandt's apparent disregard for the ideal was all the worse "since he could read only simple Netherlandish and hence profit little from books."¹ Pels wrote that Rembrandt "chose no Greek Venus as his model" but instead turned to nature.² J.A. Emmens examined this phenomenon of the naturalistic appearance as a correlation of vulgarity, and formulated the Tuscan-Roman negative as a means to chart Rembrandt's reputation: to the extent that Rembrandt's art deviated from a smooth painting style and systematically proportioned figures, it was considered vulgar rather than learned, spontaneously naturalistic rather than academically trained, and unworthy of admiration rather than

deserving of emulation.³ Rembrandt cultivated veracity to natural appearances and a rough manner, especially in his later work. This led Von Sandrart, Pels, and then Houbraken to use Rembrandt as the unworthy exemplar for both naturalism and roughness. Formed in the pre-classicistic art tradition, Rembrandt became regarded as outside the academic standards articulated after the mid-seventeenth century.

We may now understand much of the criticism leveled at Rembrandt by Von Sandrart, Pels, and Houbraken as belonging to tropes culled from a variety of literary sources. This criticism has some legitimacy in the context of late seventeenth-century writing about art. By equating lack of learning with the rough style, Von Sandrart was merely following the received distinctions of academic practice in linking Latin with book-learning, and in presuming that the “simple Netherlandish” language did not include classical texts and values. He should have known better, but he used Rembrandt’s rough style as an approximation of ignorance because it fitted his paradigm. But what of Rembrandt’s education in the Dutch culture of his time? He was educated in the formal settings of school and workshop, and these did not make for an untutored background. Indeed, his lettered background supported the theoretical grounding to the variety of his styles and subjects, ranging from precise to rough, from low life to noble histories.

Jan Jansz Orlers presented Leiden as a small lively city, with a university, an anatomy theater, a Latin school, and the textile industry. Orlers gave brief biographies of those considered worthy of bringing renown to the city, including artists. In the second edition of his history, published in 1641, he began his biography of Rembrandt:⁴

His parents sent him to school so that he would learn Latin and then attend the Leiden Academy (University). That way, when he grew up he could use his knowledge for the service of his city and the benefit of the community at large. But he hadn’t the least urge or inclination in that direction, his natural bent being only for painting and drawing. His parents had no choice but to take him out of school and, in accordance with his wishes, apprentice him to a painter...

Orlers makes it clear that Rembrandt's parents wished him to learn Latin in order to have a distinguished career, one that depended upon "wetenschap," learned expertise, usually in the professions of law, medicine, or theology. But the boy was more interested in art than in pursuing a profession involving further academic training. Although Orlers wrote "the boy's parents took him out of school," he did not specify whether it was the Latin school or the university. Rembrandt studied first with "den welschilderende" Jacob van Swanenburgh in Leiden for three years (around 1620-1623), and then with Pieter Lastman in Amsterdam for six months (1624-25). Orlers established the basic facts: whilst Rembrandt's parents intended him to be well educated in the humanist tradition in order to pursue a profession, he had little enthusiasm for academic studies. Instead, he had a strong desire to paint and draw; his parents recognized his natural inclination and placed him with two artists who would train him for a career in painting. This may seem fairly straightforward, but it has led to various interpretations.

W.R. Valentiner offered a positive view of Rembrandt's education:⁵

... he enjoyed seven years of such instruction as was suited to an embryo man of letters, for only those boys were sent to the Latin school whose abilities, in their parents' opinion, gave promise of scholarship.

Valentiner even supposed that Rembrandt could have attended a year at the university without causing conflict with Orlers' account, therefore giving Rembrandt eight years of daily lessons. A less rigorous assessment of Rembrandt's schooling was suggested by G. Schwartz, who proposed that Rembrandt may have attended a city school for a few years followed by Latin school, from which his parents removed him before he would have completed his studies because his inclination for art was stronger than that for academic study. Schwartz suggested that the years spent in grammar school would have sufficed to prepare Rembrandt for the university.⁶ And A.T. van Deursen astutely ob-

served, “It is conceivable that he retained almost nothing from his schooldays, since the human capacity to forget what has been learnt is boundless.”⁷ The topic of Rembrandt’s knowledge of Latin was considered exhausted by S. Grohé, who asserted that Constantijn Huygens could have supplied the artist with all he needed to know for one painting dependent upon a Latin text, the *Abduction of Proserpina*.⁸ Even if Rembrandt daydreamed through his school years, he gained familiarity with rhetoric and background in secular and Christian history and literature.

Boys attended school from the age of 7 to 14. Among Dutch boys eligible by age to attend a Latin school, only a small percentage did so, and of those, an even smaller percentage went on to the university.⁹ Rembrandt’s name is inscribed on the list of entering students at the university on May 20, 1620, when, at nearly 14 years of age, he would have completed six or seven years of study.¹⁰ The Leiden Latin school had an exceptional relationship with the university; advanced students were enrolled at the university without necessarily continuing their studies there.¹¹ Rembrandt was enrolled, along with his classmates.

After his artistic apprenticeships with two diverse artists, Rembrandt was sufficiently adept to embark on his own as a painter and to associate with Jan Lievens, also a native of Leiden. Lievens began his apprenticeship at the age of eight; by then, he may have had a year of schooling, which he may have continued concurrent with his art training. For two years, he studied with the Leiden painter Joris van Schooten, and for another two years with Pieter Lastman in Amsterdam; he then returned to his father’s house where he worked independently and assiduously, copying others’ compositions and devising his own.¹²

Rembrandt’s academic education was intense in contrast to that of Lievens. Rembrandt’s parents had ten children, three of whom did not survive childhood. As the sixth surviving child (the ninth-born), Rembrandt may have had some advantages. His three older brothers did not enroll at the university, although they probably had some schooling.¹³ In this respect, it is noteworthy that Lievens’ younger brother was enrolled at the university in 1620; it is likely that younger

siblings were favored in this way.¹⁴ Another, slightly younger Leiden artist, Jan Steen, had an education similar to that of Rembrandt. Steen attended the Latin school and had his name entered at the university, but did not attend. His paintings, seemingly raucous and disorganized, are the deliberate construction of an educated painter creating visual equivalents to rhetorically based categories.¹⁵

Before 1625, when reform in the Latin school curriculum was introduced in the *Schoolordre*, which was issued by the government of the province of Holland, there is no known program for the Dutch Republic's Latin schools in general, or for the Leiden Latin school in particular. The 1625 "Schoolordre" set forth a systematic, ideal plan; it was not accepted in the other provinces, and was probably only partially followed even in the province of Holland, except for Leiden, where it may have had more rigorous implementation.¹⁶ Led by the Leiden University professors, the movement to establish a consistent humanistic curriculum was intended to remedy uneven levels of competence and preparation in the case of students who transferred, and to establish standards for entrance to university. The 1625 document may reflect the curriculum as it already was practiced at the Leiden Latin school, where the cooperation between the local professors and the school's rectors was strong. The plan called for publishers to issue school editions of recommended authors' books. Additional evidence for the curriculum as enacted is the appearance, first in 1626 and regularly thereafter, of small, cheap editions intended for the use of students in these schools.

According to the 1625 *Schoolordre*, the Latin school curriculum would have included some Greek, Latin, Old and New Testaments, music, psalms, catechism, comportment, and calligraphy. Basic texts included Erasmus' *De Civilitate Morum* and Vossius' *Rhetorica* and *Rudimenta Logicae*. Over the course of study for all levels, the readings of works by ancient authors would ideally have included selections of poetry and philosophy from Ovid, Homer, Virgil, Terence, Aesop, Caesar, Hesiod, Solon, Xenophon, Horace, and Cicero, and selections from the histories of Sallust, Livy, and Curtius. The highest class

included: physics, ethics, arithmetic, music, catechism, selections from Justinus and Florus, and six or seven of the principal maps of Ortelius. During their final year, students were expected to compose poetry in the minor genres, according to the rules of J.C. Scaliger's *Poetices Libri septem*. From Scaliger, the theory of poetry involved a comparative study of the style, tone, development, and imitation of worthy models. Such a strength in poetry cultivated skills that served in social contexts. Within the university, there was no further study of arts and letters, so this final year of Latin school concluded formal study of poetry, literature, and history. The schedule of lessons followed a pattern of classes meeting on two, three or four days of the week (Monday through Saturday) and a review of the week's material each Saturday. These studies were to be conducted in Latin and Dutch. It is unclear how much Greek was actually read, but the alphabet was practiced. Latin school prepared young men to continue their studies in theology, jurisprudence, or medicine at the university; although the Leiden students were automatically enrolled at the university, many did not attend and went directly into commerce or other professions that did not require further academic training.

The goal of the program was to train boys in social graces as well as religious and academic studies. Presenting oneself, through one's bearing, speech, and written communication, was integrated into the curriculum. Students regularly gave oral presentations, whether as rhetorical Latin exercises or as declamations in Dutch. Throughout, students practiced calligraphy. Not mentioned in the 1625 "Schoolordre" is drawing, a skill regarded by the upper classes as essential to a complete education. In 1613 Hendrick Rijverding was the Latin school teacher of calligraphy, and may also have taught drawing and painting. If Rembrandt were given drawing classes as part of his schooling, he would have had the opportunity to develop an interest in art, which Orlers indicated as the young man's strong "inclination."¹⁷ The 1625 "Schoolordre" may have been an ideal curriculum, yet its basic plan applied to Rembrandt's years of attendance.

The program of education which Rembrandt enjoyed, if that he did, constituted the humanist tradition. Insofar as this curriculum may be related to the practice and interpretation of imagery, it became an essential approach for understanding the arts and making pictures. By now incorporated into the literature on Rembrandt, some rhetorical terms are familiar, if not commonplace, in connection with the artist. The process *translatio*, *imitatio*, and *aemulatio* focused upon imitative literary exercises, variations, and rivalry between writers.¹⁸ These terms represent a compression of the training in rhetoric. Students created compositions that imitated, adapted and surpassed their models. Throughout his work, Rembrandt did just that. *Aemulatio* was the successful rivalry of one artist with another. Rembrandt repeatedly made works to rival not only the masters of antiquity and the Renaissance, but also his contemporaries, especially Rubens. Rembrandt's textual and visual literacy involved familiarity with and use of theoretical precepts of antiquity, as well as the practical aspects of art training. Given the complexity of Rembrandt's imagery in general, we would have to assume Rembrandt was consciously placing his art within the theoretical frame of his time. In his academic training, Rembrandt learned all that was necessary to create imagery that served the highest rhetorical functions: to have an effect upon the viewer.

Rembrandt was articulate in Dutch, and wrote with a fairly clear hand, as the seven surviving letters written to Constantijn Huygens indicate; he did, however, rewrite some phrases.¹⁹ In the tradition of pithy mottos and epigrams, he was capable of a simple Dutch couplet in the *album amicorum* of Burchard Grossmann in 1634.²⁰ His graceful signatures and certainly his draftsmanship demonstrate his skill in calligraphy. How familiar he was with other languages is another matter. Neither his letters nor his imagery suggest fluency in any language other than Dutch, except German; for he owned several German books and evidently read them. The linguistic proximity of Dutch and German was closer in the seventeenth century than today, so it is hardly surprising that Rembrandt could read German. When his etched portraits received inscriptions, the verse, in Latin or Dutch, was written by

a professional poet and inscribed by a specialist.²¹ On his copy of a Mantegna drawing, *The Calumny of Apelles*, Rembrandt labelled some of the characters in Latin, but with hesitation.²² Rembrandt had a specialized knowledge of print imagery, which often carried Latin inscriptions. There are few cases in which he relied upon a caption to such a print, even when he found its image sympathetic.²³ And there are very few instances in his oeuvre in which a Latin text contributed to his imagery. There is no evidence of his familiarity with Greek, although his knowledge of Homer's life and poetry is a distinct current in his art, and most likely came from the vernacular. His etched illustrations are all for texts in Dutch with the exception of four etchings for Menasseh ben Israel's *Piedra Gloriosa*, a project on which he worked closely with the author.²⁴

Without evidently studying Hebrew, Rembrandt used it when appropriate throughout his oeuvre, from illegible Hebrew letters in decorative details to sophisticated inscriptions intrinsic to the meaning of an image. In contrast to many of his contemporaries, Rembrandt used the Hebrew letters in a fairly accurate way. Very likely he received transcriptions from an expert, as in the case of the *Judas* and other works.²⁵ For *Belsazzar's Feast*, he may have sought help for the encoded Aramaic inscription from an acquaintance, Menasseh ben Israel, and even then made a small error.²⁶

We may conclude that Rembrandt neither displayed overtly the benefits of his academic education, nor extended its method to include other languages that he used in his work, such as Hebrew. Nevertheless, Rembrandt gained training that would serve him throughout his oeuvre. His training involved close reading and textual comparison in the Bible, poetry and history. Rembrandt applied this approach to textual study for the most part in the vernacular, and only rarely did he make use of a Latin text that had not been translated into Dutch.²⁷

Rembrandt's Apprenticeship to Jacob van Swanenburgh

By the time he began studying under Jacob van Swanenburgh, Rembrandt had made known his “strong inclination” for art. The choices of Van Swanenburgh and then Lastman indicate history painting as his specialization. Rembrandt’s parents, who sanctioned and even encouraged his pursuit of art according to Orlers, may have recognized the high status of history painting, rather than still-life, portraiture, or landscape. Within the hierarchy of painting, history was at the top, with landscape and still-life successively lower in status. Portraiture crossed these categories.²⁸ As history painters, Van Swanenburgh and Lastman represented events that were believed to have occurred and were known through historical or biblical texts, or that were imagined and related in poetic stories. Van Swanenburgh painted a very limited range of poetic subjects, and Lastman, a broader selection from history, the Bible, drama, and poetry. Both Van Swanenburgh and Lastman had been to Italy, and both had absorbed ancient and Renaissance cultures, although with different consequences for their professional and personal lives. Both were also professionally successful and came from well-educated families of social and civic prominence. Throughout Rembrandt’s oeuvre, vestiges of Lastman’s invention can be discerned, but little trace of Swanenburgh’s. This is not unusual, for often pupils’ styles diverged from those of their masters. Rembrandt’s departure from the methods and style of his teachers is not due to their limitations, but to Rembrandt’s powerful ambition, active imagination and inventive intelligence; his works of art tend to diminish those of his teachers. Rather than assume that his teachers failed to match the brilliance of this pupil, why not examine the teachers’ works to discern how they may have fostered the pupil’s talent? Although Van Swanenburgh and Lastman do not share Rembrandt’s brilliant effects, complex textual allusion, and psychological expressiveness, both contributed to his formation as an artist.

Van Swanenburgh (ca. 1571-1638) probably trained with his father Isaac Claesz., a well-known painter who received major commis-

sions for the town hall, for the cloth guildhall, and a number of churches; Isaac Claesz. held various civic positions and was burgomaster from 1596 to 1607. For the generation of Rembrandt's parents, the elder Van Swanenburgh dominated the art world of Leiden. Jacob left for Italy around 1591; he spent some years in Venice, and by around 1598 had settled in Naples, where about a year later he married Margherita Cordona, a daughter of a Neapolitan grocer. In 1615, he came back alone to Leiden, and in April 1617 he returned to Naples to bring his family back to the Netherlands. On January 6, 1618 he, his wife, and three surviving children arrived in Leiden. The timing of his return may have been related to the death of his father in 1614; he had not told his family of his marriage and his children. Only through the diary kept by his nephew, Willem van Heemskerck, do we know the exact dates, and the revealing phrase: "he married [her] without informing his parents".²⁹ Jacob was also regarded highly in Leiden. Orlers recounted:³⁰

Jacob Isaacsz. spent many years in Italy, especially in Naples, where he married an Italian woman, with whom, in the year 1617 or thereabouts, he returned to his native city, and there and in other cities, he pleased with his art all the connoisseurs who commissioned him.

Documentation concerning Jacob van Swanenburgh's Italian sojourn is scant, with the exception of an incident in 1608, in which he was brought before the Inquisitor in Naples. In May 1608, he rented a shop in one of the busiest quarters of Naples; six months later, on November 19, two messengers from the Inquisition came with a summons which accused Van Swanenburgh of hanging outside his shop a large canvas, in which a number of witches and devils were engaged in perverse activities. During the two hearings, on November 20 and 28, 1608, Van Swanenburgh stated that he had begun the picture three years ago, and had hung it outside the shop to clean and varnish it. The hearings were conducted with the questions posed in Latin and the answers reported in an awkward Italian sprinkled with Neapolitan dialect. Evidently,

Van Swanenburgh did not converse in Latin, and the questions were probably repeated in Italian. Van Swanenburgh stated that he was a painter by profession, and that he had learned the art of painting in Venice without a master. Perhaps he did not wish to compromise another artist, understandable given the circumstances, but he may have been simply stating the truth that he felt he was self-taught at least while in Italy. At any rate, he managed to convince the inquisitor of his upright character and good faith, and of his total lack of association with witches. The outcome of the process was a strong reprimand.³¹

With respect to matters of religion, the family of Van Swanenburgh was largely Arminian, and after 1618-19, Remonstrant.³² Van Swanenburgh himself, married to an Italian woman, may have had some ambivalence in religious matters, but, living in Naples and raising a family there, he must have appeared sympathetic to the Catholic faith. Had he been considered non-Catholic in the 1608 process, the Inquisition might have been more severe. At his death in 1638, he was buried in St. Pieter's Kerk, Leiden, next to his father.³³

Van Swanenburgh's oeuvre has yet to be fully understood; only eleven paintings are connected with him, of two diverse kinds: three cityscapes and eight hellish scenes.³⁴ One hellish scene is a large and encyclopedic view of the perversions and tortures of the inferno, and may have been painted while Van Swanenburgh was in Venice.³⁵ Two infernos concern the story of Pluto and Proserpina (Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book V).³⁶ Another one contains the seven deadly sins.³⁷ Of the four pictures depicting the entrance to hell, two are generic infernos, and two include Aeneas with the sibyl (*Aeneid*, Book VI).³⁸ Van Swanenburgh's references to Virgil and Ovid were not at all original, and followed the lead of Jan Brueghel.³⁹

In the center foreground of one of his Virgilian infernos, Aeneas and the Cumaean Sibyl stand on the shore at the entrance to the underworld [FIG. 8]. Following the burial of Misenus, Aeneas made a large sacrifice at the Sibyl's instructions at the site of the cave, and then prepared to go below the earth's surface. As Hecate came to open the way to the underworld:⁴⁰



FIG. 8 – Jacob van Swanenburgh (attributed to), *Aeneas and the Sibyl at the Entrance to the Inferno*.

The sybil shrieked: “Away, away, unhallowed ones! Now, Aeneas, thou needest thy courage, now thy stout heart!” So much she said, and plunged madly into the opened cave; he, with fearless steps, keeps pace...

Virgil then described monstrous forms of beasts and humans, Charon and his boat, and the throng upon the shore. Van Swanenburgh used this text minimally, and emphasized neither arcane elements nor the characters’ expressiveness. He needed only passing familiarity with Virgil, available in Dutch, Latin, or Italian; and in any case, he most likely followed Brueghel’s pictorial models. His two depictions of

Aeneas in the underworld share elements with his generic infernos: Charon's boat, crowds of nude figures clustered together, monsters, the enormous mouth of hell, perverse actions by the nudes and monsters, fantastic ships, and an eerie background filled with ancient ruins, flames and billowing clouds of smoke.

Living in Naples, Van Swanenburgh was familiar with ancient ruins. In several of the inferno paintings, the massive arches resemble the ruins of Pozzuoli, and the billowing clouds recall the steam emanating from the sulfur springs of Solfatara. His portrayals of the entrance to the underworld seem to be imaginative reconstructions of the volcanic area known as the Phlegraean fields to the west of Naples.⁴¹ Van Swanenburgh's reference to Virgil is appropriate, since the poet knew the area well; his villa and his presumed tomb were nearby.

Van Swanenburgh's experiences of Italy and Italian art may have made an impression on Rembrandt, possibly influencing him not to make the journey himself. Perhaps Van Swanenburgh's encounter with the Inquisition cast a pall over his Neapolitan years. Rembrandt avoided cityscapes and infernos, as did the majority of artists at the time. Yet Rembrandt's chiaroscuro and interest in artificial light may have kinship with Van Swanenburgh's fiery underworlds. As paintings by Isaac Claesz come under technical scrutiny, they reveal a method that endured in the Rembrandt workshop, and that was likely standard practice in the Leiden workshops of both Van Swanenburghs. Aspects of this technique are: laying out compositions upon the supports in stages; building up pictures from background to foreground; and applying glazing or finishing layers.⁴² Jacob van Swanenburgh's contribution to Rembrandt's training may have been conceptual as well as practical.⁴³ Despite the narrow range of literary themes in his surviving paintings, Jacob van Swanenburgh had some interest in reading history. He borrowed a book by Sebastian Franck from Coenraet Adriaensz van Schilperoort (1577-1635), a Leiden painter of landscapes who had studied with Isaac Claesz van Swanenburgh.⁴⁴ The notation, "Sebastian Franck, wesende ten huysen van Mr. Jacob van Swanenburgh, Schilder", does not specify which of Franck's publications was in the

hands of Van Swanenburgh. Franck (ca. 1499-1542) was a Catholic who converted to become an ardent Lutheran, but he was too independent for any of the reform movements and was shunned by Luther. Franck's two principal books, written in German and translated into Dutch, are world chronicles that link religion and historical events to a messianic age to come. The *Chronica, Zeitbuch, und Geschichtsbibel*, of 1536, is a compilation of world history loosely based upon, and enlarging, the *Nuremberg Chronicle*. Franck's *Germaniae Chronicon*, 1538, is a similar compilation concentrating on European historical events. Such Protestant chronicles would be in keeping with Remonstrant affiliation. The Franck notation indicates an interest among a few Leiden artists in this world view. As far as Van Swanenburgh's family is concerned, however, books were possessed and read; his younger brother Isaac Isaacs (1582-1626) had a humanist library.⁴⁵ In addition to teaching the craft of painting, Van Swanenburgh may have imparted to Rembrandt a method of composition with variable identifiable narrative elements, so that a basic composition could be changed only slightly, in order to render different subjects. An underworld scene could be a generic hell; the slight addition of a few figures presented a narrative identity – a slight alteration could make a difference in identifying a literary theme. Additionally, Van Swanenburgh may have demonstrated how a design could be repeated with slight variation. This template approach served Van Swanenburgh as a shortcut for designing his paintings. This approach is not unique to Van Swanenburgh, but links him with the general practice of art in Holland, and may have been absorbed by Rembrandt in his first teacher's workshop.

Pieter Lastman: Pedantic Literacy

Pieter Lastman (ca. 1583-1633) offered the young Rembrandt a markedly different style of painting to Van Swanenburgh. Rembrandt spent six months in Lastman's studio in Amsterdam, sometime between 1624 and 1625, and would have been especially familiar with the works then in progress; several of Rembrandt's early paintings make reference to

Lastman designs from these years. Later he made drawings after several paintings by Lastman, and he referred to inventions by Lastman throughout much of his working life. He also possessed a number of Lastman's own works of art; the 1656 inventory includes two paintings (*Tobias* and *A Little Ox*) and two albums of drawings, one in ink and one in red chalk.⁴⁶ Rembrandt's interest endured beyond his study year.

Lastman was born into a Catholic family in Amsterdam. His father was a beadle in the Amsterdam city government until 1578, when his faith prevented him from holding public office and then he went into the second-hand goods business; he died in 1603. Lastman's mother, Barbara Jacobsdr (1549-1624) was an appraiser of real-estate and a dealer in second-hand clothing; she owned property in Amsterdam, and left a substantial estate at her death. Of Pieter's siblings, one brother was a sail maker, another a goldsmith, and a third, an engraver. In 1625, his sister Agnieta Pietersdr (1595-1631) married the Remonstrant painter François Venant, whose art is close to that of Lastman. Although Agnieta waited until her mother's death, in 1624, to marry outside of the Catholic faith, she was not the only member of the family to make close ties with Protestants. The family became a blend of confessions in the course of the seventeenth century, and thus echoed the wider, tolerant Amsterdam milieu. Lastman's formal education probably included Latin school, for his family had the means to support it, and Catholic families in the Netherlands generally educated their children to the best of their ability.⁴⁷

After training in Amsterdam with Gerrit Pietersz, Lastman went to Italy between June 1602 and March 1607. Lastman's earliest drawings reveal his training in rendering of gracefully exaggerated figures. By studying Italian art and drawing from nature, his style evolved from the mannerist and artificial to the more naturalistic and classical. His receptivity to the art, antiquities, and landscape of Italy shaped his development. Lastman traveled somewhat in north Italy and certainly visited Venice; he associated with northern artists in Rome, including Elsheimer. In many of its characteristics, Lastman's painterly style mediates between Tuscan-Roman *disegno* and Venetian *colore* – the two stylistic directions noted by Van Mander as worthy of

study for young artists. From Raphael and his associates, Lastman adopted a method of ordering his compositions to achieve a clear narrative structure. From the Venetians, especially Veronese, Lastman learned to use brilliant primary and secondary colors applied with pronounced fluid brushwork.⁴⁸

During his lifetime, Lastman was highly regarded, but several decades after his death, he was considered obscure in the art literature. In 1604, Van Mander praised him as “a young man of much promise, now in Italy”, and in 1618, Theodore Rodenburgh listed him as one of the artists who brought glory to Amsterdam. Constantijn Huygens, writing about 1630, considered him among the gifted history painters in the Netherlands. In 1641, Philips Angel named him as a renowned painter. Orlers’ description of Leiden twice mentions Lastman as *vermaerde* (eminent) in his accounts of the training of Lievens and Rembrandt. Although Lastman was included in Samuel van Hoogstraten’s 1678 *Inleiding* in a list of worthy painters, he was mentioned by Von Sandrart and Houbraken only as the teacher of Rembrandt and Lievens.⁴⁹

Uniquely, poetic attention ensured Lastman’s reputation; in 1648, Vondel wrote a lengthy poem about the 1614 *Sacrifice at Lystra* (present location unknown), in which he remarked upon the archaeological exactitude and conflict between Christian and pagan belief. To render expertly the sacrificial procedure, Lastman studied Roman reliefs and Renaissance paintings of sacrifices as well as Renaissance scholarship about pagan rites. Probably among his textual sources was Guillaume du Choul’s *Discourse de la religion des anciens romains* (1556), a book later cited by Houbraken in his own annotations to Vondel’s poem on the *Lystra*. In deliberate imitation of Vondel’s poem on the *Lystra*, Joachim Oudaan wrote a poem on the *Iphigenia, Orestes and Pylades* in 1657 [FIG. 11].⁵⁰ Houbraken, admitting that he had never seen Lastman’s work, stated that the artist must be important; after all, Rembrandt was his pupil and Vondel wrote the famous poem about the *Lystra*.



FIG. 9 – Pieter Lastman, *Dido Sacrificing to Juno*, 1630

Lastman painted subjects from the Bible, ancient poetry and drama, and Roman history. The literary material supporting these subjects is not very extensive. Few of his subjects are obscure, although some are unusual in painting. He favored scenes of conflict and resolution, in which he gave precise attention to the narrative, its characters, appropriate setting and accompanying paraphernalia. In his ideas, inventions, and realization, Lastman conformed to precepts articulated by Van Mander and followed theatrical practice.⁵¹ His paintings are composed as dramatic action upon a stage.

Many of Lastman's inventions combine textual source and pictorial model known in prints. His 1617 *Annunciation of Samson's Birth* emphasizes how Manoah and his wife listen to the speech of the angel, and the composition closely derives from an engraving of the same subject by Hendrick Goltzius.⁵² In *The Judgment of Midas*, Lastman

may have been guided by the overall design of another engraving by Goltzius, also of the same subject, but he heightened the dramatic aspects of the event: figures listen even as they gesture toward each other.⁵³

Another painting that demonstrates this interplay of sources in text and image is *Dido Sacrificing to Juno* of 1630 [FIG. 9].⁵⁴ Lastman's attentive reading of Virgil's *Aeneid* contrasts with Van Swanenburgh's casual reference to the same text. Lastman's painting concerns one episode in Dido's story, which is told in the first four books of the *Aeneid*. Exiled from her native Sidon, Dido settled in Carthage and began to build a magnificent city. When the shipwrecked Aeneas arrived, he was grateful for the shelter provided by Dido, who hoped that Aeneas might remain as her companion. Aeneas willingly helped in constructing Carthage, but then wished to fulfill his mission and leave for Italy. Desiring to keep Aeneas, Dido and her sister Anna prepared a sacrifice to the four gods, Ceres, Bacchus, Apollo, and Juno:⁵⁵

First they visit the shrines and sue for peace at every altar; duly they slay chosen sheep to Ceres the law giver, to Pheobus and father Lyaeus, before all to Juno, guardian of wedlock bonds. Dido herself, matchless in beauty, with a cup in her right hand, pours the libation between the horns of a white heifer, or in the presence of the gods moves slowly to the rich altars, and solemnizes the day with gifts, then, gazing into the opened breasts of victims, consults the quivering entrails... Of what avail are vows or shrines to one wild with love?

Dido's efforts to keep Aeneas were in vain. On his departure, Dido prepared her funeral pyre, and then killed herself. Lastman's pictorial precedent for this scene may have been the manuscript called the Vatican Virgil, which he could have known during his Roman years [FIG. 10]. Considered the oldest of the Virgil texts, this manuscript was famous; it had belonged to Pietro Bembo and then Fulvio Orsini. When Orsini's collection came to the Vatican in 1604, the manuscript was a scholarly sensation. In the spare style of late antiquity, the set-

ting, props, and figures are minimal. Lastman prepared a full stage of temple, main and secondary characters, and ritual paraphernalia. By adapting a model of the same subject, Lastman demonstrated his study of the illustrated Virgilian tradition; by embellishing his model, he adhered to the formula of *translatio-imitatio-aemulatio*.

One exceptional case in which he seems to have worked without a precedent is his *Iphigenia, Orestes, and Pylades* of 1614, an event well-known from Euripides' play *Iphigenia at Tauris* and its Renaissance adaptations in literature but evidently without prior representation in painting.⁵⁶ In this panel, Lastman represented the moment of resolution when Iphigenia, priestess against her will at Tauris, recognizes her brother Orestes and his friend Pylades as two Greeks who have haplessly landed there. One of them is marked for a human sacrifice, while

FIG. 10 – P.S. Bartoli, *Dido's Sacrifice*. Etching, 1741





FIG. 11 – Pieter Lastman, *Iphigenia, Orestes, and Pylades*, 1614

the other will be freed. Iphigenia has prepared a letter for the freed one to take back to her family, whom she has not seen for many years. As Orestes and Pylades vie for the privilege of saving the other, they argue, and Iphigenia, overhearing them, comes to learn their identities. Majestically presiding over the pageantry, she holds the sealed letter in one hand. The letter, which is not mentioned in any of the Dutch abridgements of Euripides' *Iphigenia at Tauris*, serves as the key to Lastman's knowledge of the original plot.

Other aspects of his tableau demonstrate an almost obsessive interest in archaeological accuracy. Aware that Taurian custom was to preserve victims' heads so that they could be mounted upon stakes and kept as trophies, Lastman showed these grisly relics, which are carried by the participants in preparation for the planned human sacrifice. For aspects of the pagan sacrifice, Lastman used the same Roman sources in ancient and Renaissance art that served his *Lystra* and *Dido*.

Lastman preferred pivotal scenes within longer narratives, so that his pictures represent the moment of revelation or resolution. In this way, the viewer is made to understand the earlier and later actions within the drama, and may comprehend that the picture becomes a synecdoche for the whole narrative. Aristotle formulated his theory of drama with this in mind, and gave as an example Iphigenia's recognition of Orestes and Pylades. His *peripeteia* usually involved a recognition by the main characters that their situation would be reversed.⁵⁷ Vondel explained this as plot reversal and recognition: *staetveranderinge* and *agnitio*. Lastman consistently focused upon scenes in which there is a resolution of a conflict, so that the emotional expressions change from one state into their opposite.

Lastman had a fairly sizeable library. In his 1632 inventory there were "about 150 books," none listed singly. Probably because the art works formed the main portion of the artist's estate, they were enumerated at length; the books were listed *en masse*.⁵⁸ From his paintings, the range of his reading may be reconstructed. For his history subjects, Lastman consulted the Bible and the major ancient authors: Livy, Homer, Euripides, Herodotus, Virgil, and Ovid. He used various publications on history and antiquity, in Latin and Greek as well as vernacular languages. His knowledge was in part based on experience gained from art, nature, and acquaintances, and in part, derived from reading. Very likely he expected his audience to be aware of, as well as impressed with, his expertise.

For Rembrandt, Lastman offered exactly what Van Swanenburgh did not: the composing of a variety of history pieces with dramatic action, adaptation of sculpture and other visual precedent, and the use of life-drawing. Yet the approaches of these two teachers may not have been as far apart as the appearance of their paintings would have us believe. Throughout much of Rembrandt's working life, he turned to Lastman for visual material; he may have been prepared to do so by his earlier training with Van Swanenburgh.

Rembrandt's Scholarly Acquaintances

Rembrandt's enduring reputation is not one of a well-educated gentleman or learned scholar. Yet Rembrandt attended Latin school and studied with two painters who were fairly sophisticated. He associated with two of the most cultivated men in the United Provinces, Constantijn Huygens and Jan Six. Among those poets who paid attention to Rembrandt's imagery are Vondel, Vos, De Decker, Dullaert, Waterloos, and Westerbaen. Huygens, Six, De Decker and Dullaert were able to maintain friendships, or at least acquaintanceships, for a length of time with the artist.⁵⁹ Rembrandt portrayed Six and De Decker, and many merchants, accountants, and ministers who were among the well-educated of Amsterdam and often had literary interests.

Huygens knew Rembrandt as a young man starting out on his career. As secretary to Frederik Hendrik, Huygens was in a position to advance careers and patronage. His autobiography, written around 1630, expresses keen interest in the art of painting, and admiration for Rembrandt and Lievens. This passage indicates a more than passing familiarity with both artists, and may indicate that Huygens visited the studios of Rembrandt and Lievens on several occasions. Huygens implied that both Lievens and Rembrandt so surpassed their teachers that they owed little to instruction, and everything to their own genius and skill. On the one hand, such a comparison with the pupils and masters emphasizes the exceptional talent of the two young artists within rhetorical terms, and on the other hand, it underscores how extraordinary they really were.

Huygens gained entry for Rembrandt, along with Lievens, into the Stadhouder's collection by 1632. Huygens also secured the commission for the *Passion* series for Rembrandt. The artist was slow to deliver the paintings, and, perhaps as a consequence, payment was delayed. It is not clear if Rembrandt was at fault in souring this relationship, or if other circumstances contributed to a coolness between the artist and Huygens. In need of funds, and desirous of retaining Huygens' good will, Rembrandt made him a gift of a large canvas, probably the *Samson Blinded* [FIG. 49]. Rembrandt's only known autograph

letters, which request payment for the *Passion* series, generally are cordial in tone, although they are pleading for payment and excusing the painter's delays. At least initially, Rembrandt found favor with Huygens.

Nearly twenty years later, Jan Six commissioned Rembrandt for the title page to his play *Medea* [FIG. 6]. For that publication, Rembrandt crafted a composition that conveys not only the horror of Medea's actions but also her motivation. He did not merely put a scene from the play into visual form; he invented a scene that was not in it. This enhanced the text with an image that encapsulated its very meaning: Medea vows vengeance as Jason weds Creusa. Over the next seven years, Rembrandt produced five more works for him: an etched portrait [FIG. 3], a painted portrait (Amsterdam, Six Foundation, Br. 276), two drawings for his friendship album [FIG. 29], and a frame for the grisaille *John the Baptist Preaching*, a painting already owned by Six (Berlin, SMPK, Br. 555). These works indicate a sustained level of involvement with a single patron over time, but the relationship may have become complicated by Six lending funds to Rembrandt that the artist did not repay. It seems likely that their friendship suffered because of the loans, rather than aesthetic issues. Their friendship may also have cooled because of another circumstance. In 1654, Hendrickje Stoffels was called three times before the Council of the Reformed Church authorities, because she was living with Rembrandt but not married to him; being pregnant, her relationship with him could not be hidden.⁶⁰ In 1655, Geertje Dircks was released from the workhouse, and Rembrandt's household arrangements became even more complicated and stressed financially. Jan Six was appointed to the Bureau of Marital Affairs, of the city of Amsterdam, and such an appointment would have carried the responsibility of making the status of cohabitation into a legal marriage. Rembrandt could not do this without losing Saskia's legacy, according to the terms of his first wife's will, and therefore he was bound to maintain his relationship with Hendrickje outside the legal bonds of marriage. Such a circumstance may have discouraged a continuing relationship with Jan Six, whose family ties with Nicolaes Tulp and civic position required some distance from the kind

of messy household of which Rembrandt was head.⁶¹ In terms of the humanist knowledge and status, Jan Six was at the most select level of Rembrandt's circle. That Rembrandt had contact with Jan Six for seven years is not questionable; it is also not in doubt that the artist shared some of Six's interest in antiquarian matters.

How Rembrandt learned from, or conversed with, his other patrons and acquaintances may be more speculative. His Amsterdam patrons offer a range of occupations in which education was a likely if not essential requisite. During the 1630s, his clients included the medical doctor Nicolaes Tulp, the shipbuilder Jan Rijcksen, the Remonstrant Johannes Wtenbogaert, and the merchants Nicolaes Ruts, Philip Lucas, and Maerten Looten. During the 1640s, he portrayed the Mennonite teacher of the church and merchant Anslo, the regent and militia leader Frans Banninck Cocq, and Nicolaes Bambeeck and Maria Trip. Well-placed professionals, such as the medical doctor Jan Deyman, gave him commissions; the Latin school rector Jacob Heybloq sought Rembrandt as a contributor to his *album amicorum*. Both poetic attention and patronage implicitly place Rembrandt in the wider circle of the community of the highly literate of Amsterdam.

CHAPTER 3

REMBRANDT'S
BOOKSHELF PART I



FIG. 12 – Rembrandt's *Kunstkamer* reconstructed

*The 1656 Inventory and its
22 Books in the Breestraat House*

THE INVENTORY OF 1656, MADE ON THE occasion of the *cessio bonorum*, is the primary document for Rembrandt's possessions. It provides an abbreviated list of the books and an extensive list of the other precious objects, props, art, and miscellaneous items. In the course of making the inventory, items may have been moved around, and put in some semblance of order by category or size. In 1999, the Rembrandthuis exhibited a reconstruction of Rembrandt's collection, including a jumble of books, musical instruments, naturalia, coins, medals, prints and drawings, and weaponry. The reality of Rembrandt's house in 1656 may not have been so different, although the books were kept somewhat together, and less interspersed among the collectibles [FIG. 12]. According to the 1656 inventory, the following eight items contained printed texts, and are distinct from the over 80 items that are albums of drawings or prints:¹

IN THE KUNSTCAEMER:

- 1 Jan Six's *Medea*, a tragedy, "*d'Medea van Jan Six, treurspel*" [254];
- 2 *All Jerusalem* by Jacques Callot, "*Gants Jerusalem van Jacob Calot*" [255];

- 3 Albrecht Dürer's book on proportion, with woodcuts, "*t proportie boeck van Albert Durer, houtsnee*" [273];

IN THE VOORKAEMER OF THE KUNSTCAEMER:

- 4 Fifteen books in different formats, "*15 boecken in verscheijde formaeten*" [281];
- 5 A German book with war illustrations, "*Een Hoogduyts boeck met oorlocks figueren*" [282];
- 6 Ditto with woodcut illustrations, "*Een dito met hout figuren [sic]*" [283];
- 7 A Flavius Josephus in German, illustrated by Tobias Stimmer, "*Een hoogduytsche Flavio Fevus, gestoffeert met figueren van Tobias Timmerman*" [284];
- 8 An old Bible, "*Een oude bijbel*" [285].

These seven items listed singly and fifteen grouped together total 22 individual books. The three books with illustrations by Rembrandt, Callot, and Dürer were placed among the albums of prints and drawings – an indication that they were probably valued as much for the artists' contributions as for the texts. The rest of the books were consecutively listed. Of the seven single items, four are readily identified through their assigned authors or illustrators (nos. 1, 2, 3, 7 above; 254; 255; 273; 284); these are books with illustrations, by Rembrandt, Dürer, Callot (Amico), or Stimmer (Josephus). Another item is the "old Bible," which could have been illustrated (no. 8 above; 285). The two remaining items listed singly have illustrations, and may be tentatively identified through evidence in Rembrandt's own work (nos. 5 and 6 above; 282; 283). Those "15 books of varying size" (no. 4 above; 281) could be small, large, illustrated or not. However, as it was customary for appraisers to list singly the larger volumes or those that were extensively illustrated, it is likely that this item refers to books of quarto and smaller size, without notable illustrations. The Six/Rembrandt and Amico/Callot books are quarto, and the Dürer is folio; they could have fitted well by size with the art albums. The 22 volumes are a small component among the other items in the inventory.²

These 22 books comprise Rembrandt's "library." They could easily fit upon a shelf; the 15 books were probably smaller than folio, and of various widths.³ The four listed singly (nos. 5, 6, 7, and 8 above) were probably thick folio volumes.⁴ The assessment of the size of the four single books is based upon the one that has a certain identification, the Stimmer Josephus, and the adjacent Bible – both would have been about 5-8 centimetres wide and folio size. The Callot, Dürer, and Six/Rembrandt books were in the art room, or *kunstkamer*, and the other 19 books, in the foyer of the *kunstkamer*. The term *kunstkamer* denotes a room within the houses of scholars and collectors where those valuable or curious items were kept; these items might be art objects, but they could also be works on paper, minerals, natural specimens, sculpture, coins, books, weaponry, and other precious possessions in some order. These rooms were not necessarily large; they were often grander in their depictions than in reality.⁵ In Rembrandt's house, the *kunstkamer* was among the larger rooms. It was at the back of the house; the rooms given over to painting were at the front, along the street.⁶ Both rooms contained, in addition to the books, a number of sculptures, several globes, animal and mineral specimens, weapons, and a box of medals; its contents comprised the items 138 through 287 of the 1656 inventory. Atypically for a collection of this kind, over 80 of these items are art folios, albums of drawings or prints, described by artist or subject; many of these albums were filled with Rembrandt's own works on paper.

The 1656 inventory indicates only what Rembrandt owned at this time, and in his house. Rembrandt's financial situation had been worsening for some years, and had already led to a series of public sales in December 1655. Documentation of these sales consists of receipts for the rental of the Keizerskroon inn.⁷ Some purchases by Rembrandt during the 1630s do not appear among the items in the 1656 inventory. These include the nine sets of Dürer's *Life of the Virgin*; presumably Rembrandt bought such multiple sets for resale, and sold them prior to the inventory, possibly at the Keizerskroon sales.⁸ An earlier case of Rembrandt's dealing is his purchase and sale of Rubens' painting *Hero and Leander*, which he bought in 1637 and sold in 1644.⁹ Having

amassed a comprehensive print collection and a large collection of various sculptures, costumes and paraphernalia, in 1655 Rembrandt may have sold, or tried to sell, those possessions least essential to his studio. After the 1656 *cessio bonorum*, the auctions of his goods, and the move to the Rozengracht, he continued to collect precious art works, including an album of Lucas van Leyden, and paraphernalia that served his paintings.¹⁰ The 1669 inventory made at Rembrandt's death includes only one book, a Bible, but this inventory excludes the contents of three rooms of "schilderijen, teyckenen, rariteyten, antiquiteyten, en anders." These rooms were sealed, without having been inventoried, because their contents belonged to Cornelia van Rhijn, daughter of Hendrickje Stoffels. Magdalena van Loo, wary of being liable for Rembrandt's debts, was reluctant to accept possession of these items.¹¹ Any books owned by the artist at that time were likely to be included with the art works and "anders." Although there is ample evidence of Rembrandt's possessions from the inventories at his bankruptcy proceedings and death, and from various other documentation, there is little record of his book ownership apart from the 1656 inventory.

The nature of Rembrandt's 1656 inventory suggests that the books belonged to Rembrandt just as the other items did: they were his own production, they were collectibles and items for dealing, or they were useful in his studio. The illustrated books might fit the last two categories, but it is more likely that Rembrandt's "15 books in various sizes" were there for practical service. The corollary between Rembrandt's work and these seven largely identifiable and fifteen grouped items is occasionally direct, as in his illustration for Six's *Medea*. In other cases, such a one-to-one relationship between a book listed in the inventory and Rembrandt's imagery can also be deduced.

Certainly Rembrandt read the text of Josephus, and he studied the woodcuts by Stimmer. Yet in this and other cases, his study of the text and woodcuts in a book he owned is mediated by his own artistic goal: to make visual statements that are more dramatic, more historically evocative, and more laden with allusion than those made by his predecessors and peers. Rembrandt's bookshelf served this goal. The ensuing chapters examine the evidence of Rembrandt's reading

from his own works and those of his pupils, in light of his library of 22 volumes.

Callot's Gants Jerusalem

Jacques Callot is an artist whose sole appearance in the 1656 inventory in connection with a book does not reflect adequately Rembrandt's knowledge and use of his prints. In his early single-figure etchings, Rembrandt studied Callot's etchings carefully for both subject and technique. Several of Rembrandt's prints and drawings of beggars and actors are loosely modelled upon Callot's series published between 1617 and 1623.¹² Rembrandt's large etching *Christ Presented to the People* drew upon a number of visual sources, among them Callot's etching of the same subject.¹³ For Rembrandt's early etching technique, Callot provided a guide to suggest both volume and light. Callot's cleanly bitten grooves establish strong, unmediated contrasts between the ink and paper tone; the swelling inked grooves evoke the figures in brilliant relief against the spare white ground. Rembrandt's linear schemes in his early etchings evince similar assertive strokes and effects. By the mid-1630s, however, Rembrandt's preference for dense and subtle shading led him to develop a more complicated, modulated technique. In the 1656 inventory, no prints by Callot are listed under his name; perhaps Rembrandt arranged some Callot prints by subject in an album of assorted masters, or perhaps he had disposed of them by that time.

