Chapter III

Rembrandt's prototypes and pupils' production of variants

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Over the course of the Rembrandt Research Project, the project's investigators were increasingly confronted with problems and questions related to the training of pupils in Rembrandt's workshop, and with the workshop production that may have been associated with it.
This aspect had played no major part in the original plans for the project since the only –or at least most important – question on the agenda had then been: which works of a Rembrandtesque appearance could be considered as autograph Rembrandts?

Besides a large number of paintings that we accepted as being autograph works by Rembrandt, what remained after the first sifting between 1968 and *c.* 1984 was an indeterminate mass of paintings of diverse nature. As became gradually apparent, there were virtually no later forgeries found among them. What were found were paintings which, seen in retrospect, could after all be considered as works by Rembrandt himself[1] and works which, on further consideration, were judged to have probably been produced by Rembrandt in collaboration with a workshop associate, either a pupil and/or assistant.[2] It also gradually became clear that many of the paintings that had been disattributed were works which had been produced in the context of the training of Rembrandt's pupils and the workshop production that was possibly connected with it.

We might have suspected this latter in advance, of course; Joachim von Sandrart had written in his biographical text, concerning Rembrandt, that

> '… Rembrandt's house in Amsterdam was full of almost innumerable children for instruction and learning, each of whom paid an annual fee of one hundred guilders' and that 'he earned considerable sums of money, some 2000 or 2500 guilders a year, from their paintings and etchings.'[3]

The connection between this eye-witness account and the works disattributed by the Rembrandt Research Project was not immediately seen because at the time when the Project began the image of works by Rembrandt's pupils had been set by the earliest signed and dated works by pupils as far as these could be identified. And such works were usually found to differ in style more or less markedly from Rembrandt's autograph works. Apart from that, a 20th-century preconception about education was projected on to the 17th century, which further contributed to the assumption that the work of pupils would be easily distinguishable from that of the master, even while they were still working in Rembrandt's workshop. That anachronistic preconception has been stated explicitily by Sumowski: '… Freedom to choose what could serve as an example apparently was granted by Rembrandt from the outset … in accordance with Rembrandt's ideal of the individual freedom to choose. The Rembrandt–imitator did not work according to his sense.'[4]

The truth, however, gradually emerged that the paintings that were closely related to Rembrandt's works and yet unacceptable as autograph for reasons of particular nuances of style and quality, were not later imitations or falsifications as had initially been thought. They were works which had originated in an educational context in which the accurate imitation of the master was considered to be the most important means of learning the skills of the trade.[5] This explained why copies of works by Rembrandt were to be found among the disattributed paintings that had demonstrably originated in Rembrandt's workshop; and tronies in his style and technique. Furthermore, the existence of free variants after Rembrandt's works could be similarly explained. These are paintings that are evidently related to prototypes by Rembrandt (*'principaelen'* in 17th-century Dutch terminology) yet which cannot be considered copies, even though they often include parts that are copied after Rembrandt's 'prototype'. We refer to such works simply as 'satellites' because there are several types of works derived from Rembrandt's own works. If we were to distinguish between these types by categories with descriptive titles we would lose sight of what they have in common – their dependence on works by the master.

In retrospect it is remarkable that the attention given to the nature of this type of painting only developed during the later stages of the project's existence. Such pairs of *'principael'* and satellite were actually already visible in the Rembrandt literature, specifically in the survey by Abraham Bredius, where what we now see as prototype and satellite were often reproduced on opposing pages. But Bredius, and many others with him, thought that both paintings were by Rembrandt and that their kinship could be explained by assuming that they represented steps in Rembrandt's creative search for the best solution. For a long time too, uncertainty reigned within the Rembrandt Research Project over the question of whether both works in such pairs could not have been painted by Rembrandt himself. Two particular cases in point were the Munich version of *Abraham's sacrifice* (Appendix 1, 21) and the Copenhagen version of the Paris *Supper at Emmaus* (App. 1, 38). The true nature of this practice in Rembrandt's

1 See for instance the reattributed paintings in Chapter II of this Volume and a number of self-portraits reattributed in the *Addenda and Corrigenda* of Vol. IV.

2 See in this Volume cat. V 7, 8, 24.

3 J. von Sandrart, *Teutsche Academie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste*, Nuremburg 1675 (ed. A.R. Peltzer, Munich 1925), p. 203: '…seine Behausung in Amsterdam mit fast unzahlbaren fürnehmen Kindern zur Instruction und Lehre erfüllet, deren jeder ihme jährlich in 100 Gulden bezahlt, ohne den Nutzen, welchen er aus dieser seiner Lehrlinge Mahlwerken und Kupferstucken erhalten, der sich auch in die 2 bis 2500 Gulden baares Gelds belauffen, samt dem, was er durch seine eigne Handarbeit erworben.'

4 Sumowski *Gemälde* I, p. 14 '…Freiheit in der Wahl des Vorbildlichen wurde den Schülern offenbar von vornherein zugebilligt … Das …entsprach Rembrandts Ideal des Individuellen. Der Rembrandt-Imitator arbeitete nicht in seinem Sinn.'; Zie ook Haak Introductie collectie Cevat.

5 J. Bruyn, 'Studio practice and studio production', *Corpus* II, pp. 12-50; J. Bruyn, 'Rembrandt's workshop; function and production', in: Exhib. cat. *Rembrandt. Paintings*, 1991/92, pp. 68-89; M. Franken, '"Aen stoelen en bancken leren gaen". Leerzame vormen van navolging in Rembrandts werkplaats', *Album Discipulorum J.R.J. van Asperen de Boer*, Zwolle 1997, pp. 66-73; M. Franken, 'Learning by imitation: copying paintings in Rembrandt's workshop', in: Exhib. cat. *Rembrandt. Quest of a genius*, 2006, pp. 153-178; E. van de Wetering, 'Principaelen' and satellites: pupils' production in Rembrandt's workshop', in: Exhib. cat. *Rembrandt? The master and his workshop,* 2006, pp. 106-122.

E. Van De Wetering et al., *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*
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workshop was eventually revealed to us, but from an unexpected direction.

That insight took shape when, in two cases, private collectors confronted us with variants previously unknown to us. The owners hoped that their paintings might be works by Rembrandt himself. The first case was the *Isaac and Esau* (App. 1, 25b), which has often been discussed and reproduced since. Isaac lies in, and Esau kneels next to a huge bed that determines the paintings entire composition and bears a strong resemblance to the bed of the *Danae* in the Hermitage (App. 1, 25a). It was clear at first sight that we were looking at a painting executed in Rembrandt's technique and thus must have originated in Rembrandt's workshop; but it was evidently not an autograph work by Rembrandt himself. The same applied to the case of a version of the Louvre painting with *The angel leaving Tobit and his family* (26a). In this newly discovered studio work the angel flies up in the direction of the beholder (App. 1, 26b).

Our confrontation with these two paintings was the first step leading gradually to our becoming convinced that we were dealing with a phenomenon that could be significant in the demarcation and ordering of Rembrandt's autograph oeuvre. The two paintings led us to the idea that we were dealing with an aspect of Rembrandt's normal workshop practice where training and production were aligned with each other. Our hypothesis was that Rembrandt's pupils produced works in which, on the one hand, they based themselves on the master's work, but at the same time could allow their own 'invention' to take its own way towards independent artistic mastery. It was therefore an obvious suspicion that these pupils, in a subsequent stage of their apprenticeship, would develop inventions of their own for paintings in Rembrandt's style. Michiel Franken discovered a contemporary formulation that was relevant for an understanding of this phenomenon in a text by Vondel: that the pupil, like a child '*had to learn to walk while holding to chairs and benches*' [*'aen stoelen en bancken [moest] leren gaen'*]. In the case of the trainee painter, the master's works would be considered the 'chairs and benches'.[6] Another relevant passage is found in Willem Goeree's *'Inleiding tot de praktijk der algemene schilderkunst'*. It reads as follows: *'That, – with an eye to one's education – one practises the virtues of the work of a famous master in a new invention.'*[7]