Rembrandt owned "Gants Jerusalem van Jacob Calot," [no. 255: all Jerusalem by Jacques Callot], a book valued for its maps, buildings, and plans of Jerusalem that were the sites of Christian importance [FIGS. 13 and 14]. Somewhat surprisingly, it is Callot's name that the inventory attaches to the *Trattato delle piante et immagini dei sacri edifizii di terra santa*. This book was written by Bernardino Amico da Gallipoli, and published in two editions: Rome 1609 and Florence 1620. In the first edition, the plates were etched by Antonio Tempesta after Amico's drawings. For the second edition, Callot made reduced copies of those in the first edition. In the first edition, the prints were awkwardly inserted into the binding, and somewhat difficult to tally

33



Tempio di Salomone. il quadretto di mezzo dinota
che li sotto discendino i turchi alare oratione.

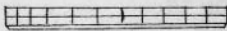
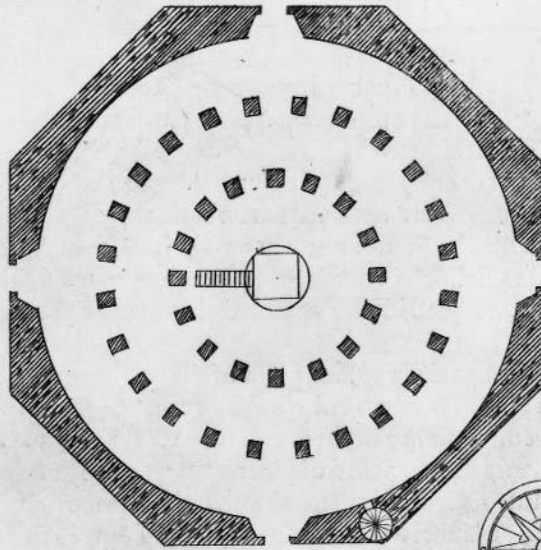


FIG. 13 – Jacques Callot, *Tempio di Salomone*. Etching, 1620

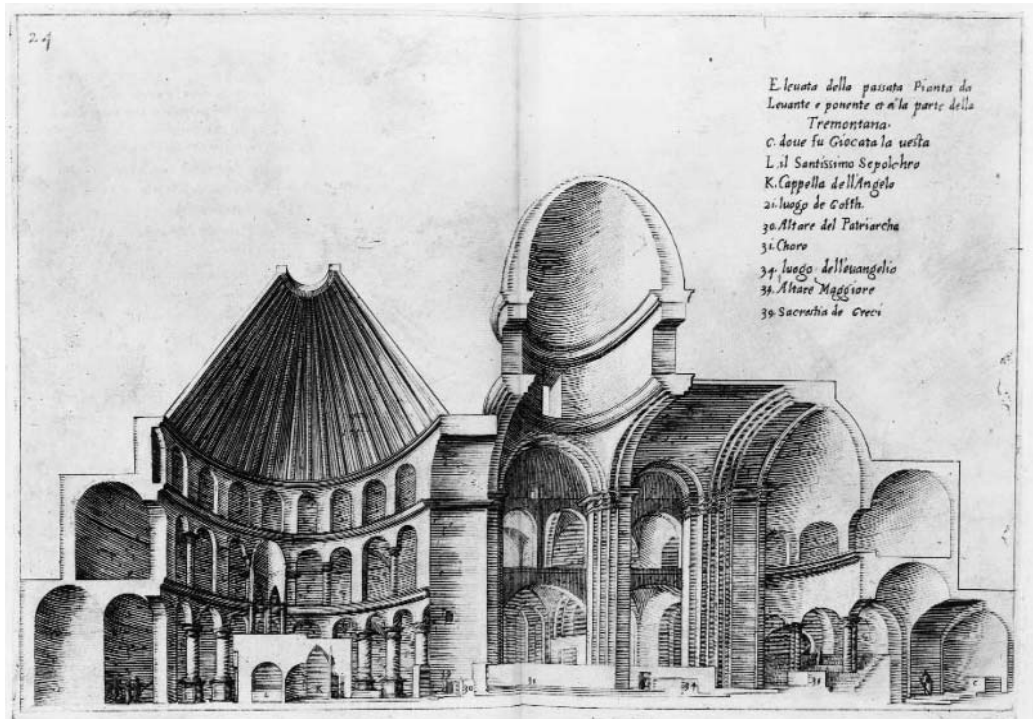


FIG. 14 – Jacques Callot, *Elevation of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre*.
Etching, 1620

with the text. A format with better integrated plates was therefore desirable, and was produced in the smaller, second edition. The first edition is folio size (56 by 28 cm.). The second edition is quarto (28 by 21 cm.), and would have been close in size to the adjacent book in Rembrandt's *kunstcaemer*, Jan Six's *Medea*.

Curiously, the names of Callot and Tempesta are anything but prominent in this book. Tempesta's name appears only in the frontispiece to the first edition, and Callot's name, not at all in the second edition. Amico, after returning to Rome from his Mediterranean travels, enlisted Tempesta to turn his own drawings into usable etchings for the book. Callot's participation is documented through the editor Pietro Cecconcelli, who hired Callot to make reduced copies of the plates, so that they could be inserted into the text itself, and to embellish some of the compositions with a few figures. Both editions of the book

were printed in small quantity, and considered rare even in the seventeenth century, and certainly later.¹⁴ It is likely that Rembrandt owned the second edition; it is also possible that Callot's name became attached to both editions as a matter of convenient attribution.¹⁵

Amico spent four years in Jerusalem (1593-1597), and held several offices while there. Amico's purpose in this project was to make the measurements and appearances of the sacred buildings known to clergy and artists in Europe. The illustrations present in a clear and spare style the plans and elevations that purport to be exactly as Amico saw them. The foremost among them were the Church of the Nativity, the Holy Cenacle, and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Two fold-out plans were included, a map of the present Jerusalem, and a map of the ancient city and its surrounding hills. Amico asserted that his illustrations were accurate, within the limitations imposed upon access to the temple mount and other areas that were controlled by the Moslems. His work must have been regarded as correct, because it was copied in five other seventeenth-century publications.¹⁶

Rembrandt would have found Amico's Italian text difficult to understand, if he read it at all. More likely, he valued the book for the 46 illustrations. Several of Rembrandt's paintings of the 1630s seem to reflect Callot's illustrations, and therefore it is likely Rembrandt acquired the book early in his career.

In Amico's map of the ancient city, the temple of Solomon is shown as oblong. In his map of the modern city, the temple is centralized and domed, and labelled "Tempio Moderna"; it roughly corresponded in design to the Mosque of Omar. Amico's text emphasized the difference between the Temple of Solomon, which was oblong, and its replacement, which was octagonal. He noted that visitors to the Holy Land confused the octagonal Dome of the Rock mosque with the form of the temple of Solomon. Rather than clarify this issue, he confused it. He reinforced the notion of a centralized temple in the illustrations; these are the map of the modern city and the standing temple [FIG. 13]. In Chapter 35 in his book, accompanied by a plan and illustration of the octagonal structure that we recognize as the Mosque, Amico explained that this is the temple built in the place where the

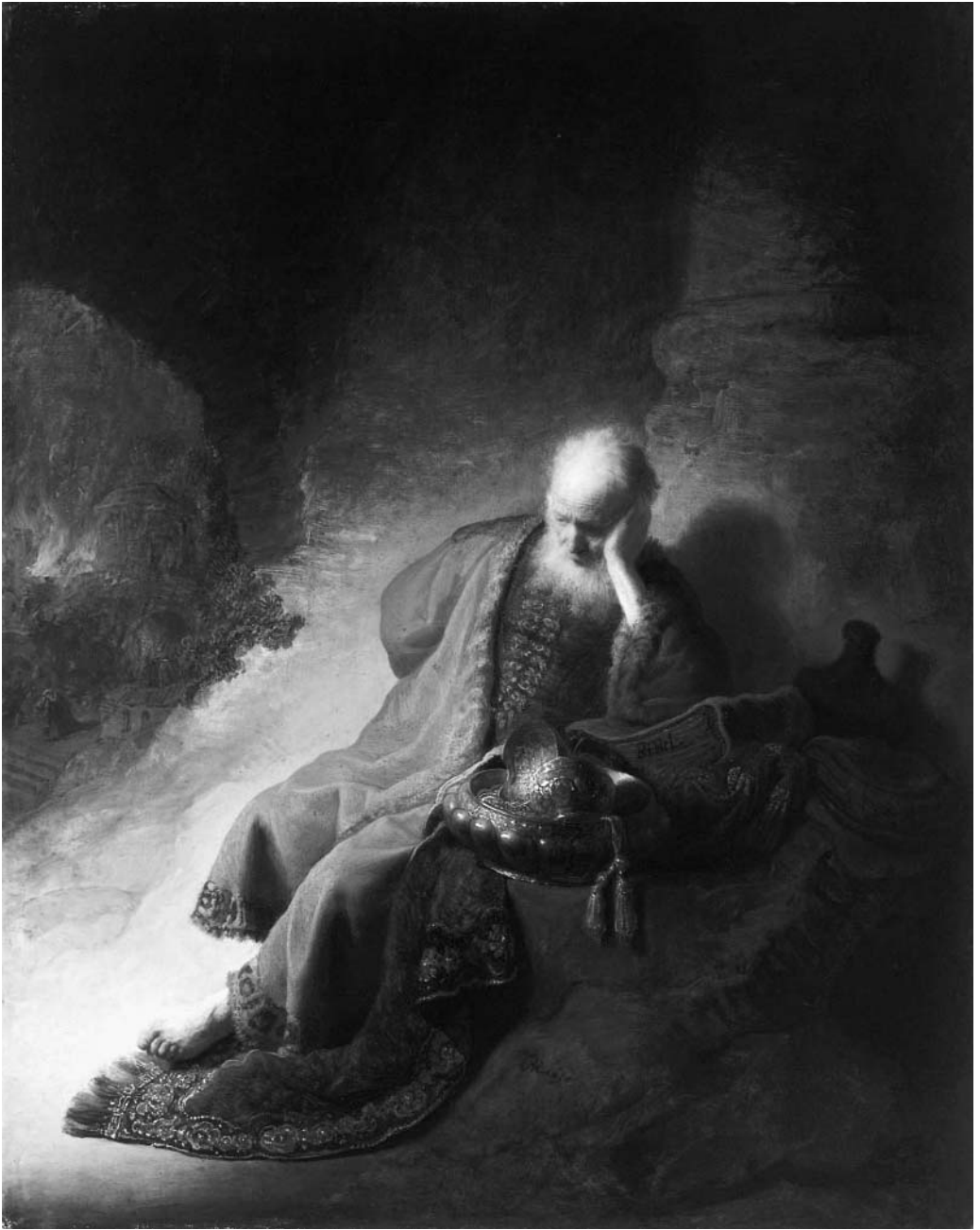


FIG. 15 – Rembrandt, *Jeremiah Lamenting the Destruction of Jerusalem*, 1630

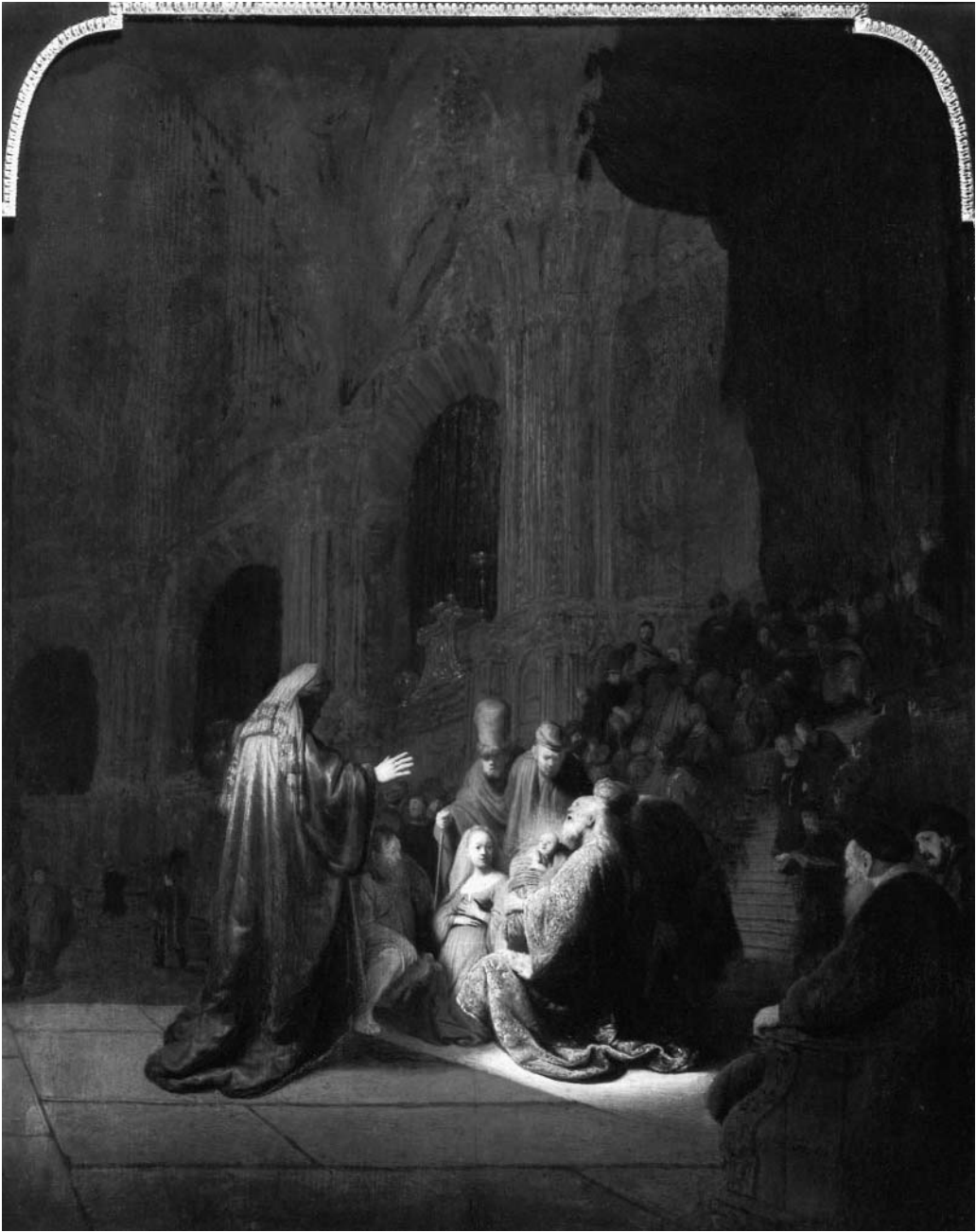


FIG. 16 – Rembrandt, *Simeon's Song of Praise*, 1631

temple of Solomon had once stood; Amico implied that this structure could be compared to the rebuilt second temple. The caption to the print of the octagonal structure is “Tempio di Salomone,” although Amico also explained that in its center was a staircase used by the Moslems to descend into a cave to pray.¹⁷ By the time of the Renaissance, the tradition had become established that the temple in Jerusalem was centralized; it was often depicted as a domed octagon, evidently a variation on the Mosque of Omar. Amico’s book became one more authority for this form of temple.

This two-storey octagonal structure surmounted by a dome probably was among Rembrandt’s sources for a centralized temple that appears in the 1630 *Jeremiah* [FIG. 15], and the etching *Triumph of Mordechai* from around 1641 (B. 40). In these instances, the centralized temple alludes both to an attempt at accuracy and a messianic desire for the rebuilding of the destroyed second temple.¹⁸ Rembrandt probably ignored the lengthy explanation of the difference between the two temples of Solomon and Herod. Rembrandt’s interest in this publication was in the visual information it conveyed about the temple, and not in the textual explanation.

In his records of the interiors of other churches, Amico evoked the solemnity, centrality, and mystery associated with the ancient temple. Some of these church interiors could be used for scenes of Christ’s life. Rembrandt may have found these other illustrations useful for his interior settings of the temple. In his 1631 *Simeon’s Song of Praise* [FIG. 16], Rembrandt approximated the cavernous, multi-storied space of the interior elevation of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre [FIG. 14]. He used a similar columned interior in his 1644 *Christ and the Woman in Adultery*.¹⁹ Amico devoted three chapters to this church, and two additional chapters to the Holy Sepulchre itself, and Rembrandt may well have considered the accompanying illustrations in his representations of the temple itself.

For his several versions of the Entombment, Rembrandt may have consulted Amico’s illustrations.²⁰ One, of the Holy Sepulchre itself, shows the frontal view of the sheltered cave-like area into which Christ’s body was placed. Several others of the Church of the Nativity

offered clear illustrations of subterranean spaces.²¹ Rembrandt may have regarded these plans as authoritative and bare structures that he could embellish with natural growth and architectural elements.

Since Amico's records of Jerusalem were made to depict the city as he found it in the 1590s, his drawings show little that could have been as it was in the time of Christ. But this may not have been bothersome to Rembrandt, whose purpose was to blend the evocative with the historically accurate. Rembrandt's attitude toward the archaeologically correct in his renditions of the holy places evolved over time. His 1659 etching, *Peter and John at the Temple Gate* may reflect a close reading of Josephus' text, with a precise reconstruction of the forecourt of the Herodian rectangular temple and division of spaces [FIG. 46].²² It is likely that Rembrandt's interests changed over the decades, and his interpretations were affected by personal contacts and patronage.

Dürer's proportie boeck

Dürer was the northern Renaissance exemplar of both the practice and theory of art, and the learned *peintre-graveur*. In Rembrandt's 1656 inventory, “*t proportie boeck van Albert Durer, houtsnee*” was placed among albums of prints and drawings, and between an album filled with sketches by Rembrandt and an album with prints by Lievens and Bol. Dürer's prints, better known than his paintings in the Netherlands, established the northern Renaissance ideal in portraiture and religious imagery, and his two books on human proportion and measurement established a theoretical approach to the figure. With respect to the nude, Dürer became especially significant both as a practicing artist, best known through his prints, and as a theorist, through the proportion book.

For Rembrandt, Dürer's folio book on human proportion, *Vier Bücher von Menschlicher Proportion*, may have been useful for theoretical and practical purposes. Published posthumously in 1528, it was reissued in 1604; it was translated into Latin, 1532; Italian, 1591; French, 1557 and 1613; and Portuguese, Spanish, and Dutch, 1622.²³ Since the

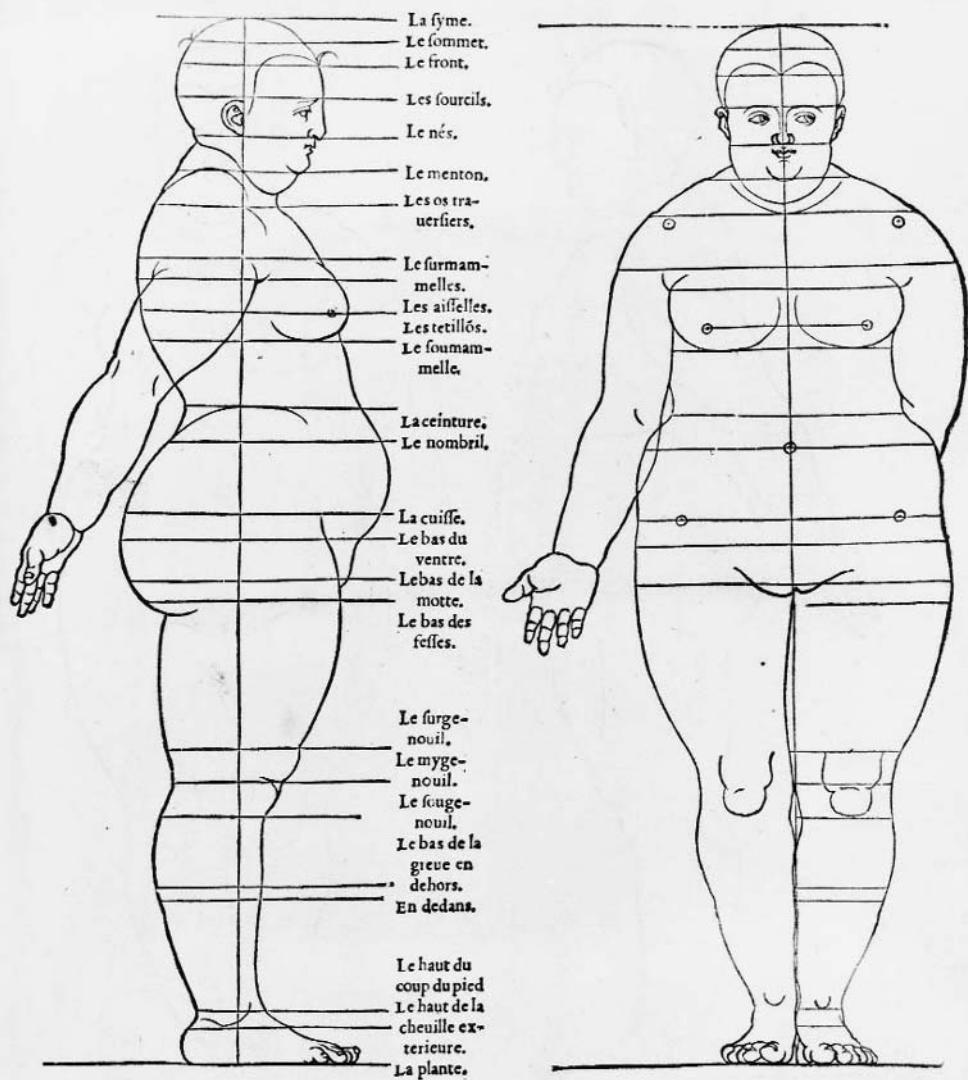


FIG. 17 – Dürer, *Two Views of a Woman*. Woodcut, 1528

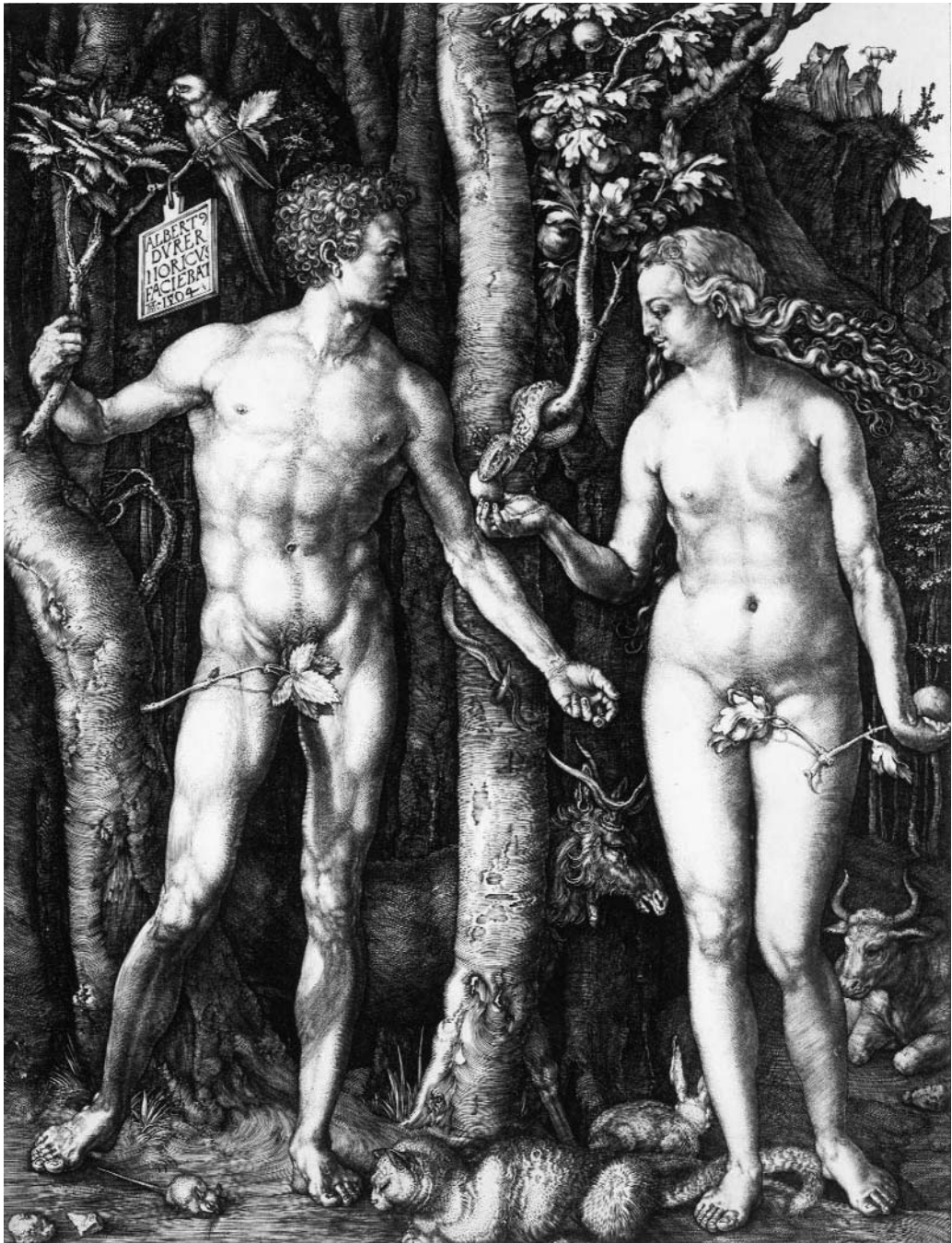


FIG. 18 – Dürer, *Adam and Eve*. Engraving, 1504

1656 inventory gives the title in Dutch, it is likely that Rembrandt owned that edition. The illustrations are essentially the same in all editions, and for Rembrandt, they may have been more interesting than the text [FIG. 17]. The text concentrates on elaborate measurements for representing the parts of the body and explanations on how to represent figures viewed through distorting lenses. Dürer believed that his book would be helpful to the young artist, and that it contained all the necessary rules to depict the human body, male or female, whether fat or thin, or infant or adult, as foreshortened, or in frontal, back or side views. The woodcut illustrations would have served as helpful models, for they present a variety of human figures, consistently in upright, standing or walking postures, in simplified contours. Dürer showed ways of representing the movement of figures along axes of circles and squares, and within circles and cubes. In art studios where there were few or no posing nude models, this book may have been useful to artists in representing the nude. In Rembrandt's studio, where the nude became somewhat commonplace, the value of these illustrations may have been less in anatomy and proportion, and more in vocabulary of postures, body types and gestures.

Dürer struggled to comprehend an ideal system of proportion for the human body as it was articulated by Vitruvius and practiced by Renaissance artists in Italy, especially Mantegna, Raphael, and Jacopo de'Barbari. The book was Dürer's presentation of a working knowledge of the nude to the practicing artist. His starting point was the perceptual and his result was the conceptual: he began with observation, and then subjected the natural form to the systematic measurement that he hoped would bring him to the ideal. The ideal for him was not the visualization of unattainable beauty, as it was for the Italians. It was rather the harmony of the figure to all its parts. Believing that there existed ancient and secret formulae to create perfection, as the Italians did, Dürer wrote Jacopo de'Barbari, and hoped to elicit the mystery from him. But Dürer's quest turned up no quick answers and no easy solutions. Before his second Italian trip, he made the 1504 engraving *Adam and Eve* as his own demonstration of the ideal nude form [FIG. 18].

This solution arose from empirical observation combined with knowledge of ancient sculptural models, rather than calculated conceptual constructions. Dürer's *Adam and Eve* is the northern response to Italian ideals. With models for the female and male nude, this print became the standard against which northern artists measured themselves. Later, in drawings and writings for the *Book on Human Proportion*, Dürer further illustrated the ideal as a function of harmony among the parts. In these drawings and woodcuts, however, he followed calculations that brought his efforts to different results.²⁴ Van Mander summed up Dürer's contribution:²⁵

Just as his forerunners in his land [Northerners, especially Germans] followed nature, so did he... The Italians opened his eyes to the Greek and Roman art, and to understanding the beautiful. Dürer learned beauty from nature... He was learned in literature, art, the sciences, math, architecture, and perspective, and wrote books on proportion, and on perspective and architecture.

Rembrandt's profound study and knowledge of Dürer's art is merely hinted at by this single mention of him in the inventory. It is possible that some works by Dürer were included in the albums of various artists in the inventory, but that, too, would not indicate the depth of Rembrandt's interest in Dürer's art. Rembrandt bought Dürer's prints in quantity at sales in the 1630s, and probably sold them prior to the 1656 inventory.²⁶ Rembrandt never worked in woodcut, yet he must have studied Dürer's relief prints.²⁷ For the etcher Rembrandt, Dürer's engravings had special significance for their rich tone and texture. Dürer's burin set the highest standard for a fine network of cross-hatches that hold the ink and convey mysterious, shadowed depths. Dürer's dry-points, similarly, offered guidance for variety of line in catching the ink. In both technique and subject, they, too, were emulated by Rembrandt. Dürer's drypoint *St. Jerome by a Pollard Willow* is one model for Rembrandt's etchings of St. Jerome, which make use of a fair amount of burr raised by drypoint.²⁸

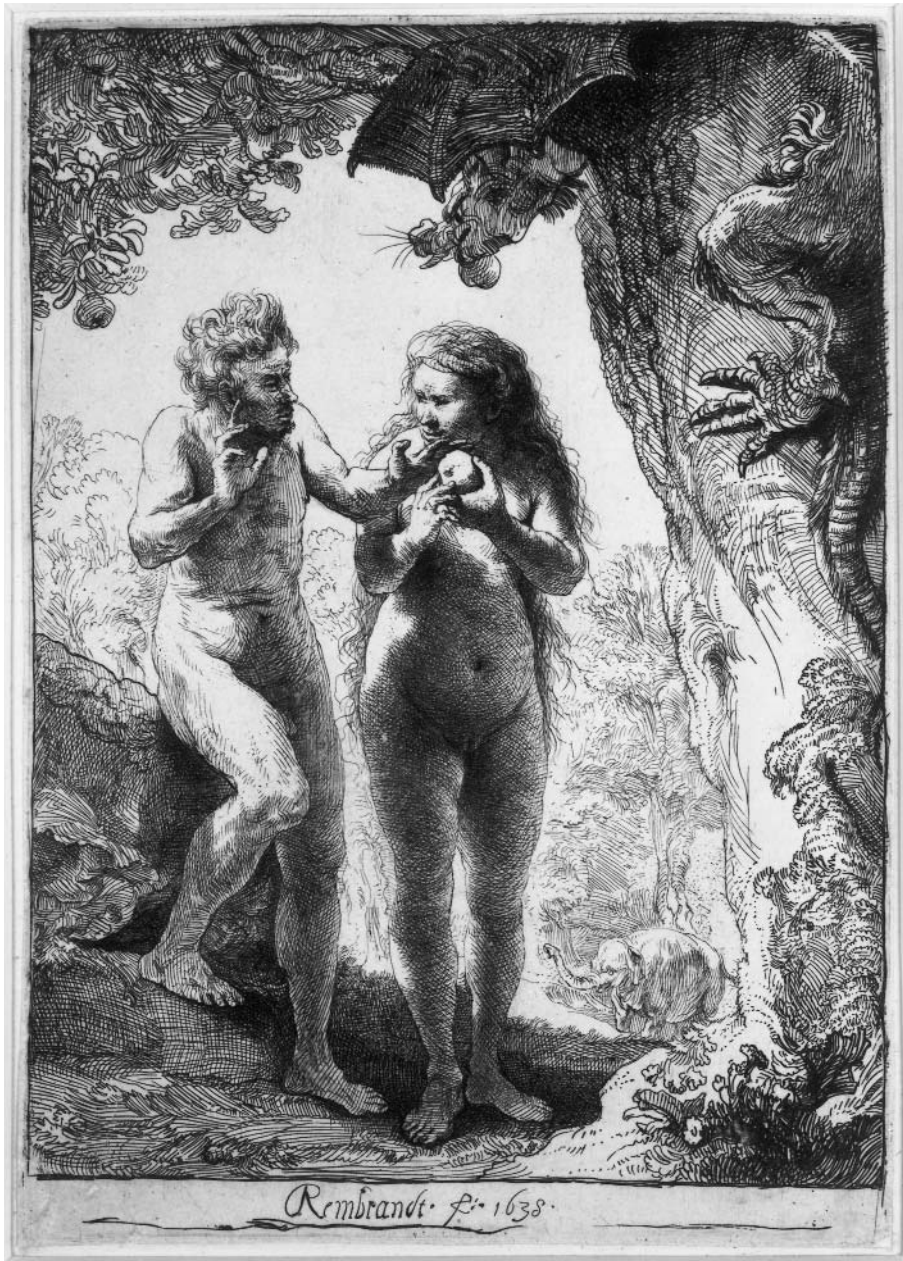


FIG. 19 – Rembrandt, *Adam and Eve*. Etching, 1638

Rembrandt's 1638 etching *Adam and Eve* is a demonstration of how the nude figures convey artistic reference and theological meaning [FIG. 19]. This etching gains its moral dimension from its dual responses to Raphael and Dürer. Rembrandt's Adam and Eve derive in pose from Raphael's ideally beautiful figures in the Vatican Loggia fresco *The Creation of Eve*. Other motifs derived from Dürer allude to original sin as a transforming and redemptive process. As D.R. Smith has demonstrated, Rembrandt's Adam and Eve, ungainly and aged, express in their physical forms not only their departure from the innocent and pure state of grace, but also their potential for redemption. Rembrandt has adapted Dürer's serpent from the *Descent into Limbo* of the 1512 engraved Passion.²⁹ The serpent refers to the mouth of hell rather than the snake of temptation in Eden. Rembrandt therefore endowed the print with both the meaning of the original sin and its redemption through Christ's descent into limbo and the saving of souls. Innocence, voluptuousness, and strength characterize Raphael's Adam and Eve, who have not yet partaken of the fruit, although they are modestly covered by tree branches. The consequences of their temptation are not yet made apparent. Rembrandt's figures demonstrate their moral corruption in their aged, ugly bodies; they subvert the Raphael ideal by containing sin and salvation in the figures themselves.³⁰

Rembrandt's possession of "*proportie boeck van Albert Durer, houtsnee*" may be symptomatic of his own struggle to convey a moral and religious state of mind with the human form, as he did with the 1638 *Adam and Eve*. On another level, Rembrandt's depictions of non-ideal nudes recall Dürer's inclusiveness of body types. In his etchings of the nude, Rembrandt presented body types that are hardly the ideal, but that are observed and variable in their types: heavy women, thin men. Collected in a series, these prints offer a variety of postures and proportions.³¹ A few of the postures are fairly standard, and may be compared to similar prints in model books of Rembrandt's contemporaries. The most radical distinction between Rembrandt's nudes and those by others is their range of physique. In Rembrandt's images, the female models are fat, and the males, thin or even mangy. One of the foremost model books was that by Crispijn de Passe II, published in

1643.³² In De Passe's series, the typical models have a healthy and muscular physique. An offering of non-ideal types in contrast to the model books of the seventeenth century, Dürer's figures would have served Rembrandt as a precedent for his own "model book" – a loose series of prints that one collector, Dezaillier D'Argenville, later gathered and labelled "Rembrandt's drawing book."³³

Dürer glorified imperfect nature in contrast to the conceptual ideal. This was, in part, a trope of the northerners' critique against the Italians. The Italian ideal was expressed in Raphael's 1516 letter to Castiglione. Raphael, echoing Zeuxis' selection of the five maidens of Crotona for the most beautiful parts of each, stated: "In order to paint a beautiful woman I should have to see many beautiful women...; but since there are so few, I make use of a certain idea that comes into my head."³⁴ Raphael had internalized his definition of beauty, and fixed it in his mind, so that he was not dependent upon observable nature. Dürer, however, "recognized both the impossibility of establishing one universally valid norm of beauty and the impossibility of being satisfied with simply imitating that which was given to the senses."³⁵ He concluded that both the formulaic investigation of proportions and the empirical copying of models was only the beginning for the artist, whose greatness would lie in his ability to draw from a store of images gathered from study from the natural world and his imagination. Van Mander, in making the distinction between "naer 't leven" and "uyt den geest" ("from life" and "from the imagination") would have recognized that the image formed in the mind results from long study of nature. The duality of nature and the ideal of Dürer and his writings were an excuse, a precedent, and a justification for Rembrandt's nudes, so fleshily actual that they negate concern for ideal proportion or beauty.



PLATE I – Rembrandt, *The Abduction of Proserpina*, ca. 1630, oil on panel.



PLATE 2 – Rembrandt, *The Abduction of Europa*, 1632, oil on panel.



PLATE 3 – Rembrandt, *Mars and Venus Caught in Vulcan's Net*, ca. 1640, drawing.



PLATE 4 – Rembrandt, *Lucretia*, 1666, oil on canvas.



PLATE 5 – Rembrandt, *Samson's Wedding Feast*, 1638, oil on canvas.



PLATE 6 – Rembrandt, *Samson Blinded*, 1636, oil on canvas.



PLATE 7 – Rembrandt, *Pyrrhus Pardoning The Captives Before their Release to Fabricius*, ca. 1655-60, drawing.



PLATE 8 – Aert de Gelder, *Zeuxis Painting an Old Woman*, 1685.

CHAPTER 4

REMBRANDT'S
BOOKSHELF PART II

“15 books in various sizes”

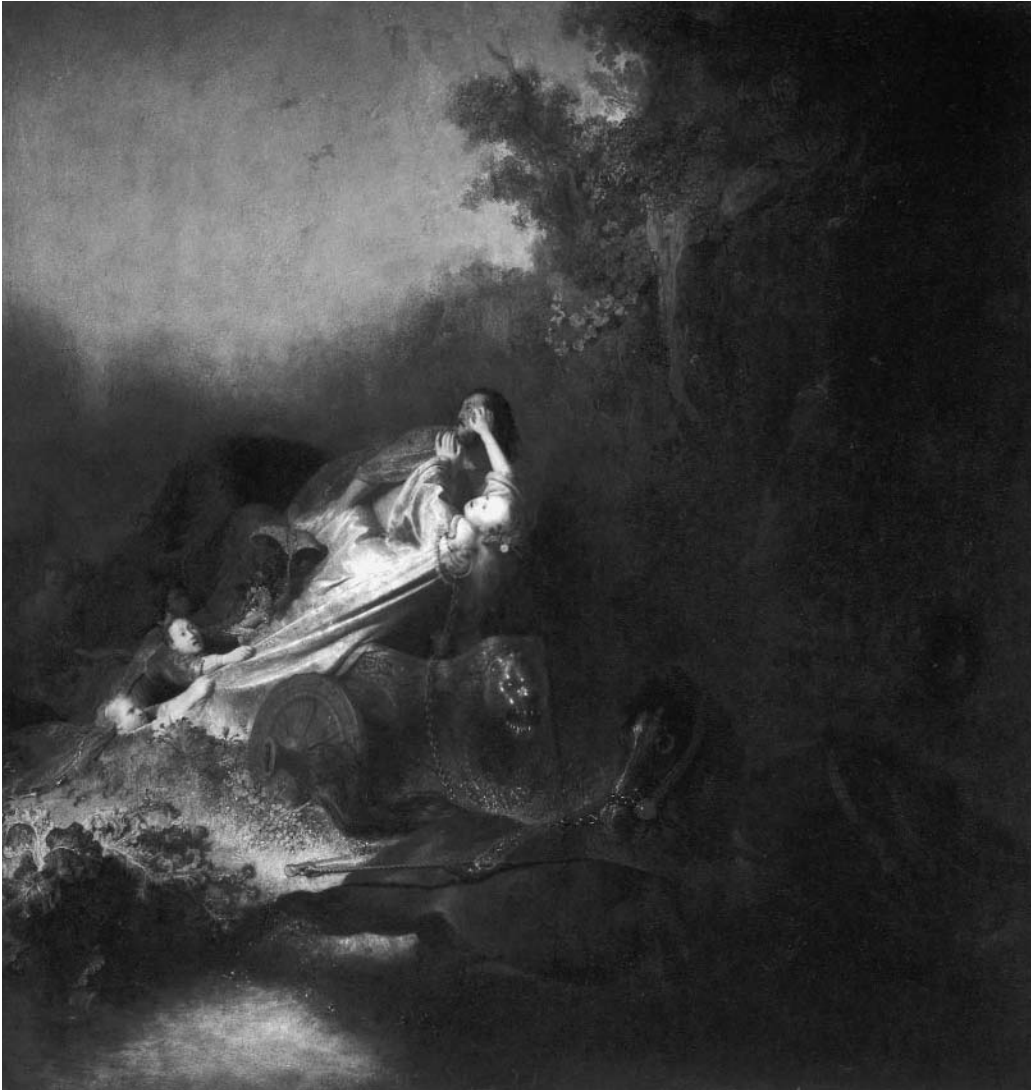


FIG. 20 – Rembrandt, *The Abduction of Proserpina*, ca. 1630

REMBRANDT'S "15 BOOKS IN VARIOUS SIZES" were grouped together in the *voorkaemer* of the *kunstcaemer*; they are listed between a box, containing a bird of paradise and six fans, and the three German books and old Bible. Listing books as a group was common in inventories where other items, including books, had more apparent value for illustrations or other qualities; in Rembrandt's inventory, the illustrated German books were probably distinctive for pictures, language, and size; in the inventory, the nearby items were probably more exotic and valuable than the books. These fifteen books were a mixed lot, smaller than folio, and not particularly notable for their illustrations or language. The poetic and historical texts, small editions that may have been issued for use in schools, were probably in this group.

*Rembrandt's Proserpina: Visual Rhetoric
from Claudian and Scaliger*

Rembrandt's renderings of myths have long been recognized as unusual.¹ As a group, these paintings are unified by their deviation from pictorial precedent. The comparative textual study, with which Rembrandt would have become familiar in the Latin school, through Ovid, Virgil, Horace and others, is most evident in Rembrandt's painting of about 1630, *The Abduction of Proserpina* [FIG. 20]. This picture is

a demonstration of Rembrandt's rivalry with Rubens. It was visually prompted by Soutman's etching after Rubens' design, now known in an oil sketch that was preparatory to a large canvas, destroyed by fire [FIG. 21]. Rembrandt's painting, however, also reflected Claudian's *De Raptu Proserpinae*, the text that had served Rubens.² The two main versions of the story of Proserpina's abduction by Pluto were by Ovid and Claudian. Ovid's *Metamorphoses* proliferated in translations, including Dutch, and in illustrated prints, and belonged to the general culture. Claudian's epic had been read as a school text during the medieval and early Renaissance periods, but it was not read in its entirety in the Dutch Latin schools; it was not illustrated, and was translated only into Italian, Spanish, and English. Ovid's version of Proserpina's story was rich with details about landscape and expression, but Claudian's was more elaborate in these respects. Only Claudian described Minerva, Venus, and Diana as Proserpina's companions who resist the abduction. In Rembrandt's painting, one companion has a crescent crown and quiver, and is Diana; another, at the far left, carries a lance and shield, and wears a helmet, and is Minerva. In Soutman's etching, only Minerva carries identifying attributes; this alone could not have sufficed for Rembrandt. The passages used by Rembrandt are selective, and concern the setting and characters.

Soutman's print carries lines from the climactic moment of Claudian's text. According to Claudian, Jupiter plotted with Venus to stage Pluto's abduction of Proserpina while Ceres, her overprotective mother, was absent at a distant feast (I:214-228). Venus joined Minerva and Diana, who were unaware of the subterfuge (I:229 ff). These three collected Proserpina (II:10) and her companions, the Naiads and stream nymphs (II:56 f.), and proceeded to the lush meadows of Henna, where they gathered flowers. When Pluto arrived and seized Proserpina, Minerva and Diana attacked him; Minerva was armed with spear and gorgon shield, Diana with a bow and arrow (II:204-08). The caption, slightly altered from the Claudian poem, reads:³

Meanwhile Proserpina is carried away by the flying chariot. Her hair streaming in the wind, she beats her arms and laments, She



FIG. 21 – Pieter Soutman after Rubens, *The Abduction of Proserpina*.
Etching

calls to her nearby companions, and her distant mother,
And she calls out, in vain, to the clouds.

These lines convey Proserpina’s despair, but also Pluto’s victory, and accord with Rubens’ worried but unfazed Pluto and lamenting Proserpina. The alert connoisseur would note the connection between Rubens’ image and Claudian’s narrative, and possibly recognize that the caption was a partial quotation from Claudian. Rubens’ design pointed to Claudian as the textual authority, on the internal evidence of the characters and on the external evidence of the inscription in Soutman’s etching.

Rembrandt had no need for the complete Claudian text. Had he reviewed his studies from the last year of Latin school, he would have found all the relevant passages from Claudian quoted in Scaliger's *Poetices libri septem*. That handbook, first published in 1561 and often reprinted, was a basic text for poetic analysis in Latin, and a definition of the poet's purpose. Undoubtedly the close connection of Scaliger's son, Joseph Justus, to Leiden contributed to its use in the Latin school there.⁴ By comparing selected passages of Virgil, Ovid, Claudian, Homer, and others, Scaliger displayed his own preference for Virgil, and endeavored to show how other poets were deficient in various ways. On the other hand, Scaliger also brought out differences in tone, intensity, and characterization among the various authors concerned with the same themes or subjects.