It may be assumed that such exercises were an integral part of the production of etchings and paintings that Rembrandt sold for his own benefit, just as Sandrart described (see note 3). So far, no texts have been found that give any precise account of this method of teaching/production. In the inventories that have occasionally been found of the parents of Rembrandt's pupils, works have been listed as being *'after Rembrandt'*. These may have been copies, but could also have been free variants of the type described here.[8] The surmise that this was a normal teaching method, whereby commercial commodities were at the same time produced, is supported by the fact that we have encountered the same phenomenon with other 17th-century painters – as shown at the end of the Appendix 1.

As already said, free variants can be 'hidden' in the documents behind the designation 'after Rembrandt'. But the possibility cannot be excluded that they have also occasionally entered the market as works by Rembrandt himself. Indeed, in some cases we have indications that this actually happened. In these cases, however, we have the impression that Rembrandt got his pupils to produce such altered versions in order to improve one of his own already executed inventions. The best known example of this is the *Abraham's sacrifice* in Munich, where it can be taken as established that Rembrandt got a pupil to paint the prototype afresh (*'overgeschildert'*), but this time in an altered form *('verandert'*). This pupil – often taken to be Govaert Flinck – made use of a drawing with Rembrandt's new, improved 'invention' (see p. 201 fig. 123) in which, compared with the St Petersburg prototype, both the ordonnance and iconography were partially revised.

The reason why the art historical discussions round this case went on for so long has mainly to do with degree of freedom with which the passages common to both paintings have been executed in the Munich version. They seem to be more spontaneously painted than the corresponding passages in the St Petersburg version. As a result, it was difficult to accept that they could have been copied by another hand. Not only in the case of Rembrandt but also, for instance, in that of Frans Hals and his workshop, caution must be exercised in this matter. In the 17th century, and certainly in the case of these two workshops, it was not usual when copying to strive for an exact repetition of the prototype. Copies (whether partial or complete) in these workshops could be freer in their execution because although the copyist had the prototype before him it was apparently not demanded that he should copy as exactly as was common in the 19th and 20th centuries. For this reason, discussions over the phenomenon of free variants after Rembrandt's *principaelen* are often protracted and laborious.

In the arguments invoked in such cases, radiographic investigation play an important role in providing evidence of the genesis of the works concerned (see for instance cat. V 12-15, 21-22 and Appendix 2 to this Chapter). Equally important is the analysis of style and quality, and the way the various pictorial means have been employed, as demonstrated in Chapter IV in this Volume.

The range and nature of the differences between *'principael'* and free variant could be greater than, say, in the case of *The angel leaving Tobit and his family* (App. 1, 26b). The composition of the prototype could, for example, be mirror-imaged by a pupil, and then freely varied, as we are convinced is the case with the London *Nativity* (App. 1, 37b). Alternatively, the young painter could use the mas-

6 M. Franken, op.cit.[5], 1997.

7 Willem Goeree, *'Inleiding tot de praktijk der algemene schilderkunst'*, Middelburg 1697, p. 85: 'Datmen de deugt van een beroemd meesters werk omtrent en in een nieuwe inventie geleerdelijk oefent.'

8 *Corpus* II, pp. 48-49.

ter's prototype as a basis for developing 'a new invention' as proposed by Goeree. This happened in the case of the *Danaë/Isaac and Esau* transformation (App. 1, 25b) and with Rembrandt's Berlin *Susanna,* which was transformed by a pupil into a *Bathsheba* (27d). Whatever the case, the general hypothesis presented here does offer the possibility of introducing some structural order into the production of Rembrandt and his workshop. Certainly one would like to test this hypothesis directly against contemporary sources that are more explicit about this training/production system than the texts quoted above (Sandrart, Vondel, Goeree). Taken together, however, the latter constitute impressive corroborative evidence.