For Rembrandt, there was a practical application. Scaliger summarized the salient aspects of Claudian's plot, mentioned the three goddesses as companions, and pointed out nuances of character. Rembrandt's Diana, with her emphatically raised eyebrows, mouth open in dismay, and fervently tugging hands, may be explained by the phrase, cited by Scaliger from Diodorus Siculus: "the virginal Diana was absurdly funny."⁵ In Rembrandt's painting, she has become a parody of the distressed young lady. For the description of Pluto as a lion, Scaliger cited Claudian:⁶

Pluto is like a lion when he has seized a heifer, the pride of the
... herd, and has torn with his claws the defenseless flesh, and
has sated his fury on all its limbs. He stands befouled with clot-
ted blood and shakes his tangled mane, and scorns the shep-
herds' feeble rage.

Rembrandt made this comparison of Pluto to a lion tangible by the chariot with its gold figurehead of a roaring lion. The horses, of which only the two nearest are clearly visible, turn their heads back to look at the chariot; the carved lion urges them on. Antonio Tempesta, in his illustrated *Metamorphoses* of 1606 presented a similar carriage, in which the carved lion is at the back of the chariot; Tempesta's lion

growls at the nymph Cyane, who is helpless to stop the abduction.⁷ This etching was certainly familiar to Rembrandt, but he made the lion a participatory accomplice. He animated the literary conceit into a play between the golden carved lion and the black galloping horses. Like the lion, who devours his meat to satiate his hunger, Pluto seizes his bride to satisfy his passion. Rembrandt's Pluto, swarthy and hirsute, is more than a little alarmed at the resistance he receives from his prey and her companions.

The setting is described as the color of spring and with a lake sheltered by verdant growth. Scaliger, quoting Claudian, was a convenient source:⁸

Wherever he [Zephyr] flies, spring's brilliance follows, The fields grow lush with plants, and heaven's dome shines serenely cloudless above them. He paints the bright roses red, the hyacinths dark, and the sweet violets purple.

And the landscape where the goddesses gathered flowers was woody, cool, sheltered, and moist:⁹

Even more lovely than the flowers is the country. The plain, with gentle swell and gradual slopes, rose into a hill; issuing from the porous rock gushing streams bedewed their grassy banks. With the shade of its branches the forest tempers the sun's fierce heat and at the height of summer makes for itself the cold of winter.

Scaliger compared Claudian's *De Raptu Proserpinae* to Ovid's telling of the story in the *Metamorphoses* and *Fasti*, in order to find Ovid more relaxed and simple, Claudian more impassioned and elaborate. In four passages found on three pages in Scaliger's text, itself over 800 pages, Rembrandt would have found sufficient textual support for his painting.

The internal evidence of Rembrandt's painting *The Abduction of Proserpina* suggests that his goal was to rival Rubens in three ways.

The first is the challenge to use and improve upon the invention of Rubens. Taking Soutman's etching as a visual prompt, Rembrandt enhanced the physical movement so that the whirlwind of activity becomes a unified and dynamic action that proceeds forward at a sharp angle. The figures are not only in a more closely knit group, but they are also in more forceful contact with one another. This intensifies their expressions of distress. Thus, the movement is a "great and natural" one, physically and emotionally. The second is informational. By more precisely identifying the characters and alluding to the text-based details, Rembrandt followed the Claudian text more carefully than had Rubens. He therefore also demonstrated that his knowledge of the classical text in this case was more specific than that of Rubens. A third consideration is patronage. Rembrandt's painting was apparently intended for the Stadhouder, through the good will of Constantijn Huygens.¹⁰ Rembrandt may have chosen the subject of Proserpina, knowing it would be placed in the Stadhouder's collection, because it allowed him to exercise his artistic rivalry with the Rubensian model. And Huygens, a great admirer of Rubens, may have contributed to Rembrandt's choice of subject and its invention based in both pictorial model and ancient poem.

Neither the Soutman/Rubens print nor the Claudian text, especially as it was known in the Scaliger textbook, was esoteric. From these sources that were near at hand, Rembrandt crafted an image that was a product of his academic and artistic education. He applied the processes of studying and surpassing a model. Rembrandt's borrowing of Rubens' nymph clutching Proserpina's robe is an example of *translatio*, the simple appropriation of a source; its doubling is a case of *imitatio*, or improvement over one's model. The very reason Rembrandt painted the subject appears to be a direct rivalry with Rubens, *aemulatio*. Rembrandt's ambition was to demonstrate not only his skill in inventing a rivalling Rubens' dramatic composition, but also in interpreting a poetic account. But he did not need to do much research for this: the Rubens was probably well-known, and he used only selected passages of the Claudian poem.

Amorous Myths from Ovid

A similar pattern of picture and text, as found in the *Proserpina*, contributed to Rembrandt's sources for three other early mythological paintings: *Andromeda*, *The Abduction of Europa*, and *Diana and Actaeon with Callisto and Nymphs* [FIGS. 22, 23 and 24]. For these, Ovid's *Metamorphoses* was the narrative authority. Portions of the *Metamorphoses* belonged to the 1625 *Schoolordre*, and would have been read at the Latin school. For Rembrandt, as for other artists, the Dutch translation by Florianus, first published 1552 and often reprinted, was adequate. Van Mander's abridgment in *Het Schilderboeck* presented the myths in brief and with moralized commentary; this text was useful, but did not generally furnish the narratives with sufficient detail for the artists' representations. For Rembrandt, the Ovidian narrative was a vehicle for the nude, the passions, erotic humour, and pastoral landscape.

In these myths, Rembrandt's goal was to invent original responses to visual and textual precedents. He conflated textual moments that had been hitherto rendered as pendant images, isolated a moment from a larger text and from illustrated series, excerpted visual motifs from various contexts, or departed from visual tradition in other ways. There is no single approach that can explain the myth renditions except the search for novelty, and it is distinct in each case. Only in *The Abduction of Proserpina* was the authoritative text not translated into Dutch. S. Grohé concluded that in each of the six paintings, Rembrandt concentrated upon producing an image of a *Pathosformel* (rhetorically grounded representation of the passions).¹¹ Such an underlying principle is consistent throughout his work, whether in dramatic outward or serene inward forms of expressiveness.

The smallest and earliest of these paintings is *Andromeda* [FIG. 22]. Its general composition may have been suggested by the illustrated astronomical manuscript by Aratus, a prized possession of the Leiden University library, which was published in 1621 with engravings by Jacques de Gheyn II.¹² In the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid related how Perseus flew over Ethiopia and saw the beautiful Andromeda chained to a rock



FIG. 22 – Rembrandt, *Andromeda*, ca. 1629

and menaced by a sea-monster; this punishment was decreed by Jupiter for her mother's boast that she herself was more beautiful than the sea-goddesses. Perseus approached, asked her name, and inquired about her circumstances. She at first was shy, then told him everything. Hardly had she finished when the sea monster menaced her anew and her parents, watching upon the shore, lamented; resolving to be of help, Perseus offered to rescue the girl if her parents would consent to his marrying her. The ensuing battle between Perseus and the sea-monster is a long, noisy, and violent struggle:¹³

...Finally he came flying with his sword drawn, and gave a blow to the right shoulder of the fish, upon which the monster began to leap, and became more agitated, jumping sometimes into the air, sometimes also deep into the water, all the while he had him struggling, like a wild boar surrounded on all sides by the hounds ... but seeing next to him a rock, that projected over the water, he went there to stand, and holding his left hand fast to the rock, he continued the struggle with his right hand, striking and piercing his enemy with his sword three or four times, so that he at last defeated him.

The rock was important to Perseus' victory, for it provided a natural barrier from which he achieved his final and winning assault. Within the rich pictorial tradition, Andromeda is always chained to a prominent rock. Typically, the monster flails in the sea, thereby establishing the danger to the maiden; either Perseus flies down to attack the monster, or, having vanquished the beast, Perseus tenderly approaches Andromeda. Occasionally, her anxious family and a crowd watch from the shore. Rembrandt isolated Andromeda from her family, the monster, and Perseus. Rembrandt's Andromeda expresses tension in her inclined head, her puckered brow, and her twisting shoulders; she is listening to Perseus' attack on the sea monster, a combat that generates quite a lot of noise. She gives her attention to what is not shown to the viewer – who must supply the narrative.

The Abduction of Europa of 1632 departs from convention in the pastoral costumes, carriage and driver, and interaction through sight and gesture between Europa and her companions [FIG. 23].¹⁴ Rembrandt's visualization of Ovid's words led him to render the scene with consideration for the action unfolding in time:¹⁵

When Europa the king's daughter saw this beautiful bull, so nearby, she held fresh grasses up to his mouth. Upon this, Jupiter rejoiced to himself, and truly hoped that gradually he would have his desires fulfilled. He kissed her hands, and wished for much more. Now he delighted her, now he rolled in the sand, now in the grass, and finally, becoming a little bolder, he also gave her his chest to touch. When she saw that he was so gentle and friendly, she became emboldened, and sat upon his back. Then Jupiter went with his royal foot into the water, and then further, and finally he swam away with his prize. Europa, seeing that she was already so far from the shore, began to be very frightened, and in order to sit more securely, she grabbed his horn with one hand, and with the other, she held tightly onto his back; thus she was carried away by her unknown lover with her clothes [fluttering] in the wind as if they were sails.

Ovid's text emphasized the deliberate pace and measured progress of Jupiter's advances toward the maiden. Just as Ovid described in words how Jupiter calculated to win Europa's trust, Rembrandt rendered in paint the bull's subtle grin and princess' growing fear. In his characterization of the bull, Rembrandt followed the text:¹⁶

...his color was white as snow, he had a beautiful thick neck, from which hung a shapely dewlap, beautiful small and brilliant horns, his forehead was without wrinkles, his eyes friendly and charming.

Rembrandt's Jupiter embodies deceit and playfulness, for as he escapes into the sea he averts his head as if avoiding the viewer's gaze. Rem-



FIG. 23 – Rembrandt, *The Abduction of Europa*, 1632

brandt infused a poignancy into the expressions of Europa and her companions that is not evident in any of the printed versions.¹⁷ Another passage from the *Metamorphoses* amplified the dismay and growing alarm of Europa and the companions, woven into the tapestry of Arachne:¹⁸

Arachne showed how Jupiter, in the form of a bull, carried Europa away, the bull and the river were so well pictured after life that they could not be improved upon; ... Europa looked back at the land, calling upon her companions for help, and she lifted her feet out of the water so that they would not get wet.



FIG. 24 – Rembrandt, *Diana and Actaeon with Callisto and Nymphs*, 1634

The graduated responses of the companions and the carriage driver reflect their distance between them and the swiftly moving Europa; those nearer the shore are more aware of Europa's plight and therefore more alarmed, while those further away are just beginning to realize what has happened. The progression of the action as a linear text, unfolding in time, unifies all of the characters.

The canvas *Diana and Actaeon with Callisto and Nymphs* combines in a single frame two episodes distinct in text and time [FIG. 24]. Diana is the pivotal and supreme figure in both narratives. Rembrandt's Diana focuses upon Actaeon, and many of the nymphs in her entourage focus upon Callisto. In this way, there is a balance of activity directed toward the two hapless victims. In Ovid's text and the many illustrated *Meta-*

morphoses, the two episodes are considerably separated and occur in different books.¹⁹ However, some artists appropriately associated these scenes. Titian famously paired them in his series for Philip II; although only the *Callisto* was engraved by Cornelis Cort under Titian's direction, the *Actaeon* was anonymously engraved as a pendant to it.²⁰ In small printed cycles of myths, the two scenes are implicitly paired by Crispijn de Passe I (after drawings by George Behm) and Antonio Tempesta.²¹ If Rembrandt was the singular artist who combined both episodes in one frame, he was not alone in pairing them; he merely took the established pendant nature of the two scenes one step further.

The relevant passages in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* are brief. As Actaeon came upon the group of Diana and her nymphs:²²

...she sprinkled him with water from the fountain, saying: "Go away now, if you can, since you have seen Diana naked." With these words, Actaeon sprouted two horns upon his head, a long neck, long legs, a rough, mottled and hairy hide...

Diana's treatment of Actaeon was severe, for she transformed him into the stag that would then be killed by his own dogs. Similarly severe was Diana's treatment of Callisto, unwillingly seduced by Jupiter; Diana transformed Callisto into a bear. Later, Jupiter changed Callisto and her son Arcas into stars, to give them immortality. The modest and pregnant nymph Callisto was cruelly taunted by the other nymphs when she refused to bathe with them:²³

With these words Callisto was completely defeated, and while the others undressed, she alone remained in fantasy and as if in a dream, so that she herself was being undressed by the others, and being unclothed, they saw clearly what she had hidden. In this way the poor Callisto stood wholly shamed among her companions, and could hardly cover her stomach with her hands.

Rembrandt starkly contrasted the nymphs' pleasure and Callisto's distress.

Rembrandt's interest in the themes of Diana and Callisto continued in other images. He portrayed Diana alone in an early drawing that was etched under his direction.²⁴ Here, the goddess is resting with her quiver and bow, and comfortable within the wild landscape of her domain. Again, in a late drawing, Rembrandt considered Diana in the narrative context of her curse upon Actaeon; in this case, Rembrandt concentrated on the horror with which Diana sprayed water upon Actaeon.²⁵ If the 1654 painting *A Woman Wading* may be interpreted as Callisto bathing, then it indicates Rembrandt's further interest in the episode of Jupiter and Callisto and its tragic consequences [FIG. 25]. Recently J. Leja suggested that the woman who steps into the water but remains half-clothed may be Callisto, who is aware of her delicate condition and wishes to keep it hidden.²⁶ Support for this interpretation includes the setting of the dark grotto and the pile of brocaded clothes that the woman has left upon the river bank. Most convincingly, however, is the hesitant manner in which the woman lifts her chemise from her body as she approaches the water, and the dreamy expression in her face, as "fantaserende." The lack of additional clues as to the context of the narrative is in keeping with Rembrandt's method of isolating single figures from larger settings.²⁷ This painting then represents an unfamiliar moment in a well-known story, and depends more on textual consideration than visual precedent.

The paintings *Ganymede* and *Danae*, two grand canvases of the mid-to-late 1630s, are derived from Ovid, but have a more complicated relationship to pictorial tradition. The *Ganymede*, uniquely, shows the future cup-bearer to the gods as a howling and peeing toddler, rather than the traditionally beautiful youth; a preparatory sketch includes the parents, and therefore alludes to the family context of the boy's life.²⁸ The *Danae* is Rembrandt's response to the tradition of Venetian nude made famous by Giorgione and Titian. By distilling Jupiter's participation to light alone, rather than coins or golden droplets, Rembrandt may have followed other precedents, including an engraving after Frans Floris, in which the physical presence of Jupiter is transformed into light. The cupid, with hands bound, further lends a moralistic and



FIG. 25 – Rembrandt, *A Woman Wading in a Stream*, 1654

emotional content to Danae's imprisonment.²⁹ Rembrandt's interest in the loves of Jupiter is also found in two small etchings of Jupiter and Antiope, which further explore the expressive potential of a nude female, unaware of the erotic overtures of the god.³⁰

Rembrandt's mythologies are his visual challenges to poetic authority. In each case, the painter crafted an action that is outside the established pictorial tradition. His formulated images, unique to his renditions, create their own narrative.³¹

Reading Homer: Vulcan's Net

The drawing *Mars and Venus Caught in Vulcan's Net* continues Rembrandt's interest in lascivious myths during the 1630s [FIG. 26].³² Tentatively, it may be connected to decorations made for two Amsterdam houses.³³ Homer presented the story of Vulcan crafting a fine net to entrap Mars and Venus as an amusing yet admonitory anecdote during a feast at the palace of Alcinous, the king of the Phaeacians, who was entertaining Ulysses prior to his return to Ithaca (*Odyssey* Book VI-II:266-365).³⁴ Ovid briefly told the story in the *Metamorphoses* (Book IV:171-89).³⁵ Only Homer related how the gods laughed and exchanged lively conversation in their demands for Mars to pay a penalty, Vulcan appealed to Jupiter for restitution, and Neptune helped resolve the situation. The works of Homer were available in Dutch, and familiar to the reading public outside academic classical training. Rembrandt approximated Homer's version, although he presented a unique cast of characters.

Homer described how Mars and Venus carried on their affair secretly in Vulcan's house, and how, when tipped off by Apollo, Vulcan made the net that he secretly placed above the bed to catch them. Apollo kept watch on the lovers, and informed Vulcan when they were caught. Angry and saddened, Vulcan returned home and invited Jupiter and the other gods to view the ensnared lovers from outside the door of his house. Vulcan demanded from Jupiter the repayment of the dowry he had paid to gain Venus; and the other gods also demanded



FIG. 26 – Rembrandt, *Mars and Venus Caught in Vulcan's Net*. Drawing, ca. 1640

that Mars pay the fine of the adulterer. In a heated argument, Neptune guaranteed Vulcan repayment if Mars were to skip bail; Vulcan finally set the pair free. Homer specifically stated that the goddesses remained away, each keeping to her own house from shame. Rembrandt's drawing is at once a response to the Homeric narrative and a departure from it, in details that demonstrate his own interpretation of the text and appropriation of visual precedent.

The seventeen figures in this drawing are: Mars and Venus in the net; Vulcan holding a mallet under one arm and the net in the other, and with uneven legs; a seated, robed female; three heads: one with big ears, one shaded, and one with hand holding a cloth over his nose; Hercules with a lion skin and a club; a couple with their heads close together; Jupiter holding a thunderbolt, and sitting on a large bird; Juno with a peacock; Cupid, with a quiver, peeking from above the cloud; a couple at the far right; and a distant couple at the left. Each figure has

a distinct reaction to the confrontation between Vulcan and Jupiter. Those nearest Mars and Venus are the seated female, the three heads, and Hercules. Their expressions are varied: the seated woman smiles as she pulls her robes closer around her body, as if maintaining her modesty in the face of the adulterers; the head with the big ears grins, the shaded head scowls, and the head with the covered nose reacts to a foul smell. Hercules smiles. The three heads may be emblematic reactions to cuckoldry: through ears, sight, and smell. The bird at Jupiter's legs does not resemble an eagle. It might well be a rooster, emblematic of cuckoldry.

Homer's passage in the *Odyssey* conveys humor, and helps to explain the identities and actions of the characters in Rembrandt's drawing:³⁶

Mars saw Vulcan depart [on his way to Lemnos], and that pleased him: Blinded by amorous fantasies he went to Vulcan's house to meet Venus... They sat inside the house, he took her in his arms..., 'Come, Princess, to bed! Let us sleep without fear'... They went to bed to take their pleasure... Sleeping, they were ensnared by Vulcan's net, against which Mars struggled. But Mars could neither move nor leave the bed... Vulcan had not gone far toward Lemnos when he returned home with a heavy heart – for the sun, keeping watch for this mischief, told him [of it] – ... Enraged by fierce jealousy, he called out before the door, So that all the gods would hear...: "O Jupiter, and all you other blessed and comely gods, Come, look upon this slanderous fact... See how Venus always dishonors me and scorns my lameness!"

Neptune, Mercury, and Apollo came immediately and Jupiter evidently followed, although his arrival is not mentioned:³⁷

The gods gathered there with great commotion. Neptune, the mover of the earth, also came to look, Mercury together with

Apollo saw this unchaste fact. But the goddesses stayed in their houses out of shame.

Vulcan, acutely aware of his own misshapen form and Mars' handsome virility, lamented the unchaste behavior of all women and particularly his own unfaithful wife. The gods agreed that Vulcan was lame but cunning, and that the strong Mars should pay the fine of the adulterer.³⁸ A merry exchange between Apollo and Mercury reveals their own lust for Venus:³⁹

Apollo spoke to Mercury, who laughed heartily...:
“...Wouldn't you enjoy lying beside the beautiful Venus for a night of pleasure!” Mercury didn't think long about this: “O Lord Apollo, were that to happen once! Even if he [Vulcan] were to catch me in a net made three times stronger, and all the gods were to look down upon me in shame, still I should desire to lie beside the beautiful Venus.”

Neptune, alone of the gods, did not laugh, but ordered Vulcan to free Mars and offered to pay the reparations:⁴⁰

“Untie him, ...let him get dressed, I will be his guarantor... Let him go, get over your anger, if he does not pay up, I myself will pay.”

The son of Juno and Jupiter, Vulcan was born before they were married so that Juno cast him out, and he was raised by the sea nymph Thetis, herself Neptune's lover. Born with a deformed foot, he was mocked for his lameness. Here Vulcan, having caught his own wife in an adulterous situation, confronts his father Jupiter, who was well-known for his own infidelities. Vulcan laments Mars' strength and Venus' unfaithfulness, and his own misery:⁴¹

“I am lame, but I am most saddened by this: My parents are responsible, and I wish that they had not begotten me!”

Rembrandt embellished the Homeric narrative with figures who offer commentary: Juno and two other goddesses and the three emblematic heads. Furthermore, Rembrandt deviated from Homer by setting the event in the heavens, and by depicting the lovers encased in the net which Vulcan had dragged before the gods for their derision. Rembrandt not only implied that Vulcan had caught the lovers in the act, but also that he had carried them from the bedchamber to the clouds. Other details are in accord with the tone of the Homeric passage, but are not found in it. Hercules, who has no spoken part in the text, smiles to himself as if thinking the same thoughts as those voiced by Apollo and Mercury. Three goddesses are not impartial: Juno, lips pursed and back rigid, disdains the scene of infidelity; the robed goddess, possibly Diana, pulls tight her clothing in chastity; and the third goddess, nude but for a turban, watches attentively. As a representation of the action at its most heated and unresolved point, this scene indicates *Staetveranderinge*, the pivotal moment that Vondel considered critical to theatrical success. A visual source may help account for these deviations in setting and characters.

Rembrandt's visual point of departure is Raphael's *Council of the Gods*, from the cycle based upon Apuleius' *Golden Ass* in the Villa Farnesina, in Rome; the fresco depicts Venus petitioning Jupiter to permit the union of Psyche and Cupid, and, at the far left, Mercury offering Psyche the goblet containing the ambrosia of immortality.⁴² Two prints circulated this design, and both were familiar to Rembrandt. From Caraglio's engraving, Rembrandt took the stiff posture of Juno and the suggestive bird between Jupiter's legs.⁴³ However, the *Council of the Gods* in the extended series of 32 prints by the Master of the Die after Michiel Coxcie provided other details for Rembrandt's invention [FIG. 27].⁴⁴ The Coxcie design presents three episodes: at the left, Mercury offering Psyche the drink of immortality, at the lower right, Mercury carrying Psyche to the clouds, and at the main center, the council of the gods. In the main scene, the characters include, from the left, Hercules, Apollo, Psyche with Cupid clinging to her leg, Neptune, Jupiter, Mars, Diana, Juno, and Minerva. In Rembrandt's draw-



FIG. 27 – Master of the Die after Michiel Coxcie, *Council of the Gods*.
 Engraving

ing, several specific features approximate details in the Coxcie print: the same directional orientation; the older and bearded Jupiter; the small couple at the left; the elaborate headdress of the female at the right, which derives loosely from Minerva's helmet; and the seated robed female, a variant of the modest Diana.

Three pairs of figures in Rembrandt's drawing may be related to both the Homeric narrative and the Coxcie print series after Raphael: the couple at the far right, the pair with their heads together at the upper center, and the small couple at the far left. The pair at the upper



FIG. 28 – Master of the Die after Michiel Coxcie, *Jupiter and Cupid*.
Engraving

center, with heads conspiratorially close, may be Mercury and Apollo. The wings upon the head of the figure at the left would identify him as Mercury; with his arms held close to his body, he listens intently to the other figure. This figure embraces Mercury with one arm, and with the other, holds a rounded object. The rounded object held by Rembrandt's Apollo vaguely recalls the lyre that is Apollo's attribute in the Coxcie print. The peculiar huddle of these two figures has a strong similarity to the group of Jupiter and Cupid, in the previous print of the Coxcie series, in which Jupiter embraces Cupid and gives him in-

structions and approval to take Psyche [FIG. 28].⁴⁵ Rembrandt adapted the group of the paternal Jupiter and the dutiful Cupid for the joking Mercury and Apollo.

The couple at the right, just behind Juno, pays attention to the main action of Vulcan's appeal to Jupiter. The man, hunching forward, furrows his brow in concern. He, or the adjacent woman, holds a staff. He may be Neptune, the staff a cursory trident, and his consort Thetis. Neptune plays the key role as guarantor in Vulcan's defense. Thetis was married to Peleus and bore Achilles, then returned to her native sea to become one of Neptune's lovers. Having helped raise the boy Vulcan, she would be sympathetic to his predicament. The breastplate at the right, and a helmet-like shape in front of her would indicate the armor she brought to Achilles (Homer, *Iliad*, XIX). Her turbaned headdress is an embellishment of the helmet worn by Minerva in the Coxie print, and the nearby armor is, reminiscent of Minerva's own breastplate, also in the print. Nude but for the turban, she may be urging Neptune to speak in defense of Mars, and gain satisfaction for Vulcan. As consort of Neptune and nurturer of Vulcan, Thetis is appropriately present.

Finally, the two small figures at the far left, derived from Psyche and Mercury in the Coxie print after Raphael, may be tentatively suggested as Ulysses and Penelope. They are a female in a long robe and a male with bare legs. The couple's reunion brings the saga of the *Odyssey* to an end. The parallel between Vulcan and Ulysses here resonates with cautionary meaning. Vulcan was absent from his home while Venus frolicked with Mars, and Ulysses, absent from Ithaca for so many years, feared for Penelope's fidelity. Besieged by the suitors who grew more belligerent in making their claims upon her as Ulysses' absence continued, Penelope resisted their advances. The anxious Ulysses, who had had a few flings himself on his homeward journey, did not know of her faithfulness. The contrast between Venus' infidelities and Penelope's fidelity is strong; but strong too is the parallel between Psyche and Penelope. Psyche's love for Cupid was tested in various trials, and Penelope's love for Ulysses was tested by his long absence and her eager suitors. Psyche and Penelope both triumphed in their love for their

respective mates. Penelope is the opposite in moral conduct to Venus and a parallel with Psyche.

Before the feast at which Demodocus sang of the affairs of Mars and Venus, the Phaeacians prepared ships and provisions for Ulysses' journey home. Eager to send off their guest with festivities, the Phaeacians then held the banquet with dancing, games, and singing. After Demodocus completed his song, Ulysses expressed his admiration to Alcinous, who called to his own noblemen to equip their guest for his journey home. One of the nobles, Eurialus, gave Ulysses an especially beautiful sword, saying:⁴⁶ "Be joyous, father, and ... may the wind carry you, ...May God help you return home to your wife, released from all your sorrow..."

If these figures may be considered as the reunited couple, then they represent closure to Homer's epic, and a moral counterpart to the escape of Mars and Venus.

Rembrandt's recollection of the Raphaelesque figures shaped his own invention. This small drawing contains one main episode, and possibly a later event. The immediate scene represents Vulcan lamenting before the gods' assembly. The second may be the reunion of Ulysses with Penelope. The first episode indicates one encouragement for Ulysses to get back on his journey homeward, and the later one, the result.⁴⁷ For *Vulcan's Net*, Rembrandt read the writings of Homer, and blended the *Odyssey's* earthy verbal communications and characters with formal models that were among the most idealized Renaissance representations of the gods.⁴⁸

The Historical Homer: Poet and Teacher

Rembrandt's interest in Homer continued in two representations of the poet speaking, the 1652 drawing made for Jan Six's *album amicorum* and the 1663 painting made for Don Antonio Ruffo [FIGS. 29 and 30]. The Ruffo painting was badly damaged by fire, and aspects of its original appearance may be suggested by a preparatory drawing [FIG. 31]. The preparatory drawing, showing Homer and a scribe or pupil, may



FIG. 29 - Rembrandt, *Homer Reciting*. Drawing, 1652

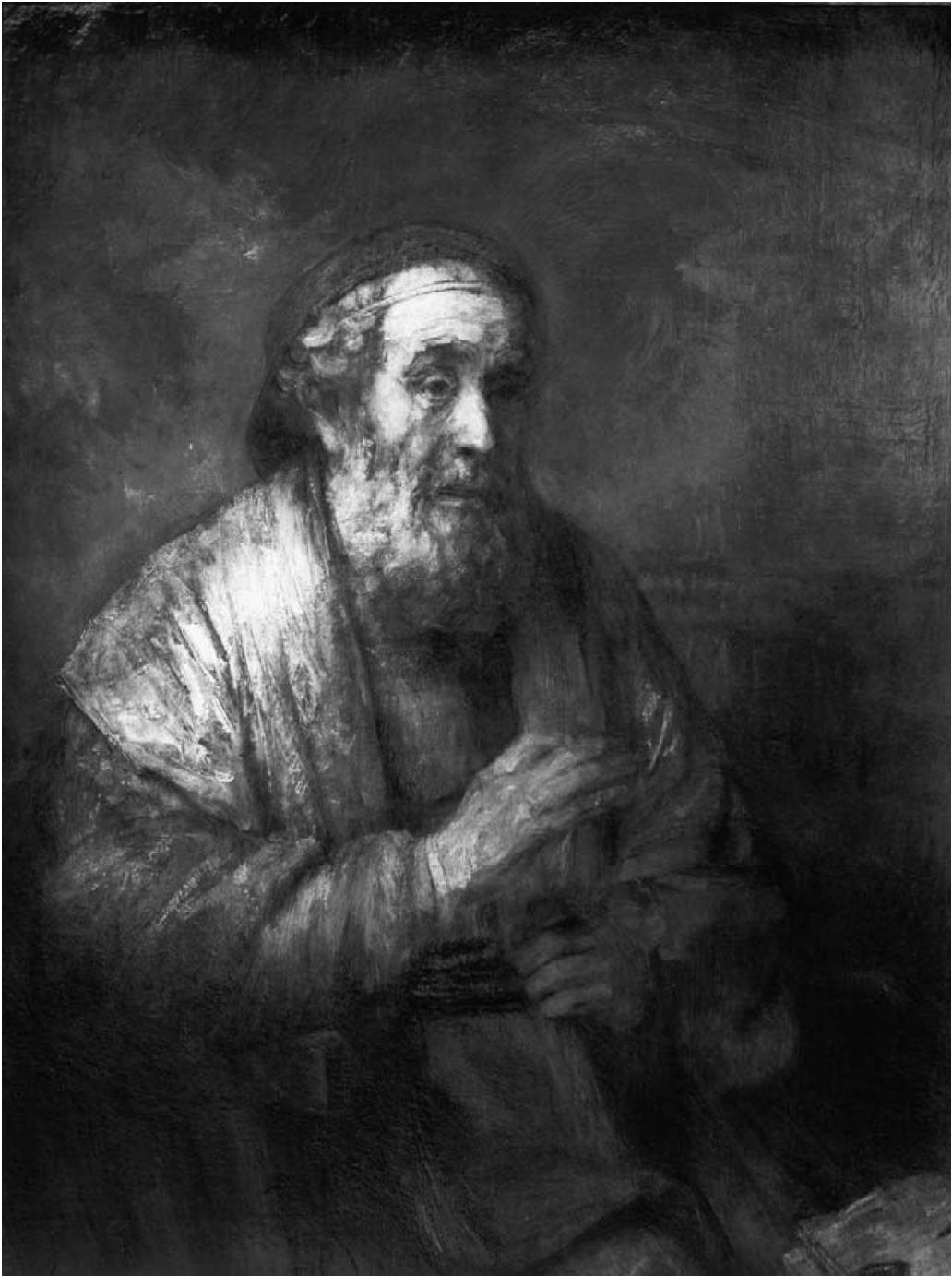


FIG. 30 – Rembrandt, *Homer*, 1663

not be used to reconstruct the exact composition of the painting, which was described in the Ruffo 1673 inventory: “...Omero seduto che insigna a due discepoli...” [Seated Homer, who instructs two students...].⁴⁹ The drawing shows one pupil, and the painting, at least in its early state, showed two. The 1652 drawing and the 1663 painting depict different episodes in Homer’s life. Homer’s biography circulated in a text considered to be by Herodotus until the mid-eighteenth century.⁵⁰ Coornhert, in the introduction to his 1561 translation of the *Odyssey*, presented much of this material for the Dutch reader.⁵¹ Three Dutch versions of this biography appeared during the mid-seventeenth century: G. van Staveren’s introduction to his 1651 *Odyssey*; J.H. Glazemaker’s introduction to his prose *Iliad* of 1658; and O. Dapper’s complete life of Homer in his translation of Herodotus’ *Histories*, 1665.⁵² If obscure and discredited today, this biography was accessible and credible to the Dutch reader in the seventeenth century.

Coornhert’s abbreviated biography presented the basic outline of Homer’s life: he surpassed his teacher Phemius; he traveled throughout the Mediterranean; he became blind at Colophon, and then went to Cumae where he recited verses in the shop of a shoemaker who took him in; he was supported by the city of Cumae but remained poor and felt unappreciated; he went to Phocia and then Chios, where he taught the children of Thestorides; he returned to Cumae, where the inhabitants asked him to remain, but he declined, for he remembered how little they had appreciated him earlier; he then decided to go to Athens but died on the way. This account is shortened in the Van Staveren version, and is amplified in the Glazemaker book. Four other anecdotes, mentioned in the Glazemaker and Herodotus/Dapper versions, are: a poplar grew upon the place in Cumae where Homer recited his poems, and was venerated by the people living there; the Cumaens refused to give Homer a larger sum for support because they feared that others would come to the city to demand aid; Thestorides employed Homer as a tutor for his children, then betrayed Homer by claiming his poems and selling them as his own; and finally, Homer lived for an extended stay at Chios where he taught school, married and had two



FIG. 31 – Rembrandt, *Homer and a Scribe*. Drawing, ca. 1661

daughters. One theme throughout all the versions of the Herodotus biography is the lack of material appreciation given to the poet, who relied upon several patrons and upon his own verses and instruction for his livelihood.

Made expressly for two diverse patrons, Rembrandt's 1652 drawing and 1663 painting reveal two facets of Homer's activity. Although Rembrandt surely had both patrons in mind when he invented these compositions, he was more familiar with Jan Six than with Antonio Ruffo. His drawing for Jan Six was made for an intimate book of per-

sonal tributes, and his painting for Ruffo is one of a grand trio, ordered from a distance. Rembrandt's 1652 drawing *Homer Reciting* compositionally derives from Raphael's fresco, *Apollo and the Muses on Parnassus* (Stanze, Vatican, Rome), as known in the engraving by Marcantonio Raimondi – a print almost surely in Rembrandt's own collection.⁵³ Rembrandt excerpted the figures of Homer and the scribe from the Raphael design, and retained the paired trees with a figure peeking through them. By reducing the figures and landscape setting, Rembrandt emphasized the trees at the right side of the engraving. These prominent trees may be related to the incident in Homer's life of the tree that grew in Cumae on the spot where the poet recited his verses. This was reported by Herodotus, omitted from Coornhert's abridgement, but included in the Glazemaker 1658 introduction. For Rembrandt, the incident may have been pointed out by Jan Six, who possessed multiple editions of Homer in Greek and Latin, and also owned two editions of Herodotus' *Histories*, an Aldine from 1502 and a later one from 1570.

The 1652 *Homer Reciting* is one of two drawings made by Rembrandt for Jan Six, and specifically for his *album amicorum*. Rembrandt's drawing is both erudite and personal. A custom among the educated elite was the keeping of a book of friendship, which included inscriptions, poems, drawings, and other memorabilia. Six was one of three men for whose *alba amicorum* Rembrandt contributed drawings, and of these, the only one for whom the contribution was personal. Rembrandt contributed two drawings to Six's album in 1652. Minerva, having taken off her armor, is sitting at a desk, writing – in the act of literary creation.⁵⁴ Homer, surrounded by attentive listeners, speaks as a scribe records his words.

Rembrandt's contributions to the two other albums seem motivated by different circumstances. In 1634, Rembrandt made a drawing for Burchard Grossmann, a German jurist who was then in Amsterdam; his friendship album was a record of his travels and meetings with interesting people.⁵⁵ In 1661, Rembrandt made *Simeon in the Temple* for the Amsterdam Latin school rector Jacob Heybloq.⁵⁶ In the cases

of the Grossmann and Heybloq books, there is little discernible connection among the various contributors. Heybloq (1623-1690) contacted contributors to his *album amicorum*, and these were not necessarily known to him apart from these contacts. Both Grossmann and Heybloq sought Rembrandt out of a desire to represent a personality who was recognized and accomplished. For both the German traveler and the rector, it seems Rembrandt's contribution was a matter of the prestige that the artist bestowed on their booklets rather than friendship; the only records of interaction between them and the artist are the two drawings. Exceptionally, Rembrandt's contribution to Six's album represented a sustained acquaintance with the album's owner.

The Ruffo painting and its preparatory sketch show Homer seated and speaking. In the sketch, Homer's words are being recorded by a boy; the setting seems to be an interior in front of an arched opening, and may include a case of books in the background. Because the painting originally included two students, it may have represented a school, possibly the one founded by Homer in Chios.⁵⁷ The *Homer* was the last of three canvases painted for the Sicilian nobleman. The series presented the powerful Greek personalities of Homer, Aristotle, and Alexander. Together, these three encompassed historical achievement in poetry, scholarship, and valorous leadership. The writings of Aristotle and the *Life of Alexander* (by Curtius or Plutarch) may have been familiar to Rembrandt from Latin school, for they are listed in the ideal 1625 curriculum. Aristotle's ideas and Alexander's deeds were well integrated into the vernacular culture. Among Rembrandt's possessions was a head of Homer; Rembrandt modelled the painted Homer's features upon this sculpture, and featured it in the *Aristotle*.⁵⁸ For the Ruffo paintings, Rembrandt may have been prompted by Italian Renaissance portraits, and he may also have regarded these commissions as a challenge to use oil paint in a tonally rich and plastic style, one that he developed with Venetian pictorial precedent.⁵⁹

Rembrandt's reading of the *Odyssey*, as apparent in the drawing *Vulcan's Net* during the 1630's, was followed by more thoughtful considerations of the life of its author, in 1652 for the Six drawing, and 1661-

1663, for the Ruffo painting. Although Rembrandt may have learned all he needed for the Homeric subjects from the vernacular, he might have discussed the Greek poet and his works with Jan Six. Rembrandt's reading of Homer may have been supplemented by conversations in Six's library, where Rembrandt made preparatory sketches for the 1647 portrait of the scholar. Rembrandt seems to have been more interested in Homer the man than in his writings. This suggests that the character and life of the Greek poet held personal meaning, whether as an artist whose support from his patrons was inconstant, or as an exemplar for the arts.⁶⁰ His enduring interest in Homer was in the poet as he lived among others: reciting and teaching.

Artemisia: Devotion in Body and Soul

Rembrandt's *Artemisia*, painted in 1634, blends a familiar formula with an unusual motif, and demonstrates how the widowed queen showed her devotion in a novel way [FIG. 32].⁶¹ The massive, opulently dressed queen leans one hand upon a table and rests the other lightly against her ample mid-section. The round table is a formal counterpart to the oval forms of the kneeling maid; the edge of the table top curves forward, echoing the sweep of the maid's extended arm. The two crafted objects in the picture are also counterparts: the grand open book atop the table and the shell cup proffered by the maid. The curled up pages of the folio are at the right reflect the spiral inner bulge of the shell is at the left. The woman, the maid, and the table create a pyramid: the woman's head forms the apex, the maid and table, the base.

Artemisia's story is a noble one: she was the wife and sister of Mausolus, ruler of the province of Caria in western Turkey then under Persian domain; following his death in 353 BC, she ruled in his place, without remarrying, until her own death several years later. She and Mausolus planned their sepulchral monument, which was probably begun before his death; Artemisia completed this monument, which became one of the wonders of the world. It was described at length by Pliny, and mentioned by others.⁶² Upon Mausolus' death, Artemisia



FIG. 32 – Rembrandt, *Artemisia*, 1634

cremated his body according to Greek custom, and, over the next two years until her own death, she drank a potion mixed with his ashes daily. In this way, her own body became the final resting place for most of his mortal remains.

Artemisia became popularly known in antiquity and the Renaissance through Valerius Maximus, and she exemplified wifely devotion (Book 4, Chapter 6, Foreign example 1):⁶³

There are also legitimate loves in other lands, not buried in the obscurity of ignorance. It will suffice to touch upon a few of them. It would be frivolous to argue how sorely Artemisia, Queen of Caria, missed her dead husband Mausolus after the magnificence of the manifold honours she devised for him and the monument that rose to a place among the Seven Wonders. Why collect the former or speak of that famous tomb when she herself desired to become a living and breathing sepulchre of Mausolus by the testimony of those who record that she drank a potion powdered with the dead man's bones?

After noting that Artemisia showed Mausolus honor and built the tomb, Valerius described the drink as a mix of ashes; by drinking this potion, Artemisia herself became the a "living tomb" for her husband. The Dutch 1614 translation states that Artemisia "mixed the bones of the deceased in a drink."⁶⁴ Cicero amplified the poignancy of her devotion by noting that her sorrow was fresh every day, even as it consumed her and caused her to waste away.⁶⁵ And it is as a bereaved and devoted widow that Artemisia would endure.

Rembrandt's Artemisia prepares to take her daily dose of ashes, already prepared in the shell cup as a red liquid. Rembrandt may have been familiar with Renaissance versions of the story that indicated wine as the mixing agent. The kneeling girl holds the base of the cup with a cloth, a sign of reverence, and a dim figure in the background may indicate another servant with the bag of remaining ashes.⁶⁶ But neither Valerius nor Cicero accounts for the book resting upon the table – a crucial element of Rembrandt's painting, one that characterizes Artemisia as a learned patron of the arts.

According to Aulus Gellius, Artemisia instituted a contest of eulogies in memory of her husband. Gellius recounted how passionately she loved and mourned Mausolus, how she mingled his ashes with spices and water and drank the mix, and how she built the magnificent tomb in order to perpetuate his memory. He continued:⁶⁷

When Artemisia dedicated this monument, consecrated to the deified shades of Mausolus, she instituted an “agon,” that is to say, a contest in celebrating his praises, offering magnificent prizes of money and other valuables. Three men distinguished for their eminent talent and eloquence are said to have come to contend in this eulogy, Theopompus, Theodectes, and Naucrates; some have even written that Isocrates himself entered the lists with them. But Theopompus was adjudged the victor in that contest. He was a pupil of Isocrates.

Artemisia’s interest in literary patronage was largely ignored, except by Aulus Gellius. The tomb was noted by Valerius Maximus, Aulus Gellius, and Pliny. After describing the tomb, Pliny mentioned that the main architect for the tomb was Pytheus, and that, following Mausolus’ death, the four Greek sculptors who had been working on the tomb were retained by Artemisia to continue the work; he implied that after her death, they worked without payment, simply for the glory of the project.⁶⁸

Mausolus and Artemisia’s patronage of Greek artists was part of a larger movement in the fourth century to hellenize western Anatolia. Artemisia’s name, the tomb monument, her cremation of Mausolus’ body, and the eulogy contest are all appropriations of Greek customs. The tomb survived and was made famous by Pliny; but the eulogies did not survive, and are known only through Aulus Gellius’ account. In the Renaissance and Baroque, Artemisia’s interest in Hellenic culture was recognized minimally or not at all. One unusual example in which she is shown in her two roles of ash-drinker and tomb-builder is Maerten van Heemskerck’s *Tomb of Mausolus* in his series of the *Wonders of the World* of 1572.⁶⁹ In that engraving, she oversees the construction of the tomb, confers with the architect, and holds the goblet. Nearby, sculptors busily work on blocks of marble. Heemskerck’s Artemisia is the supervisor of the tomb and its adornment, but not patroness of oratory.

Artemisia’s ash-drinking was part of the vernacular culture, but her eulogy contest was not incorporated into popular accounts.

Rembrandt's massive book would be the manuscript copy of the eulogies. However, his initial composition may not have included the folio, since x-rays reveal that her hand was painted first.⁷⁰ His idea to represent the queen as commissioner of the eulogies may have developed as he worked on the canvas, and may even have been suggested by the unknown first owner of the painting.

By dressing the queen not in mourning but in bright luxury, Rembrandt channeled her widowhood into the celebratory role of arts patron. In this way, he radically departed from other representations to create a wholly new pictorial characterization of Artemisia.⁷¹ His unique solution was found through a well-known authority for her life, Aulus Gellius. As he had in *The Abduction of Proserpina*, Rembrandt used a Latin source, one not translated into Dutch. Rubens' painting of Artemisia, in the Stadhouders collection at The Hague in 1632, may well have been an impetus for Rembrandt to rival a Rubensian model for classical erudition.

CHAPTER 5

REMBRANDT'S
BOOKSHELF PART III

German Folios

IN THE INVENTORY, THE “15 BOOKS OF VARIOUS size” are immediately followed by three illustrated German books (numbers 282, 283, and 284):

- A German book with war illustrations, “*Een hoogduyts boeck met oorloochs figueren*” [282];
- Ditto with woodcut illustrations, “*Een dito met hout figuren* [sic]” [283];
- A Flavius Josephus in German, illustrated by Tobias Stimmer, “*Een hoogduijtsche Flavio Fevus, gestoffeert met figueren van Tobias Timmerman*” [284].

The identities of the first two of these German books may be suggested, and the identity of the third, is certainly known as the Josephus. The Josephus is a folio, and it is likely that the other German books and following item, an old Bible, were also folios, and grouped by size. The linguistic relationship between German and Dutch is close, and probably allowed for comprehension without formal study.¹

The first of the three German books is: “Een Hoogduyts boeck met oorloochs figueren.” Without a designated author or illustrator, it is too vaguely described to arrive at an immediate identification. However, it may be more closely identified through other evidence. Firstly, the language is designated as German, not Dutch. Secondly, the term

“*figueren*” could equally apply to woodcuts or engravings. German books with illustrations of battles proliferated during the Renaissance, and often had woodcut illustrations. However, the illustrations in this book owned by Rembrandt are probably not woodcuts but metal plate prints. The next item makes the distinction between the kinds of illustrations in these two consecutively listed books: “een dito met hout figuren”. The first item has illustrations and the second, woodcut illustrations; the prints in the two volumes are therefore in different media. Taken together, these adjacent notations indicate that the first *was not* a publication with woodcut illustrations, and the second item *was* a book with woodcut illustrations. Thus, this book with *oorlochs figueren* may indicate a German book with illustrations in metal, either etched or engraved, and with pictures of battles. Depictions of war occur in so many books – Bibles, histories, and military manuals. *Oorlochs figueren* could be narrowly, or broadly, interpreted. One possibility is that this entry refers to the world chronicle by J.L. Gottfried, published in 1630, written in German, and copiously illustrated with etchings by Matthaeus Merian the Elder. The second book may be by Livy, and the known third, the *Josephus*. These books will be discussed in the order of the inventory listing.