But the sheer mass of such suspected *'principael'*/satellite pairs as collated in Appendix 1 (pp. 262-269) alone argues for this hypothesis, even though in many cases further investigation is needed above that which has already been published (also in *Corpus* Vols IV and V) (App. 1 nos. 17-28, 30, 31, 35-39, 42, 45, 47, 49, 50, 51). We also believe we have been able to identify similar *'principael'*/satellite pairs in the case of both Gerard Terborch and Jan Steen (54-56), which have been subjected to similar analysis as that demonstrated in Chapter IV.[9] In both cases we can infer that here too we are dealing with *'principael'*/satellite pairs. We are thus not dealing with a training/production system that was unique to Rembrandt. It may be anticipated that we are looking at a general workshop practice with far-reaching consequences for problems of attribution in Dutch 17th-century painting.

In the case of Rembrandt's small-scale history pieces, insight into another type of free variant proves to be equally important for the ordering of Rembrandt's oeuvre. These are the free *partial* copies: mainly heads or half-figures, a few times whole figures that were isolated from Rembrandt's prototypes and copied and modified to serve as independent 'tronies'. In several cases (27b, 35b), it could be shown that these were indeed works produced in Rembrandt's workshop and derived from prototypes by Rembrandt. Such paintings, which in the past had been regarded as autograph oil-studies made in preparation for Rembrandt's history pieces, in most cases came to be considered as free partial copies. The great problem in the discussion over this type of painting is that the majority of these have long been in private ownership and some of them are untraceable. We can only hope that they still exist and will be made available for investigation in the future. The category of free variants after Rembrandt self-portraits (App. 1 32, 42b, 47b, 49b, 51b) is extensively discussed in *Corpus* IV.

In Appendici 1-3 and Chapter IV the phenomenon raised here is considered further. In Appendix I this is done through the frequency with which it seems to occur. Undoubtedly, it would have occurred more often with the etchings and drawings from Rembrandt's workshop than is suggested here. It is, however, for specialists in these areas to explore further the occurrence of this phenomenon when they see occasion to do so. The same applies equally, of course, to the oeuvres of other artists. In that case we still have only suspicions based on the analysis of style and quality (see App. 1 54-56). We are very well aware that such an approach to oeuvres that have been accepted to date, not only in the case of Rembrandt but also of other artists, could cause considerable disquiet among the owners of the paintings concerned. The satellites shown in Appendix 1 are presented here on the basis of tentative opinions that, in certain cases, require further testing.

Our main concern is to bring the phenomenon to attention because we believe that it could be of significance for the future of art historical research on a broad front.

9 E. van de Wetering, 'Gerard ter Borch en zijn atelier', *Kunstschrift* 2005, no. 3, pp. 16-27. In the case of 56 a/b this happened during a number of lectures.

Appendix 1

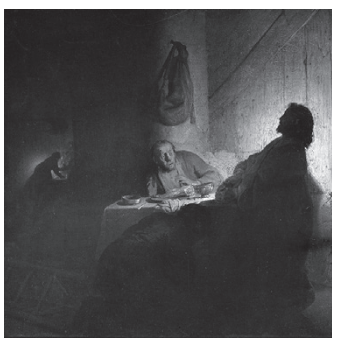
An illustrated survey of presumed pairs of Rembrandt's prototypes and pupils' free variants

1a B 352

1b B 353

1c Br 64

Br	=	Bredius
B	=	Bartsch
Ben	=	Benesch
priv. coll.	=	private collection
p	=	page in present volume
App	=	Appendix to present chapter



2a Br 539

2b Br 556

The first free variants on Rembrandt's works appear as early as 1628, when he had his first pupils. Several of these variants seem to be from the same hand (see 1c, 2b, 3b), an artist who would appear to have been influenced by both Rembrandt and Jan Lievens. The name van Dirck Lievens has been suggested by Martin Bijl, although this possibility remains unverifiable. This younger brother of Jan Lievens was a contemporary of Gerard Dou, usually considered to have been Rembrandt's first pupil. Dirck Lievens was also a painter but there are no works that can be attributed to him with any certainty. The young painter, whoever he was, was clearly determined and ready to follow Rembrandt in his explorations of the effects of artificial light with large, dark repoussoirs and sunlight, going for highly daring effects.