A Confrontation:

Popilius Laenas and Antiochus

The identity of *een Hoogduyts boeck met oorlochs figueren* may be suggested on circumstantial evidence. By reasoning the inventory’s listing, we can assume that it indicates a German book with illustrations in copper plate of battles. Then, through additional evidence of a Lastman painting and a Rembrandt school drawing, we can propose that it refers to the world chronicle by J.L. Gottfried that was copiously illustrated by Matthaeus Merian. As a general history, Gottfried served as a compilation of many basic texts, including Herodotus, Pliny, Plutarch, Valerius Maximus, Livy, Justinus, Josephus, and the Bible. General Christian histories of this sort, which first appeared around 1000, were

chronicles of the world from its beginning to the compilers' present time. Written according to the examples of historical order set forth by Eusebius, Augustine, and Jerome, these chronicles combined secular and Christian material. Giuseppe Villani produced the first of the early Renaissance, and Hartmann Schedel produced the most famous one, *The Nuremberg Chronicle* (1493). Sebastiaen Franck (1531) and Sir Walter Raleigh (1614) authored Protestant histories that are closer precedents for Gottfried. The pattern of historical presentation, with Biblical, pagan, and Christian events in a unified chronology, led to the promise of salvation. After the Reformation, this form of historical writing became identified with the Protestants, who, following Jerome, interpreted the *Book of Daniel* in order to predict Christ's second coming. Protestant world histories were popular through the mid-eighteenth century, after which they were supplanted by encyclopaediae; some versions continued to serve as school texts in the nineteenth century.²

The first volume of Gottfried's world history was prepared in 1629 and published in 1630; the subsequent three volumes appeared by 1634. The format of this first edition was quarto, with each volume being about 5 centimeters thick. A single publication in four volumes thus contained the history of the world from the creation to the year 1618, with 329 prints by Matthaeus Merian the Elder. Subsequent German editions appeared, as a convenient and compact single folio with the text reset and modified spelling, in 1642, 1648, 1657, 1674, 1710, and, finally, in 1743. Merian's illustrations, refreshed or copied, were used in these later editions. For the 1642 edition, Joachim von Sandrart, then living in Amsterdam, designed the title page that was used in all later German editions.³

Gottfried's chronicle was translated into Dutch for an edition of 1660, published by Jacob Meurs in Amsterdam.⁴ This translation was reissued in 1698 by Simon de Vries, and an additional updated edition published by Pieter van der Aa in 1702.⁵ The illustrations for these Dutch editions were exact copies of Merian's prints. The chronicle was evidently in some demand in private libraries in Amsterdam in the later

seventeenth century, when it appears in sale catalogues and library inventories, at least once with the notation “sought after”.⁶

Gottfried is an enigmatic character. He was born between 1582 and 1587, and enrolled at Heidelberg University in 1601; by 1603 he was a deacon in a small parish, and by 1625, he had a secure parish position in or near Frankfurt and was working with the Frankfurt publisher Johann Ammon as a corrector. By then, he had made a connection with the Swiss-born Matthaeus Merian the Elder. Merian worked for Johan Theodor de Bry in Oppenheim and married De Bry’s daughter in 1617, thereby ensuring the continuation of De Bry’s publishing ventures through the century. For Merian’s series of 1625, the *Icones Biblicae*, Gottfried furnished verses in German, Latin, and French. The next few years were busy with several projects; one of these was his translation of Sir Philip Sidney’s *Arcadia* into German.⁷ Gottfried had connections with the foremost team of publisher and engraver, De Bry and Merian.

Two features ensured the popularity of Gottfried’s chronicle: the vernacular text and the copious illustrations. The text gave abbreviated historical anecdotes, comprehensively presenting the Orient and Occident according to the Four Monarchy chronology: Assyrian-Babylonian, Persian-Mede, Greek-Macedonian, and Roman, including the Holy Roman Empire. These ages were strung together without transitions between stories, and without geographic continuity. Merian not only followed the text in conceiving and placing his illustrations, but he also brought out those details particular to each episode. He emphasized the peculiar qualities of violence, deception, and deviant behavior. All except a few of the illustrations were Merian’s original designs; ten were copies after Antonio Tempesta’s Ovidian and Batavian etchings and three after Maarten van Heemskerck.⁸ Artists found this compendium a treasure trove for their own variations. For one massive project, the ceiling of the Eggenberg Palace at Graz, painted in 1670, over 200 of Merian’s illustrations were copied as frescoes.⁹

The first volume of the first edition, which contained the history of the world up to the end of the Roman Republic, would have been the portion of Gottfried’s history most useful to artists. A rare subject

painted by Lastman can be identified by its similarity to one of Merian's designs and its accompanying text in this first volume. Lastman's painting of 1631 of a ruler, triumphantly processing in a chariot pulled by four men, seems without precedent except for Merian's print [FIGS. 33 and 34].¹⁰ The ruler is King Sesostris of Egypt, whose story is related by Herodotus and then, with pertinent embellishment, by Diodorus Siculus. One episode, narrated by Diodorus but with no apparent basis in fact, relates how Sesostris conquered many territories in Asia, Africa, and Europe, and allowed the local kings to continue to rule their own land under his dominion. However, when these rulers came to Egypt to pay tribute to Sesostris, they were subjected to a specific demonstration of his power: they would pull his chariot through the city, so that his people could see the force with which Sesostris ruled the conquered lords.¹¹ According to Gottfried:¹²

Concerning [Sesostris], the historians recount how he tied four of the conquered kings to his wagon, which was decorated with gold and precious stones, to display them. On one occasion he saw one of these chained kings look back at a wheel of the wagon. Sesostris asked him the cause. The prisoner said, I console myself that Fortune turns like a wheel, and revolves along with the greatest sinners; so it also may happen with us. The King took note of what this speech meant, and resolved to himself to hitch no more kings to his wagon.

The sentences concerning the chained kings looking at the turning wheel and Fortune became added to the ancient accounts by the late Byzantine chroniclers, in keeping with the medieval practice of endowing historical events with moralistic messages. Sesostris was reminded of the potential for his own reversal of fortune and of the fragility of his power, and heeded the conquered king's remark.

In Merian's etching, one of the captive kings, placed prominently near the center foreground, turns to look at the chariot's front wheel; Sesostris, looking upward and ahead, has not yet asked him why he



FIG. 33 – Pieter Lastman, *The Triumph of Sesostris*, 1631

looks at the wheel. The garments of the four kings are the loose robes of captives found in Roman monuments, and the armor of Sesostrius and his soldiers, too, is somewhat Roman. A winged Victory crowns the king, still confident in his power. Lastman represented the moment immediately afterward, when the king has already asked the prisoner why he has contemplated the wheel. Having heard the prisoner's ominous reply, Sesostrius turns his head slightly toward the wheel and widens his eyes. Merian's and Lastman's renditions of this episode differ in their emphasis. Merian's interest was in the peculiarity of the narrative, with focus upon the four captives pulling the chariot of the king; Lastman's interest was in the opportunity to show various reactions: the crowd celebrates a procession of power and Sesostrius expresses shocked surprise at a premonition of Fortune's reversal.¹³

Only with Gottfried's explanation can Lastman's painting be understood as conveying a moment of revelation for Sesostrius. Lastman's signature on the wheel of the chariot emphasizes Fortune's turn-

ing. The lively book trade in Amsterdam would have offered Merian's book soon after publication, and Lastman, whose interests were strong in history, may well have sought such a lavishly illustrated volume. We can speculate that it was Lastman who introduced Rembrandt to Gottfried's compendium.

One Rembrandt studio drawing is a close copy of another leaf from Gottfried's chronicle, of another unusual action [FIGS. 35 and 36]. By its distinctive action, the subject is unmistakable: Popilius Laenas, Roman consul, draws a circle around the Seleucan King Antiochus Epiphanes and orders him to comply with a request to leave the territory before he steps out of the circle.¹⁴ The king has had cordial relations with the Romans and the Egyptians in the past; but now, by

FIG. 34 – Matthaeus Merian, *The Triumph of Sesostris*. Etching with engraving, 1629/30





FIG. 35 – Rembrandt Studio, *Popilius Laenas and Antiochus*. Drawing, ca. 1655

invading Egypt in 168 BC, he has encroached on the Roman alliance with his own brother and son-in-law, the Egyptian king Ptolemy Philometor. Earlier, Antiochus had regained eastern territory for Ptolemy and received the Egyptian king's warm thanks, but he then abandoned his good will toward the Egyptians; he demanded that they cede to him Cyprus and the region around the Pelusian mouth of the Nile. Ptolemy sent to Rome for help. The Roman envoy, the consul Popilius Laenas, known for his gruff manner, ordered Antiochus to leave Egypt. Antiochus, procrastinating, suggested that he and Popilius renew their acquaintance and behave as friends. The ultimatum: the consul stated that the King must give an answer before he steps out of the circle.

In the Rennes drawing, Popilius holds in his right hand the rod with which he has just completed outlining the circle on the ground, and raises his left hand in speech; Antiochus, his left arm akimbo and his right resting on a staff or sword, stands silently and motionless within the circle. The king's entourage, including soldiers and three

horses, fills the area from Popilius to the right, and a group of onlookers stands to the left of the Roman consul.

Although the condition and attribution to Rembrandt of the Rennes drawing have not been questioned, they are worth discussing.¹⁵ The paper has been torn vertically, and pieced at the left side; one figure, immediately to the left of Popilius, has been drawn on both sheets, and other lines also cross both sheets. The last figure at the far left is turned away from the main action, and may indicate that the drawing was originally extended on that side. The piecing of the two sheets belongs to the process of designing the composition. In four areas, white gouache has been put over the pen lines. These are: the horse on the right, at the mouth; Popilius' head; the head of the man, third from

FIG. 36 – Matthaeus Merian, *Popilius Laenas and Antiochus*. Etching with engraving, 1629/30



the left; and, most significantly over Antiochus' sword or staff. This correction, in particular, was purposeful: it served to place Popilius' stick in front of the king's sword. Otherwise, the two sticks become confused. The draftsmanship is close to undisputed drawings that are also pieced together and corrected; the drawing may be considered as made under Rembrandt's supervision. The drawing was copied, probably in Rembrandt's workshop.¹⁶ Both drawings show the moment after Popilius' ultimatum to Antiochus; the tension has not yet been resolved.

The encounter between Popilius and Antiochus was reported by Polybius and then Livy, whose text served Valerius Maximus, Justinus, Gottfried, and others.¹⁷ Valerius used the episode as an example of "Things Gravely Said or Done".¹⁸ Gottfried recounted the narrative, with slight variation from Livy:¹⁹

In the following year, he [Antiochus] laid siege to Alexandria, but he could not gain victory. The young Ptolomy sent ambassadors to Rome to get help... The Senate agreed to intervene, and sent a legation to Egypt, to meet Antiochus with his army still encamped near the city of Alexandria. Popilius Laenas, the foremost of the ambassadors, went to him to give him the Senate's decree. Antiochus approached him, offered him his hand, and bade him recall that they had once enjoyed each other's acquaintance. Popilius turned to him, saying this was not the time to recall their friendship, and asked him in the name of the entire Senate and Roman people, would he or would he not leave Alexandria, and go away from Egypt? To this he should swiftly and plainly answer. Antiochus said he would consider this and summon his friends to discuss it with him before he would give his answer. The Roman Legate made with his stick, which he held in his hand, a circle in the sand around the king, and said, give me your answer before you step out of this circle, whether you wish war or peace with the Romans. Antiochus was frightened at this serious prospect, and said that he was prepared to do what the Senate at Rome wished. Thus Popilius made him leave Egypt.

The episode, well-known in histories, was rarely illustrated.²⁰ The draftsman in Rembrandt's studio surely could have read Livy's text, well-known in complete editions in Dutch and German. Yet it is the peculiar closeness of the Rennes drawing to Merian's print that offers a connection. Visually, Merian's print gave all relevant details, and Gottfried's text explained the action.

As an encyclopedic source, Gottfried would have been a reference not only for Lastman's *Sesostris* and the Rembrandt studio *Popilius Laenas and Antiochus*, but also for other subjects depicted in Rembrandt's circle.²¹ The placement of this book as one of the three German volumes, may indicate that the three were similar in size; if the Gottfried's chronicle owned by Rembrandt was folio size, then it would be the 1642 edition that he possessed – the first one with Sandrart's title page.

Livy as a Studio Resource:

Lucretia, Scipio, Dido

The next item, “een dito met hout figuren” [283] (another of the same with woodcuts), indicates a German-language book with woodcut illustrations of battle subjects. Were this book to contain illustrations by an artist who was well-known, such as Tobias Stimmer who is so carefully named with respect to the Josephus, might not the inventorist mention it? Perhaps, but not necessarily. Through some drawings associated with Rembrandt but likely done under his supervision, evidence accrues to indicate a vernacular Livy as a reasonable candidate for this volume. The text of Livy was available in Dutch, French and German translations, which incorporated the material of books 11-20, known as the lost books and surviving as summaries in the Latin editions; this material was gleaned from other authors. A vernacular Livy was more complete for the material of the late Republic than the Latin editions, and therefore more useful for artists.

Livy's text, *Ab Urbe Condita* (From the Founding of the City), was basic for Roman history. Two German folios of the complete Livy

text, including the lost books, were published around 1570, and often reprinted, one with woodcuts by Jost Amman (1568), and another with woodcuts designed by Tobias Stimmer and cut by Christoffel van Sichem and Christophe Stimmer (1574). The visual similarities between Stimmer's illustrations and imagery from Rembrandt's studio suggest that Rembrandt owned the Stimmer edition.

Lucretia

The death of Lucretia, a noblewoman who chose suicide to save her honor following rape by an acquaintance of her husband, presented both moral and erotic qualities and had a rich pictorial tradition. Rembrandt's two late paintings of Lucretia are well-known (1664 and 1666) [FIGS. 37 and 38]. But he had made at least one earlier, now lost, painting of Lucretia, documented in 1658.²² Several drawings indicate his interest in Lucretia's death during the preceding decades.²³ A workshop drawing *Death of Lucretia* from the early 1640s, further indicates studio attention [FIG. 39]. This drawing was copied in another school sheet.²⁴ So many works of the same subject indicate a certain fascination, more than the two late paintings indicate, and bring Rembrandt's level of interest in the theme of Lucretia to that of some of his biblical subjects, in frequency of rendition and in attentiveness to the narrative.

Rembrandt's two surviving paintings of Lucretia have long been considered as pendant pictures, not because they were viewed together in or out of the studio, at least so far as we know, but because their depicted moments have a temporal relationship that may indicate how Rembrandt conceived the story. One canvas shows Lucretia just before she stabs herself, and the other, just after she has pulled the knife from her body. Both compositions take into account the narrative as it unfolds in time, the text's emotional potential, and the expressive power of paint. The two paintings may elicit reactions from viewers that range from compassion to outrage. This engagement with the viewer is a consistent element of Rembrandt's art, from his earliest to his latest



FIG. 37 – Rembrandt, *Lucretia*, 1664



FIG. 38 – Rembrandt, *Lucretia*, 1666

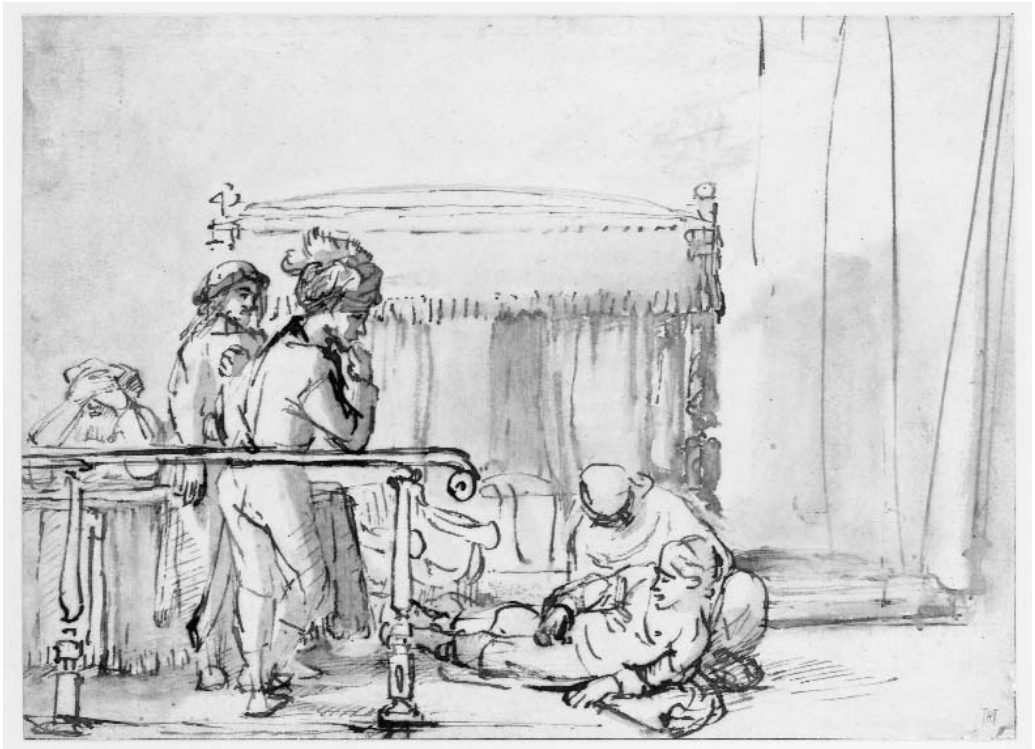


FIG. 39 – Rembrandt Studio, *The Death of Lucretia*. Drawing

works, but here, the viewer's response seems an unusually calculated element of the conception. In both, Lucretia's pose implies the past, present, and future moments; her implicit speech awaits audience response. Her disarranged clothing and the swinging earrings further heighten her vividness. And her face, intimating despair and imminent expiration, endows both paintings with the tragic sense of the last-gasp moment.²⁵

As Livy presented her story (Book I:57-59), she is the beautiful, virtuous, and industrious wife of Collatinus, a general in the army of King Tarquinius Superbus. Collatinus and the king's son, Sextus Tarquinius, out drinking one night with friends during the war between the Romans and the Rutilians, boasted of their wives' virtue. To ascertain whose wife was the more virtuous, they checked up on Sextus', and found her merrily carousing with some women friends; they found

Collatinus' wife Lucretia at home with her maidservants, all industriously sewing. In triumph at having the most virtuous wife, Collatinus invited the party for dinner. Upon meeting Lucretia, Sextus became infatuated with her. He made a second visit for dinner, on an evening when he knew Collatinus would be absent. Lucretia, not suspecting darker motives, offered him the hospitality due an honored guest; when she was asleep in her private chamber, he approached her sexually and threatened to murder her with his sword should she make any sound or refuse him; when she continued to refuse his advances, he threatened to kill her and a manservant, and put the bodies nearby so that it would look as if she had consented with the servant. In both cases, the consequential shame would be for herself and her family, but it would be a greater shame for her to have contact with the servant than Sextus, who was of noble lineage. The day following the rape, Lucretia summoned her father and husband, and requested that each of them come with a trusted friend. She then told them of Sextus's actions, and lamented her violated condition. She exacted a promise from them that they would take revenge upon her rapist. Declaring her innocence and readiness to take the consequences, Lucretia took a knife that she had hidden under her robe and drove it into her heart. The four men were near her at death. Her brother vowed revenge, and they all took an oath that they would wage a war upon King Tarquinius and his son Sextus. By means of this oath, their grief became transformed into anger and action. After the public display and mourning of Lucretia's body, the men gained popular support from Rome; they then murdered the king and overthrew his 25-year despotic rule. After this liberation, two consuls were elected: Lucretia's brother Lucius Junius Brutus and her husband Lucius Tarquinius Collatinus. Lucretia's roles are as an abused yet honorable woman and as a catalyst for revolt against Tarquinius's rule and for Rome's freedom.

The two effects, virtue raped and vengeance sworn, associated Lucretia with two different interpretations: feminine chastity and political freedom. Livy presented her story to serve both purposes. Lucretia as a chaste and wronged woman was codified by Valerius Maximus under



FIG. 40 – Tobias Stimmer, *The Death of Lucretia*. Woodcut

De Pudicitia.²⁶ This role remained popular, but added to it was the sacrifice of a virtuous woman for the political improvement of the nation. In the Renaissance, Lucretia became invoked as a strong female, and offered a variety of readings.²⁷ Her own words, however, reinforce the notion of physical chastity as a requisite for feminine virtue.

Lucretia summoned her father, husband and their friends. They “found her grieving and in distress, sitting in her bedroom, with tears flowing from her eyes.”²⁸ Her address to them is passionate and moving. According to Livy’s account in the German edition, with Stimmer’s woodcuts, she lamented [FIG. 40]:²⁹

In no way can it be well with a woman who has lost her wifely honor and chastity. Collatinus, my husband, you must suffer the traces of another man in your bed. However, it is only my body

that has been violently shamed, and my heart has no blame. My death should demonstrate this. Give me your right hand to swear to me in eternal good faith that the adulterer shall not go unpunished. He is namely Sextus Tarquinius, who last night came to me as a guest, but was in actuality a violent enemy, and through coercion, took me to himself, [threatening me] with manly vengeance, and in [his] ruinous delight he took and raped me.

After she spoke, the men tried to comfort her, telling her she was helpless against her attacker, and consequently innocent, and that Tarquinius alone was guilty. It was the mind that had sinned, not the body: without intention there could never be guilt. But again she spoke, declaring that she would not be an example for a shamed woman, even though innocent of any wrongdoing or complicity, and then killed herself.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.

In Rembrandt's two paintings, the moments represented are those after her second speech, in the Washington painting, and after the stabbing, in the Minneapolis version. The viewer supplies the context and voice of Lucretia's lament, and also the previous and subsequent actions: in one, she will stab herself, and in the other, she will fall to the ground. Characteristically isolating the main figure from a narrative context, Rembrandt nonetheless followed the narrative as Livy presented it with Lucretia's soliloquy. Surely a visual source, one which merely showed Lucretia stabbing herself or among her kin, would have conveyed the information for Rembrandt's inventions. But no visual model would have endowed her with the expressive speech.

The differences in the various accounts and their accompanying illustrations are not substantial, and Livy's narrative was generally

translated quite faithfully.³¹ Occasionally an artist followed a motif that can be traced to Livy's specific words. Livy stated that Tarquinius put his left hand upon Lucretia's breast and carried his sword in his other hand; Titian depicted Sextus in that posture.³² Rubens, however, followed Ovid's characterization of Sextus as somewhat less violent, and hiding his sword behind his back.³³ In Stimmer's illustration, as well as in other Renaissance prints, the rape scene took place in the background and the suicide in the foreground, thus packing the cause-and-effect into the same image.

Rembrandt's isolation of Lucretia in the two late paintings removes her from the political context and heightens her personal tragedy. By showing the moments before and after the stabbing, Rembrandt considered Lucretia's sequential actions. The 1664 image anticipates the knife thrust into her body; she has completed her speech, and proceeds to carry out her suicide. In the 1666 painting, however, Lucretia has completed the stabbing and herself removed the knife from her body. This particular detail contradicts Livy's account, in which Lucretia's brother removes the knife as her husband and father are overcome with grief. Surely Rembrandt did not need to consult the text for this late painting, as he was already familiar with the story. Yet he may have reflected on creating an image that went beyond the text for action and passion.

The workshop drawing *Death of Lucretia* is further revealing of Rembrandt's method and sources. Its composition presents the setting of the bedroom, and also the full cast of characters at Lucretia's death. The father, seated at a table, covers his eyes in grief, the husband and a friend stand solemnly, watching Lucretia as she lies upon the floor; the brother kneels over her, about to remove the knife. The central and canopied bed, to which Lucretia referred as the place of her violation and her husband's shame, dominates as a sixth character in the drama. Resting upon a low platform, the bed is aligned with the picture plane, the railing, and the table at which the father sits. The prominent railing may recall Stimmer's woodcut; the railing seems a displacement of the bed's base, a heavy support with columns and pilasters, in the back-

ground of Stimmer's design. In the cluttered left corner, this drawing shows some confusion; the railing, the two standing men, and the table with the seated father become a muddled overlapping of figures and props. The viewer's attention becomes divided among the figures and deflected from the central activity.

If the Livy/Stimmer book were owned by Rembrandt, it may have served, as apparently the two other German volumes of Gottfried and Josephus did, as an instructional tool. Pupils in Rembrandt's workshop often copied Rembrandt's own drawings; in the copies, the emphasis was on figural groupings, nudes, and the expressive potential of figures within a narrative context. The drawn *Death of Lucretia* belongs in this category, which entailed mastering technique and learning of history.³⁴

The two surviving paintings of Lucretia were finished works, possibly commissions; the 1658 inventory mentioning the lost *Lucretia* would indicate that such a painting appealed to collectors. By recognizing that Lucretia, who innocent yet wronged, may courageously appeal to the viewer's sympathy, Rembrandt strengthened the confrontational, speaking aspect of the painted image.

Scipio

The drawing *Scipio Returning the Spanish Bride to her Family* is a composition that reflects Rembrandt's invention, but has weaknesses that remove it from his hand [FIG. 41]. This sheet has itself been copied, as an exercise in imitating the flow of the line of the model [FIG. 42].³⁵ As in the Lucretia school drawing, the action faithfully follows Livy's text, and the design loosely relates to the woodcut by Stimmer in the Livy edition of 1574 [FIG. 43]. The events concerning Scipio Africanus, the Roman general who conquered Spain and north Africa, are told in full by Livy, and in excerpted, exemplary anecdotes by Valerius Maximus.³⁶ Scipio was 25 years old when he was put in charge of the Roman army in Spain. He demonstrated generosity, sexual restraint, and monetary discipline following the 209 BC victory at New Carthage. After having taken the city and permitting the victorious Roman sol-

diers to plunder it thoroughly, Scipio allowed all the free men who had been captured in the assault to return to their homes. He thanked his own soldiers and rewarded them generously. He then called for the hostages to be brought before him, and made records of their tribes and the names of their kinfolk, in order to send them back to their families. During this process, an old woman pleaded for mercy for the younger women. Scipio assured her that, because they were in the hands of the Romans, “a people who preferred to bind men by gratitude rather than by fear,” the women would be treated honorably and placed in the charge of “a man of proven integrity.” The next incident concerns the return of the bride to her bridegroom, and again demonstrates Scipio’s rhetorical power and personal integrity: a group of soldiers brought an exceptionally beautiful girl to Scipio, who spoke with her. When he learned that she was betrothed to a Celtiberian chieftain, named Allucius, he sent for the girl’s fiancé and parents. First, Scipio returned the girl to Allucius, and asked only that Allucius be a friend to Rome. Then the parents arrived, “bringing a weight of gold sufficient for her ransom,” and begged Scipio to keep the gold as a gift. Scipio gave it to Allucius as a wedding present. Upon returning home, in gratitude Allucius supplied Scipio with a brigade of 1400 select cavalry. Scipio’s motivations were interpreted variously by ancient and Renaissance authors: it was to his political and military advantage to win over Allucius as an ally, and even more to do so by enhancing his personal qualities, and he was no less interested in setting an example for his own troops of good behavior.³⁷ Livy stated, “Allucius... filled the ears of his compatriots with the well-deserved praises of Scipio, telling them that a godlike young warrior had come, who carried all before him not only with arms but with generosity and kindness.”³⁸

The stage-like setting in the Rembrandtesque drawing features Scipio leading the bride to the center, toward the kneeling groom. The tent at the right and the shelter in the middle distance indicate the Roman encampment, while the truncated tower and other structures in the distance point to recent war damage. Two soldiers on the left and one on the right attentively turn toward Scipio, as do four men, wearing



FIGS. 41 AND 42 – Rembrandt Studio, *Scipio and the Spanish Bride*.
Drawings



FIG. 43 – Tobias Stimmer, *Scipio and the Spanish Bride*. Woodcut

soft hats, who are clustered at the right edge. The bride’s parents follow the groom, and in the left middle distance, an aged figure is guarded by a soldier. The composition echoes Stimmer’s woodcut in reverse [FIG. 43].³⁹ The basic similarities between the Rembrandt and Stimmer designs are in the main figures; Scipio guides with one hand the standing bride toward the kneeling Allucius. Other similarities include the parents who follow the groom, and the setting of the army encampment of tents and soldiers. One difference is in the treatment of the ransom: in Stimmer’s woodcut, the father holds a full bag of money, while in the Rembrandtesque drawing, a heap of vessels rests at Scipio’s feet. Stimmer represented a slightly earlier moment, when the parents bring the ransom, and the Rembrandt pupil depicted the moment when the ransom, already brought and given to Scipio, is being given to the bridegroom as dowry.⁴⁰

There are, however, several differences between the Rembrandt invention and the woodcut tradition that indicate the draftsman was familiar with Livy's text. The drawing includes an aged captive guarded by a soldier in the left distance, to show that Scipio had captured and protected civilians. The drawing also prominently includes, behind the table on the right, four men in soft hats, as advisors rather than soldiers. These four men may indicate the keeping of records, as the Romans were known to do, and the gathering of information from the hostages, prior to sending them back to their own cities. Several Rembrandt pupils depicted Scipio with this addition of non-combatants, perhaps as record-keepers.⁴¹

Valerius Maximus included this episode of Scipio, and thus ensured the popularity of the story.⁴² Later compilers, such as Gottfried and Lauremberg, further popularized the event. In Dutch art, the episode invoked civic and personal virtue, and was often included in town hall programs.⁴³ Several of Rembrandt's pupils painted the subject, which lent itself to group family portraits.⁴⁴

The details about the captives and record-keeping may indicate close reading of the text among the artists who made these copy drawings in Rembrandt's studio. These details were not factors in other artists' renditions. Whether on the instructions of Rembrandt or of their own accord, the draftsmen crafted a scene of Scipio returning the bride that blended visual precedent with textual familiarity.

Dido

Another studio drawing, *Dido Overseeing the Cutting of the Ox Hide*, indicates that a vernacular edition of Livy was consulted in the Rembrandt workshop [FIG. 44].⁴⁵ The event concerns the founding of Carthage through Dido's bargain for land with King Hjarbas. According to various historians, Dido found herself exiled from her homeland; by chance landing on the north coast of Africa, she bargained the large territory to build Carthage from the ruling King Hjarbas for as much land as could be circumscribed by an ox-hide, an event dated around

814 BC. Dido's story belonged to the events of Livy's Histories, Books 11-19, but these were the lost books and known only in the summaries by Lucius Florus.⁴⁶ Latin editions presented only the authentic Livy text, with the lost books in summary only.⁴⁷ However, the editors of the vernacular editions of Livy compiled material from other historians, and restored significant material from the lost books. Thus, the vernacular editions of Livy included Dido's life. General histories, including Gottfried's chronicle, also recounted the life of Dido.⁴⁸

The pictorial tradition of Dido founding Carthage was established in the sixteenth-century vernacular translations of Livy, which were illustrated. Stimmer's woodcut, from the German Livy of 1574, seems to have provided a compositional model for the draftsman in Rembrandt's studio [FIG. 45].⁴⁹ The similarities are the animal skin draped over the table, Dido and King Hjarbas, and the general design. Dido and the King both supervise the cutting in the foreground. Stimmer also showed, by continuous narration, that Dido and Hjarbas oversaw the laying out of the skin in the background. The Rembrandt pupil specified a scissors as the tool for cutting such a fine thread of the ox-hide, gave a servant a large umbrella to protect Dido from the sun, and costumed two of the surrounding soldiers in feathered headdresses. Perhaps he confused early representations of the American Indians with the natives of Africa.

Dido is both a poetical figure and a historical one. In Virgil's *Aeneid* (Books I-IV), she fell in love with Aeneas as she was building the city. Virgil gave an account of her previous life and the founding of Carthage through Venus' addressing Aeneas (*Aeneid* I: 340-369). Both Jacob van Swanenburgh and Pieter Lastman depicted scenes from the *Aeneid*. Dido was popular on the Amsterdam stage, and Vondel translated the *Aeneid* twice, in prose and verse (1646 and 1660). Yet Rembrandt seems to have paid no attention to the poetic Dido of Virgil or, for that matter, the *Aeneid* in general; his attention to the age prior to the founding of Rome and early Roman history seems to be limited to this studio drawing and to his paintings of Lucretia.

Dido's shrewdness in securing the land to build Carthage and her chaste conduct towards Hjarbas place her among the examples of



FIG. 44. Rembrandt Studio, *Dido Cutting the Ox-Hide*. Drawing

worthy leaders. Only rarely is she used to convey civic virtue.⁵⁰ She may not have appeared more often as an *exempla* because her story was not in Livy's main text, or – more pertinently – because it was omitted by Valerius Maximus who unwittingly determined the popularity of many histories. Or her strength as an *exempla* may have been poetically compromised; as the lovelorn queen, who tried to keep Aeneas from carrying out his destiny, in Virgil's *Aeneid*, she would hardly serve as an example of civic virtue.

The three episodes from Livy discussed here indicate that a vernacular edition with illustrations by Stimmer was available in Rembrandt's studio. The subjects of Lucretia, Scipio and Dido belonged to the common body of historical knowledge for the literate Dutch. Lucretia and Scipio were considered exemplary by Valerius Maximus, and became featured in civic programs and other didactic imagery. Dido, whose



FIG. 45 – Tobias Stimmer, *Dido Cutting the Ox-Hide*. Woodcut

peculiar position was blended in history and poetry, was not part of the canon of virtues, although her story was essential in order to establish the later wars between the Carthaginians and Romans.

Apart from these three themes, others rendered in the workshop indicate a wider use of Livy among the pupils.⁵¹ And it is possible that additional connections between Roman history as told by Livy and Rembrandt's workshop may be made.

Stimmer's Josephus

The Josephus that belonged to Rembrandt is clearly listed: “Een hoog-duijtsche Flavio Fevus gestoffeert met figueren van Tobias Timmerman”. Rembrandt owned a German language edition, when Dutch translations were available, and credited Stimmer with the illustrations – when, in fact, his monogram appears only on a few of the prints, and his full name appears in none of the editions. The 111 woodcuts after Tobias Stimmer's designs are by Christoffel van Sichem and Christoph Stimmer, whose ciphers appear in most of the blocks, except the few with Tobias' mark. Rembrandt understood the inventor of these woodcuts to be Tobias, and that it was his illustrations that distinguished the book.

First published in Strassburg 1574, Conrad Lautenbach's German text of Josephus with Stimmer's woodcuts was reprinted fourteen times by 1630.⁵² It included all Josephus' works: *Antiquities of the Jews*, *Wars of the Jews*, *Against Apion*, *Destruction of the Jews*, *Maccabees*, and *Life of Josephus*. Perhaps Rembrandt sought an early printing or first edition that had good impressions of the woodcuts, which became worn in later printings. That he owned a German edition indicates that its language presented no obstacle to his appreciation of it. The works of Josephus were readily available in Dutch, with the first Dutch translation of *Josephus* appearing in 1552 (without illustrations), and often reprinted. Lautenbach's German edition was translated in 1594 into Dutch by E. Bommelius, and published with woodcut copies of some of the Stimmer illustrations; it was reprinted numerous times until 1659. In 1665, a new translation by Lambert van den Bos was published, ostensibly, as the foreword claims, because the earlier Dutch editions were considered inferior.⁵³

Josephus' *Antiquities* and *Wars* repeated and enlarged many of the episodes in the Old and New Testaments, and Apocrypha. Few episodes related by Josephus were not also in the Bible or recounted by later historians. Josephus amplified the activities and characters of the biblical figures through extended conversations and interactions. Most significantly, Josephus validated the divine word of the Old and New

Testaments as history. For artists, Josephus' unusual details and psychological insight lent depth to the renderings of familiar stories.

That Rembrandt owned this book is not in dispute, but that he read it carefully has been debated. There are a few cases in which it is difficult to determine if a particular detail, belonging to both biblical and Josephan versions, links Rembrandt's imagery with Josephus' text. One example is the 1630 *Jeremiah Lamenting the Destruction of Jerusalem* [FIG. 15]. In this panel, the prophet leans his elbow upon a large Bible; in front of the tome are prominent golden vessels, beneath it a traveling bag, and behind it, an earthenware jug. To explain the golden vessels, Tümpel proposed that Rembrandt showed an episode according to Josephus: following Jerusalem's defeat, Jeremiah was set free, and received precious gifts from the Babylonian commander. However, Perlove indicated that the biblical text included the same event, and may account for these details: Jeremiah was given a gift and provisions (*Jeremiah* XL:5-6).⁵⁴

Another case is the 1659 etching *Peter and John at the Temple Gate*, which depicts an event in *Acts* 3:1-8 [FIG. 46]. R. Wischnitzer sought connections between Josephus' text, Stimmer's woodcuts, and Rembrandt's print. She proposed that Rembrandt carefully read the text of *Acts* for the interaction between the apostles and beggar, and studied the accompanying Stimmer woodcut for the temple, but concluded that Josephus' text played no part here, or even generally in Rembrandt's art.⁵⁵ On the other hand F. Landsberger demonstrated that Rembrandt studied the German text of Josephus in both *The Antiquities of the Jews* and *The Wars of the Jews*, in order to reconstruct the Herodian temple, rather than the Solomonic structure; the Herodian temple would have been appropriate for the early Christian era. Landsberger noted that a number of details from Josephus' description of the temple, pulled from five pages in the Stimmer edition, correspond to the architecture of this print.⁵⁶ This kind of meticulous architectural reconstruction seems out of keeping with Rembrandt's other renditions of the temple. His interiors of the church in which Christ is preaching or presented are shadowy, cavernous structures, and his ex-



FIG. 46 – Rembrandt, *Peter and John at the Temple Gate*. Etching, 1659

terior views show a centralized structure; both may be loosely based upon the “new temple” in the Amico book about Jerusalem. Quite possibly, the 1659 etching may have had a patron’s advice, which concerned a more authentic depiction of the series of rectangular Herodian courtyards outside the temple.

It is likely that Rembrandt consulted the *Josephus* for unusual subjects or variants of the biblical narrative. The episode of Rembrandt’s 1635 painting *King Uzziah Stricken with Leprosy* appears in *Josephus’ Antiquities*, not the Old Testament [FIG. 47].⁵⁷ This subject, which could have served as a warning against prideful acts that bring about divine punishment, seems inexplicable without the passage ex-

plaining the sudden affliction befalling the king. Uzziah, king of two tribes of Jerusalem, achieved victories over the Philistines, Egyptians, and other peoples. He rebuilt the city of Jerusalem, and prospered. But corrupted by pride, he became carried away by his success. Prohibited from entering the temple by the high priest during a sacrifice, he became angry and went into the sacred space anyway. Following the captions, “Eyn grosser Erdbidem” [a great Earthquake] and “Ozias wird Aussaetzig” [Uzziah became Leprous], Josephus’ text continued:⁵⁸

A great and violent Earthquake occurred, from which the Temple became sundered at the top, and a hot burning ray of the sun shone through upon the face of the king, from which he soon became leprous... But the Priests soon saw this, that the King was struck in his face with leprosy, and became unclean; they perceived that this was a judgment from God, and they regarded him as one unclean, who must leave the City.

Uzziah lived in exile for a time, and died quietly as a private person, with the kingdom given over to his son Jonathan. Josephus’ passage explains the altar and temple setting of the background, the ray of light that falls upon the face and hands, and the mottled skin of the face and hands of Rembrandt’s figure.

During the 1630s, Rembrandt paid intense attention to the story of Samson. His three canvases of *Samson’s Wedding Feast*, *Samson Threatening his Father-in-Law*, and *Samson Blinded* form a loose series in conception, although there is no evidence that they were viewed together. Samson, an oafish fellow with few manners and little foresight, acted violently and against his consecrated status on several occasions, and finally became humbled before God. Both the biblical and Josephian texts give extensive accounts of the complicated relations between Samson and his wife, the Philistines, and Delilah. The episode of *Samson Threatening his Father-in-Law* (Berlin, SPMK Gemäldgalerie; Br. 499) occurs only in the Bible, and is not recounted by Josephus; however, the two other episodes are told with important variation in the Bible (*Judges* 13-16) and Josephus (*Antiquities* Book V: 8). Certain



FIG. 47 – Rembrandt, *King Uzziah Stricken by Leprosy*, 1635



FIG. 48 – Rembrandt, *Samson's Wedding Feast*, 1638

details of the grand and complex *Samson's Wedding Feast* refer to Josephus [FIG. 48]. Rembrandt differentiated between the kinds of guests at the wedding; the lusty young men and women, as couples, are on the left, and the single men near Samson are on the right. According to Josephus, the bride's family assigned thirty single men, who were to be kept away from the other guests, to watch Samson during the festivities.⁵⁹

The *Samson Blinded* also has ties to Josephus [FIG. 49]. According to the biblical account Delilah extracted the secret of Samson's strength and got him drunk so that he fell asleep; she then called the waiting Philistine soldiers to cut off his hair, capture him, and put out his eyes. Josephus explicitly stated that it was Delilah who bore responsibility for cutting the hair. Samson confided to Delilah that he remained strong as long as his hair grew. Then:⁶⁰



FIG. 49 – Rembrandt, *Samson Blinded*, 1636

... as soon as she heard this, she stealthily cut off his hair so he did not feel its [loss], gave him over to his enemies, for meanwhile he had lost his strength and could not fight them. After that the Philistines put out his eyes, bound and imprisoned him, and led him away.

Rembrandt's Delilah brandishes the open scissors in one hand, and holds the shorn locks of hair in the other. Her victory, earned by her own actions, is closer to the Josephan account than the Bible. However, the visual tradition that made Delilah the agent of the shearing is strong. Lucas van Leyden rendered Delilah as cutting the hair of the sleeping Samson in an engraving and two woodcuts. Rembrandt surely



FIG. 50 – Jacob Matham after Rubens, *Samson and Delilah*. Engraving ca. 1612

knew the delicately sinister engravings by his Leiden predecessor, and he referred to them in other images.⁶¹

Here, as in the earlier paintings *Proserpina* and *Artemisia*, a Rubensian challenge may have led Rembrandt to a novel visualization of a familiar episode, with a well-known but less obvious text in mind. For the violently overturned figure of Samson, Rembrandt may have been prompted by several Rubensian paintings, including the *Prometheus* (Philadelphia, Philadelphia Museum of Art), and also the ancient sculpture *Laocoon* (Rome, Vatican Museums).⁶² Rubens' *Samson and*

Delilah (London, National Gallery) belonged to the renowned Antwerp collector Nicolas Rockox; it was engraved by Jacob Matham [FIG. 50]. Rubens showed Delilah full of quiet conflict, as she watched a guard cut Samson's hair. Perhaps recognizing Rubens' reliance on the biblical text, Rembrandt sought the less common Josephus version. It is also possible that Rembrandt was prompted by another image from the Rubensian circle, Van Dyck's *Samson and Delilah* (Vienna, Gemäldegalerie); Van Dyck's despairing Samson recognizes that he has been betrayed as Delilah weakly bids him farewell. Rembrandt may well have thought that he could improve on Rubens' subdued and Van Dyck's lamenting Delilah. Rembrandt's exultant Delilah glows from her successful sabotage, and Samson struggles against unbearable torture. Rembrandt may have here referred to Josephus as a textual authority, but here as elsewhere, he sought to create an image of powerful action and expressive emotion.

For amplified stories of Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, Ruth, Esther, John the Baptist and other figures, Josephus was appealing to artists as a corollary to the Bible. The many depictions of Abraham, Sarah, Hagar, and Ishmael by Rembrandt and his school may indicate the use of Josephus, which amplifies Abraham's conflicted feelings, the tensions between Sarah and Hagar, and Hagar's distress.

One episode, Abraham sacrificing Isaac, is told by Josephus with significant variation from the Bible so that it is possible to learn which text an artist followed. In his canvas of 1635, Rembrandt followed the biblical account.⁶³ The *Statenbijbel* states that Abraham took the knife in his hand and bound the hands of the boy (*Genesis* 22:6: "het mes in sijner hant," and 22:9: "ende bondt sijne sone Isaac"). In the biblical account, the angel of the lord called to Abraham and stopped him from laying the knife upon the boy; after the lord spoke briefly to Abraham, Abraham turned to the boy and they went home. In Rembrandt's painting, Isaac's hands are tied tightly behind his body, and his discomfort is accentuated by the father's hand brutally covering his eyes; Abraham's hand, grabbed by the angel, has just let go of the knife, which appears to be falling precipitously near Isaac's body.



FIG. 51 – Rembrandt, *Abraham Sacrificing Isaac*. Etching, 1655

The ensuing passages concern the loving relationship between Abraham and Isaac.

Josephus described how the father and son conversed at length. Abraham told his son how much he loved him and how he was obligated to obey God, and Isaac understood that he had to obey his father and be the sacrifice himself.⁶⁴ “And with that he went straight to the altar and would have allowed himself to be slaughtered for the offering, and immediately would have been dead, if God had not opposed it.”

After God bestowed his blessing upon father and son, he produced a ram for the sacrifice:⁶⁵ “So Abraham and Isaac, to whom God had so marvelously had restored hope and heralded good tidings, kissed one another; and after they had sacrificed, they went home to Sarah and lived happily together, and thanked God for all they had received...”

For his 1655 etching of Abraham sacrificing Isaac, Rembrandt distinctly followed Josephus’ account rather than the biblical one [FIG. 51]. He showed Isaac’s unbound hands held close to his thighs. This pose stresses Isaac’s natural obedience to his father and his willingness to be the sacrifice. It would, moments later, permit the two to embrace, unhindered. Abraham’s hand covers Isaac’s eyes, but not so harshly as in the earlier paintings. This softening of the physical action reflects Rembrandt’s deeper and pervasive concern with inner expression.⁶⁶

For the stories concerning Jacob and his sons, Josephus was especially descriptive. The subject of the etching *Jacob caressing Benjamin* (ca. 1637; B. 33) seems to depend upon an interpretation of Josephus’ text, which details Jacob’s joy and despair at various times.⁶⁷ The painting *Potiphar’s Wife Accusing Joseph* from 1655 also relates to Josephus’ text [FIG. 52].⁶⁸ C. Tümpel perceptively applied Josephus’ text to this composition, in which the bed is central; he observed that the German text emphasizes the marriage bed [*Ehebett*], which has been violated.⁶⁹ G. Schwartz noted that Vondel may have staged the last act of his play *Joseph in Egypte* to show the three characters of Potiphar, his wife, and Joseph on the stage at the same time, although they do not hold a conversation together.⁷⁰ Vondel’s play, written in 1640, belonged to his

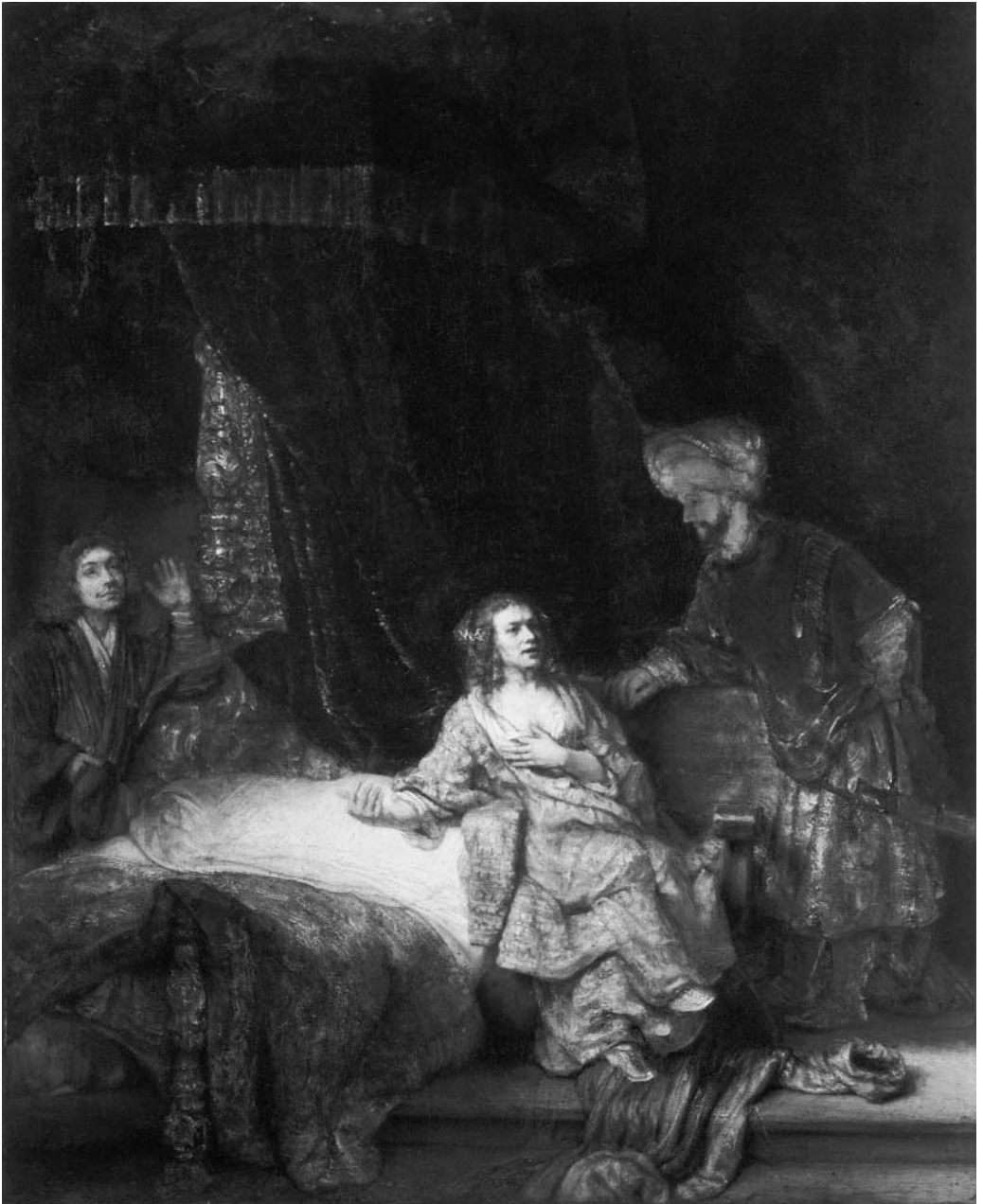


FIG. 52 – Rembrandt, *Potiphar's Wife Accusing Joseph*, 1655

trilogy of Joseph, and was revived in Amsterdam in 1655, coincident with the date on Rembrandt's painting. Vondel drew upon both Josephus and the Bible, but it is Rembrandt who crafted the scene to imply a three-way conversation.

For Rembrandt's many depictions of the stories connected with David, Josephus may also have provided suggestive passages. Typically, artists represented Bathsheba in the foreground as David watches her from a distance; the prominent nude is one reason for the scene's popularity. Stimmer's woodcut inverted this formula: David, in the front left corner, leans over the ledge between two columns and peers at the bathing Bathsheba. By placing Bathsheba in the distance and David in the foreground, Stimmer emphasized David as the active voyeur and Bathsheba as the passive victim. David's gaze has become the instrument of violation, and it is David with whom the viewer is identified. With respect to Rembrandt's 1654 *Bathsheba*, E.J. Sluijter noted that Rembrandt may have had Stimmer's design in mind; the pillar on a high plinth at the right and curtain hanging behind Bathsheba recall Stimmer's woodcut.⁷¹

Specific correlations between Rembrandt's oeuvre and Stimmer's woodcuts are minimal, but it is possible that Rembrandt suggested his students consult this "hoogduijtsche Flavio Fevus." Nicolaes Maes' drawing, *The Death of Absalom*, is a variant of Stimmer's woodcut of the same subject.⁷² Van den Eeckhout's drawing *Bathsheba Pleading to David to Name Solomon his Successor* depicts a biblical episode given amplification with speech, tears, and gesture in Josephus.⁷³ The pen drawing, by Rembrandt or a pupil, *Eli Receiving the News of his Sons' Deaths and the Loss of the Ark* compositionally echoes Stimmer's woodcut.⁷⁴

The many versions of the story of Esther that appear in Rembrandt's own work, as well as in that of some of his pupils, may reflect the reading of Josephus.

Rembrandt's familiarity with Josephus would have been part of his training and early reading. Josephus' role in Dutch art is much larger

than that discussed here with respect to Rembrandt.⁷⁵ Most probably it was Lastman who demonstrated the usefulness and potential expressiveness of Josephus as an alternative to the Bible.⁷⁶ The relevance of that author as a source for Dutch artists is emphasized in Philips Angel's 1641 speech to the Leiden Guild of Saint Luke. Angel advised artists to consult more than one text in order to render the singular qualities of a particular history, and suggested that Josephus would be appropriate in addition to the Old Testament for biblical subjects. Angel singled out Jan Lievens for appropriately referring to Josephus in addition to the Bible for his now lost grisaille *Abraham Embracing Isaac*.⁷⁷

In this way I have found something extraordinary yet natural, in a small grisaille by Jan Lievens, in which he had painted the sacrifice of the Patriarch Abraham, so thoroughly unusually, and yet specifically, according to the description by Josephus, the Jewish History Writer, in the first book on the last [part] of the 13th Chapter, where he says, that, after God had called out the name of Abraham, they hugged one another (as if they had newly found one another), and kissed...

This grisaille probably reflected the large canvas of about 1637 in which the father and son embrace tightly in recognition of their salvation [FIG. 53]. Lievens painted two other canvases that show the moment preceding the embrace, when Isaac, lying upon the wood piled atop the altar, stretches his arms toward his father, as if imploring that he be spared this cruelty.⁷⁸ In his consideration of the sequence of actions and emotional states of Abraham and Isaac, Lievens thoughtfully and repeatedly interpreted Josephus.

Angel's praise for Lievens was so intense because this was a case in which the artist, by precisely following a text, demonstrated not only his own excellence as a painter but also the superiority of image over word. Angel noted how Lievens left Isaac's hands unbound, and thereby showed that Abraham had not disobeyed God, but rather, trusted Isaac to do as his father told him; it was not necessary to tie the boy's hands since he followed the directives of the father. Moreover, this



FIG. 53 – Lievens, *Abraham Embracing Isaac*, ca. 1637

permitted the boy's unbound hands to hug the father, once it became apparent that the sacrifice would not be carried out. Abraham's tight and emotional embrace of Isaac foreshadowed that of the father and the prodigal son in the Gospel of St. Luke. These kinds of connections, not only between the Bible and Josephus but also between Josephus' text and the parable, implied Angel, were only possible by reading various texts, associating them, and using good artistic judgement.

CHAPTER 6

REMBRANDT'S
LATER IMAGERY

After the 1656 Inventory



FIG. 54 – Rembrandt, *The Oath of Civilis*, 1662

FOLLOWING THE VARIOUS SALES OF HIS ART collection and household furnishings in 1655 and 1656, Rembrandt moved from the spacious Breestraat house to smaller quarters on the Rozengracht in 1658. Neither this relocation nor his straitened financial situation seems to have hindered his collecting habits. During the eleven years he lived there, he had amassed enough paraphernalia and art works to fill three rooms – the rooms that Magdalena van Loo refused to open to settle his estate, lest she might be liable for his debts.

Rembrandt continued to attend auctions, and acquired some exceptional prints by the Carracci and Lucas van Leyden.¹ Rembrandt also frequented the markets in search of old clothing and weaponry, as Baldinucci, De Piles, and Pels reported. It is likely that his early patterns of acquisition continued in the 1660s: he bought fine graphics by foremost artists, he purchased costumes and weaponry that he used in his art, and he picked up a few books that served his imagery. For his later paintings and drawings, Rembrandt seems to have read some history books that he may not have studied earlier. His range of reading was not great, and is consistent with his earlier oeuvre in its mix of histories and some poetic subjects.²

The Amsterdam Town Hall

The most familiar project for which a knowledge of history was required was the decoration of the Amsterdam Town Hall. Rembrandt's minor involvement with the Amsterdam Town Hall has been considered as an indication of his ambiguous position in the Amsterdam art world. By 1660, he was bankrupt, living with a woman he could not marry, and continuing to work in a rough style of painting that may have been considered old fashioned. In the ambitious complex of the new Town Hall, several commissions went to some of his pupils, but only one went to him, and then, in circumstances in which he was not the first choice. The *Oath of Claudius Civilis* was installed, but only briefly, and its unfortunate cutting down and replacement are well-known [FIG. 54]. The decorative program comprised three main parts: the allegorical celebration of Amsterdam as a commercial center of the world, the representation of civic virtues embodied in the city's leaders, and the glorification of the ancient Batavians, the forerunners of the Dutch people. This universe was conceived of as a triumph of Christianity, but it was the heir to and continuation of two foundations in the Old Testament and Roman civilization. In this grand design, Rembrandt's *Oath of Civilis* is a small component that has received a great deal of attention. Yet the episode is a seminal one in the ancient war between the Batavians and the Romans, and may also be interpreted as an encapsulation of the values regarded by the Dutch as most worthy of cultivation, with respect to their ancient forebears and to their sense of contemporary honor, faith, and duty.

The circumstances of the building of the Town Hall are well known. The need for a new city hall had long been recognized, and the decision was made in 1640 to replace the antiquated structure that had served the city for over a century. A fire in 1648 made the need for a new building more urgent. After the 1648 Treaty of Münster concluded the North Netherlands' struggle for independence, the Amsterdam town council laid the foundation stone of the new city hall. It was inaugurated in 1655, with great ceremony. The edifice was conceived as a

majestic celebration of the glory of Amsterdam in the universe, and the decorative program for the exterior and the interior is integrated into the architecture. When the architect Jacob van Campen resigned in 1654, the work was continued under the direction of Daniel Stalpert. The program for the decorations was planned by Joost van den Vondel and Cornelis de Graeff.³

Van Campen's design was realized as a grand, classicizing structure on two main levels. The Tribunal, or *Vierschaar*, was on the ground floor, and twelve rooms, connected by grand galleries, for the departments of government were on the upper level. At the time of the structure's design, the decorative program must have been worked out, with consideration for the functions of the spaces. Comprehensively, the program glorified Amsterdam in terms of allegory, history, and religion, through marble and stucco reliefs, canvases, and frescoes. Amsterdam's central position in the universe was made tangible by celestial and earthly maps on the floor of the Citizens' Hall.

On the ground floor, the Tribunal contained three large marble reliefs on the theme of Justice carried out under extraordinary circumstances, by Artus Quellinus (Junius Brutus ordering the deaths of his sons; The Judgment of Solomon; The Blindness of Zeleucus). For the over-mantles in the various meeting rooms on the main floor, Old Testament scenes were commissioned from a number of artists, including Jan Lievens and several former pupils of Rembrandt, Bol and Flinck. These subjects were selected to demonstrate civic and personal virtues desirable in the *Vroedschap* of Amsterdam: generosity, steadfastness, respect, wisdom, incorruptibility, judiciousness, courage, and strong leadership.

The interior decoration would be largely completed by four crescents, illustrating heroic acts in battle, two Old Testament (David and Goliath and Samson and the Philistines) and two Roman heroes (Marcus Curtius and Horatio Cocles), and the eight lunettes in the Batavian series. The two Old Testament crescents were painted by Jordaens, and of the Batavian series, six by Lievens, and one each by Jordaens and Jurriaen Ovens were installed; finally around 1700, two more scenes of this series were painted by Jan Anthony de Groot.⁴

The eight scenes from Batavian history were determined by Cornelis de Graeff after the mantle-piece canvases were underway, and after Van Campen pulled out of the project in 1654. The Batavian series was hastily commissioned in 1659 from Govaert Flinck when the Burgomasters learned of the planned visit in 1660 by Amalia von Solms. Flinck was given the task of providing designs and ultimately oil canvases for the eight lunettes in the four corners of the building; each lunette was to represent a scene from the conflict between the Romans and the Batavians; after Flinck's sudden death in the midst of this work, the project became divided between Rembrandt, Lievens, and Jordaens. According to the 1662 description by Melchior Fokkens, the cycle was in place by 1661-62, and at that time included Rembrandt's *Civilis*. Shortly thereafter, Rembrandt's canvas was removed, cut down, and ultimately replaced by Ovens' painting.

The conventions of town hall decoration were established during the Renaissance with imagery of virtues and good government. Typically, the exemplars came from ancient history and often directly from Valerius Maximus, rather than the more authoritative sources. Valerius selected noteworthy episodes from Roman and ancient Mediterranean cultures, and conveniently arranged them by theme. Designers of civic programs chose their subjects from Valerius, but tailored their programs to the town in question and gave prominence to local legends or favored values.⁵ The situation in Amsterdam was typical in this regard.

Vondel stated he selected histories from Tacitus and Plutarch. The Batavian cycle was based upon those by Tacitus, and is specific to Amsterdam, with precedence in Otto van Veen's 1612 cycle, etched by Antonio Tempesta. Although captions to the Tempesta series explained the depicted events, they were not sufficiently descriptive for all the details represented by Rembrandt, who seems to have read the original Tacitus more carefully than the other artists involved. Vondel selected the examples of civic virtue for the overmantles from Plutarch. Most of these subjects were available in several abbreviated forms, including Valerius Maximus. Artists, therefore, did not need to consult Plutarch in the original, even if the program designers had done so; the artists

had only to look into the abbreviated, concise, and pithy exemplars of Valerius in order to get the gist of their project.

The decoration of this complex monument concerns Rembrandt primarily for his *Civilis*. However, a drawing, probably representing a scene from Plutarch of Pyrrhus negotiating with Fabricius, may be related to the program. Other drawings by Rembrandt, of varying quality, may also be connected in some way with this project.⁶ Despite, or perhaps in spite of, Rembrandt's position as famous artist in Amsterdam, his pupils Flinck, Bol, and Ovens and his friend Lievens played a greater role in it than he.

The Oath of Civilis

One of the eight enormous canvases planned to illustrate the Batavian revolt, Rembrandt's *Civilis* was assigned to him only after Flinck's death in 1660; Rembrandt's canvas was in place briefly in 1661-62, but sent back to the artist for revision, and ultimately rejected [FIG. 54]. Rembrandt's fidelity to Tacitus' text has also long been recognized. Reasons for the refusal of the picture have included this fidelity: *Civilis* is thoroughly inelegant, with his one eye, bulky clothing, and coarse features. Such aspects may not have fitted expectations of decorum.⁷ Quite possibly, the reasons for refusal were more complex. The parallel between the House of Orange-Nassau and the Batavians may have been enthusiastically encouraged in the abstract and in the historical sense. Fokkens, and others, explicitly made the comparison: "So the Batavians (striking exemplars of present-day Dutchmen) won their liberty by force of arms, just as in our time under the leadership of the House of Nassau..."⁸ At a time when tensions were high between the Amsterdam Burgomasters and The Hague over the policy to be followed with England, Rembrandt may have made *Civilis* too obviously an Orangist.⁹

Rembrandt was unusual among the painters of the Batavian series to make such overt reference to Tacitus' text.¹⁰ He did so with his customary attentiveness to the narrative, and imaginative recreation of the actions and intentions of the characters. The story of the evening

feast at which the sword-oath took place is well-known. Civilis gathered the noblemen, the strongest, and the most headstrong of the tribe together for an evening of eating and drinking:¹¹

And then Civilis called together the greatest noblemen of the country and also the bravest of the council, under the pretense of a large feast; and after seeing that it was late in the night and that they were completely inflamed by wine and merry-making, he then began to address them, commencing with his oration on the extraordinary glory and honor of their people, then he began also to recount all the oppressions, robberies, and other wrongs of slavery, that had been done to them.

The oath-taking followed shortly:¹² “...thus, according to the barbarian custom, he united them, one and another all together, with oath taking, as was then the practice in the nation...”

On Civilis’ appearance and character, Tacitus was quite precise:¹³

Because Civilis was a very exceptional man, with wisdom above the ordinary Barbarians, and marvelously clever in his understanding, but deformed in sight, he carried himself as another Sertorius or Hannibal.

Civilis, who had lost one eye in battle, wore this disfigurement as a mark of honor and courage. The rough features of the men gathered in the rustic setting of Rembrandt’s painting may be more readily associated with the “Barbarians” of the Dutch text, which subtly tends to emphasize the fierce and unrefined character of the group.¹⁴

Only a few passages in Tacitus were essential for Rembrandt’s depiction, but he read them with more care and attention to accuracy, setting, and action than the others who had depicted the scene. Van Veen, Flinck, and Ovens showed the genteel handshake, and hid Civilis’ disfigured eye by portraying him in profile. Consistently, these three

artists gentrified the characters and the occasion. Tempesta's etching, based upon Otto van Veen's modello of 1612, gave the general prototype for Flinck, whose composition is known from a preliminary drawing.¹⁵ Jurriaen Ovens' painting, now seen in place of Rembrandt's, retained the figural arrangement of Flinck's.¹⁶ In these designs, the location is a wood-like garden, day-lit in the Van Veen-Tempesta design, and probably day-lit in that of Flinck. In Ovens' version, however, the scene is unequivocally dark. It is likely that Ovens, having been a pupil of Rembrandt, learned something from either his master's style, teaching, or his rejected *Civilis*; Ovens placed the oath-taking as a night event, and avoided disfavor by following the composition of the original, and accepted, Flinck design.

Another issue may have been disagreement over the location of the ancient event. The location of the oath-taking in the *sacrum nemus*, or *Schacker-bosch*, was an issue for much discussion during the seventeenth century. The two foremost candidates were in Voorschoten (between Leiden and The Hague) and in Nijmegen, in the province of Gelderland.¹⁷ Simon van Leeuwen summarized the differences in opinion, and gave reasons for Nijmegen as the site of Oppidum Batavorum; he mentioned that J. Smetius located the *sacrum nemus* in Nijmegen, but everyone else believed it to be between Leiden and The Hague, in Voorschoten.¹⁸

The setting for Rembrandt's banquet and oath-taking is seen in the preparatory drawing, which is the basis for approximating his original design [FIG. 55].¹⁹ Rembrandt placed the event in a massive arched and open building, which extends the lunette of the Town Hall itself. This structure seems to be a variant of the octagonal building known as the "Carolingian chapel" in Nijmegen.²⁰ Although the walls were closed by the Renaissance, Rembrandt drew it, or a variant, with open arches to show trees, as is suitable for a woods. According to L. Smids and others, this building was so ancient that it dated back to the days of Julius Caesar, and was used by the earliest Batavians.²¹ H. Brunsting proposed that Rembrandt's setting would be a good reason for the rejection of the painting. The Amsterdammers may have preferred not to share the honor of original Batavian city with Gelderland.²²



FIG. 55 – Rembrandt, *The Oath of Civilis*. Drawing, ca. 1661.

Not only did Rembrandt emphasize the least elegant features of Tacitus' account to characterize Civilis and his tribe, but also he set the event in Gelderland's ancient structure. Neither of these aspects would apparently seem pleasing to the Amsterdam burgomasters. Their interest may well have been in promoting a more refined ancestry in a locale they favored. Indeed, Rembrandt's *Civilis*, with his rough features and peculiar yet evocative clothing, may have simply not pleased the Town Hall commissioners, who sought to glorify republican and Christian values.²³

A Case of Kindness: Pyrrhus

Rembrandt's small drawing of a military scene has generally been related thematically, though vaguely, to the Town Hall decoration, and placed within the years 1655-1660 [FIG. 56]. An entire encampment is established with a mountainous backdrop: tents, elephants, canopied platform with a group of soldiers and elders, mounted soldiers and foot soldiers, and kneeling men. A tall man, his outstretched right hand holding a scepter, stands upon the platform and addresses a group of kneeling men. Two of these have their hands tied behind their backs, and one hunches forward. Various episodes in Roman history have been proposed for this drawing.²⁴ I suggest that it represents *Pyrrhus Pardoning the Captives Before their Release to Fabricius*, according to Plutarch's account in the Life of Pyrrhus. Plutarch's text was well-known in the vernacular; the first complete Dutch translation, by A. van Nyevelt, appeared in 1603 and was reprinted in 1644.²⁵ And an abridged Dutch translation, by M. Everart, was published in 1601.²⁶ Selections were popularized through Valerius Maximus, and Vondel relied upon historical figures from Plutarch for portions of the Town Hall program. The questions that arise in consideration of this drawing, however, involve both a careful reading of the full text of Plutarch and artistic rivalry in rendering an episode in Pyrrhus' life.

Pyrrhus, a Hellenic prince descended from Achilles, was king of Epiria (now Albania) and regarded as a successor to Alexander; he con-



FIG. 56 – Rembrandt, *Pyrrhus Pardoning The Captives Before their Release to Fabricius*, ca. 1655-1660

quered Macedonia and then turned to Italy; in 280 BC he arrived in the south by offering alliance with the Tarentines in their defense against Rome. In a series of battles against the Romans, he was at first strong and victorious, but he eventually suffered sufficient losses in battles fought against Manius Curius to leave Italy for good. Not content to stay in his home territories, he attempted to conquer Sparta, where he was killed at Argos by a tile thrown at him by a woman, who had just watched him kill her son.

In Rembrandt's drawing, the tall man on the platform holds out a scepter toward the kneeling captives – as in a pardon. The prime attribute of the tall figure on the dais is his peculiar helmet. Plutarch's description of the helmet is specific, for Pyrrhus was identified by:²⁷ “...the tall and beautiful plume and goat-horns on his helmet.”

During an early battle against the Greek leader Demetrius to gain control of the Macedonians, Pyrrhus had taken off his helmet and was not immediately recognized; once he put it on again, he was noticed, gained the support of the Macedonians, and won the battle. This battle and its accompanying description of the helmet, occur in Plutarch's account of the events that took place before Pyrrhus crossed the sea to Italy. The description of the helmet was not repeated in Plutarch's account of Pyrrhus' later exploits on the Italian peninsula. Consequently, the helmet, so distinctively Pyrrhus' own, was not included in other writers' accounts, which focused upon the events concerning the Roman republic, nor was it included in the abbreviated translation of Plutarch by Everart of 1601.

Rembrandt drew this headgear as a round top, with a ridge in the center and eight perpendicular strokes, some curved at the top. The central strokes are crossed by a perpendicular line, to make a squared shape. This central piece is the crest, and those strokes at either side are the goats' horns. The rest of the armor is a breastplate, skirt, and boots, since the legs end in blocky feet. This costume is distinct from the other figures in the scene.

In the context of the conflicts between the Romans and the Tarentines, Plutarch recounted three episodes of negotiations between Pyrrhus and the Romans that involved pardoning captives. The first follows an early battle in which Pyrrhus took many Roman prisoners and gained the favor of the Lucanians and Samnites; Cineas, Pyrrhus' advisor, went to Rome to offer peace and pardon to Roman captives, without ransom; the offer was refused, with the response, led by the eloquent and blind Appius Claudius, that Pyrrhus must leave the Italian peninsula, which he refused to do.²⁸ The second concerns Fabricius, a poor but highly esteemed Roman officer, who led a delegation to negotiate with Pyrrhus about the prisoners. Aware of his poverty, Pyrrhus offered Fabricius gold as a gift, but Fabricius understood it as a bribe, and refused it; the next day, Pyrrhus, aware also that the Roman officer had never seen an elephant, hid a large one behind a curtain and at an appointed time, pulled the curtain suddenly

so that the elephant became startled, and bellowed loudly. This attempt to frighten Fabricius with the elephant was unsuccessful: Fabricius declared to Pyrrhus: “Your gold was ineffective yesterday and your beast does not frighten me today.” Pyrrhus admired Fabricius and “entrusted his prisoners of war to him alone, on condition that, in case the senate should not vote for the peace, they should be sent back again to him, though they might first greet their relatives and celebrate the festival of Saturn. And they were so sent back after the festival, the senate having voted a penalty of death for any that stayed behind.”²⁹

The third instance, which appears to be the incident represented in the drawing, involves a plot to poison Pyrrhus; this was instigated by his physician, and discovered and foiled by Fabricius, who warned Pyrrhus. After punishing the physician, Pyrrhus permanently released the prisoners in gratitude to Fabricius. Pyrrhus “once more sent Cineas to negotiate a peace for him. But the Romans would not consent to receive the men for nothing, either as a favour from an enemy, or as a reward for not committing iniquity against him, and therefore released for Pyrrhus an equal number of Tarentines and Samnites whom they had taken...”³⁰ The Romans declared they would allow no friendship or peace until Pyrrhus left Italy. Pyrrhus then fought the Romans at Asculum, where he was victorious although both sides suffered heavy casualties, and eventually left Italy. Having won these battles, Pyrrhus realized he had lost the war.

In the first instance, the pardon is an offer, not an act, and was negotiated unsuccessfully by Cineas at Rome. In the second instance, Pyrrhus clearly stated to Fabricius the terms by which the captives were sent to Rome for a leave in the care of Fabricius, and their return. In that case, Cineas was not involved. The third instance involved both Cineas and Fabricius, and the result was to hand the captives over, finally, to Fabricius. This third and permanent release accords best with the drawing: the two men flanking Pyrrhus, in the foreground of the platform, would be Fabricius to the left, with the crested helmet, and Cineas, robed, bearded, and hands clasped upon a stick. In the left corner, the soldier, holding a banner and mounted upon a horse, might

indicate the convoy upon horseback sent by Pyrrhus to meet the Roman envoy outside the camp, as an escort for safety.

Pyrrhus was hardly obscure within the range of humanistic reference. His moral character and thoughtful leadership provided a number of pithy anecdotes that were didactically useful. He demonstrated kind treatment of captives and respect for one's opponents. Valerius Maximus, relying on Plutarch, popularized Pyrrhus and some of his deeds.³¹ Valerius presented Pyrrhus first as a firm and generous leader of the Tarentines, and then, as a kind commander who not only sent an escort to meet the Roman convoy, but also pardoned a group of Roman captives, prior to their redemption. Valerius, however, omitted many details, including Pyrrhus' distinctive helmet. In spite of its appropriate demonstration of fortitude, clemency, and personal strength, the episode of Pyrrhus frightening Fabricius with the elephant was not included in Valerius' compendium. The anecdote, with its source in Plutarch, was too good for other compilers to pass up; it was recounted by P. Lauremberg.³²

Pyrrhus' only other appearance in Dutch art is in the Amsterdam Town Hall decorations. The scene of the elephant scare was chosen for one of the overmantles in the Burgomasters' Cabinet, and painted by Ferdinand Bol. This subject demonstrated Fabricius' valor, steadfastness, and incorruptibility – qualities deemed desirable in the burgomasters who were to meet in this room.³³ Another scene intended to show incorruptibility in another valorous military leader was the pendant, made for the same room, by Govaert Flinck, *The Consul Manius Curius Dentatus Refusing the Gifts of the Samnites*.³⁴ Both these scenes are tests to scare or bribe the hero: Fabricius' fearlessness in the face of an unknown terrifying beast indicates his steadfastness, and Dentatus' resistance of temptation in the offer of wealth indicates his moral rectitude. Historically, both are closely connected, for it was Manius' decision to resume leadership of Roman troops that would eventually drive Pyrrhus from Italy. Fabricius and Manius were regarded as incorruptible leaders, and they were associated, or perhaps confused, by Seneca.³⁵ Although neither subject is mentioned explicitly by Vondel in the

Inwyding, it is generally assumed that both paintings must have been planned by the dedication ceremony, 1655, and in any case, were installed and dated in the following year. Vondel's poems about the *Fabricius* and *Manius Curius*, inscribed below the paintings upon the mantepieces, emphasize the qualities of steadfastness, incorruptibility, and loyalty to Roman ideals.

Bol's composition of Pyrrhus confronting Fabricius with the elephant is a demonstration of two men staring at one another, neither yielding; it relies upon the second incident in Plutarch, and is here illustrated by the early preparatory drawing [FIG. 57]. The power of their glares is the meaning of the painting: Fabricius has already delivered the Roman message for Pyrrhus to leave the Italian peninsula, and Pyrrhus, having failed to win over Fabricius by gold, attempts to terrify him with the startling bellow of the elephant. Bol's scene allows no reasonable debate, not even a spoken exchange. The Roman envoy, wearing armor and a plumed helmet, stands beneath the trumpeting beast, as he turns to face the king; Pyrrhus, wearing armor, has, upon his head a crown upon a turban. Pyrrhus' crowned turban is a generic kingly attribute, of the type worn by monarchs to connote antiquity, whether secular or biblical. It is not the goat-horned helmet of Plutarch's description. Bol omitted the one attribute of Pyrrhus that was uniquely his.

Rembrandt's drawing is in many details cursory, but in this it is unequivocal: Pyrrhus' helmet has a crest and horns. The episode of the drawing is not a test of wills, as in Bol's stand-off, but a scene of conciliation and mutual respect. Fabricius was there to negotiate about the captives and Pyrrhus' continued stay in Italy. On each of their meetings, in fact, the purpose was diplomatic negotiation, and the last resulted in the permanent release of prisoners.

On two grounds, Rembrandt's drawing may be understood as a critique of Bol's painting. The first is the non-specificity of Pyrrhus' headgear, and the fact that Bol ignored this means of making the costume particular to the subject. The second is more subtle. Elephants made periodic appearances in Amsterdam, where they were regarded

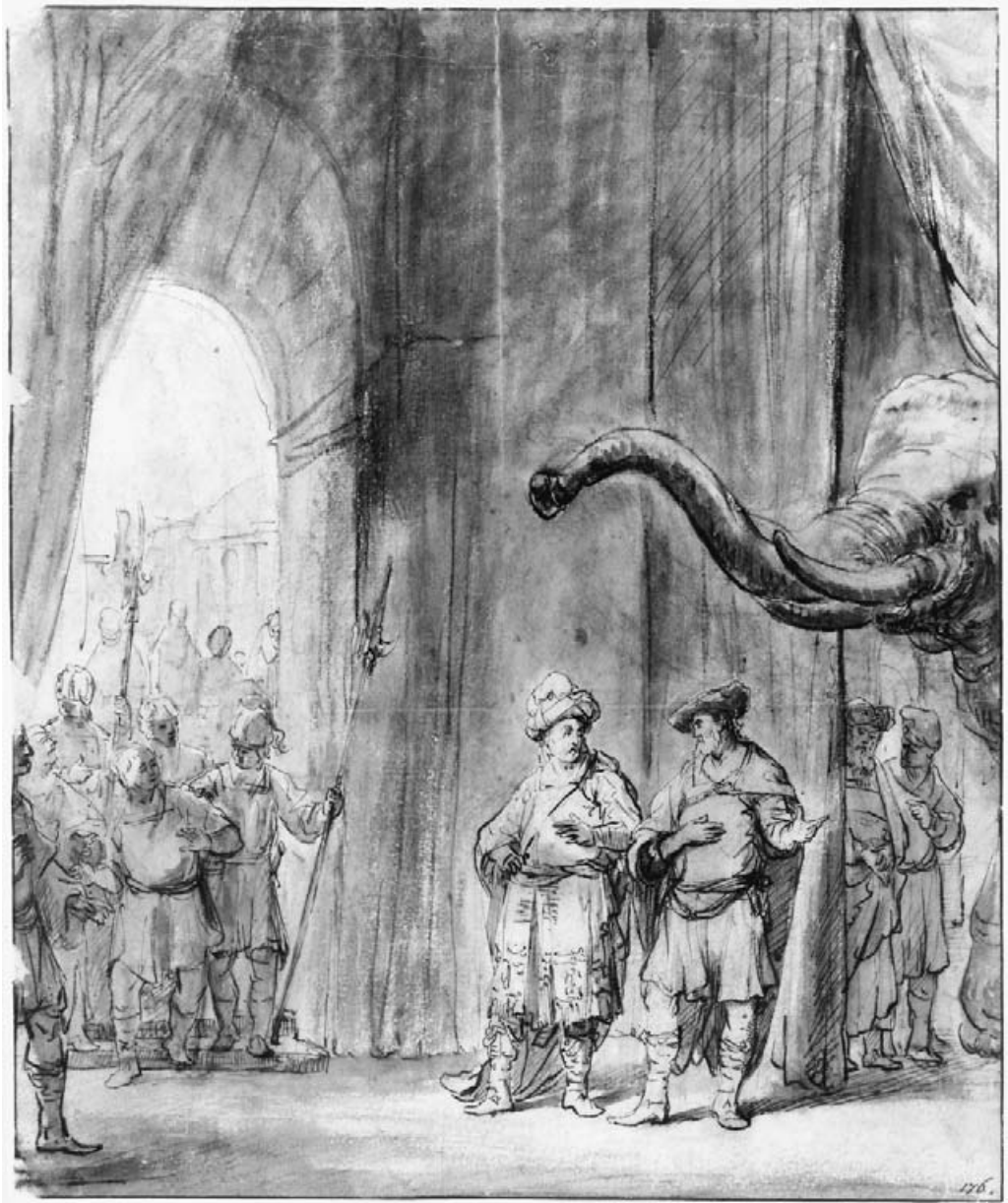


FIG. 57 – Ferdinand Bol, *The Fearlessness of Caius Fabricius Luscinus*.
Drawing, ca. 1655

as exotic. They were not feared, but respected and displayed as an attraction for the circus. One elephant, Hanske, was drawn three times by Rembrandt in 1637.³⁶ Perhaps the choice of Fabricius' fearlessness had an unconvincing note; the elephant Hanske who visited Amsterdam seems to have had a calm and placid nature. The relationship between Pyrrhus and Fabricius was one of mutual respect. The elephant scare episode is not one that tellingly reveals Pyrrhus' personality. Pyrrhus desired a diplomatic truce. He respected Fabricius so profoundly that he asked the Roman envoy to serve him, and he treated his own soldiers, allies, and prisoners kindly. Fabricius demonstrated his own strengths not only by his fearlessness in the elephant scare, but also by his incorruptibility when he suspected the proffered silver was a bribe. Thus he revealed his acuity in assessing Pyrrhus' leadership, and his trustworthiness and good judgment in behaving properly even to the occupying power of Pyrrhus. He turned over the traitor when the plot to poison Pyrrhus was uncovered, and reaped the reward by securing the release of the prisoners.

On another level, Rembrandt's drawing may be understood as a critique of the choice of this subject for the Town Hall decoration. If so, then Rembrandt was aiming it at Vondel, who designed the program and selected its scenes from Plutarch and Tacitus. Perhaps Rembrandt made the drawing in order to demonstrate an alternative scene, and one that more effectively conveyed worthy leadership: Pyrrhus pardoning the captives and releasing them into the care of Fabricius. Pyrrhus' speech upon this occasion was in keeping with Rembrandt's interest in depicting communication among figures. This speech, renowned for its eloquence, in delivery as well as meaning, was not included in Plutarch's life of Pyrrhus, but known from Ennius and recorded by Cicero. Pyrrhus was eloquent upon returning the captives:³⁷

"I wish neither money nor gold.

"We are fellow warriors, let us not trifle as robbers.

"Money shall not divide us, but rather, our strong swords.

"One shall see how fortune leads to my or your piety,
[or] makes one or the other rule. Let me yet speak.

“Should fortune mercifully spare anyone’s strength,
if God so wills it,
“I will also preserve his freedom.
“Take them [the prisoners] freely, without payment,
or any other impediment.”
That was surely a regal statement, worthy of the race
of Achilles.

These repeated and extensive verbal exchanges between Pyrrhus and Fabricius distinguish their relationship from other adversarial leaders. Within the visual tradition, there is one illustration of the conversation following Fabricius’ discovery of the poison plot against Pyrrhus, the episode immediately preceding the third release, and permanent pardon, of the prisoners. In the first German edition of Cicero (1531), Pyrrhus and Fabricius converse excitedly, in a setting of the military encampment [FIG. 58].³⁸ Pyrrhus wears oriental robe, pointed shoes, and turban; Fabricius wears soft hat and European armor. Without the label and text, they could be any two gesticulating and speaking officers. However, the text explains that Fabricius prevented the death by poison of Pyrrhus, even though the two were on opposite sides. This book, a thin folio, was fairly well known and often reprinted; Jan Six owned the first edition.³⁹ This is hardly a visual prompt for Rembrandt’s drawing, but it indicates the suitability of the event for exemplary leadership for both Pyrrhus and Fabricius. Bol, perhaps following its woodcut illustration more closely than any text, may have used it as a guide for the antiquated costume of Pyrrhus. For Rembrandt, Pyrrhus’ personality and character have aspects that may have provided an opportunity to delve further than had Bol or the designers of the Town Hall program.

Defying Mortality: Zeuxis Laughing

A rare subject is found among Rembrandt’s later self-portraits: Zeuxis, who, according to legend, died laughing while painting the portrait of an old woman. The painting survives in a fragment, and only in rela-



FIG. 58 – Christoph von Schwarzenberg (attributed), *Pyrrhus and Fabricius*.
Woodcut

tion to Aert de Gelder's *Zeuxis Painting an old woman* does the subject become clear [FIGS. 59 and 60].⁴⁰ The story of Zeuxis' death was not common currency in the art literature, and had never been represented previously. It originated in late antiquity through Festus and became disseminated in the Renaissance, partly through the efforts of J.C. Scaliger whose edition of that author was published in Leiden 1575. In the vernacular, it first appears in Van Mander's Addenda of the *Antieken Leven*, as an afterthought to the life of Zeuxis:⁴¹



FIG. 59 – Rembrandt, *Self-Portrait as Zeuxis*, ca. 1662



FIG. 60 – Aert de Gelder, *Zeuxis Painting an Old Woman*, 1685

Zeuxis is supposed to have died laughing immoderately, choking while painting from life a funny, wrinkled old woman. Verrius Flaccus related this in his books on the meaning of words, according to Sex. Pompeus Festus. Here is a poet's version of these lines: "Do you laugh without moderation? Or do you wish to be like the painter, who died from laughing?"

Although this anecdote may give a peculiar power to laughter that can kill, it also relates to concepts of beauty, moderation, and glory.

Zeuxis' odd death conveyed the positive worth of non-conformity, of expressiveness, and of challenging mortality through art. One collection of exemplars and historical curiosities was assembled by Petrus Lauremberg in German, first in 1640 and then in later enlarged editions in German and Dutch. The anecdote of Zeuxis' death was first included in the Dutch edition of 1661, under the caption, "some men laughed themselves to death":⁴²

Laughter is a quality of men, which no other creatures of nature share, ... Zeuxis, a Painter, once portrayed very expertly from life an old, wrinkled, crooked, and misshapen Woman. When he keenly regarded his work, which fully corresponded to the [old woman's] form, he began to laugh so immoderately and violently that he laughed his own living breath out of himself, and fell dead to the ground...

Moderation is good in all things, because it is as one says in the Proverb: Too much is unhealthy. By avoidance, all excess may be overturned.

And perhaps the very timeliness of this compilation may have attracted Rembrandt's attention. This publication included many episodes from Plutarch and Valerius Maximus that were represented in the Town Hall decoration, and that were not otherwise handily available in Dutch; although they were well known in a variety of books, they did not all appear in one volume, with the possible exception of this 1661 edition.

Van Hoogstraten referred to Zeuxis several times in his *Inleyding*. He noted that "Zeuxis reluctantly painted ordinary histories, that is of wars, or the deeds of heroes or gods, but he always sought some lively embellishment, in the depiction of passions and emotions..."⁴³ Elsewhere, Van Hoogstraten discussed laughter, and reported that Myron had enjoyed portraying a drunken old woman as delightfully charming, from which he gained much fame, but that Zeuxis did not have that same pleasure, because "while he was busy painting another old funny granny from life he burst into such violent laughter that he choked and died."⁴⁴

Van Hoogstraten, who was a meticulous reader, may have become familiar with the anecdote through Van Mander's *Addenda*. Perhaps Van Mander's inclusion of the passage, even at the very end of the *Antieken Leven*, may have been sufficient to make the story part of artistic lore. However, an earlier literary vehicle may have been Scaliger's 1575 edition of *Festus*, which may have been a critical factor for Van Mander in his inclusion of the anecdote, even as an afterthought. The position of Scaliger also may have been significant in popularizing this anecdote, since it may have circulated by word-of-mouth among the scholars and artists in Leiden independently of Van Mander's book. Rembrandt seems hardly the sort to read Van Mander's book with such care as to pick out this passage, from among the very last, unnumbered pages. But others may have pointed out Zeuxis' bizarre death to him. Through the 1661 Dutch Lauremburg compendium which served as a handy reference for the Town Hall imagery, the anecdote would have become easily accessible.

Although known in the literature, the anecdote of Zeuxis' peculiar death would not alone serve to inspire Rembrandt to identify with the ancient artist. Rembrandt's identification with Zeuxis in this self-portrait may have been prompted by personal reasons. Zeuxis painted unusual subjects with an unexpected and interpretive aspect. Zeuxis was also renowned for his painting of Helen, which demonstrated the principle of selecting the most beautiful parts from the most beautiful maidens in order to create a single beautiful figure. He was noted for the high prices paid for his work, whose worth was beyond financial estimation. Pertinently, Zeuxis was famous for his inimitable style of painting. He was an eccentric, non-conforming sort. He was famous for his competition with Parrhasius, in which Zeuxis' painted grapes deceived the birds but Parrhasius' painted curtain deceived Zeuxis who tried to pull it aside; this popular anecdote was often illustrated.⁴⁵

Each of these qualities associated with Zeuxis resonates in Rembrandt's art and life. Rembrandt sought unusual subjects and expressive qualities; in his representations of the nude; he blended the ideal and the real to achieve tactile natural appearances; he demanded high prices for his

work; and he cultivated a manner of drawing, etching, and painting that defied imitation. Rembrandt's household arrangements were unconventional, and, if Houbraken may be taken with cautious authority, Rembrandt's reputation marked him an eccentric. Artistic competition with painters and printmakers past and present was a constant factor in Rembrandt's art; he challenged and surpassed Rubens, Raphael, Lucas van Leyden, Dürer and others.

It may have been easy for Rembrandt to identify himself with this wealthy, successful, highly praised, competitive, and somewhat eccentric painter. For Zeuxis, the death by laughter was a sign of immoderate behavior toward an example of unbeautiful humanity. Rembrandt, laughing at the artist's task of recording the visible, may have blended the triumph of art over death with the human laughter at one's detractors. Among the ancient painters, Apelles was the exemplar of the princely painter and for the elevation of painting above common craft, and Zeuxis, the exemplar of deceptive realism and the portrayal of emotions, natural selection, and an inimitable style. Zeuxis sought novel and expressive inventions, and imbued his works with an added dimension of spirituality or liveliness, according to Van Hoogstraten. The autonomy of the artist and his "above it all" status might have appealed to Rembrandt. And so would the act of laughing in the face of his sitter's impending mortality. Perhaps, too, Rembrandt, as an old man, saw himself as the mortal sitter, crafting his image even as he would become immortal through it. Art would outlast nature, and the maker of the art, thereby earn immortality.⁴⁶ At any rate, it was through the printed text that the story circulated, subtly through Van Mander and more overtly, through Lauremberg.