3a Br 535

3b Br 427

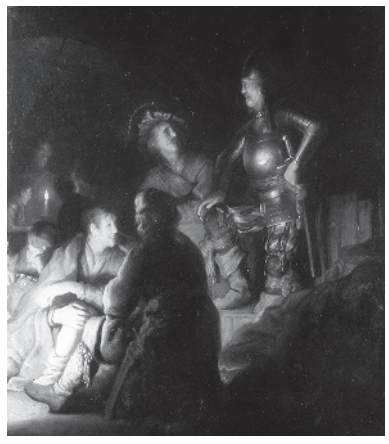
4a – d: In fig. 4b, the challenge that led to the painting of this free variant was surely to render the affect of laughter. Beneath 4a, technical methods of investigation revealed a campfire scene with armed figures (fig. 4c) see also Ch. II p. 157.
4d could well be a free variant of the painting now covered by 4a. If it is a free variant after a prototype by Rembrandt it could possibly be painted by Gerard Dou.

5: The relation between 5b and 5a is unmistakable: their ordonnance is remarkably similar. But whereas in 5a the entering sunlight plays a main role, other motives must have influenced the decision of the author of 5b to paint his variant in this way.

4a p 157

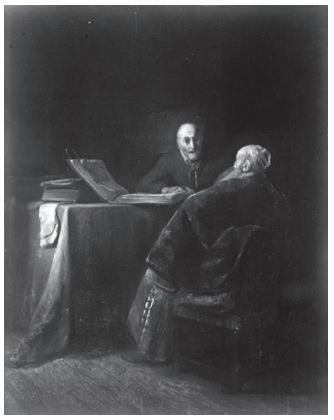
4b Br 15

4c p 157



4d Br 533

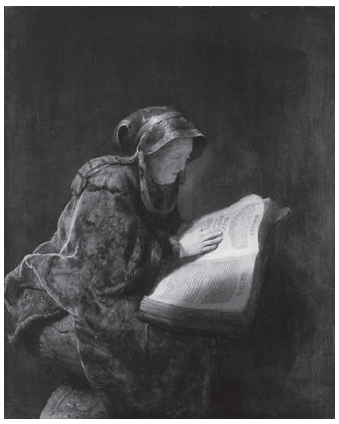
5a Br 423



5b Br 424

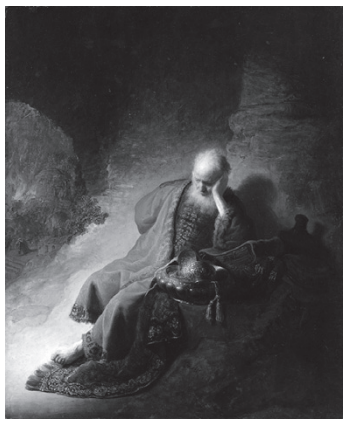
6a Br 602

6b Br 425

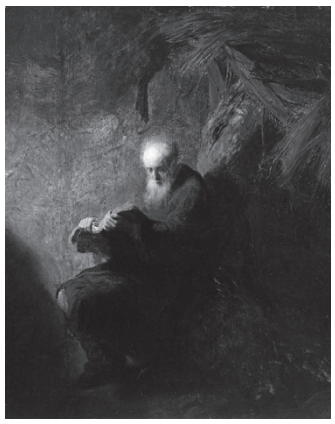


7a Br 69

7b Br 465



8a Br 604



8b Br 605

9-14: Rembrandt's early pupils seem to have imitated the young Rembrandt experimenting with the etching technique by making free variants after his small etchings.