CHAPTER 7

ARTISTS'
LIBRARIES

Practicality and Universality

REMBRANDT'S INTEREST WAS IN COLLECTING art, not books. The 22 books noted in the 1656 inventory were far outnumbered by over 75 *kunstboecken*, portfolios of prints and drawings by Rembrandt, his pupils, and Italian and Netherlandish artists. In this imbalance between library and art holdings, his interests are clear: his passion was for the visual, rather than the literary, arts. Artists who were renowned for their reading and for their possession of books were few in the Renaissance and Baroque, and those who amassed sizeable libraries often were art collectors; they were generally better off financially, through their earnings, investments, or inheritance, than the average artist.

As an artist who collected books and art, Rubens was unsurpassed. Following his travels in Italy and Spain in 1600-1608, he settled in Antwerp and furnished his house and studio with sculpture, paintings, prints, and books. His art collection as much as his reading fed his imagination; he appropriated other artists' invention, technique, and style, and reworked drawings by Italian Renaissance artists. For the seventeenth century, in northern Europe as in Italy, Rubens was the exemplar of the learned, successful, wealthy and cultivated painter. A humanist scholar of history, poetry, philosophy, language, political science, and the church, Rubens was also regarded as a classicist. In his correspondence with Claude-Fabri de Peiresc, the French scholar, antiquary, and Councilor to the Provence Parliament, Rubens demonstrated his expertise on gems, cameos, mummies, and other artifacts; in a famous letter of 1630, Rubens discussed the purpose and

function of an ancient tripod, examining it as a cooking pot, sacred seat, or pedestal for a statue.¹ He designed title pages for classical and contemporary authors published by his friend Balthasar Moretus of the Plantin press, and acquired the press' publications as they were produced, often in exchange for his title page designs. Perhaps more than any other artist, Rubens left a well-marked trail of his reading. This trail may be followed in his letters, his dealings with Moretus, and above all in his own works of art. His attentiveness to Greek and Roman poetry and history is evident in his original interpretations; he combined texts when appropriate to arrive at unique solutions, and even illustrated moments not described by an author. His early canvas, *Hero and Leander*, relied upon Musaeus' epic for Hero's plunge from her tower, and upon Bion's *Lament for Adonis* for the sea nymphs bewailing Leander's death.² For the tapestry design *Decius Mus Relating his Dream*, his main source was Livy (VIII.6,9.10), but he adorned the hero's helmet with the she-wolf suckling Romulus and Remus from the literary description of Juvenal's *Eleventh Satire*.³ Rubens' addition to Virgil's *Aeneid* is his painting *Aeneas Assisting Dido to Dismount*, which depicts the moment just before the couple will take shelter from the impending storm in a cave.⁴ Rubens exemplified the cultivated and prosperous artist who read voraciously, sensitively, and imaginatively. For northern Europe, and for Rembrandt, Rubens' presence as the cultivated, learned painter was pervasive.

Rembrandt's aemulation of Rubens is a guiding force in his early work; this is evident in several of Rembrandt's paintings in which he challenged a Rubensian invention not only visually but also textually, as in the *Proserpina*, *Artemisia*, and *Samson Blinded*. At the same time, Rembrandt's unconventional domestic circumstances, messy financial dealings, and loosely organized workshop contrast with Rubens' two happy marriages, considerable wealth, and tightly organized studio. Rembrandt's bookshelf of 22 items and his limited yet pragmatic reading also contrast to Rubens' extensive library of about 500 books and methodical textual study.

For Spain, Italy, and France, foremost painters who had received humanist educations and drew upon their academic training throughout their oeuvre include Velazquez, Sacchi, Pietro da Cortona, Pietro Testa, and Poussin; these artists were respected both for their craft in art and their eloquence, in speaking, writing, and painting. Their libraries contained a broad range of subjects. Velazquez owned 154 books, on topics ranging from cosmology, mathematics and hydraulics to architecture and art theory. He preferred reading in Italian, and he read ancient literature primarily in Spanish.⁵ The libraries of Sacchi (54 books) and Pietro da Cortona (222 books) are typical of Italian artists. These tended to be strong in practical, literary, scientific, social, and historical topics.⁶ Another significant library was possessed by the Roman artist Durante Alberti (1538-1613), who owned a hundred books. His library reflects his activity as a painter: history, poetry, church history and a few religious works, and architectural books and manuals for the artist.⁷ Most of the books owned by Sacchi, Da Cortona, and Alberti were in Italian, with the exception of a few religious works which were in Latin. Their libraries in this respect reflect artists' broad interests, and mostly in their spoken language.

These are the exceptions, for most artists did not possess many volumes, even if their art demonstrated close study of a variety of subjects. Poussin's scholarly conversation was prized by his friends, who marveled at his erudition. His paintings, many of them meticulously planned allegories, often present puzzles of iconography, yet his literary sources, with text and pictures, were not only in Greek or Latin, but also in French and Italian. He studied Tacitus, Livy, and Plutarch in French editions in order to render certain of their more obscure episodes in his paintings. These include *The Death of Germanicus*, pendants of *Phocion*, and *The Schoolmaster Stoned*.⁸ Poussin's library is not known, but his reading was broad, and his knowledge, so respected, was gained from both the vernacular and the classical literature. Caravaggio, who spent much of his later years evading legal authorities, possessed 12 books. In August 1605, Caravaggio left Rome precipitously for Genoa. He owed his Roman landlady some money; she apparently locked him out of the premises, and made an inventory

of Caravaggio's household furnishings. Among the various items was "a box with 12 books inside."⁹ Neither this document nor the artist's biography reveals much of an interest in reading. The multi-layered historical and symbolic meanings in his Roman paintings indicate a rare complexity of invention. For example, Caravaggio's haunting *Death of the Virgin* (Paris, Louvre, 1606) contains profound allusions to church history, burial practice, and apostolic character; these allusions may well have come not from books but from his own experience in Rome and conversation with acquaintances. The correlation, therefore, between complex imagery, reading, and book ownership is not automatic, but is an individual matter.

The overall situation in the Netherlands is that Dutch artists owned a small number of books, on average between 20 and 40. Information about artists' books may be gleaned from inventories, usually made at death in order to settle the estate. First studied on a large scale by A. Bredius, these often elusive documents are still accessible primarily through his massive compilation, *Künstler-Inventar*.¹⁰ His work has been augmented by more recent study of individual artists' documents. Of the several hundred inventories published by Bredius, only 18 contain noteworthy holdings of books. Often artists owned Van Mander's *Schilder-Boeck*, in either edition, 1604 or 1618. Van Mander's book regularly appears as a single item; this distinction may be due to the book's importance as a useful art source, and secondly to its size as a thick quarto. There was not yet a consistent system for making inventories or listing books, although usually large books were listed singly, and smaller ones grouped together. Rembrandt's inventory is odd, but hardly unique, in that a hybrid system was used: seven items individually noted and fifteen bundled together.

Typical of inventories that grouped the books are those of Jan Vermeer and Nicolaes Willingh, two artists here representative of genre and history painting. Vermeer's 1676 inventory mentioned thirty volumes, kept in a small back room on the main floor: "five books in folio/twenty-five [others] of all kinds." For Vermeer, who evidently enjoyed the practice of music, another diversion was reading.¹¹ In many of his paintings, books have a significant place as physical

objects, formally within the compositions and symbolically. In *The Astronomer*, the book is Adriaen Metius' treatise on astronomy and geography (1618 edition), opened to a page that quotes Josephus; the quoted passage makes an analogy between the astronomer's task of charting the heavens and the patriarchs "who measured and described for us the firmament and course of the stars."¹² In that painting and also in the *Lady Writing a Letter with a Servant*, a picture-within-a-picture of *The Finding of Moses* offers a further clue that Josephus served the artist.¹³ Just as the astronomer measured the stars, so the patriarchs provided wisdom and spiritual guidance to the ancient Israelites, of whom the Dutch would have regarded themselves as the spiritual heirs. Another example of the importance of text is in Vermeer's *The Music Lesson*, where the Latin inscription on the virginal imparts the general meaning of music as the happy companion of love to the specific event of the lesson.¹⁴ Vermeer's allusions to biblical history and emblematic symbolism imparted depth to these seemingly casual scenes. In having a library of thirty volumes, Vermeer was not unusual.

Willingh (ca. 1640-1678) was the court painter to the Grand Duke of Berlin. His inventory of 1685 listed a number of statues and paintings as single items, and "38 books, 45 prints, 39 models, 800 drawings, and a book with 136 prints, all together in one large cabinet".¹⁵ Whatever the book with 136 prints was – perhaps Tempesta's Ovidian series or Merian's biblical prints – is not identified, but the volume was unusual enough to receive separate mention. Willingh favored mythological subjects and painted in an elegant manner derived from Van Dyck. The art of Vermeer and Willingh ranges from genre to history. Although the study of received knowledge through books was essential for their inventions, it did not entail ownership of many volumes.

A few artists were unusual in this respect, and possessed large libraries: these are Cornelis Dusart (1660-1704), Adriaen van Nieulandt (1614-1658), C.A. van Schilperoort (1577-1636), Pieter Jansz Saenredam (1597-1665), Pieter Lastman, and Aert de Gelder. Dusart, whose own production focused on farmyards and taverns, would seem to have little use in his art for much reading, but he had a large art library and

was an art dealer, according to his estate catalogue, offered on August 21, 1708. Dusart's inventory was especially rich in works on paper by Italian, French, and north European artists. He owned books on art and music that may have been for his own interest, rather than resale; these included a few religious guides, many music books, Herckmans' *Der Zee-vaert Lof*, and practical and theoretical books on art by foremost authors, such as Scamozzi, Dürer, Goeree, Van Mander, De Bie, De Lairese, Van Hoogstraten, Junius, and Bosse. After 33 volumes are listed singly, there is the phrase: *en honderden boeken meer* [and hundreds of other books]. Two items that would have been particularly useful for a dealer are a small book listing Italian artists, the anonymous *naamlijst der Italiaanse Konstenaars* [1681 list of the names of Italian artists], and *Een kasje met Catalogen* [a small box with catalogues]. The art books such as Van Mander and De Bie would have supported his dealing business, but the more practical books on art would have been useful to any artist.¹⁶

The inventory of the Leiden artist Van Schilperoort was compiled at the time of his divorce from his second wife in 1632. The inventory lists 96 publications by author and title, and then 70 books as a group. The listed books include two on loan to painters: a Sebastiaen Franck to Jacob van Swanenburgh and a Flavius Josephus to David Bailly. Then an intriguing phrase follows: "other books are on loan to a certain student."¹⁷ Such lent books were more likely to have been read, at least by the borrowers. The notation indicates that reading material was shared, at least among this group of artists. Schilperoort's interests were poetry, rhetoric, travel, history, languages, and religion; among the few art items are books by Serlio and Van Mander. Schilperoort's library of over 160 volumes was that of a well-read vernacular humanist.¹⁸ Echoing the general pattern of Schilperoort's library is that of Adriaen van Nieulandt. Van Nieulandt's inventory of 1658 contained 17 books listed individually and then the notation: *50 kleyne boekjens* [50 small books]. Of those books listed singly, the art books were by Serlio, Vredeman de Vries, Bloemaert, and Van Mander – hardly an unusual sample; the rest concerned history and religion, including a Josephus.¹⁹

Saenredam, the specialist of church interiors, had an exceptional library; he possessed 424 volumes in 330 lots, according to its catalogue, prepared for auction in Haarlem, April 20, 1667.²⁰ Saenredam's interests ranged from law, history, theology, warfare, philosophy, geography, geometry, literature, and medicine. All the titles were in Dutch except for a very few in German, French, or Latin, which were notable for their illustrations. "The most complete category in the sale were the translations from Greek and Latin... [he was] a humanist in the vernacular."²¹ Not a classicist in language, Saenredam had the depth of knowledge about the ancient and modern world that belonged to a humanist. He owned books with extraordinary illustrations. Many, if not the overwhelming majority, of volumes were relatively recent publications, so that it seems he bought books that appeared during his lifetime, and even soon after they were published. His father, the engraver Jan (1565-1607), was church deacon in the village of Assendelft, with connections to the leading schoolmasters, artists, and writers of Haarlem. Pieter was orphaned at a young age, but he was well cared for by extended family and friends. Presumably he attended school until 1612, when he commenced his apprenticeship to Pieter de Grebber. Yet although Saenredam possessed a selection of books on perspective, which would have been of interest for practice and theory, he evidently learned more from doing than from reading. His knowledge of constructing pictorial space was acquired from the practice of surveying, and his friendship with the surveyor and mathematician Peter Wils was probably more valuable than any of his books.

Of artists in Rembrandt's immediate circle, the library of none is known in detail. Pieter Lastman's inventory of 1633 contained as one item "150 books of various sizes," while paintings, linens, furnishings, folios of drawings, and other art works were listed in over 200 items.²² A strong attention to the details communicated in the histories of antiquity, the poetry and drama of Greece and Rome, and the Bible is evident in Lastman's paintings. Lastman's reading included Livy, Herodotus, Du Choul, Boissard, Homer, Ovid, Virgil, Euripides, and other ancient and Renaissance authors. And for histories, Lastman read the classical sources, but also compendia, such as the Gottfried chronicle.

Among Rembrandt's pupils who were well-to-do and owned substantial property are Gerrit Dou, Govaert Flinck, Ferdinand Bol, Samuel van Hoogstraten, and Aert de Gelder. Typically, their inventories and other documents record paintings, furnishings and properties, usually for taxation at time of death or marriage, or for inheritance division. However, their books are grouped, unspecified. Van Hoogstraten's erudition is amply displayed in his *Inleyding* (1678), and he must have had a sizeable book collection. De Gelder, a history painter and portraitist, studied with Rembrandt during the later 1660s, and was his last known pupil. In the 1727 inventory made on his death, De Gelder possessed a large number of books, located in a room designated as a library. The books were kept in three cabinets: "Above in the middle room [there is a] library, kept in two cabinets and a smaller one, with books."²³ The three cabinets were probably made to hold books according to their size. But, as was usually the case in artists' estates, the inventorist did not bother to list the books; he found the paintings, tapestries, linens, kitchen goods, and furniture more worthy of enumerating individually.

The number of books owned by an artist is not necessarily a measure of his learnedness or even interest in the culture of the printed text. An artist's oeuvre may be a better measure. In the case of Jan Steen, for whom documentation about his book ownership is not available, the images themselves reveal a fluency with the prevailing literate culture. Steen attended primary school and Latin school, then registered the following year as a master-painter in the Guild of St. Luke.²⁴ Steen's art training coincided, at least in part, with his years of formal education. In his oeuvre, Steen demonstrates expertise in popular literature, the Bible, and some classical narratives; his erudition is demonstrated in the visual and literary puns that he inserted into various subjects, including *Twelfth Night*, *The Dissolute Household*, *The Wedding at Cana*, and *The Sacrifice of Iphigenia*. Only recently has the extent of Steen's awareness of classical literary categories been recognized.²⁵ His academic education was only one aspect of his learning; it was supplemented by ongoing social contacts, the theatre, and popular culture.

Artists tended, with the exception of Rubens, to read books in the vernacular. For example, Velazquez favored Spanish and Italian, and Saenredam, Dutch. Artists who were renowned for their learned knowledge, as well as for their skill in art, often were not readers of Greek and Latin when translations were available. Poussin, as fluent in Italian as he was in French, evidently did not read Latin well, despite a claim made by Mancini.²⁶ Another well-read artist was Hendrick Goltzius, whose erudition in history, mythology, and religion pervades his art. Yet he was not a Latinist, and those who commissioned him for portraits were careful to communicate only in Dutch.²⁷ Rembrandt's books in Dutch and German reflect a general trend toward the vernacular; the only Latin texts obviously used by Rembrandt appear to be Claudian's *De Raptu Proserpinae*, which he consulted in the excerpts published by Scaliger in the poetry handbook for Latin school, and Aulus Gellius' *Noctae Atticae*, which he used for a single passage for *Artemisia*. In both these works, Rembrandt may have sought an erudite text as a means to rival Rubens. Rembrandt's familiarity with Ovid, Homer, Cicero, Plutarch, and Tacitus came from Dutch translations. And his Josephus, his encyclopedic history of Gottfried, and probably his Livy, were in German.

In the seventeenth century, the vernacular increasingly sufficed for the publication of new discoveries in the sciences.²⁸ Those who studied classics beyond the Latin school years became specialists in ancient literature, and less concerned with current research in other fields. For artists, who were above all practitioners of the craft of illusion, the language in which they read classical narratives may not have mattered very much; only in a few cases would an artist take pains to reveal that he had studied a classical text in the Greek or Latin in order to portray a detail that became omitted or altered in translation.²⁹

The case for a practicing artist to learn foreign languages was not a strong one, at least in the art literature. Under the caption, "Wat Boeken men behoorte lezen" [Which books one ought to read], Goeeree advised the artist desirous of knowledge that there were four basic categories of books which he should seek out and look through

[*behoorde te doorsnuffelen*]: history, poetry and philosophy, ancient customs, and practical technique. As for languages other than Dutch, he noted:³⁰

It is also very advantageous to gain experience in some foreign Language, such as Latin, French and Italian, in order to better understand some Writers, who still are not translated into our Mother-tongue. But now, in this respect, we are more fortunate than in earlier times.

Consequently, it was not essential, but merely advantageous, for the artist to have some familiarity with languages other than Dutch; most authors were available in Dutch by this time. Goeree made numerous references to various authors, ancient and modern, in his books on drawing and painting. His recommendation was to read for knowledge, but generally the vernacular sufficed. Although he counselled the artist to seek out books for expertise, he did not emphasize this advice as did other authors.

Typical of Dutch artists' libraries of 20 to 40 volumes, then, are the libraries of Rembrandt, Vermeer, and Willingh. More substantial collections, such as those of Dusart, Schilperoort, Lastman, and De Gelder, are extraordinary. As an artist's book catalogue, Saenredam's catalogue of 1667 may be unique. Junius, who would have been taken quite seriously by artists in the Netherlands, did not expect book learning to be a substitute for the practice of art as a craft, but rather, as a means of raising art to the level of other professions in which knowledge of history, nature, and poetry played crucial roles. For the artist, reading supported the making of imagery. It was not the quantity of reading that mattered, but the process and the result.

Avoiding Error: Advice to the Artist

Rembrandt's attentiveness to historical and poetical texts belongs to the artistic practice of his time, but such attentiveness was not always

evident in the works of some artists. In the Dutch art literature, it became a repeated piece of advice to know the histories well, as De Grebber's *Regulen* and other writers proclaimed. More specific recommendations were scarce during the seventeenth century. Yet it was through book learning that artists could become expert in the histories they rendered. Karel van Mander's *Schilder-Boeck* contained abbreviated myths and a brief guide to the representation of the pagan gods and allegorical figures, but no broader scope for guidance in historical matters. Van Mander's ambition was to present a way of living and working for the young artist that would help raise the status of painting. To this end, the young artist should keep regular hours, be sober and temperate in his habits, and follow the technical, practical and conceptual advice presented in *Den Grondt*.³¹ Van Mander presumed that the artist was fairly well educated. After all, for the painting of histories, the artist needed expertise in his material, which comprised historical knowledge of events, customs, and costumes. Although he repeatedly alluded to the necessity for artists to be expert in many kinds of knowledge, Van Mander gave little advice except to "read and reread" history. Philips Angel, in his address in Leiden on St Luke's Day 1641, emphasized the need for artists to be expert in both the practice of art and the knowledge of histories in order to portray accurately their subjects. Of his eight main requirements that a good painter must possess, the first concerned having good judgment, and the eighth, expertise in historical matters. The intervening six requirements, as well as other observations elsewhere in the *Lof der Schilder-konst*, concerned practical and technical demands.³² The "good knowledge of histories" was essential in order to avoid mistakes.³³ In discussing at length this eighth requirement, Angel gave five examples to demonstrate the varying rigor with which artists displayed their knowledge of histories.

As an example of the need for expertise in the unique circumstances pertaining to a story, Angel related how one artist, unnamed, painted the prophet Elijah and the widow of Zarephat in a verdant landscape, an event that is related in *Kings* I:17. The episode occurred during a time of extreme drought and famine. The artist had the obligation to show a parched, sun-burnt terrain, but instead had painted a

well-watered land, fat cattle, working mills, a lush landscape, and a cloudy sky. Angel chastised the artist for his errors in depicting a prosperous setting: “He could easily have avoided this if he had but opened the Bible again, ...taking heed of what the prophet said there.”³⁴ By referring to three passages concerning this episode, Angel showed just how sloppy and ignorant was this artist, in showing the fertile land, flourishing mills, and rain clouds. Even the weather, controlled by God, must be appropriately rendered by the artist. Artists had the freedom to make their paintings according to their own invention, but they could not be inaccurate.

To avoid falling into error, as in the case of the ignorant artist in the episode of Elijah, Angel stated that we, as capable artists, should learn to do as:³⁵

...many masters of our day, namely to occupy ourselves by diligently scouring the musty old books to acquire a knowledge of histories. If we want to depict the same in drawings, prints or paintings we must add to that knowledge that deep reflection, the better to combine it with the freedom granted us, without doing injury to the sense of the histories and to the greater adornment of our work, just as the ancients did and as many of today’s celebrated spirits still do. Among them is the far-famed Rembrandt, the celebrated Jan Lievens, the much-admired Backer, the pleasing Bleecker, and many others...

Angel singled out these four artists for their obvious display of learning in their work. Most remarkably, Angel continued to discuss at length two paintings, Rembrandt’s *Samson’s Wedding Feast* and Lievens’ *Abraham Embracing Isaac*. [FIGS. 48 and 53] After praising Rembrandt’s *Samson’s Wedding Feast* for its faithful depiction of the subject according to *Judges XIV:10*, Angel mentioned the specifics that won his admiration: Samson with long hair and gestures appropriate to telling his riddle, the benches upon which the guests are seated with their legs raised, and the merriment and accompanying food and drink. Since the biblical passage does not indicate the sitting posture, nor how Samson

posed the riddle, Rembrandt's visualization of the wedding feast earned Angel's praise for its understanding of the elements unique to the story:³⁶

Behold, this fruit of true, natural depiction came from reading the story properly and examining it with lofty and profound reflections.

The details won Angel's attention, but it was the approach of the artist that earned his praise: it was the intensity with which Rembrandt studied the narrative that led to such a compelling and accurate visual effect. Angel noted that it is acceptable, and even desirable, for an artist to read more than one account of a given episode, so that his erudition informs his rendition. The implication here is that the *Book of Judges* was the authority for the episode, but other texts, among them Josephus, contributed to the artist's rendition of customs, furnishings, and actions specific to this event.

Angel then discussed a grisaille of Lievens' *Abraham Embracing Isaac*, in which he remarked that the artist depicted the patriarch hugging and kissing his son, as described in the account of Josephus, *Jewish Histories*, Book I, Chapter 13. Angel proclaimed: "One may read more than one book in order to gain a deeper understanding of the subject." Although the Bible was the prime authority, it was embellished and made vivid by another account, that of Josephus. And then Angel went on to relate Abraham's embrace of Isaac to the father's embrace of the returned prodigal son, as told in *Luke XV:20*. Reading not only helped an artist to formulate a subject so that the result was a more intensely emotional image, but it also helped the critic analyze the image with cross-references and allusions.³⁷

Another example of an artist's deviation from a text was in a painting of Bathsheba, which Angel admired as by the "same spirit," presumably Lievens. In it, the artist went beyond the biblical text in showing an old woman, a procuress expert in the matters of love, and a cupid in the sky shooting love's arrow. Angel reasoned that it was appropriate for Bathsheba to be shown reading a letter, even though this activity is contrary to the Bible, which explicitly mentions that a mes-

senger was sent to summon her to David; the letter motif allowed Bathsheba to become flushed with a “sweet blush of honorable shame” and thereby the painting gained in power of expression. Angel further analyzed the situation:³⁸

...First, he [the artist] reflected that no matter how powerful a prince might be, no one need be prepared to be at his service in sin. Accordingly there must have been a hot fire of passion in Bathsheba when she was entreated by the king.

The deviations from the Bible in the old woman, letter, and cupid were legitimate, for they added to the overall effect. In the cases of Elijah and the Widow of Zarephat, Samson, Abraham, and Bathsheba, Angel criticized one case of an artist’s ignorance, and three of skillful reading or textual embellishment.

However, it then behooved Angel to mention other deviations that were not appropriate. He discussed how artists erred in showing Philemon and Baucis in a rich household, because their poverty is essential to the story as Ovid related it (*Metamorphoses* Book VIII:620 ff).³⁹

How poor they were and how diligently they tried to arrange everything properly in honor of Jupiter and Mercury, and discovering that their three-legged table (which they had rubbed clean as best they could with mint and other herbs in their trembling hands) had one leg shorter than the others, [they] placed a piece of broken crockery beneath it to prevent it from rocking. Nowhere have I found this conscientious expedient...

Angel continued that he once marveled at a painting of Philemon and Baucis, in a correctly impoverished house. But, even so, the crockery support for the table was missing. Although he did not name the artist, he praised him for knowing the story in the vernacular, even though he was expert in Latin. This artist may well have been Elsheimer, whose painting of the subject was engraved by Goudt [FIG. 61]. In that design,



FIG. 61 – Hendrick Goudt after Adam Elsheimer, *Jupiter and Mercury Visiting Philemon and Baucis*. Engraving, 1612

there are nonetheless several discordant details: the table legs are hidden and a painting of Argos beheaded by Mercury decorates the wall. It seems that plenty, rather than poverty, is indicated by the onions hanging in the doorway and the abundant heap of fish, fruit and vegetables in the corner. On the other hand, Elsheimer depicted Mercury and Jupiter seated regally upon a couch covered with a blanket, and underscored the miraculous aspect of the episode by placing the wine vessel at the table's center. In contrast to Elsheimer, Otto van Veen



FIG. 62 – Otto van Veen, *Jupiter and Mercury Visiting Philemon and Baucis*.
Engraving



FIG. 63 – Rembrandt, *Jupiter and Mercury Visiting Philemon and Baucis*, 1658

followed Ovid's account scrupulously. His engraving of 1612 expressly indicated two of the three legs of the shaky round table, with crockery propping up one leg [FIG. 62].⁴⁰ According to Angel, the learnedness of a painter did not depend upon his knowledge of languages, but more importantly, upon his attentiveness to a text.

Rembrandt's own painting of Philemon and Baucis clearly seems to pay homage to Elsheimer, in design and reverential tone [FIG. 63]. Although Rembrandt crafted an image that emphasizes the majesty of Jupiter and Mercury, he also clarified the poverty of Philemon and Baucis. The table has three legs; these legs are arched, and seem to need no crockery support to make them even. The table is half-covered by a cloth, so that the bare wood is partially visible. The goose escapes

from Baucis' arms to safety under Jupiter's protection, and the gods are just about to reveal their true identities and reward the elderly couple for their hospitality.

A Rembrandt studio drawing shows how strenuously Baucis and Philemon chased the goose in order to cook it for the meal. This aspect of Ovid's narrative demonstrates not only the generosity of the couple, but also the miraculous power of their visitors in saving the goose [FIG. 64]. Philemon is on the ground chasing the bird, while Baucis looks on. The inscription clarifies the action:⁴¹ "The old Philemon takes the knife in his mouth and with the hand slipped on the floor."

The drawing underscores how an episode from a well-known story could be shown with unusual attention to detail. The most important goal of an artist's "learnedness" was the avoidance of careless error. Errors were essentially of two kinds, narrative content and perceptual observation. Angel selected several of the first kind; he noted the error of ignorance in the cases of *Elijah and the Widow of Zarephat*, where one artist erred with the lush land and full kitchen, and in *Philemon and Baucis*, where another artist erred with the sturdy furnishings. However, Angel also observed that the deviation from a text was acceptable if the variation enhanced the story, as in the case of Bathsheba reading a letter, a motif that was rendered by several Dutch artists, including Lievens and Rembrandt.

For an example of the second kind of error in perceptual observation, Angel used the speed of moving wagon wheels. He remarked that in depicting a fast-moving carriage, the spokes of the wheels should blur together; he had seen a painting of Pluto abducting Proserpina in which this was not the case.⁴² He may well have had in mind Rembrandt's early panel, in which the solid and ornate wheels do seem to be standing still rather than spinning [FIG. 20]. If so, Angel obliquely criticized Rembrandt without naming him, but he also missed an opportunity to acknowledge the artist's reference to Claudian, rather than the more obvious Ovid. Surely, critics took special delight in proving errors on the part of painters, thereby participating in the rivalry of skillfulness, erudition, and natural observation.



FIG. 64 – Rembrandt Studio, *Jupiter and Mercury Visiting Philemon and Baucis*. Drawing

Rembrandt, however, escaped criticism for the more serious kind of error of the first category, that of ignorance of behavior or customs, or the inappropriate adornment of a scene. This was a violation of decorum, which concerned appropriate characters, action, and embellishment for each application. Apparently, no artist was safe from criticism in this respect. Willem Goeree chastised Rubens for including a dog eating bones under the table in a painting *The Last Supper*.⁴³ Goeree wrote two manuals on drawing and painting, and illustrated several religious books; he also wrote two encyclopedic publications on ancient Jewish and Christian practice. He was particularly attentive to accuracy in such matters as the size and weight of the cross and how Christ carried it, and how Pilate should be clean-shaven. Goeree's religious volumes served Houbraken, who consulted them for his own book.⁴⁴

Houbraken delighted in pointing out artists' mistakes. He gave a lengthy discussion on tearing garments as an example in which errors were common:⁴⁵

The tearing of clothing was customary among the Hebrews, whenever blasphemous speech was heard... The High Priest tears from below, but a common priest from above... According to this guidance, our most excellent masters of art have erred, when they have shown the High Priest Caiaphas tearing his clothing from the breast downward...

In their prints of *Christ before Caiaphas*, which belong to their respective Passion series, both Dürer and Lucas van Leyden showed the high priest tearing his clothing from the neck down instead of from the waist up. For Houbraken, this was an opportunity not to be missed, for he could simultaneously demonstrate his own erudition and others' mistakes.

De Lairese, operating within a more theoretical framework of academic rules, also indicated that artists needed to know histories in order to avoid mistakes in rendering them: "All particulars must be attentively considered ... for which purpose reading and books are necessary."⁴⁶

He gave four categories of histories, in which there were rules and conditions: (1) truth, historical; (2) fantastic, poetic; (3) moral, and these were threefold: teaching duty to God, neighbor, and ourselves; (4) hieroglyphic, mysteries.⁴⁷ Throughout the *Groot Schilderboek* he mentioned artists and writers from the past and present whom he considered worthy of emulation or deserving of avoidance. De Lairese was critical of artists who followed the pictorial formulae of their predecessors without creating original compositions. He exhorted artists to read in order to remedy the poverty of their imagination.⁴⁸

He thought that the Bible, Homer, Virgil, and Ovid were sufficient for this purpose. To read well did not necessarily mean reading a great quantity of literary texts. Rather, it meant reading these texts with care and imagination. De Lairese decried artists who followed

the pictorial inventions of their predecessors, and advised them to be guided by reading the narratives in devising their own compositions.⁴⁹

The knowledge of histories and the correct rendering of the customs, accessories, and paraphernalia associated with them were essential for the artist. It was not enough to know the story – the artist had to be able to make it appear convincing to his audience. In this regard, writers on art from Van Mander to De Lairese and Houbraken are consistent. But often the knowledge of a history and the correct rendition of its particularities are considered as two separate pieces of advice, as in the booklet of Angel and the rules of De Grebber. According to Houbraken, the workshop practice of Samuel van Hoogstraten was known to include compositional drawings of narratives, in which the pupils were to render the action correctly according to the relevant text and adorned with the proper accessories. The history had to be rendered accurately on both accounts, or it faced criticism from the master:⁵⁰

His Teachings, or Art rules, were founded on firm foundations... It happened that one of his pupils showed him a sketch of his own composition, but had paid little attention to the correct positions of the figures, and just set them down sloppily. Soon came the directive, Read the text...

Proceeding from the text, the pupils were to render its action to convey the correct movements of the figures and their utterances. The correct gestures and positions of the figures depended upon the narrative. The narrative could be acted out in the studio in order to teach the speech, gestures, and attitudes of the figures to be portrayed.⁵¹ Van Hoogstraten may have learned this procedure from his own training with Rembrandt. The analogy with acting out the narrative has an even stronger place in the art and writings of De Lairese, who considered theatre as the fullest realization of his own practice and theory.⁵²

For narrative structure and codes of behavior, decorum, and speech, De Lairese looked to theatre for his own inventions. History painting, the highest order of the art of painting, was in its essence the

presentation of a theatrical performance. In it, the artist was challenged to be expert in many things, of which the foremost was the skill of depiction; if De Lairese presumed, as had Van Mander, that the painter was reasonably well-educated, he did not leave it to chance. De Lairese decried the fact that painters lacked imagination in choosing their subjects, and recommended that artists read in order to remedy their limitations.⁵³ The painter was exhorted to read, even if his primary obligation was to the art of visual depiction. In this respect, Rembrandt exceeded the expectations of Angel, Van Hoogstraten, Houbraken, and De Lairese on attentive reading.

An Essential Reading List

Not until De Lairese published his two volumes, *Grondlegginge der Teekenkonst* and *Groote Schilderboeck*, was a list of books recommended to the Dutch artist. In Italy, reading lists had been prepared since 1586, when Armenini proposed these essential authors, in addition to the Bible and lives of the saints: Plutarch, Livy, Valerius Maximus, Appian, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Ovid, Cartari, Apuleius, and Amadis de Gaula (a popular Spanish romance).⁵⁴ Armenini also advised those who wished to be expert in painting to be acquainted with the architectural treatises by Vitruvius, L.B. Alberti, Sebastiano Serlio, and Daniele Barbaro. Aimed at the artist, Armenini's list included manuals for the practice of art, but emphasized historical and literary material. In French but for an international readership, Raphael du Fresne compiled another list of books, in his edition of Leonardo's treatise of 1651.⁵⁵ His intended audiences seem to have been connoisseurs, scholars, and collectors, rather than artists, and his list reflects a historical emphasis and an interest in the Italian Renaissance. Of Du Fresne's 35 titles, the majority were by Italian authors and concerned the theoretical basis of art. The six titles on the list involving the practical aspects of art were the books by Van Mander and Dürer, two other manuals, Abraham Bosse's treatise on etching (1649), and Peacham's famous

handbook *The Compleat Gentleman* (1634). Peacham's treatise contained an exhortation for the cultivated gentleman to be adept in drawing and painting portraits, and so it included several chapters on the practice of art. For the practicing artist, Du Fresne's list may have been largely redundant by the time it appeared, but it nonetheless offers a useful guide.

During the seventeenth century, other authors compiled reading lists for artists that varied little from the approach of Armenini. In 1674, Luigi Scaramuccia retained the same categories of biblical and secular history, artist's biographies, manuals for the artist, and literature. He recommended a knowledge of art for artists as well as connoisseurs: Ridolfi, Vasari, Euclid, Vitruvius, Vignola, and Raffaello Borghini. In order for the practicing artist to be well-read, Scaramuccia recommended books in history and literature above all, and listed fifty authors or works; nearly all are written by Italians, among whom he included ancient Latin authors. Northern authors were the exceptions, and included Dürer, Lipsius, Junius, Bosse, Van Mander, and Peacham – a near repetition of Du Fresne's recommendations. Peacham's place was not only due to his chapters on painting, for his advice on comportment and social bearing was recommended for the artist, along with an emphasis on general readings essential for depicting histories.⁵⁶

Toward the end of the century, Roger de Piles made an extensive list, which was intended to be complete for history, literature, religion and art. It mainly concerned the artist's knowledge in rendering historical and poetic subjects, and emphasized biblical and secular history and poetic texts. De Piles also mentioned a few illustrated texts that concerned the major monuments, and therefore would be useful as visual sources for the practicing artist; these were Perrier's reliefs, Trajan's column, and books on coins, medals, and ancient statuary. Sensitive to the rivalry between painting and poetry, De Piles recommended Horace's *Ars Poetica*, and, for subjects worthy of depiction, various writers on mythology.⁵⁷ With some adjustment, De Piles' list and

Rembrandt's reading have a number of overlaps, and are not far apart in their general range. The main areas of interest coincide: ancient history, the Bible, Josephus as corollary to the Bible, Homer, and Ovid. Rembrandt's art collection, which included ancient statuary, coins and medals, and prints of antiquity, would have served the same purpose in his studio as books about these topics did in the recommendations of De Piles, De Lairese and others.

Such a recommended reading list may have been self-evident for the Dutch artists, for whom the publications by Van Mander, De Grebber, and Angel were sufficient as artists' guides until mid-seventeenth century. Van Mander, De Grebber, and Angel indicated the need for expertise in general knowledge and history. Angel further supported this need by warning against mistakes out of ignorance, an approach echoed by Goeree and Houbraken. Most histories and mythological narratives were available in the Dutch language, and probably at the corner bookstore. Artists who specialized in history painting certainly were familiar with literature and history, and most likely in the vernacular and at the local bookseller's. In general, few subjects rendered by Dutch artists are based upon non-Dutch texts. Van Mander's *Schilder-Boeck* with its abbreviated mythology pointed the artist toward more substantial sources. Did the Dutch artists regard the books published in Italian or French as valuable aids in the making of art, or did they regard them as pretentious promotions of aesthetic goals? Very likely we may accept Junius' understanding of the artist's balance between the craft of painting and the learning of books, and posit that the Dutch artist got by with book learning as he needed it.⁵⁸

De Lairese's ideas concerning rules for the practice of art may be traced to the Dutch writers Junius, Jan de Bisschop, and Van Hoogstraten. On the one hand, these Dutch authors developed their own codifications for the practice of art, and on the other, they belong to broader traditions, then flourishing, of the academic French and Italian theorists. The classicist ideas that De Lairese proposed were part of rhetorical theory and practice, and are related to those of Andries Pels (1681). The general body of knowledge required for the playwright and the artist consisted of history, drama, and poetry.

In the *Groot Schilderboek*, a compendium of theoretical and practical material intended for the practicing painter, De Lairese demonstrated how texts are useful for the artist. He criticized artists for following the inventions of their predecessors instead of inventing their own compositions, for he regarded it as easier for the artist to consult visual sources than to read texts and devise original images. To remedy the poverty of imagination of painters in choosing subjects, De Lairese recommended the artist read Ovid, Homer, Virgil, Apuleius, and Tasso; to learn historical events, he recommended Plutarch, Livy, and Tacitus.⁵⁹ To depict various nations and peoples in their appropriate clothing, expressive appearance, physical characteristics, and war costume and armament, he recommended Herodotus and the Latin historians Ammianus Marcellinus, Vegetius, and Polybius.⁶⁰ He also mentioned Propertius, Philostratus, Claudian, Cicero, and Macrobius, among others.⁶¹ In his chapter on sculpture, De Lairese gave a list of books he considered indispensable to the sculptor: Perrier's *Statues*, Ripa's *Iconologia*, Oudaan's *Roomse Mogendheid*, books on antiquity, the foremost histories, books on the passions, on costumes, animals, "and so forth."⁶² De Lairese mentioned these readings as informative for narrative, setting, and costumes. Most would have been standard in any humanist library. De Lairese distinguishes these authors by presenting them for the practicing artist.

If De Lairese may have been showing off his own erudition in these passages, he elsewhere presented a limited, but essential, reading list for the apprentice. In the *Grondlegginge ter Teekenkonst*, a treatise of practical material, De Lairese staged a debate between Judicio and Probus, or Learned Professor and Student:⁶³

Judicio: So, let's now hear what you have read well!

Probus: Herodotus, Tacitus, Justinus, Titus Livy, Flavius

Josephus, Plutarch, and above all the Holy Scripture.

Jud.: Those are the history books.

Prob.: Homer, Virgil, Ovid, and Horace.

Jud.: These four are poets.

Prob.: Cesar Ripa on the allegorical figures. Oudaan on

Antiquity, and Medals. Are these all now, that I need to know?

Jud.: No, just the most important.

The debate continued with the Professor advising the Student not to be overburdened with reading to the detriment of his practice of Drawing and Painting. But at the end of the dialogue, the Professor admits that the books listed in this conversation are only the most essential; there are others, perhaps less basic and providing more subtle accounts, that Judicious spares Probus, at least for the moment.

De Lairese's list of history books is brief, yet adequate for antiquity. For Roman history, the choice of Tacitus, Livy and Plutarch repeats De Lairese's recommendation in the *Groote Schilderboek*. Similarly, Herodotus and Josephus are basic, and the Bible is self-evident. But the inclusion of several additional authors in this recommended reading list indicates a more comprehensive approach to history than has been generally recognized. The histories of Justinus, whose compilation of the writings of Trogus Pompeius earned him his reputation as an authority on ancient history, largely synthesize the material found in Herodotus, Livy, Josephus, Plutarch, and the Bible. Somewhat obscure today, Justinus' writings were well-known in the Renaissance. Justinus served as a compact edition of the other sources on antiquity. His books were among the Roman histories read in Latin school, where the more complete texts of Livy, Plutarch, and Tacitus were not studied. De Lairese may have found Justinus useful for that reason. A more pertinent and timely reason for Justinus' text may have been the recent publication of his histories by David van Hoogstraten in 1696. The recommendation to consult Joachim Oudaan, whose book on "Oudheid en Medaillien" appeared first in 1664, reflects a specialist's regard for Roman imperial history, customs, and coinage.⁶⁴ As a concise list focusing on history, De Lairese's readings provided the artist with subjects both common and arcane, in history, allegory, and poetry.

In his advice to read ancient and modern authors, De Lairese expected that the young artist would master this material thoroughly.

De Lairese had faith in the text for providing the material worthy of art, and he emphasized the need for the artist to go beyond the text, that is, to apply his own careful reading and imagination to arrive at powerful renditions. Keenly aware of the comparison between painting and theatre, De Lairese believed that the painter's craft was more challenging than the playwright's. The painter had to make the entire story clear at a glance, whereas the playwright could relate the story as it unfolded in a series of scenes. Maintaining the superiority of painting over theatre, De Lairese wrote:⁶⁵

In representing an History the Artist is not always confined to the Laws of written story; a good Historiographer is obliged to go thro' with all the particular Facts from the Beginning to the End, in a successive Order; a Painter, contrarily, has a greater Liberty of Choice, since 'tis indifferent to him, whether he falls upon the Beginning, middle or End of a Story; and therefore sometimes begins where he pleases; picking out of the Story what best suits his Intention, either what went before, now is in Action, or must be in Consequence; being obliged to exhibit no more out of the Whole, than can be seen together at one View.

De Lairese's serious expectations of the artist's reading were amplified in a chapter on the depictions of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. He enumerated the four main requirements for the depiction of an Ovidian episode that were applicable to rendering histories in general. First, know the story as described by the author; second, consult comments on the best writers on that subject in order to get the true meaning of the story; third, choose appropriate costumes, color, and ornament; and finally, consider the characters' complexions, time of day, and other details.⁶⁶ Not only did De Lairese expect the painter to read the primary account of a history, but also he expected him to compare other writers on the episode. In this way, the artist was reading as a scholar, with various texts at hand for comparison. It was through attentiveness to the text and textual criticism that the artist succeeded in rivaling writers.

Houbraken gave a different response. He recognized the need for expertise in histories and their accessories, and warned against ignorance that caused error. But his attitude toward book learning was flexible. Houbraken did not compile a reading list, although his references throughout the *Groot Schouburgh* offer an informal guide to some useful texts, including those by Goeree and Oudaan. He probably knew better than to expect the young artist to read an assortment of ancient authors such as those mentioned by De Laireesse. In fact, Houbraken was a believer in short-cuts. He understood that artists were not likely to spend much time reading when they needed to become fast experts in ancient customs. He referred to books that were compendia, that were written in the Dutch language, and that efficiently provided arcane knowledge of ancient customs. The balance between practice and book-learning was a delicate one, for the artist had to be expert in received knowledge as well as the making of images with skill, confidence, and deception. Houbraken also believed that artists should be expert in rendering historical events and accessories, such as ancient sacrifices, but that they shouldn't have to read very much to become sufficiently knowledgeable.⁶⁷

But so that all the painters needn't sit with their noses stuck in books, I have gone to a lot of trouble to set down the preparations that the old pagans used in their sacrifices.

Rembrandt did not hide his nose in books, but read for salient aspects of character, story, and expression. In his histories, he demonstrated expertise not only in the primary narrative, but also in its secondary aspects of action, specific attribute, and character. His reading list was short but to the point, and pragmatically served his imagery. Rembrandt's attentive reading was evident only to those who were familiar with the same texts; the rest of his audience could be impressed by his images, which presented each narrative in its specificity, with particulars of dress, gesture, speech, and setting. Angel noticed this aspect of Rembrandt's art, and praised his knowledge gained from books – but Von Sandrart chose to emphasize the rough appearance of Rem-

brandt's art, and equate it with ignorance. By stating that Rembrandt knew only Dutch and therefore could not benefit from book learning, Von Sandrart misunderstood Rembrandt's art, and falsified it for posterity. Von Sandrart's remark that Rembrandt was not learned in books is not borne out by his paintings. In fact, Von Sandrart's assessment is contradicted by Angel, who praised Rembrandt for "diligently seeking out the knowledge of history from old musty books."⁶⁸ Von Sandrart's remark, however, should not be dismissed, for it indicates that Rembrandt found all that he needed in the Dutch and German languages. Book-learning for its own sake may not have appealed to him, for he was, after all, an artist whose language was the brush, not the pen. Von Sandrart, in contrast, was an ambitious artist who wished to make his mark as a writer. But for Rembrandt, the goal of painting was not to demonstrate pedantic erudition; it was to dazzle the viewer by the sight of the image. The reality of the painting conquered the image in the mind, and surpassed the written narrative.

Rembrandt's Library Concluded

The ancient authors in Rembrandt's reading list are fairly standard: Ovid, Homer, Aulus Gellius, Livy, Josephus, the Bible, Tacitus, Plutarch, the historical compendium of Gottfried, and Cicero. For his curious *Self-Portrait as Zeuxis*, Rembrandt may have consulted Van Mander, or Lauremberg's compendium of anecdotes. Apparently missing is Virgil, an author whose subjects were rendered occasionally by Rembrandt's two teachers and some of his pupils; such an omission might be a reaction to his teachers, or merely chance. Only two of Rembrandt's sources were in Latin: Claudian, whose passages were in Scaliger's textbook used at Leiden Latin school, and Gellius, whose amplification of the deeds of Artemisia guided Rembrandt's characterization of her.

The seemingly most obscure subjects in his oeuvre – Zeuxis, Pyrrhus – were found in mainstream publications: Van Mander and Lauremberg, and Plutarch. The inventory of 1656 contained 22 books;

the following list may be compiled, based upon his work up to that date:

IN THE KUNSTCAEMER, NAMED BOOKS:

- 1 Jan Six's *Medea*, 1648, "*d'Medea van Jan Six, treurspel*";
- 2 Amico's *Trattato delle piante...di terrasanta*, 1620, "*Gants Jerusalem van Jacob Calot*";
- 3 Albrecht Dürer's *Beschrijvinghe van... de Menschlijcke Proportion*, "*t proportie boeck van Albert Durer, houtsnee*";

IN THE VOORKAEMER OF THE KUNSTCAEMER:

FIFTEEN BOOKS IN DIFFERENT SIZES:

- 4 Ovid's *Metamorphoses* in Florianus' Dutch translation;
- 5 Homer's *Odyssey* in Coornhert's translation;
- 6 Aulus Gellius' *Noctes Atticae*;
- 7 Scaliger's *Poetices libri septem*;

FOLIOS:

- 8 Gottfried's *Historische Chronica*, "*Een hoogduyts boeck met oorlochs figueren*";
- 9 Livy, with Stimmer woodcut illustrations, *Von Ankunfft unnd Ursprung...*, "*Een dito met hout figuren[sic]*";
- 10 A Flavius Josephus in German, illustrated by Tobias Stimmer: "*Een hoogduytsche Flavio Fevus, gestoffeert met figueren van Tobias Timmerman*";
- 11 An old Bible, "*Een oude bijbel*."

This leaves eleven additional books, probably publications of quarto and smaller size. Most likely these included a copy of Van Mander, Homer's *Iliad*, some costume and emblem books, and artist's manuals. After the inventory and the move to the Rozengracht, the later works indicate a different selection of reading:

- 1 Tacitus, *Van de ghedenkwaerdige geschiedenissen* in the Fenacolijs edition;

- 2 Plutarch, *T' leven...*, in the Van Nyevelt edition;
- 3 Cicero, *Van den Officien*, in Coornhert's edition;
- 4 Van Mander or Lauremberg.

Throughout, Rembrandt read the Bible and focused on its narratives that emphasized personal relationships, often of family and friends. The much broader book culture of the Dutch Republic was all around him – in Leiden, Amsterdam, and The Hague. It hardly needs noting that Rembrandt's interests were broader than these lists indicate. Rembrandt was fully engaged in the general culture of his time, whose popular publications were emblem books, marriage manuals, Netherlandish histories, and song books.

The catch for an artist was to look for unusual subjects in the usual places. But most of Rembrandt's images are of fairly common subjects. His larger goal, that of creating compelling, original images, was fulfilled by considering how to communicate a written narrative in a unique visual form. We might well agree with Gerard de Lairesse:⁶⁹ “We want not a new Homer, Virgil or Ovid, for their inventions have left us enough material... for a thousand years...”

De Lairesse's challenge to the artists was to create new visual narratives, by careful study of canonical literature. Rembrandt fulfilled that challenge with Homer and Ovid, and a sprinkling of other poetic and historical authors.

NOTES

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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NOTES

CHAPTER 1

- 1 Br. 409; Corpus A 143; Tümpel 1993, 120.
- 2 For Vondel's poem on the Anslø etching, see *inter alia*, Emmens 1981, 61 ff. Vondel's poem reads: "Ay Rembrant, maal Cornelis stem./ Het zichbre deel is't minst van hem:/ 't Onzichtbre kent men slechts door d'ooren./ Wie Anslø zien wil, moet hem hooren" (Vondel/ Sterck 1927, IV, 209). English translation from Berlin/Amsterdam/London 1991, 224.
- 3 On a number of occasions, Rembrandt used reading as an activity that could be interrupted, in order to demonstrate the interaction between the living viewer and the painted image. The reader turns away from his book to regard the viewer with surprise, amused regard, or greeting. See, for examples, *A Man at a Desk* (1631, St. Petersburg, Hermitage, Br. 146, Corpus A44); *Johannes Uytenbogaert* (1633, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Br. 173); and *Johannes Eliason* (1634, Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, Br. 200).
- 4 Ben. 767 and 768.
- 5 Berlin/Amsterdam/London 1991, II, 232. Other solitary readers include the paintings *Rembrandt's Mother as the Prophetess Hannab* (1631, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Br. 69), *Scholar at Table with Books* (1634, Prague, Narodni Gallery, Br. 432; Corpus A95); and the etchings of St. Francis and St. Jerome (B. 103, 104, 105, 107).
- 6 For Rembrandt's *Self-Portrait as the Apostle Paul* (1661, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Br. 59), see London/The Hague 1999, 213; Chapman 1990, 120-27.
- 7 For examples, *St. Paul in Prison* (1627, Stuttgart, Staatsgalerie, Br. 601); and *St. Paul at his Desk* (ca. 1629, Nürnberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Br. 602).
- 8 Kingston 1996; Frankfurt 1993. For Dou's many self-portraits and portraits of artists with symbolic attributes, see Washington/The Hague 2000.
- 9 See Amsterdam 1999 for the practical nature of Rembrandt's collection and paraphernalia.
- 10 Baldinucci 1686, 79: "Visitava spesso i luoghi de'pubblici incanti, e quivi faceva procaccio d'abiti d'usanze vecchie, e dismesse, ...; appiccava alla mura nel suo studio tra le belle galanterie, che pure si diletta di possedere, come sarebbe a dire, ogni sorta d'armi antiche, e moderne, come frecce, alabarde, daghe, sciabre, coltelli, e simili..."; see Hofstede de Groot *Urk.* 1360, 422, and Slive 1953, 113.
- 11 De Piles 1699, 433: "... il avoit de vieilles armures, de vieux instrumens, de vieux ajustemens de tête, & quantité de vieilles étoffes ouvragées, & il disoit que c'étoit-là ses Antiques." See further Hofstede de Groot *Urk* 1381, 437; Slive 1953, 125; and Amsterdam 1999, 60 n.
- 12 Pels 1681, 35 f.: "Die door de gansche Stad op bruggen, én op hoeken, Op Nieuwe, en Noordermarkt zeer yv'rig op ging zoeken Harnassen, Moriljons, Japonsche Ponjerts, bont, En rafelkraagen, die hij schilderachtig vond, En vaak een Scipio aan 't Roomsche lichaam paste, Of de éd'le

- leden van een Cyrus meê vermaste...” See further Hofstede de Groot Urk. 1352, 414; Slive 1953, 102.
- 13 See Becker in Frankfurt 1993, 106-24.
- 14 The development of printing is inseparable from the developing Reformation, especially in Germany, the Netherlands, and England; see Eisenstein 1980 and Kraye 1998. For the development of printing as a technique coexisting with manuscript illumination, see London/New York 1994.
- 15 See Manuth in Kingston 1996, 2 and 8, n. 5, for further bibliography; Beck/Veldhuijzen 1993, 16.
- 16 Kingston 1996, 3 and 8, n. 11; see also Van Deursen 1995; Frijhoff 1982.
- 17 Van Selm 1992, 66; Franits 1993, 6; Schama 1987, 98.
- 18 See Strauss 1640/9, for Rembrandt’s mother’s inventory; Strauss 1641/3 for Elisabeth’s inventory.
- 19 For Hendrickje’s mark, see Strauss 1660/20.
- 20 Van Selm 1987, 335 ff. and 381; Keblusek 1997; Frijhoff and Spies 1999, 258.
- 21 Van Selm 1987, 381.
- 22 Montias 1989, 139, noted that this was at a time when the semi-skilled craftsman earned a guilder per day.
- 23 Ruurs 1983, 63; see Saenredam 1667, and Chapter 7.
- 24 Van Selm 1987; Van Selm 1992. See also Keblusek 1997; Bijvoet 1996; and Hoftijzer and Lankhorst 2000.
- 25 Hoftijzer 1999, 13.
- 26 Keblusek, 1997, 55.
- 27 See also Amsterdam 1991, 161 ff, for print publishers in the Netherlands.
- 28 Von Zesen 1664, 174.
- 29 Von Zesen 1664, 370.
- 30 Renting 1993; Korteweg 1998.
- 31 *Catalogus* 1612; *Catalogus* 1668. Van Selm 1992, 81. The city library later formed the core of the University of Amsterdam library.
- 32 Six 1706. See De la Fontaine Verwey 1975; and also Courtright 1996.
- 33 For this edition of Cicero, see Chapter 6.
- 34 Amsterdam 1992, 207.
- 35 Van Selm 1992, 81; De la Fontaine Verwey 1997, 188 f.
- 36 Flines 1700; Golahny 1981.
- 37 Van der Waals 1988, 200.
- 38 Beck/Veldhuijzen 1993, 26.
- 39 See Beck/Veldhuijzen 1993, 143; and passim Keblusek 1997, 43. David Beck’s diary is unique as a daily account of a complete year, but his familiarity with books and book culture reflects a more general attitude toward buying, reading, and collecting books; see Bijvoet 1996, Keblusek 1997; and Kingston 1996, 2.
- 40 For the process of education, see Grafton in Kraye 1998, esp. 211; and below.
- 41 Jauss 1989, xiii.
- 42 Iser 1978, 19 and 274 f.
- 43 Gombrich 1962, 204. See further Iser 1974, 274 ff, who discusses the process of reading as an evocation of an image or of sympathy; Bal 1991, 5.
- 44 Emmens 1981, 61 ff.; Held 1991, 164 ff.
- 45 See *inter alia*, Boston 1981, 135.
- 46 Israel 1998, 201 ff.; Boston 1981, 136.
- 47 Herckmans 1634, 5.
- 48 Herckmans 1634, 97: “Want elck gebruyckt den vreed’, terwijl hy vrede heeft.”
- 49 See also Boston 1981, 135.
- 50 Herckmans 1634, 97: “Bellone (die te gaer met Mars te velde torsten, ’t Gehamerd yser, tot bescherm, van buyck en borsten...”.
- 51 See further New York 1995, II, 55; Corpus A70; Br. 467.
- 52 Dickey 1986, 261.
- 53 Translation with emendation from Dickey 1986, 262, n. The original text:
Creus’ en Iason hier elckandren Trouw beloven
Medea Iasons vrouw,
onwaerdighlijck verschoven,
Werdt opgehitzt van spijt,
de wraecksucht voert haer aen.
Helaes! Ontrouwigheydt,
wat komt ghij dier te staen!
- 54 Dickey 1986, 262.
- 55 Konst 1996, 228.
- 56 For *La Preciosa*, see Gaskell 1982 and Edinburgh/London 2001, cat. no. 94. For the *Piedra Gloriosa* etchings, see Zell 2002, 58 f.
- 57 Amsterdam/London 2000, 44 ff. for consideration of some of the biblical etchings as two series: the early childhood of Christ (B. 45, 47, 55, 60, 63, and 64), and the life of Christ (B. 50, 83, 86, and 87). Rembrandt’s etchings of the

- story of Abraham may also be considered as a loose series (B. 30 and 34; B. 29 and 35).
- 58 De Jongh 1969; Broos 1975-76; Emmens 1979; Courtright 1996.
- 59 Van Mander 1604, *Den Grondt*, 156; Melion 1991; Miedema 1973.
- 60 Junius/Fehl 1991.
- 61 Puttfarken 1985.
- 62 Angel 1642; Angel/Hoyle 1996 with introduction by H. Miedema.
- 63 For De Grebber's *Regulen*, see Van Thiel 1965. The second rule concerns reading history: "Is 't van noode datmen de Historien wel door-leest: (bysonder als het schriftuerlijcke ofte waerachtighe Historien zyn) om den sin soo nae als't moghelijk is wel uyt te beelden. (It is essential that one read thoroughly the Histories, especially the written or true histories, in order to depict them as if they could happen)."
- 64 Houbraken 1718, I, 109.
- 65 McGrath 1997, I, 33.
- 66 Emmens 1979, 42.
- 67 Horace 1965, 82, 90.
- 68 Quintilian 1963 passim; and esp. II, xxi; Cicero *Or.* 1959, I.vi.21.
- 69 Emmens 1979, 231; Warners 1957. See further Raupp 1983, for categories of style in rhetoric and in the visual arts; Courtright 1996; and Westermann 1997.
- 70 Vondel, *Aenleiding*, Vondel/Sterck, V, 484 f.; see also Golahny 1990 (1).
- 71 Vondel, preface to *Jeftba*, 1659, in Vondel/Sterck 1927, VIII, 775: "De beide hoofcie-raden... by de Latijnen peripetia, en agnitio, of staetveranderinge, en herkennis genoemd, gaen in arbeit..."
- 72 Vondel, dedication to *Lierzangen* of Horace, in Vondel/Sterck 1927, VII, 261: "...heeft elck nu in den mont dat schildery stomme Poëzy, de Poëzy spreekende schildery is: want de Schilder beelt zijn gedachten met streken en verwen, de Dichter zijn bespiegelingen met woorden uit..."
- 73 For Huygens' famous passage in full, see Worp 1891, 78; Slive 1953, 15-23; Strauss 1630/5. The English translation above is from Schwartz 1985, 74.
- 74 Schwartz 1985, 112, with slight emendation.
- 75 Bruyn 1998. See also Schwartz 1985, 117.

- 76 See Corpus I, A15, where it is suggested that a biblical illustration of around 1600 may have been a precedent for Rembrandt's portrayal of Judas. See also Alpers 1988, 35.

CHAPTER 2

- 1 Von Sandrart 1675, 326: "...er auch nicht als nur schlecht Niederländisch lesen, und also sich durch die Bücher wenig lesen können..."; Slive 1953, 208. For the approach that assumes Rembrandt belonged wholly to the humanist tradition, see Courtright 1996.
- 2 Pels, 1681, 31, see also Golahny 1983, 675.
- 3 Emmens 1979, passim but especially 49 ff.
- 4 Orlers 1641, 375: "Zijne Ouders hem ter Scholen bestedet hebbende omme metter tijd te doen leeren de Latijnsche Tale ende daer naer te brengen tot de Leytsche Academie, op dat hy tot zijne Jaeren ghecome wesende de Stadt ende tge-meene besten met zijne wetenschap soude mogen dienen ende helpen bevorderen, en heeft daer toe gantz geen lust ofte genegentheyt gehad, dewijle zijne natuyrlieke beweginghen alleen strecken tot de Schilder ende Teycken Conste; waer omme zy luyden genootsaecht geweest zijn, haren Soon uyt de Schole te nemen, ende volgende zijn begeeren te brengen ende te besteden, by een Schilder omme by de selve te leeren de eerste fundamenten ende beginselen van dien." See also Strauss 1641/8; Slive 1953, 35-37; and Dudok van Heel in Berlin/Amsterdam/London 1991, I, 52. The English is emended from Schwartz 1985, 20.
- 5 Valentiner 1914, 131.
- 6 Schwartz 1985, 20.
- 7 Van Deursen in Berlin/Amsterdam/London 1991, I, 41.
- 8 Grohé 1996, 61, with reference to Rembrandt's *The Abduction of Proserpina*, see further below.
- 9 Frijhoff 1982. See also Boekholt and de Booy 1987.
- 10 Strauss 1620/1.
- 11 Frijhoff and Spies 1999, 245.
- 12 De Baar and Moerman in Leiden 1991, 27.
- 13 See Schwartz 1985, 19.
- 14 De Baar and Moerman in Leiden 1991, 13.

- 15 Westermann 1997.
- 16 Kuiper 1958 passim; Spies 1999, 79 f. Notably, the 1625 plan omitted the complete histories by Livy, Plutarch and others. J.C. Scaliger's treatise, *Poetices libri septem*, first published 1561, had a large role in Dutch education and theory, and was especially promoted at the Leiden Latin school; see Spies 1999, 21-36.
- 17 For the intriguing possibility that Rembrandt studied drawing at the Latin school, see Van Gelder 1953, 273; and De Baar and Moerman in Berlin/Amsterdam/London 1991, I, 34.
- 18 Warners 1957.
- 19 For Rembrandt's letters to Huygens, see Strauss 1636/1, 1636/2, 1639/2, 1639/3, 1639/4, 1639/5, and 1639/6.
- 20 For the *album amicorum* of Burchard Grossmann, see Strauss 1634/6.
- 21 Two of these portrait etchings are of Jan Cornelius Sylvius (B. 280) and Johannes Uytenbogaert (B. 279).
- 22 For Rembrandt's *The Calumny of Apelles*, see Ben. 1207.
- 23 A contributing image for Rembrandt's *Batbsbeba* (1654, Paris, Louvre, Br. 521) is François Perrier's etching after a marble relief of a bride; the appropriateness of the caption is discussed by M.D. Carroll in Adams 1998, 164.
- 24 Van de Waal 1974, 113 ff.; Zell 2002, 72 f.
- 25 These include the *Ecce Homo* (1634, London, National Gallery, Corpus A 89), and *The Baptist Preaching* (1634-35, Berlin, SMPK, Corpus A106); in the case of the *Moses holding the Ten Commandments* (1659, Berlin, SMPK, Br. 527), Rembrandt followed the text of *Exodus* 20:2-17, but most likely devised his letters with some help, and made a few noticeable deviations. See Alexander-Knotter 1999.
- 26 For the mistake in the last letter of the inscription of *Belsazzar's Feast* (1636, London, National Gallery, Br. 497, Corpus II, A110), see Littman 1993, 296.
- 27 These Latin texts are Claudian and Aulus Gellius; see Chapter 4.
- 28 For the categories of history painting, see Van Mander 1604, *Den Grondt*, see further Blankert in Washington/Detroit/Amsterdam 1980, 18; and Raupp 1983.
- 29 Ekkart 1978, 40 ff. Ekkart 1998, 15-23.
- 30 Orlers 1641, 369: "...Iacob Isaacsz. in Italien vele Jaren geweest is. Insonderheyt tot Napels, ende aldaer met een Italiaensche Vrouwe ghetrouwt is/ met de welcke hy inden Jare 1617 of daer ontrent/ weder gekomen is in zijn Vaderlicke Stadt/ ende heeft hem inde zelve/ ende op andere plaetsen met zijn Const/ die alle Liefhebbers der selven behaechde ende aengenaem was...".
- 31 Hensen 1895, 11.
- 32 Ekkart 1978, 42; Schwartz 1985, 22.
- 33 Ekkart 1978, 60.
- 34 The two surviving cityscapes are in Copenhagen, 1628, and Augsburg, 1632; see Wurfbain in Leiden 1976, 74; the third, apparently dated 1604 was formerly in the Collection Semenov, St Petersburg; Judson 1983, 119.
- 35 Venice 1992, cat. no. 10: *Inferno*, by monogrammist JS, ca. 1600, oil on wood, 120 by 170 cm, Venice, Palazzo Ducale inv. 269.
- 36 One Proserpina painting (present location unknown, art market ca. 1950) represents the moment in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* when Cupid, upon Venus' order, shoots the arrow at Pluto that will cause him to become enamored of Proserpina; see Golahny 1988, fig. 6. The other (Besançon, Musée des Beaux Arts) shows Pluto and Proserpina presiding over the underworld.
- 37 *The Seven Deadly Sins* is in Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.
- 38 The *Aeneas* paintings are in Gdansk, Museum Pomorskie and Rome, Galleria Doria-Pamphilij; those of a generic hell, in Leiden, Lakenhal and Brussels, private collection; Judson 1983, 121.
- 39 Silver 1999, 56 n.
- 40 Virgil 1965:VI:260-63.
- 41 Judson 1983, 121.
- 42 Ekkart 1998, 30.
- 43 S.A.C. Dudok van Heel in Edinburgh/London 2001, 20.
- 44 For Schilperoort, see Wurfbain in Leiden 1976, 105-06; Ekkart 1998, 129.
- 45 Isaac Isaacs van Swanenburgh's books were sold with some belonging to Franciscus Raphelengius, a well-known printer and book dealer in Leiden, and Petrus Moseius, a scholar of ancient languages, in Leiden in 1626. The book catalogue of this sale is extensive, comprising 147 pages, and is

- comprehensive in Dutch and Latin authors, with strong holdings in French, English, Spanish and German; it is at Wolfenbuettel Bc Sammelbd 10 (12).
- 46 Strauss 1656/12, nos. 41, 119, 263, and 264.
- 47 Dudok van Heel 1991(1), 114.
- 48 Amsterdam 1991; Dudok van Heel 1991(1), Amsterdam 1993, 575.
- 49 See Golahny 1996(2), for Lastman's reputation.
- 50 See Golahny 1996(1), for the poems by Vondel and Oudaan about the *Lystra* and *Iphigenia*, which, although not painted as pendants, become considered as such by Oudaan and, later, by Jan Six, who owned both paintings.
- 51 Broos 1975-76.
- 52 *Judges* 13:11-20; Bader Collection, Milwaukee, see Amsterdam 1996, 106.
- 53 Ovid, *Met.* Met XI, 179.
For Lastman's *Midas* (Kassel; copy formerly in the Chrysler Museum, Norfolk, VA), see Sacramento 1974, cat. no.4.
- 54 The picture may have been in Lastman's studio during the next year or so, when Rembrandt was visiting Amsterdam, before he would settle there in 1632. It is likely that Rembrandt, who was staying with Hendrick Uylenburgh and seeking work in the city, would have been in contact with Lastman. Uylenburgh and Lastman were, after all, neighbors, and had acquaintances in common. See Schwartz 1985, 134 and Dudok van Heel in Edinburgh/London 2001, 22.
- 55 Virgil 1965, 400; *The Aeneid* IV:56-67.
See further Golahny 1998.
- 56 Golahny 1996(1).
- 57 Aristotle, *Poetics*, XI, concerns the reversal of the situation by recognition: "Thus Iphigenia is revealed to Orestes by the sending of the letter, but another act of recognition is required to make Orestes known to Iphigenia"; Aristotle 1951, 41 f. In this way, Aristotle makes clear that the two acts of recognition in this episode are independent of one another. As Lastman painted the confrontation between the priestess and Greek prisoners, Iphigenia recognizes Orestes first because he and Pylades say aloud one another's name as they argue. Only a few moments later will Orestes come to recognize his sister, on the basis of the letter.
- 58 For the inventory and documentation of Lastman's books, see Dudok van Heel in Amsterdam 1991 and Dudok van Heel 1991(1), 119.
- 59 These poetic homages are collected in Slive 1953 and Strauss.
- 60 Strauss 1654/11, 12, and 14.
- 61 This is suggested by Crenshaw 2000, Chapter 2.

CHAPTER 3

- 1 The 1656 inventory, which is the only full inventory of Rembrandt's possessions that survives, was first published by Nieuwenhuys in 1834; it was republished several times during the nineteenth century, and edited systematically by C. Hofstede de Groot in 1906. It has since been republished with the Hofstede de Groot numbers by Strauss 1656/12 and J. van der Veen in Amsterdam 1999, 147 ff.; see also Clark 1966 and Schwartz 1985, 290. Although some items in the inventory may have been moved for the appraisal, the order of the books seems to have been maintained.
- 2 Bialostocki 1988, 158: "A fairly limited library, if we consider Rembrandt's wide-ranging interest in classical history and mythology and his extraordinary ... collections of art works, costumes, weapons, and curiosities of all kinds."
- 3 Inventorists tended to follow the same general order of size that was followed in book catalogues and auction catalogues.
- 4 The approximate length of the bookshelf would not necessarily be longer than 90 cm: 15 books, 2-5 cm, and four books, about 5-8 cm.
- 5 For these rooms, their contents, and general orderliness or lack thereof, see Amsterdam 1999, 11 and Hanover 1991, 81. For several collector's cabinets of around 1700, see L.J. Wagenaar 1995.
- 6 See Zantkuijl 1997, fig. 10, for the plan of Rembrandt's house, and Amsterdam 1999, 48 for a discussion of the room.
- 7 Strauss 1655/7.
- 8 Strauss 1638/2. For Rembrandt's participation in Orphan Chamber auctions, see Montias 2002, 164.
- 9 Strauss 1637/6 and 1659/20.

- 10 There is abundant evidence that Rembrandt continued to collect significant and expensive art after his 1658 move to the Rozengracht; see Amsterdam 1999, 55; for the Lucas van Leyden album, see Strauss 1668/5 and 1669/3
- 11 Strauss 1669/5.
- 12 Rembrandt's etching *The Peg-Leg* (B. 179) is loosely based upon a Callot model, see Berlin/Amsterdam/London 1991, 174. Rembrandt's drawing of the *Commedia dell'arte* character Pantalon (Ben. 295) is based upon Callot's etching of the same character. Rembrandt's etchings of a woman defecating (B. 191), a beggar with malformed hand (B. 166), his standing beggar woman with a gourd (B. 168), and his seated self-portrait as a beggar (B. 174) are similarly based upon Callot prototypes; see Broos in Amsterdam 1999, 108.
- 13 See Broos 1977 under B. 76, for references to Callot as a contributing source for Rembrandt's large *Christ Presented to the People* (B. 76).
- 14 Bellorini 1953, 14. See also De Germon 1899, I, part one, 288, cat. no. 1461, where the first edition is described, evidently in error, "la plus grande partie des planches ont été gravées d'après Callot" (referring to the Houghton 1609 edition from the Riant collection).
- 15 Bellorini 1953, 2-13.
- 16 In 1677, 17 of the plates were reproduced to appear in O. Dapper, *Naukeurige beschryvinge van gantsch Syrie en Palestyn*, Amsterdam, 1677; see also Bellorini 1953, 24.
- 17 Wishnitzer 1990, 109.
- 18 For the interpretation of the *Mordechai* etching (B. 40), see Perlove 1993; for *Jeremiah*, see Perlove 1995, see also Wischnitzer 1990, 108 ff.
- 19 The *Christ and the Woman in Adultery* of 1644 is in London, National Gallery; Br. 566. See Amico 1620, Chapters 22, 23, and 24, and plates 22-26 for the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and Chapters 32 and 33, plates 31-32 for the Holy Sepulchre itself.
- 20 Several of Rembrandt's Entombments are the paintings of 1639 (Munich, Alte Pinakothek, Br. 560); the grisaille of ca. 1639 (Glasgow, University, Hunterian Museum, Br. 554); and the etching of ca. 1654 (B. 86). Among Rembrandt's prints that seem to reflect Amico's designs are:
- two *Raising of Lazarus* etchings, from 1642 and ca. 1632 (B. 72 and 73); and *The Baptist Beheaded*, ca. 1640 (B. 92). The copy drawings by Rembrandt and/or his pupils after an Italian drawing of the Entombment of Christ, attributed to Perino del Vaga, may further reflect familiarity with the Holy Sepulchre as it was depicted in Amico's text (Ben. 1208 and 1209); the Italian drawing shows a simple niche, whose accuracy would have been supported by the cross-section and descriptions of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (Bellorini 1953, 96 and plan ill. 24).
- 21 Amico 1620, Chapters 1-6, and plates 4 and 5, for the Church of the Nativity.
- 22 See Chapter 5 for discussion of Stimmer's *Josephus*.
- 23 For the critical history and many editions of this book, see Dürer/Steck 1969.
- 24 For Dürer's search for the ideal, and how he regarded the Italians, see Panofsky 1960, 45 f.
- 25 Paraphrasing Van Mander 1604, 207b-210.
- 26 For Rembrandt's purchases of prints by Dürer at the Basse' sale, see Strauss 1637/2, where Rembrandt bought nine sets of Dürer's woodcut series *The Life of the Virgin* and numerous other Dürer prints; for the Gommer Spranger auction, see Strauss 1638/1, and Montias 2002, 175.
- 27 His etching *Death of the Virgin* of 1639 (B. 99) recalls Dürer's woodcut for *The Life of the Virgin*, which Rembrandt knew in his own multiple sets.
- 28 For Dürer's drypoint *St. Jerome by a Pollard willow* (Dürer B. 59), and for Rembrandt's etchings, see Rembrandt B. 103 and 104. See also Amsterdam 1999, 106 ff.
- 29 For Dürer's *Descent*, see Dürer B. 16.
- 30 Smith 1987.
- 31 Rembrandt's prints of the nude are B. 192, 193, 194, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, and 205.
- 32 Hollstein *Dutch and Flemish XVI*, 146, no. 191. For model books in the Netherlands, see Bolton 1979.
- 33 In 1745, Dezaillier D'Argenville collected ten of the prints and considered them a drawing manual, quoted in Berlin/Amsterdam/London 1991, II, 224.
- 34 Panofsky 1960, 59.
- 35 Panofsky 1960, 123. See also Panofsky 1955, 270 ff.

CHAPTER 4

- 1 See Sluijter 1986 and Grohé 1996.
- 2 See also Golahny 1988.
- 3 The caption reads: “Incerta Volucris fertur Proserpina curru/ Caesariem diffusa noto, planctuq[ue] lacertos/ Verberat, adstantes socias, Matremq[ue] remotam/ Invocat, at quoetus ad nubila fundit Inanes.” These lines are taken directly from Claudian (II:247-249) with an insertion (adstantes ... invocat).
- 4 See Spies 1999, 21-36 for the role of the treatise in Dutch education and theory and its importance in Leiden.
- 5 Scaliger 1594, 836: “Dianam vero etiam ridicule.”
- 6 Translation from Claudian 1963, DRP II:209-213, with slight emendation. Quoted in Scaliger 1594, 692: “Ille velut stabuli decus armentique iuencam/ cum leo possedit, nudataque viscera fudit/ Vnguibus et rabiem totos exegit in armos./ Stat crassa turpis sanie nodosque iubarum/ Excudit et viles pastorum despicit iras.”
- 7 For Tempesta’s illustrated *Ovid* of 1606, which includes the three Proserpina illustrations, see Golahny 1988.
- 8 Scaliger 1594, 758: “Quaque volat, vernas sequitur color [rubor]; omnis in herbas/ Turget humus; medioque patent conuexa sereno./ Sanguineo splendore rosas: vacinia nigro/ Induit et dulci violas ferrugine pingit.” English translation with emendation from Claudian 1963, DRP II:90-93.
- 9 Scaliger 1594, 759: “Forma loci superat flores. Curuata tumore/ Paruo planities et mollibus edita cliuis/ Creuerat in collem. Niueo de pumice fontes/ Roscida mobilibus lambebant gramina riuus. Syluaque torrentes ramorum frigore Soles/ Temperat et modico brumam sibi vindicat aestu.” English translation with slight emendation from Claudian 1963, DRP II:101-106.
- 10 It is possible that Rubens’ painting was in the collection of Charles I. This appealing circumstance has been asserted by Schwartz 1985, 123; and repeated by Grohé 1996, 67. However, the catalogues of Charles I’s collection by A. van der Doort and George Vertue do not refer to Rubens’ painting.
- 11 Grohé 1996, 60 and passim.
- 12 For the Aratea manuscript and Jacques de Gheyn illustrations, see Schwartz 1985, 121; and Grohé 1996, 169.
- 13 Ovid/Florianus 1615, 63-63v: “...Te[n] leste[n] soo is hy al vliegende met sin sweert gecome[n], en[de] heeft het den visch totten hechte toe in de rechte schouder geslege[n], waer af dit mo[n]ster seer vreesslijc begonst te spertelen, en[de] te springen, worpende hem seluen somtijts tot inde lucht, somtijts ooc weder int water duycke[n], alleleens haddet hem int vechten, gelijc een wilt vercken dat va[n] alle canten va[n]den honde[n] aengevochten wort....maer siende neffens hem een rotse, die met eene[n] becke ouer d’water qua[m], is daer op gaen staen, ende houdende hem metter slincker handt wel vast aen die rotse, veruolchde sijnen strijt metter rechter hant, slae[n]de en[de] stekende sijne[n] vyant metten sweerde dry oft viermael door dingewa[n]t, soo dat hye[m] te[n] leste[n] versloech.”
- 14 For the pictorial tradition of the *Europa*, see Sluijter 1986, 95; Grohé 1996, 79-101; and Golahny 2001.
- 15 Ovid/Florianus 1615, 37-37v: “Als Europa des Coninx dochter desen schoone[n] stier gesien hadde, so is syer by gecomen hem presenteerde groene cruydekens voor den muyl, waer af Iupiter hem verblijde, en hoepte wel dat hy dus allenskens tot sijnder begeirten comen soude. Hy custe haer handen, ende hadde wel meer gewenscht. Als nu dede hy haer feeste aen, nu wentelde hy int sant, nu int groene, ende ten leste[n] een luttel stouter sijnde gaf hy haer oock sijn borsten te tasten. Als sy sach dat hy soo tractabel ende vriendelijc was, wert sy wat vercloect, en[de] ginck er boven te sitten. Doen ginc Iupiter met de vorste voete in d’water, daer na wat voorder, en[de] ten lesten maecte hy hem met sijn proye aent-swemme[n]. Europa siende dat sy alreede soo verre van cante was, begost seer te vreesen, ende op datse te vaster sitten moechte, soo sloech sy haer een hant aen die hoornen, ende met de ander hielt sy haer vaste op sijnen rugge, dus ginc sy henen drijven met haren onbekended vrijer met die cleederen inden wint, als oft seylen geweest hadden.”
- 16 Ovid/Florianus 1615, 36v: “...sijn couleur was wit als sneeu, hy hadde eene[n] schoone dicke[n]

- hals, ae[n] den welcken hinck eenen welgemaecte[n] cossem oft wraddel, fraye, cleyne en[de] clær blinckende hoornke[n]s, tvoorhoof was sonder riempele[n], de oog[e]n vrie[n]delijc ende lieflijc.”
- 17 Grohé 1996, 79-101; Golahny 2001.
- 18 Ovid/Florianus 1615, 81: “Arachnes hadde gemaect hoe dat Iupiter inde ghedaente van eenen stier Europa[m] wech vuerde, desen stier ende die riuiere ware[n] soo wel na d’leven geco[n]terfeyt dat het geensins om verbeter[e]n en was, ...Europa die aerde aensach, roepende haer gesellinne[n] te hulpe, ende datse haer voeten opwaerts troc, op dat [s]e vanden watere niet nat en souden worden.”
- 19 Ovid *Metamorphoses* Book II for Callisto and Book III for Actaeon.
- 20 For the Cort engraving after Titian’s *Callisto*, see Hollstein, *Dutch and Flemish*, V, 55, no. 57. The anonymous engraving which is a pastiche combining the figure of Diana from the Cort *Callisto* and a figure of Actaeon is in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale. Titian’s famed canvases were well-known in variants and copies.
- 21 The Behm drawings of 1602 (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art) were engraved by Crispijn van de Passe I, as part of a small series; see Hollstein *Dutch and Flemish* XV, 177, nos. 400 and 401. The Tempesta prints are B. XVII.822 and 823. The general similarities of Rembrandt’s composition to the two Tempesta prints are well noted, but another Tempesta print, of two playfully fighting dogs, may have also attracted Rembrandt’s attention (B. XVII.161.939); in this way, Rembrandt enhanced the lascivious theme of Jupiter and Callisto with animal behavior. According to Busch 1989, the two figures in the middle distance may be Philemon and Baucis; if so, then the reward of immortality given the virtuous couple is contrasted to the punishment given to Actaeon and Callisto. See also Vliegert-hart 1972.
- 22 Ovid/Florianus 1615, 40: “...soo begootsy he[m] met water der fonteynen, seggende: Gaet nv vertrecken condy, dat ghy Dianam naect gesien hebt, met dese woorden soo creech Acteon op sijn hooft twee hoornen, eenen langen hals, lange beenen, een rouwe gespikkelde en hairachtige huyt...”
- 23 Ovid/Florianus 1615, 27v-28: “Met dese woorden soo wert Calisto heel verslegen, ende die wijle haer dander ontcleede[n], soo bleef sy alleen fantaserende ende versuchtende staen, soo datse die ander selue quame[n] ontcleeden, ende ontcleedt hebbende, sage[n] sy wel wat se bedreuen hadde. Dus sto[n]t daer die arme Calisto onder hare gesellinnen heel beschaemt, ende hadde geirne haren buyck met haere gande[n] gedect.”
- 24 For the drawing, see Ben. 21; and the etching, B. 201.
- 25 For the drawing, see Ben. 1210.
- 26 Leja 1996.
- 27 For this pattern of *Herauslösung*, see Tümpel 1969 and elsewhere.
- 28 For the drawing (Ben. 975) and its relation to the painting of Ganymede (Dresden, Gemäldegalerie, Br. 471, Corpus A113), see Sluijter 1986, 96-97; Grohé 1996, 103-48.
- 29 For the complex relationship of the *Danae* (St. Petersburg, The Hermitage; Br. 474; Corpus A119) to the classical texts, Venetian tradition, and to the critical literature, see Golahny 1984, 133 ff. See also Sluijter 1986, 97; and Grohé 1996, 226-76.
- 30 For the early *Jupiter and Antiope*, ca. 1631, see B. 204; and the later one, from 1659, B. 203.
- 31 The later painting, *Jupiter, Mercury and Philemon and Baucis* (fig. 63) fits within the pictorial tradition established by Elsheimer, with resonance in the theme of Christ at Emmaus (Stechow 1940-41; Sluijter 1986, 100). But with this subject, too, there is a break from tradition in a school drawing that carries a descriptive line that embellishes the Ovidian text (fig. 64; Held 1973, 58). See below (Chapter 7).
- 32 Ben. 540; Broos 1981, 35; Broos in Melbourne/Canberra 1997, 340; and Golahny 2002(1).
- 33 See Broos 1981, 35 for 1645 reference by Philips von Zesen, in his *Adriatische Rosemund*, where a ceiling painting in an Amsterdam house is described as a representation of Mars and Venus imprisoned in Vulcan’s net. Balducci, citing Bernard Keil who was a pupil of Rembrandt’s before 1645, reported that Rembrandt painted a series of Ovidian scenes for an Amsterdam house. Roscam Abbing 1999, 57, related this subject to the bacchanal that Rembrandt painted on the gilt

- leather walls of an Amsterdam house and to the description of an ornate Palace of Peace in Samuel van Hoogstraten's 1648 play *Vryheit der vereenighde Nederlanden*. Taken together, these three pieces of information suggest that Rembrandt produced some mythological decorations for at least one house, that one of the subjects was *Vulcan's Net*, and that this drawing may be connected with the project. Other drawings that may reflect these projects include *Jupiter, Io and Juno* (Ben. A39); *Diana and Actaeon* (Ben. A50); *Diana Discovering Callisto's Pregnancy* (Ben. 521); *Thisbe and Pyramis* (Ben. A27); and *Cecrops' Daughters finding Erichthonius* (Ben. 149 and Ben. 150).
- 34 Homer 1953, *Odyssey* VIII:266-365; Homer/Coornhert 1561, 57-58.
- 35 Ovid *Metamorphoses* 1955, Book IV:171-89.
- 36 Homer/Coornhert 1561, 57v: "Als hy Vulcanu[m] sach reysen, dat hem wel heeft behaecht: Maer ginc na Vulcanus huys, blint van amoreuse drome[n], ... Sy sat binnens huys; hy heeftse in d'arme ghenomen: ...Comt Princesse te bedden, laet ons slapen sonder schromen; ...Sy ghinghen nae tbed om verpachten wellusts exchijsen... Slapende, beuinc haer Vulcanus net, daer Mars tegens stre. Maer hy mocht hem niet roeren, noch wt den bedde rijzen...Vulcanus keerde weder door tquaet vermoed[n] Eer hy va[n] Lemno qua[m]: ...Twas he[m] va[n]der sonne geseyt, die tspel voor he[m] ginc boeden. Hy riep voor duere, vergramt door ialoursheyte knaghelijc, Dat al de goden hoorden, O Jupiter, en ghy salighe goden behaghelijck, Comt siet doch dit lasterlijck feyt, al ist my ondraghelijck. Siet hoe Venus my hinckaert altyt veracht en onteert."
- 37 Homer/Coornhert 1561, 58: "De goden vergaderden daer met groot ghedruys, Neptunus schudder van d'aerde quaem oock aenschouwen, Mercurius met Apollo sach mede dit feyt oncuus. Maer de Godinnen bleue[n] al tsamen wt schamten thuyt."
- 38 Homer/Coornhert 1561, 58: "Hy is lam, meer loos, ... De stercke Mars moet gelden...".
- 39 Homer/Coornhert 1561, 58: "Apollo sprack tot Mercurium, die hertelick lachte, '...Mocht ghy by die schoon Venus leggen een vrolijke nacht?' Mercurius bedacht hem niet langhe in desen,
- Hy seyde O Coninck Apollo mocht dat eens wesen: Al soud hy my noch met driemal stercker netten vanghe[n], En my al de Goden mosten sien schanden mispresen, Noch soud my thyslapen van die schoone Venus verlangen."
- 40 Homer/Coornhert 1561, 58-58v: "Ontbint hem doch terstont, ... laet hy hem cleden, ik word zijn borge; ... lost hem, laet v gramschap dalen. Ontloopt v Mars, weyghert hy, ick selfs salt betalen."
- 41 Homer/Coornhert 1607, 50: "...ben ick swack, maar tmeeste is dat my deert: Twee ouders (diet niet behoorden) hebben mij gheteelt."
- 42 Raphael's cycle in the Farnesina (then Chigi) was based on Apuleius' text. Rembrandt seems not to have been interested in its narrative beyond the peculiar parallel of his own Vulcan and Raphael's Venus, both in the attitude of pleading before Jupiter.
- 43 Caraglio's engraving has been proposed as Rembrandt's visual inspiration; see Broos 1981, 35; Broos in Melbourne/Canberra 1997, 340, cat. no. 78; and Golahny 2002(1). The Caraglio, probably after a lost intermediary drawing, is among the ten or so engravings after the Farnesina frescoes that were made under Raphael's direction. Because Caraglio's print reverses the Raphael fresco, and because Rembrandt generally maintained the directional orientation in his borrowings, it is likely that Rembrandt knew a reversed version of it – a counterproof or even a now-lost preparatory drawing.
- 44 For the *Council of the Gods* by The Master of the Die after Coxcie, see B. 68-II (223).
- 45 For the *Jupiter Embracing Cupid* by The Master of the Die after Coxcie, see B. 67-II (224).
- 46 Homer/Coornhert 1561, 59: "Weest vrolick vader, en ...Laet dat de wint verwaeyen, ...God helpe v thuyt by v wijf, bevrijt van alle v leyt."
- 47 The two scenes of *Vulcan's Net* break the temporal unity that is generally maintained in Rembrandt's imagery. Rembrandt occasionally included two events occurring at the same time, in order to demonstrate present and future action, and cause and effect, as he did in other works, as in the frontispiece for Six's *Medea*, discussed above, and in the etching *The Agony in*

- the Garden* (B. 75), in which the main episode of Christ wrestling with the angel occurs in the foreground, and the secondary event, the arrival of the Roman soldiers, in the distance.
- 48 For Rembrandt's subversion of the Raphaellesque ideal in this case, see Golahny 2002 (1).
- 49 Giltaij 1999, 72.
- 50 See *inter alia*, De Vries 1978, 174.
- 51 Coornhert introduction, in Homer/Coornhert 1561.
- 52 Homer/Van Staveren 1651; Homer/Glazemaker 1658; Herodotus/Dapper 1665.
- 53 Marcantonio's engraving is B. 247; see Berlin/Amsterdam/London 1991, II, 109.
- 54 For the Minerva drawing, see Ben. 914. See also Möller 1984; De la Fontaine Verwey 1975, 89; and Courtright 1996.
- 55 For the Burchard Grossmann drawing (Ben. 257) and for *alba amicorum* in general, see Courtright 1996 and Thomassen 1990.
- 56 For the drawing *Simeon in the Temple*, see Ben. 1057; and Heybloq 1998.
- 57 Aert de Gelder's painting of an aged schoolmaster and four pupils derives from Rembrandt's 1663 *Homer*, and was probably made 1700-1710 (Boston, Museum of Fine Arts); Dordrecht 1998, no. 41; Belkin and Von Moltke 1994, cat. no. 76
- 58 For the *Aristotle* (1653, New York, Metropolitan Museum; Br. 478) and the *Alexander* (Glasgow, Art Gallery and Museum; Br. 480), see Held 1991. Paul Crenshaw has proposed that the main figure in the *Aristotle* could be Apelles; Crenshaw 2000, 228 and forthcoming study.
- 59 Golahny 1984, 200.
- 60 Van Hoogstraten 1678, used the incident of the Cumaens first supporting Homer and then scorning him as an example of an unappreciated artist; Schwartz 1985, 316; Crenshaw 2000, 220.
- 61 See Corpus A 94, where the painting is titled *Sophonisba*; for the identification of Artemisia, see Tümpel 1986, 199; Tümpel 1993, 183; Amsterdam 1999, 76; Golahny 2000.
- 62 Pliny 1971, vol. 10, 24-25 (Pliny Book 36.4, 30-31).
- 63 Valerius Maximus 2000, I, 407, Book 4, Chapter 6, Foreign example 1; slight variations are found in Valerius Maximus 1574, 173, edited by Pighius.
- 64 Valerius Maximus 1614, 252: "het gebeente des overleden, onder den dranck gemengt." Mirkin's Dutch translation is fairly straightforward: "Wtlantsche liefden zijn oock rechtveerdich, door de donckerheydt der onwetenheydt niet verduystert, van welcken het genoech zijn salweynige aengheroert te hebben. Hoe seer dat Artemisia de Coninginne van Carien over hare[n] overlede[n] man Mausolum, getreurt heeft, dat is slecht, datmen daer over, nae de verheventheyte van allerley tsamen gesochte eere[n] en[de] een graf tot seven wonderwercken toe uytgebreyt, wil disputeren. Want wat wilt ghy doch d'eeren by een soecken, oft van dat heerlijcke graf spreke[n], daer sy selve Mausoli leve[n]dige graf heeft begeert te zijn, haert getuygenisse der genen, die schrijven datse het gebeente des overleden, onder den dranck gemengt, gedroncken heeft?" The Mirkin translation contains marginal references to Gellius and Cicero, discussed below. In both the Dutch and the Latin, the implication is that Artemisia did more than build the tomb and drink the ashes. She devised for him " manifold honors " [omnis generis honorum], and " collected the honors " [allerley tsamen gesochte eere[n]]. However, in neither version are any of these honors explained as the poetic competition of Aulus Gellius.
- 65 Cicero *Tusc.* 1976, 314: on feeling distress, and, in Artemisia's case, fresh daily: "For instance the famous Artemisia, wife of Mausolus, King of Caria, who built the celebrated burial monument at Halicarnassus, lived in sorrow all her days and wasted away under its enfeebling influence. The idea of her sorrow was fresh for her every day..."
- 66 This shadowy figure, which is a later addition, may have been painted in order to clarify the subject as Artemisia; see Tümpel 1993, 183, and Corpus III Addendum, 774.
- 67 English translation from Gellius 1988, II, 261-64; Gellius 1624, Book 10, chapter xviii.
- 68 Ancient literary references to the tomb are collected in Junius/Fehl 1991, II, 80, 220, 344, 360, and 405. See also Veldman 1986, 101 f.
- 69 Golahny 2000, 142.
- 70 Edinburgh/London 2001, 110.
- 71 For the engraving by Pencz of around 1539, and the paintings by Rubens and Honthorst, see Golahny 2000, figs. 3-5.