9a B 354

9b B 355

10a B 163

10b B 166

11a B 141

11b B 142

12a B 151

12b B 150

13a B 138

13b B 140

14a B 165

14b B 144

The etchings 16b, 23b, 24b show Rembrandtesque motifs. But in their representation of the human figure they evince a language of forms and a handling of contours, space and light that is so foreign to Rembrandt that it is difficult to believe that they were executed by him. Perhaps the relation proposed here between prototype and satellite could provide an explanation for the occurrence of such etchings.

15a B 174

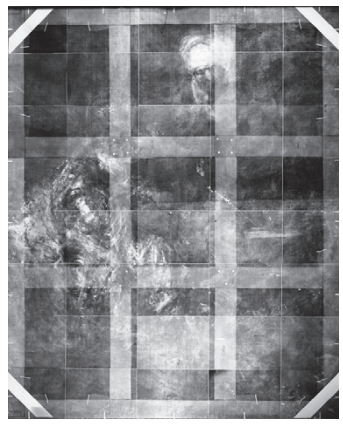
15b B 175

16a B 54

16b B 52

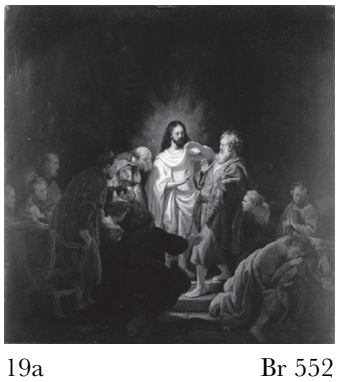
17a Br 494

17b App 2, Br 495

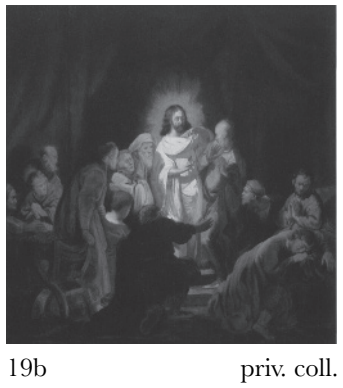


18a X-ray of 18b

18b Br 522



19a Br 552



19b priv. coll.

20a Br 551

20b Br 584

19a/b: Some copies are not only free in their execution but also differ strikingly from Rembrandt's entire way of painting. This is the case with 19b. And yet the dendrochronological evidence shows that it almost certainly originated in Rembrandt's workshop. Given that Rembrandt's pupils had, as a rule, spent an earlier apprenticeship with another master, the difference in style between 19b and 19a could perhaps point toward the young painter's previous master.

18a/b and 20a/b: several times one finds that a free variant is based on a much earlier prototype. In the case of 18a/b this variant is based on a large unfinished painting, partly visible in the X-radiograph, that Rembrandt must have kept from 1633/34 until the 1650's. Similarly, 20b was painted in the 1650's after a painting made in 1634 (p. 190 fig. 97) that Rembrandt had hanging in his house up to 1656 (see p. 191).

21a Br 498

21b Alte Pinakothek München

22a Br 499

22b priv. coll.

21a/b: In this case it is virtually certain that the variant was executed on the basis of a design, drawn by Rembrandt, in which he had changed the composition of 21a (see p. 201 fig. 123).

23/24: When one asks which etchings by his pupils were sold by Rembrandt to his own advantage (see p. 259) one can well imagine prints like 23b and 24b.

22b, initially a copy of 22a, was originally of the same width and was extended on the left within Rembrandt's studio, entailing a change in the invention. It is not impossible that after that Rembrandt's prototype (22a) was enlarged accordingly and that the added piece has since been lost as a result of water damage (*Corpus* III A 109).

23a B 121

23b B 119

24a B 69

24b B 68

25a Br 474

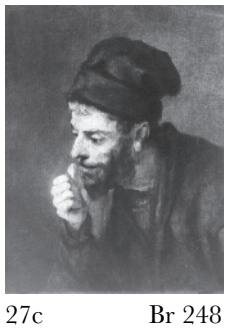
25b App 3, p 282

26a Br 503

26b App 3, p 279

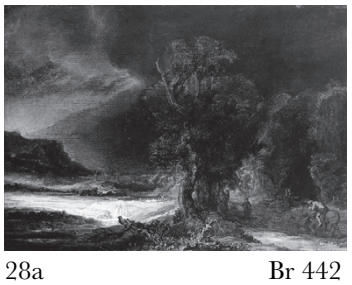
27a Br 516

27b Br 518



27c Br 248

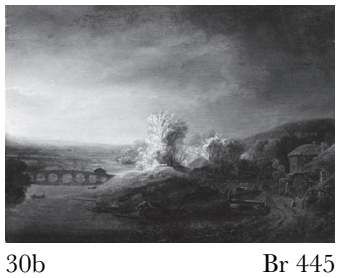
27d Br 513



28a Br 442

28b Br 443

30a Br 440



30b Br 445

29a Br 456

29b Br 455

31a Ben 538

31b Ben 537

Hypothetical Prototype

32a

32b Br 35

32c Br 40

33a Br 359

33b Br 367

34a Ben 547

34b Ben 646

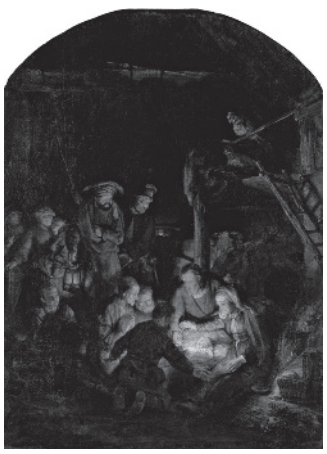
35a Br 570

35b Br 375

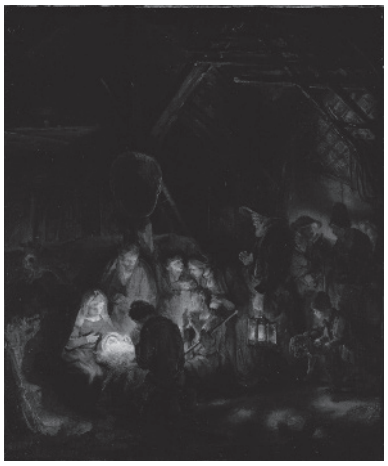
36a p 428

36b Br 376

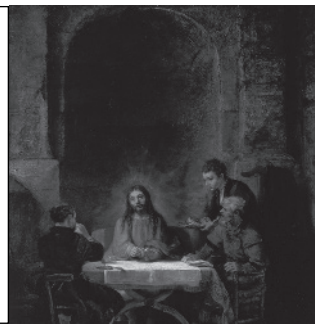
36c p 430



37a Br 574



37b Br 575



38a Br 578

38b Br 621

38c p 477

38d Br 579

38e Br 597

40a Br 583

40b p 518

41a Br 377

41b Br 378

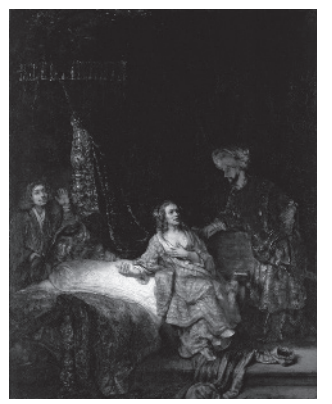
42a Br 43

42b Br 44

42c Br 45

44a Br 385

44b Br 384



45a Br 524

45b Br 523

43a Ben 947

43b Ben 948

47a Br 50

47b p 603

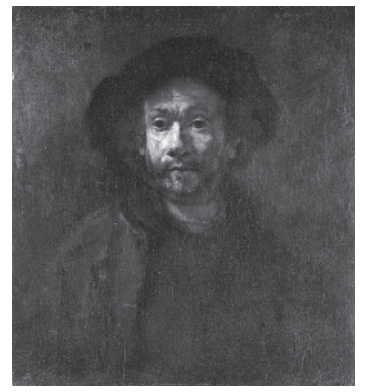
48a Br 306

48b Br 307

46a Ben 1047

46b Ben 1046

49a Br 54



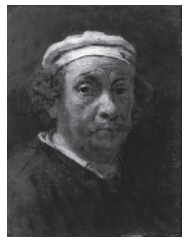
49b Br 57

50a B 70

50b p 608

51a Br 53

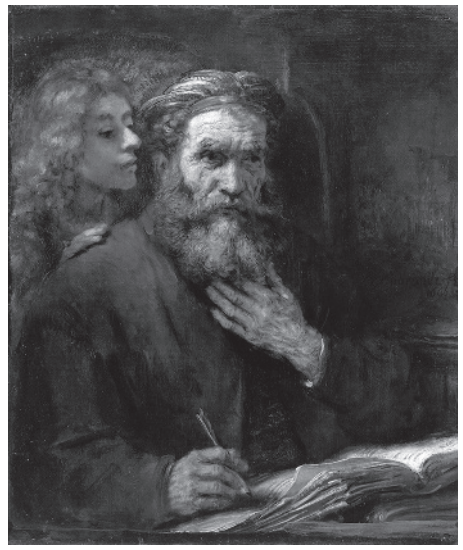
51b Br 56



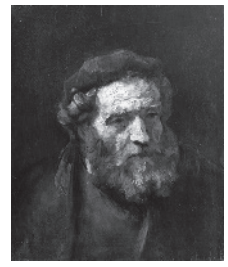
51c Vol. IV p 538

53a Br 485

53b Br 484



52a

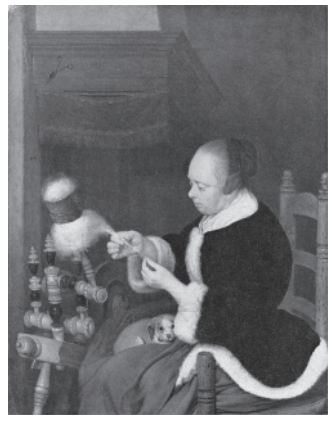


52b Br 304

52c Br 302