CHAPTER 5

- 1 See Tümpel 1984; and also Tümpel 1993, 177.
- 2 Patrides 1972, 47-61; and Thompson 1942, 78 ff. Among the nineteenth-century variants, usually produced as school texts, are Willard 1835 and Weber 1854.
- 3 For the editions of Gottfried's chronicle, see Wüthrich 1993, 197; Wüthrich 1961, 188 ff.; Faber du Faur 1958, 297. See also Basel/Frankfurt 1993, 267, where editions of 1636-38 and others are mentioned. For the influence of the 1743 edition on Goethe, and in a darker vein, on Adolf Hitler, see Basel/Frankfurt 1993, 15.
- 4 The Dutch 1660 edition was evidently a valued publication. The copy in The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, is bound in two folio volumes; its prints and some margins were extensively hand colored with watercolors, and it therefore takes on the appearance of an illuminated manuscript.
- 5 See Hoftijzer 1999, 39.
- 6 A very cursory search of the book sale catalogues revealed two occurrences between 1690-1702, in a book auction held by the Booksellers Henrik en de Wed. van Dirk Boom, 5 Dec. 1690, Among the folios, no. 17: 1660 edition; and in the book catalogue of Paulus van Uchelen, Amsterdam 1703, Folios, no. 104: 1702 edition "allergrootste pampier; een uytgesogt Exemplær".
- 7 See Wüthrich 1961 for Gottfried's life and work.
- 8 For Merian's prints, see Wüthrich 1993, 197; and Basel/Frankfurt 1993, 19 and passim.
- 9 Cichocki 1999.
- 10 See also Sacramento 1973, 56; Cetto 1966, 187.
- 11 Diodorus Siculus 1960, I, Book I, chapter 58, 203. Burton 1972, 177, asserted that there is no evidence that foreign kings were forced by Sesostris to draw his chariot in place of horses, and observed that this notion may have developed from misunderstanding carved reliefs depicting the king.
- 12 Gottfried 1630, I, Part 1, 54-55: "Es halten ettliche dafür/ Sisac, obgedacht/ sey der Egyptische König Sesostris, dan[n] dieser wie Herodotus zeuget/ hat in Iudea Krieg geführt. Vo[n] jm melden die Historien/ d[a]z er vier von den vberwundene[n] Königen an seinen von Goldt vnd Edelgesteinen zugerichten Wagen gespannet/ die jhn ziehen müssen. Auff ein zeit sahe einer dieser gefangenen stetigs zu rück/ auff ein rad am Wagen. Sesostris fragte die Ursach. Ich tröste mich/ sagt der gefangene/ deß Glücks/ welches wie ein Rad umbblauft/ vnd dn svnderstebald oben wendet/ also kan es auch mit vns gehen. Der König merckte/ waruff dieser spruch gemeynet/ gieng in sich selbst/ vnd spannet hinfüro keine Könige mehr in seine Wagen."
- 13 For the wheel of Fortune, see Nelson 1980.
- 14 For the Rennes drawing, Ben. 1014, see Paris 1972, 71; Held 1991, 177; Held 1973, 65.
- 15 As J. G. van Gelder noted, following his 1968 visit to the museum in Rennes, "On n'a jamais douté de l'authenticité de dessin à Rennes" [letter in museum files].
- 16 This drawing, Ben. 1015 (Private Collection), has been accepted in the literature, but appears to be a copy with some changes.
- 17 Livy 1951, XIII, Book 45: XII, lines 3-6, 280-83.
- 18 Valerius Maximus 2000, II, 47, Book 6.4.3.
- 19 Gottfried 1930, I, Part 3, 92-94: "Im folgenden Jahr beläert er [Antiochus] Alexandriam, kont sie aber nicht gewinnen. Da schickte der Junger Ptolomaeus Gesandten gen Rom und bat umb Hülf... Der Senat beschloß jhnen zu helfen/ schickte ihre Legaten in Egypten/ die funden Antiochum mit seinem Heer noch vor der Statt Alexa[n]dria ligen. Popilius Laenas, der Fürnembste under den Gesandten/ gieng hin zu jhm/ deß Rahts decret anzuzeigen. Antiochus lieff jhm entgegen/ bot jhm die Hand unnd wolt jhn umbfahren/ dann sie hatten zu Rom kundtschafft mit einander gemacht. Popilius wand sich von jhm/ sagt/ es wer jetzt nicht zeit/ sich der Privatkundtschafft zu erinnern/ fragt jhn hiemit im Namen deß gantzen Rahts und Römischen Volcks/ ob er von Alexandria abziehen/ unnd Egypten müssig gehn wolt oder nicht? Daruff solt er kurtz und rund antworten. Antiochus sagt/ er wolte sich mit seinen Rächten deßw[e]gen be- rahtschlagen/ unnd jhm darnach ein Antwort widerfahren lassen. Der Römische Legat macht mit seinem Stab/ den er in der Hand hatte/ einen Kreyß rings umb den König in den Sand/ und sprach/ da gib mir Antwort/ ehe du auß diesem Ring gehest/ ob du mit den Römern Krieg oder

- Friede haben wollest. Antiochus erschrack ob diesen ersten Proceß/ sagt/ er were bereit zu thun/ was dem Raht zu Rom gefiel. Da hieß jhn Popilius also balden mit den seinen auß Egypten abziehen/ welches er auch thun muste.”
- 20 Of the few sixteenth-century depictions, the only print is by Jost Amman; it appeared in the abbreviated version of Livy, the *Icones Livianiae* of 1568 and not in the other Livy editions published by Feirabend with Amman's other woodcuts. The Amman woodcut was proposed as a prototype for Rembrandt by Kieser 1941-42, 145, and Tümpel 1969, 111. Similarities are many, but the Amman print shows both main figures speaking at the same time, and Merian, likely familiar with Amman's woodcut and Livy's text, clarified the moment of Popilius' speech.
- 21 These drawings include: *Cimon and Pero* (Ben. C9a); *Scipio Africanus and the Spanish Bride* (Ben. C43); *Dido Cutting the Ox hide to found Carthage* (Ben. 490); the *Episode from Ancient History, possibly Coriolanus* (Ben. 1034); *Pyrrhus* (Ben. 1045a); *Belisarius* (Ben. 1053); and *Titus Manlius Torquatus Beheading his Son* (Ben. 1382).
- 22 For the 1658 inventory of Abraham Wijs and Sara de Potter, which includes a *Lucretia* painted by Rembrandt, see Strauss 1658/8; Schwartz 1985, 330.
- 23 The drawings are Ben A52; Ben 117; and Ben C22. Another suggestive piece of evidence that the theme of Lucretia was current in the Rembrandt studio of the 1630s is a now-lost painting by Jacob Swalmius; see Montias 2002, 169.
- 24 This school composition shows Lucretia, dying upon the floor of her bedroom, with her husband who leans over her and three other men, of whom one is aged and evidently her father. It was copied by a pupil, in a drawing in Braunschweig (Inv. no. Z. 2217). The Berlin drawing of Lucretia's death mourned by the four men may be tentatively dated in the later 1640s, because of its rigid alignment of the railing, table, and bed with the picture plane and the placement of the figures at only slight angles.
- 25 Audience response has been consistently part of the critical literature. See Bal 1991, 64 ff.
- 26 Valerius Maximus 2000, II, 2-5; Book 6.1.1; see also Valerius Maximus 1574, 229-230.
- 27 See Hults 1991 and Schwartz 1985, 330 for the range of interpretations given to Lucretia.
- 28 Livy/Stimmer 1574, 53: “Sie fanden zwar die Lucretia trawerig und bekümmert in ihrer Kammer sitzen: Die thräne flossen ihr aus de[n] augen...”
- 29 Livy/Stimmer 1574, 53: “In gar keynen weg nicht/ Dann was wolstandes ist an eynem Weibe/ wann sie jhrer weiblicher ehren und Keuscheyte verlüstigt worden. Collatine mein Gemahl/ du magst wol eynen andern Mann in deinen Bette spüren: Jedoch ist alleyn mein Leib gewalthätiger weise geschaendet/ un[nd] das gemüt hat keyne schuld daran. Solches soll mein tod bezeugen. Gebt mir aber ewere rechte hände/ und versprecht mir auff eweren guten glauben/ dass es dem Ehebrecher nicht ungestrafft solle hingehen. Derselbig ist nemlich Sextus Tarquinius/ welcher in nächesvergangener nachte/ an statt eynes erbarn Gastes/ eyn gewalthätiger Feind gewesen/ un[nd] durch nottringenden gewalt/ mir un[nd] sich eben selbs/ woh jhr anders zur rache mannlich gesinnt/ eyne verderbliche freud hat abgeraubt und genommen.”
- 30 Livy/Stimmer 1574, fol. 53: “Hiemit stache sie eyn Messer/ welches sie under dem Kleyde verborgen hatte/ in jhr Hertz hinein/ fiele zugleich mit der wunde fürwart zu boden/ und fieng an zusterben.”
- 31 See, for comparison, the Dutch editions of 1541 and 1614 (reissued 1646, translation by Merula, with copies of some of the Stimmer woodcuts), and the German edition of 1568, with Amman illustrations. For Renaissance illustrations, see Hults 1991. Gottfried 1630, I, Part 1, 128, omitted Lucretia's speech, although Merian's accompanying illustration provided the context of the rape and suicide with the four men present. The 1568 German Livy edition by Feirabend, unpaginated, included a woodcut by Amman that showed three of the four men.
- 32 For Titian's painting (Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum) with respect to the Livy text see McGrath 1997, II, 227.
- 33 Rubens followed Ovid's account, in the *Ars Amatoria*, which casts Tarquin in a somewhat less cruel light; McGrath 1997, II, 226.
- 34 Compositional drawings that were copied exactly include *Scipio*; see below. There are a number of

- drawings of biblical compositions that fit this type. See, for examples, the *Return of the Young Tobias* (Ben. 881; Berlin, Kupferstichkabinet, as by Rembrandt with a pupil, and its copy in Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Inv. 1766). For the instructional progression within Rembrandt's studio of copying drawings, see Sell 1993, 187 ff. and Robinson 1987.
- 35 For the Louvre Scipio drawing, see Lugt 1933, cat. no. 1293, as copy of the first half of 1640s; Ben. C43, as a copy from around 1643. For the Berlin copy, see Bock and Rosenberg 1930, 243, cat. no. 3109. In the Louvre sheet, there is a tentative quality to the pen, but the drawing is consistent, and of a piece in its execution; there is no evidence of reworking, piecing, or correcting.
- 36 See also Gottfried 1630, I, Part 3, 103, where the story of the bride and groom is told, but without reference to the careful keeping of records by the Romans.
- 37 McGrath 1997, II, 259 ff.
- 38 Livy 1951, XXVI.50.
- 39 Livy/Stimmer 1574, 308-09.
- 40 The editions of Livy in German and Latin with woodcut illustrations by Jost Amman may also have been available to Rembrandt's studio. In the Scipio school drawing, the soldier at the left edge may be reminiscent of a similar soldier at the far right of Amman's woodcut. See Livy/Amman 1568, 500.
- 41 Record-keepers appear in versions of Scipio by Rembrandt pupils. For a drawing by Jacob de Wet (Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet), see Sumowski 1979, no. 2351; for Ferdinand Bol's painting (location unknown), see Blankert 1982, cat. no. 26.
- 42 Valerius Maximus 2000, I, 366.
- 43 For Lievens' painting of 1639-40, now known only in a copy, see Schneider 1973, 117-18; for Dirck Hardenstein's version of 1653, painted for the Deventer Town Hall, and De Lairese's version of 1688 for The Hague, Court of Justice, see Sutton 1982, 5.
- 44 Sutton 1982; Manuth 1908.
- 45 Ben. 490. The subject was identified by Tümpel 1969, 128 and Feinblatt 1971.
- 46 Livy 1951, XVI, summary; and Livy 1541, 98 r and v, reissued under the editorship of Merula, 1614.
- 47 See Livy/Amman 1568, 319.
- 48 Gottfried 1630, I, Part I, 71.
- 49 Livy/Stimmer 1574, 220.
- 50 For Dido in the program of the Regensburg City Hall (1564), see Feinblatt 1971, fig. 3.
- 51 These include *Titus Manlius Torquatus ordering his son beheaded* (Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans-van Beuningen, see Giltaij 1988, cat. no. 66, as Eeckhout, ca. 1660; Valentiner 1925, II, cat. no. 578); and *Mucius Scaevola before Porsenna* (Paris, Louvre, Inv. 22988).
- 52 Amsterdam 1996, 172; Basel 1984, 176.
- 53 Amsterdam 1996, 170.
- 54 Berlin/Amsterdam/London 1991, 144; Tümpel 1984, 185; Perlove 1995, 163.
- 55 Wischnitzer 1990, 119.
- 56 Landsberger 1954; These are the open portal (*Wars...*, Josephus/Stimmer 1574, 451v), the second gate leading from the porch to the Holy and the curtain sheltering the ark (*Antiquities...*, 275v and *Wars...*, 451v, respectively), the altar that is in a sacred space to which only priests are admitted [the original Josephus text in the *Antiquities* specifies the altar as square and with corners like horns; this description was omitted in the German translation; see Josephus/Stimmer 1574, 258v]; the twelve steps up to the temple, which Rembrandt indicated as also leading to the altar (451v); the three or four courts of Herod's temple with grand halls surrounding this area, and in Rembrandt's etching there is one large hall in the background; a place for women to worship, which may be indicated by the open balcony with figures, who appear to be women, and who are separated from those upon the ground level by a wall (451 r and v); the tower fortress, which in Josephus is described as "starck" (strong) rather than round, as in the original Greek and other translations (257v). Landsberger noted that if the *Josephus* text was not explicit with respect to the tower fortress, then Rembrandt may have felt free to design it as he wished.
- 57 Schwartz 1985, 176, suggested that Menasseh ben Israel may have been involved in the design, and that the subject may have been relevant in times of plague.
- 58 Josephus/Stimmer 1574, 149v: "Unter deß ist eyn grosser und gewaltiger Erbbidem entstanden/

- dauon der Tempel oben zerspalten und ist eyn heysser brennender Sonnenglantz dem König unter des Angesicht geschlagen/ dauon er also bald aussätzig worden... So bald aber die Priester gesehen/ daß der König an seinem Angesicht mit Außsatz geschlagen und verunreiniget war/ haben sie jhm angezeygt/ daß solches eyn Straff Gottes sei/ jhn auch vermahnet/ daß er sich/ als eyn unreiner/ auß der Statt machen solte.”
- 59 Slatkes 1980, 114 and n. 43; Tümpel 1984, 186. See Josephus/Stimmer 1574, 72: “Es hatte aber Sampson die Thamniter alle zu seiner Hochzeit gelade[n]/ welche dieweil sie sich für seiner stärck gefürchtet/ jmn treißig Jüngling zugeben haben...”
- 60 Josephus/Stimmer 1574, 73: “So bald sie ihm das außgeloeket/ hat sie jhm das Har heimlich abgeschnitten/ daß ers nicht empfunden hat/ unnd jhn hiemit seinen Feinden verrathen und verkaufft/ dieweil er seine stärck verloren/ unnd sich nicht erwehren kont. Da er nuh den Philistern zu theyl/ ward/ stachen sie jhm die Augen auß/ und führeten jhn gebunden und gefangen mit sich hinweg.”
- 61 For Lucas’ engraving, see B. 25, and for one woodcut, B. 203. Rembrandt’s early painting of ca. 1628 (Berlin, SMPK, Br. 489, Corpus I A108) shows Delilah as cutting the hair.
- 62 See further Manuth 1990; Amsterdam/Jerusalem 1991, 81 f.
- 63 See Berlin/Amsterdam/ London 1991, I, 181, for a discussion of the original (St. Petersburg; Br. 498; Corpus A 108) and the variant (Munich, Alte Pinakothek).
- 64 Josephus/Stimmer 1574, 12v-13: “Und hiemit gehet er zu dem Altar und wolte sich zum Opffer schlachten lassen/ were auch also bald getödter worden/ wann es Gott nie gewendet hette...”
- 65 Josephus/Stimmer 1574, 13: “Abraham aber und Isaac/ die Gott so wunderbarlich und wider alle jre hoffnung erhalten/ und jhnen darzu so vil gutes versprochen und verkündiget hatte/ küsseten eynander/ und kehreten nach verzich-tem Opffer widerumb heym zur Sara/ lebten fridlich und wol/ und Gott gab glück zu allem was sie anfiengen.”
- 66 Tümpel 1984, 189, noted that the 1645 etching (B. 30) contains the same conversational ex-
change that would have come from Josephus, rather than the Bible.
- 67 See Berlin/Amsterdam/ London 1991, I, 278: Isaac’s ‘innocent submissiveness.’ For the analogous treatment by Lastman in a drawing, see Tümpel 1984, 195.
- 68 See also Edinburgh/London 2001, 210.
- 69 Josephus/Stimmer 1574, 21v; Tümpel 1984, 189. Josephus’ text may also have been a factor in the cavernous, shaded bed in Rembrandt’s earlier etching *Joseph and Potiphar’s Wife* (1634; B. 39). There, the lasciviousness of the woman becomes emphasized, not only by her twisting and revealing posture but also by the phallic bedpost and sheltering canopy; Berlin/Amsterdam/London 1991, 188.
- 70 Schwartz 1985, 273; Edinburgh/London 2001, 210. For Vondel’s *Joseph in Egypten*, see Vondel/Sterck 1927, IV, 148 ff.
- 71 Sluijter in Adams 1998, 73; Rembrandt’s *Bathsheba* is in Paris, Louvre, Br. 521.
- 72 For Maes’ drawing (Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet; Sumowski 1979, no. 1923-x), see Berlin/Amsterdam/London 1991, II, 138. For the woodcut, see Josephus/Stimmer 1574, 107.
- 73 For Van den Eeckhout’s drawing *Bathsheba Pleading before David* (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art), see New York 1995, II, 196, ca. 1642-43.
- 74 London, The Victoria and Albert Museum; Ben. 1011; Tümpel 1969, 125; Tümpel 1984, 186; and Amsterdam 1996, 172; Josephus/Stimmer 1574, 75v.
- 75 Tümpel 1984, 174.
- 76 Lastman surely knew and followed that author on several occasions. One subject he painted several times is the episode of David giving the letter to Uriah that will place him in the thickest battles. This letter is, in effect, Uriah’s death warrant, and will enable David to marry the then widowed Bathsheba. Tümpel noted that the letter is featured in the biblical text, but that only Josephus states that it is sealed; see Tümpel 1984, 180.
- 77 Angel 1642, 49: “Soo yet bysonders, doch natuerlix heb’ick bevonden in een *graeutje* van *Jan Lievensz.* daer hy de offerhanden des *Patriarchs Abraham* in affghemaelt hadd’, doch gansch onghemeen, en evenwel eygentlick, volgens de

beschrijvinghe *Iosephi den Ioodsen Hystori Schrijver, in't Eerste Boeck op't leste vant 13de Cappittel*, alwaer hy seyt, dat, na Godt het voornemen van *Abraham* ghestudt hadd', sy malkanderen (als van nieuws ghevonden) omhelsden, en kuste..."

78 Lievens' other two versions of the Abraham's Sacrifice of Isaac that depend upon Josephus rather than the Bible are in Rome, Galleria Doria Pamphilj, and Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz Museum. An example among the Rembrandt pupils who followed Josephus in this subject includes the 1646 painting by Bol, in Lucca, Mansi Collection; Blankert 1982, cat. no. 4.

CHAPTER 6

- 1 He bid at the auction of the possessions of Lodowijk van Ludick (Strauss 1662/6), and several other auctions for some prints and plates of the Carracci (Strauss 1663/9), and for Lucas van Leyden prints and drawings (Strauss 1668/5). See Amsterdam 1999, 55.
- 2 For the etching *Jupiter and Antiope* of 1659 (B. 203) and the drawing *Diana and Actaeon* (Ben. 1210), Rembrandt recalled Ovid; the compositions have visual prompts in the work of Carracci and Tempesta, respectively.
- 3 The essential studies of this monument are Goossens 1996; Albrecht 1982; Fremantle 1959; Buchbinder-Green 1974; Van de Waal 1974; Frijhoff and Spies 1999, 452 f.
- 4 Goossens 1996; Fremantle 1959; and Buchbinder-Green 1974.
- 5 McGrath 1997, I, 42.
- 6 For example, the workshop drawing of Fabius Maximus (Ben. 956 r).
- 7 Van de Waal, 1974, 35; Nordenfalk 1983, 38.
- 8 Fokkens 1662, 159 f.; Van de Waal 1974, 33.
- 9 Carroll 1986, 16; Israel 1998, 561.
- 10 Van de Waal 1974, 35.
- 11 Tacitus/Fenacoliuſ 1645, 598, Book IV, chapter 10: "En voor al heeft straks daar aan Civilis in [het] Schaker-bosch beroepen de grootste Edelen van het Landt en ook de treffelijkste van de Gemeente, onder een schijn van een groote gastery: en daar na siende dat sy nu laat in de nacht door den wijn en vrolijkheyt gantsch verhit waren, soo heeft hy haar begonnen aan te spreken aanvangende sijne reden van den overvloedighen lof en eere hares volks, voorts begost hy ook te verhalen alle de veronghelijkinghen, roveryen en andere slaafsche swarigheden, die haar aangedaan waren."
- 12 Tacitus/Fenacoliuſ 1645, 598, Book IV, chapter 10: "...soo heeft hy haar na de Barbarische gewoonte, alle t'samen verbonden met eede [sic] en andere vervloekingen in't Landt aldaar gebruykelijk."
- 13 Tacitus/Fenacoliuſ 1645, 598, Book IV, chapter 10: "Want Civilis was een man seer uytstekende boven gewoonlijke wijsheyt der Barbarischen, en was wonderlik listigh van verstandt, maar mismaaft van aansicht, hiel hem als een anderen Sertorius of Hannibal." For Civilis' one eye, see also Cluverius 1616, Book I, 381.
- 14 Civilis' appearance may also depend upon another passage in Tacitus (*History*, Book 4, Chapter 61, in Tacitus 1942, 636), in which he stated that Civilis had made a vow to grow his hair, dyed red, until he had achieved victory over the Romans; after the Roman legions were defeated, he cut it short. Elsewhere, Tacitus discussed other customs of these tribes. The Chatti grew their hair long upon reaching manhood, and cut it only after slaying an enemy in battle (*Germania*, Chapter 31, in Tacitus 1942, 724).
- 15 For the Van Veen series and the Tempesta prints after it, and for Flinck's commission, see Buchbinder-Green 1974, 188 f. and Van de Waal 1974, 35 ff.
- 16 For discussion of Ovens' paintings, see Buchbinder-Green 1974, 202 f.
- 17 Smetius 1644, 25, placed it in Nijmegen.
- 18 Van Leeuwen 1685, 176-78. Smids 1711, 36-39 and 246, summarized the possibilities for the *sacrum nemus*, of which he thought the foremost candidates were Voorschoten, Nijmegen, Kuilenborg, Tolen, and Alkmaar. Both the many locations for the wood and the tradition advocating Nijmegen were well established by the early sixteenth century; Israel 1998, 58.
- 19 Ben. 1061. Whether Rembrandt knew the structure at first- or second-hand is not the issue, since in any case he opened the walls to indicate

- the surrounding forest. His interest may have been historical accuracy, and he chose a building that was considered to date from antiquity.
- 20 Brunsting 1966, 182; Chong in Amsterdam/Boston/Philadelphia 1987, 298.
- 21 Smids 1711, 351.
- 22 Brunsting 1966, 186.
- 23 Israel 1998, 879.
- 24 Ben. 1045a, as *Pyrrhus accepting the surrender at Aegae from the Gauls* [Plutarch, Book LIX], an episode that does not fit the historical text, as discussed below; Schatborn and Tümpel, in Amsterdam 1991, 82, suggested *Coriolanus and the Roman Women*, ca. 1659-1660, and related the drawing to Lastman's 1625 painting of the same subject; this was followed by Royalton-Kisch in Berlin/Amsterdam/London 1991, II, 139, ca. 1655-1660, with review of the literature. See further Benesch 1970, 221, where the drawing is connected to Plutarch's life of Pyrrhus, but not thoroughly examined.
- 25 Plutarch/van Nyevelt 1644, 165v-75v. The complete text also was translated into German by 1580, also from Amyot's French version; both the German and the French were issued with illustrations by Amman, the same woodcuts that had appeared in the Livy/Amman 1568.
- 26 Plutarch/Everart 1601, 349-61.
- 27 Plutarch/van Nyevelt 1644, 168v: "...de groote en[de] schoone vederbosch, ende de bocx-hoornen die hy boven op sijn helmet droegh."
- 28 Plutarch 1959, Book XVIII, 402; Plutarch/Amman 1580, 428; Plutarch/van Nyevelt 1644, 170v.
- 29 Plutarch 1959, Book XX, 406-11, esp. 410-11; Plutarch/Amman 1580, 428v; Plutarch/van Nyevelt 1644, 171.
- 30 Plutarch 1959, Book XXI, 410-13; Plutarch/Amman 1580, 428v-29; Plutarch/van Nyevelt 1644, 171v.
- 31 Valerius Maximus, *Dicta et Facta*, contains ten references to Pyrrhus, although none seems relevant for Rembrandt's reading.
- 32 The compilation by Petrus Lauremberg first appeared in 1640. It was revised and translated into Dutch in 1656 and 1661. The episode of Fabricius frightened by the elephant is found in these editions: 1650 German, 631, #468; 1656 Dutch, 368, #468; and 1661 Dutch, 228, #414.
- 33 For the oil sketches and Town Hall painting of Pyrrhus and Fabricius, see Blankert 1982, cat. nos. 49-53; for the preparatory drawings, see Sumowski 1979, I, cat. nos. 110 and 111, and also Melbourne/Canberra 1997, 207.
- 34 For Flinck's *Manius Curius*, see Von Moltke 1965, 90; Goossens 1996, 43.
- 35 For the connection between the two characters, see Blankert 1982, under cat. no. 52.
- 36 For the elephant drawings by Rembrandt, see Berlin/Amsterdam/London 1991, II, 57.
- 37 Cicero, *De Officiis*, I:38; here cited in Cicero/Coornhert 1561, 15-15v:
 "Ick strijde niet om eenich ghelt oft gout.
 'Wy sijn crijslude[n], acht o[n]s gee[n]rouers gierich.
 'Tgelt sal ons niet scheyde[n], maer onse swaerden stout.
 'Men sal sien, wiens vroomheyt fortuyn on bestierich.
 'Des anders heere maect. Hoort mi noch verclaren.
 'Spaert het gheluck yemandts stoutheyt goeder tierich,
 'Alst God soo wil, ick wil haer vryheyt oock sparen.
 'Neemtse vry wech, sonder ghelt, oft eenich beswaren.'
 "Dat was seker een Conincklijcke sententie, die het geslachte van Achilles wel betaemde."
- 38 Cicero 1531, 83.
- 39 Jan Six owned this book, which is listed in Six 1706, 27, no. 422: "Cicero verteuschet von Swartzenberg und mit kuffer verziret[sic]." Here the credit of translating is given to the illustrator, Christoph von Swartzenberg, and the woodcuts are erroneously called metal plates. It was fairly highly priced at 9 guilders in the sale [KB annotated copy].
- 40 Blankert 1973.
- 41 Van Mander 1604, unpaginated, Appendix: "Zeuxis soude wesen gestorven/ uytvarende met onmaetlijck laechen/ hem verstickende/ nae t'leven schilderende een berimpelt oudt drolligh Wijf. Dit betuyght Verrius Flaccus in zijn Boecke[n] van de beteyckeninghe der woorden/ daer hy aentreckt Sex. Pompeum Festum. Hier opheeft eenigh Poet ghestelt dese versen:

- Hoe licht ghy sonder maet? oft wilt ghy g'lijcken even Den Schilder, welcken is van lacchen doot ghebleven?" See Van Mander 1604, 66v-68v for the life of Zeuxis.
- 42 Lauremberg 1661, 311-12, #462: "Eenighe Menschen hebben haer doode gelacht. Het lacchen is een eygenschap des menschen, het welck gene andere Creatuyren van natuere mede-gedeelte is, ...Xeuxes, een Schilder zijnde, hadde op een tijdt een oudt, rimpelachtigh, krom en ongestalt Wijf, seer aerdigh na 't leven afgeconterfeyt. Als hy nu dit sijn werck, en met de natuere volkomelijck over een komende gestalte met neerstigheyt aenmerckte, vingh hy aen soo onmatigh en geweldig te lacchen, dat hy alle levendige geesten mede uyt lachte, en doodt ter aerden neder viel.... Mate is tot alle dingen goet, want gelijk men in 't gemeene Spreeck-woordt segt: Te veel is ongesont. Omne nimium vertitur in vitum."
- 43 Van Hoogstraten 1678, 78: "Zeuxis schilderde ongaren gemeene Historien, 't zy van oorlogen, of de daden der helden of goden, maer zocht altyts eenige geestige verzieringe, 't zy in't uitbeelden van eenige driften en hartstochten..."
- 44 Van Hoogstraten 1678, 110 (in the context of representing laughter): "...want terwijl hy met diergelijck een drollige bes na't leven te schilderen bezich was, barste hy zelfs soo gewellich in lacchen uit, dat hy daer van verstikte en storf."
- 45 Additionally, illustrations of Zeuxis' competition with Parrhasius are included in publications discussed above: Gottfried 1630, I, part 3, 20 and Cicero 1531, unnumbered page.
- 46 See also Chapman 1990, 101-04; London/The Hague 1999, 216; Corpus IV, no. 22.
- 6 Bialostocki 1988, 153-55 and notes.
- 7 G.S. Panofsky 1996.
- 8 Bardon 1960; McTighe 1996; Kimura 1996.
- 9 Corradini and Marini 1993, 161: "un'altra cassa con dodici libri dentro".
- 10 Bredius 1915.
- 11 Montias 1989, 139, 341.
- 12 Vergara 1998, 239; Welu 1986, 266.
- 13 Vergara 1998, 235 and 251, n 11.
- 14 Harmon 1999.
- 15 Bredius 1895.
- 16 Bredius 1915, I, 52 ff.; Bialostocki 1988, 157.
- 17 Bredius 1915, II, 557 ff. and VII, 191 f.
- 18 Wurfain in Leiden 1976, 105.
- 19 Bredius 1915, I, 172 ff.
- 20 Saenredam 1667; the library catalogue is in Wolfenbüttel, Bc Kapsel 7(15). See Ruurs 1982 and Ruurs 1983.
- 21 Bok and Schwartz 1989, 184.
- 22 Lastman, see above; see Dudok van Heel 1991(1), 119.
- 23 Belkin and Von Moltke 1994, 203: "Boven op de middelkamer bibliothec[qu]e, bestaande in twee kasten en een klijndere, met boeken."
- 24 Washington/Amsterdam 1996, 27.
- 25 Westermann 1997.
- 26 Bardon 1960; Pace 1960, 438.
- 27 Nichols 1991, 89, for letters of 1592 concerning portraits of the Scaligers.
- 28 See the essays by A. Grafton and W. Boucher in Kraye 1998, esp. 193 and 204.
- 29 Such a case is Salomon de Bray's *Odysseus and Circe* (ca. 1650; private collection), in which one small detail might indicate that the artist consulted Homer's original text, rather than Coornhert's translation; see Rotterdam 1999, cat. no. 8, note 3, for mention of the Greek original text as the source for the cloth draped over Ulysses' chair.
- 30 Goeree 1704, 41: "Waarom het ook seer voordeelig is, in eenige vreemde Taal, als Latyn, Frans en Italiaans ervaren te wesen, om beter eenige Schrijvers, die noch niet in onse Moederspraak overgeset zijn, te kunnen verstaan. Doch hier in zijn onse tijden gelukkiger, danze wel eertijds waren."
- 31 Van Mander 1604. See further Melion 1991.
- 32 Angel 1642, 35 ff. See further Chapman 1990; Sluijter 1993; and Sluijter 1999. Sluijter 1999, 260, points out that, according to Angel, the

CHAPTER 7

- 1 Belkin 1998, 193.
- 2 Golahny 1990.
- 3 McGrath 1997, I, 79. Livy, *Deus Mus Relating his Dream*, Vaduz, Liechtenstein Collection.
- 4 Golahny 1998, 48 n. Rubens' *Aeneas and Dido Dis-mounting* is in Frankfurt, Städelsches Kunstinstitut.
- 5 Bialostocki 1988, 154. This study is essential, but not exhaustive.

- painter's task was to delight the eye, and be judged on the means by which the painter achieved verisimilitude through perceptual observation of the natural world, meticulous skill in the handling of the painter's tools, and convincing rendition of optical phenomena, textures, and materials. For Angel's life and circumstances, see Frederiks 1888; and Slatkes 1983, 47 ff.
- 33 Angel 1642, 34.
- 34 Angel/Hoyle 1996, 245; Angel 1642, 44-46.
- 35 Angel/Hoyle 1996, 246; Angel 1642, 47: "...vele hedendaechse Meesters na ghecomen wert, ons bekomerende met neerstich de oude vermuste Boecken te doorsnuffelen om kennisse van Hystorien te bekomen...vele vande teghenwoordighe vermaerde Geesten noch doen; als, daer is dien wijt-beruchten Rembrant; dien vermaerden Ian Lievensz.; dien groot-geachten Backer; den aerdigen Bliccker; en veel meer anderen..."
- 36 Angel/Hoyle 1996, 246; Angel 1642, 47-48: "Siet, dese vrucht der eygen natuerlicke uyt beeldinge ontstont door de Hystorie wel gelesen en ondertast te hebben door hooge en verre naghedachten."
- 37 Angel 1642, 48-49, see Chapter 5 above, for Josephus.
- 38 Angel/Hoyle 1996, 247; Angel 1642, 49-50. See also Sluijter in Adams 1998.
- 39 Angel/Hoyle 1996, 247, with slight emendation; Angel 1642, 49-51.
- 40 Otto van Veen's illustration appeared in *Emblemata Horatiana*, Antwerp, 1612, 86-87; see also Stechow 1940-41, 106.
- 41 The transcription is given by Benesch under Ben. 960. See also another school drawing of the same subject, Ben. A 76. The chasing of the goose is often represented in the illustrated Ovids, which may have been a resource in Rembrandt's workshop.
- 42 Angel 1642, 41.
- 43 Goeree 1690, 713; Goeree remarked that it would have been forbidden for a dog to eat under the table according to the customs of Jesus' day. For Rubens' *Last Supper* in which a dog gnaws upon a bone under the table, see Held 1980, I, cat. no. 341, which was engraved by Schelte à Bolswert. Goeree noted over a dozen instances of errors by painters in depicting historical subjects, citing ten mistakes in rendering scenes of Christ's life, 1690, I, 538, 560, 738-39, 707, 722, 751, and 775. In Goeree's own writings for artists, however, he was somewhat less stringent in his demand that artists be expert in all details of histories, for he admitted "the art of painting, however, does not require all those matters into their last detail, but can confine itself to a rough or general outline" (cited by De Vries 1998, 89, from Goeree, *Natuurlyk en Schilderkonstig Ontwerp der Menschkunde*, Amsterdam, 1682, 195).
- 44 In his discussion of ancient pagan sacrifices, Houbraken made the distinction between the pagan and the Jewish candelabra (Houbraken 1718, I, 107), and cited another publication by Goeree for correct ancient Jewish customs; see Goeree 1700, IV, 88, on the candelabra menora.
- 45 Houbraken 1718, I, 101-02, quoting Maimonides and the Life of Paul, in a publication that Houbraken himself had helped illustrate; the tearing of the clothing by Jews in cases of blasphemy was discussed by Goeree, 1690, I, 617. Houbraken's text reads: "Het scheuren der leederen was gemeen by de Hebreuewen, wanneer iemand godslasterlyke woorden hoorden spreken. De Hoogepriester scheurt van onderen, maar een gemeen priester van boven... Volgens deze leiding hebben zig onze braafste Konstoffenaars vergist, als zy den Hoogenpriester Kajaphas hebben verbeeld, zyne Kleederen van de borst nederwaarts scheurende." See also Golahny 1996(2).
- 46 De Lairese 1712, part 1, 139; De Lairese/Fritsch 1738, 127; and elsewhere.
- 47 De Lairese 1712, part 1, 116; De Lairese/Fritsch 1738, 88.
- 48 De Lairese 1712, Part 1, 45; De Lairese/Fritsch 1738, 33.
- 49 De Lairese 1712, Part 1, 86; De Lairese/Fritsch 1738, 65.
- 50 Houbraken 1718, II, 162: "Zyne Leerlessen, of Konstregelen stunden op vaste gronden,... 'T is gebeurt dat een van zyn Discipelen de schets van zijn ordonantie ... aan hem vertoonde, maar weinig agt gegeven had op de regte werkinge der beelden, die hy zoo maar had neergesteld. Straks was het zeggen, *Lees den Text...*" See further Brusati 1995, 87.

- 51 From this passage, it has been suggested that stories were enacted, almost as theatre, in order to teach the pupils how to present the action convincingly. After all, paintings were static and permanent theatrical productions. This practice, if indeed it was widespread in artists' workshops, reflects the general rhetorical background of a literate master, and also the practice of pupils putting on plays in the Latin schools. See Brusati 1995, 291.
- 52 De Vries 1998, 135 ff.
- 53 De Lairese 1712, Part 1, 45 (for poetic subjects) and 197 (for historical subjects).
- 54 Bialostocki 1988, 151 and 160, citing Giovanni Battista Armenini, *De veri precetti della pittura*, 1586, Pisa 1823, 234-5.
- 55 Du Fresne 1651, unnumbered pages; see Steinitz 1972.
- 56 Bialostocki 1988, 161, citing L. Scaramuccia, *Le finezze de pennelli italiani*, Pavia, 1674.
- 57 De Piles 1668, addenda; see Bialostocki 1985, 163. See also Puttfarken 1985.
- 58 Bialostocki 1988, 158.
- 59 De Lairese 1712, for Ovid, Homer and Virgil, Part 1, 45; for Apuleius and Tasso, Part 1, 141, for Plutarch, Livy and Tacitus, Part 1, 197. The *Tweederley Naem-Lyst der Italiaensche Consteners* offers a list of ten authors that are considered particularly useful to the "Konst-lievenden Leser," Vasari, Ridolfi, Baglione, Van Mander, Raphael Borghini, Lomazzo, Grignani (on the Villa Borghese), Du Fresne's edition of Leonardo's treatise, Francisco de los Santos, and Michel de Marolle's 1666 catalogue of prints. See Anonymous 1681, Foreword, unpaginated.
- 60 De Lairese 1712, Part 2, 338-9, for Herodotus, Ammianus Marcellinus, Vegetius, Polybius, Vitruvius, and Homer.
- 61 De Lairese 1712, Part 2, 184 f. for Propertius, Claudianus, Philostratus, Cicero, Macrobius, and others.
- 62 De Lairese 1712, Part 2, 226: "En welke Boeken een Beeldhouwer noodzaakelyk zyn. Een welmeenende Beeldhouwer dient deze navolgende Boeken noodzaakelyk te hebben: de Statuaas van *Perrier*, de *Iconologia* of zinnebeeldelyke Beteekenissen van *Cesar Ripa*, *Oudaans* Roomsche Mogendheid, en meer andere Boeken van de Oudheden; mitsgaders de voornaamste Historien, doch voor al *les Characters des Passions* van *Monsr. de la Chambre*, en andere van de Hertzogten; als mede die der kleedingen; ook die van Beesten en Gediertens, enz."
- 63 De Lairese 1713, 69-70: "Jud.: Zie daar, laat eens hooren of gy 't wel leezen kund?/ Prob.: Herodoot, Tacitus, Justinus, Titus Livius, Flavius Josephus, Plutarchus, en boven al de Heylige Schrift./ Jud.: Dat zyn de Historie boeken./ Prob.: Homerus, Virgilius, Ovidius, en Horatius./ Jud.: Die vier zyn Poëten./ Prob.: Caesar Ripa van de zinbeteekenende Beelden. Oudaan van de Oudheid, en Medaillien. Zynze dit nu alle dien ik van doen heb?/ Jud.: Neen, niet als de voornaamste." See also Tümpel 1986, 200.
- 64 Oudaan 1664; the book was reissued in 1671 and later. See further Golahny 1996(1) and 1996(2).
- 65 De Lairese/Fritsch 1738, Book II, 107. In this discussion, De Lairese continued to discuss Horace's division of a drama into five acts, and concluded, "But the Drama differs from a Painting in this; that the one contains in each Act a particular Time, Place or Action; and the other exhibits only a momentary Action." Yet it was this momentary scene that, in painting, was constrained to convey more motivations and actions of the story than was possible in a single theatrical moment.
- 66 De Lairese 1712, 122 f.; De Lairese/Fritsch 1738, 93 f.
- 67 Houbraken 1718, I, 104: "Maar om dat het aller Schilders doen niet is, met de neus in de boeken te snuffelen, heb ik my de moeite getroost van nazoek te doen, aangaande de gereedschappen die de oude Heidenen in hunne offerdiensten gebruikten..." See also Golahny 1996(2).
- 68 Angel 1642, 47; Angel/Hoyle 1996, 246.
- 69 De Lairese/Fritsch, 1738, 65.

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ABBREVIATIONS

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- 31 Rembrandt, *Homer and a Scribe*, drawing. Stockholm, Statens Konstmuseer. Photograph: Nationalmuseum.
- 32 Rembrandt, *Artemisia*, 1634, oil on canvas. Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado.
- 33 Pieter Lastman, *The Triumph of Sesostris*, 1631, oil on panel. San Francisco, Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Philip N. Lillenthal Jr., 44.16.
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- 36 Matthaeus Merian, *Popilius Laenas and Antiochus*, etching with engraving, 1629/30, in: J.L. Gottfried, *Historische Chronica, oder, Beschreibung der fürhnehmsten Geschichten...*, Franckfurt, vol. I, 1630, part 3, p. 93. Reproduced here from the Dutch edition *Gottfrieds Historische kronyck*, Leiden 1698. Reproduced with the permission of Rare Books and Manuscripts, Special Collections Library, The Pennsylvania State University Libraries.
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- 38 Rembrandt, *Lucretia*, 1666, oil on canvas. Minneapolis, The Minneapolis Institute of Arts. The William Hood Dunwoody Fund.
- 39 Rembrandt Studio, *The Death of Lucretia*, drawing. Berlin Kupferstichkabinett. Photograph: Jörg P. Anders.
- 40 Tobias Stimmer, *The Death of Lucretia*, woodcut, in: Titus Livius and Lucius Florus, *Von Ankunfft unnd Ursprung des Römischen Reichs...*, jetzund auff dasz neue ausz dem Latein verteutscht..., T. Rihel, Straszburg, 1574, fol. 53. By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University.
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- 42 Rembrandt Studio, *Scipio and the Spanish Bride*, drawing. Berlin Kupferstichkabinett. Photograph: Jörg P. Anders.
- 43 Tobias Stimmer, *Scipio and the Spanish Bride*, woodcut, in: Titus Livius and Lucius Florus, *Von Ankunfft unnd Ursprung des Römischen Reichs...*, jetzund auff dasz neue ausz dem Latein verteutscht..., T. Rihel, Straszburg, 1574, fol. 309. By permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University.
- 44 Rembrandt Studio, *Dido Cutting the Ox-Hide*, drawing. Formerly Norton Simon Inc.
- 45 Tobias Stimmer, *Dido Cutting the Ox-Hide*, woodcut, in: Titus Livius and Lucius Florus, *Von Ankunfft unnd Ursprung des Römischen Reichs...*, jetzund auff dasz neue ausz dem Latein verteutscht..., T. Rihel, Straszburg, 1574, fol. 220.

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- 46 Rembrandt, *Peter and John at the Temple Gate*, 1659, etching, B. 94-II. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum.
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