52a/b/c: There is a group of four small, sketchily executed heads that are related to that of 52a (see also 52b and c). Establishing the possible relations of these paintings with 52a would require investigating all five paintings. Is one of them an autograph sketch for 52a? Are all sketches after the same posing model? Or is 52c a satellite of 52b or vice versa?

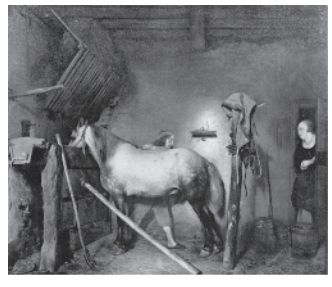
54a Mauritshuis



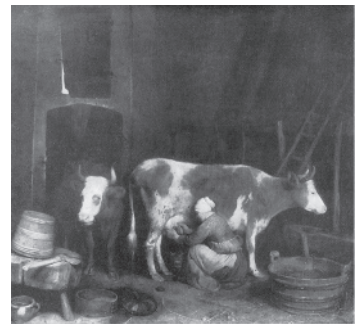
54b Boijmans

56a Getty Museum

56b priv. coll.



55a Getty Museum



55b Getty Museum

53a, b: The possibility that 53b could perhaps have been painted by Rembrandt's pupil Aert de Gelder basing himself on 53a would require an in-depth study of de Gelder's oeuvre.

54/56: Both the 32 painted principals shown above as well as the 36 putative free variants that may have been based on them almost all have a Br(edius) number. That is, Bredius in 1935 accepted all these paintings as autograph works by Rembrandt. If the free variants are in fact works by pupils, this would mean that Rembrand's oeuvre could be only about half as large as assumed by Bredius. The same could be the case with the oeuvres accepted as autograph of, for example, Gerard Terborch (54 and 55), Jan Steen (56) and other 17th-century painters where, as with Rembrandt, one can distinguish comparable putative 'principal/ satellite' pairs.

Fig. 1. Rembrandt, *A Young woman at her toilet* (Esther), 1633, canvas 110.5 x 94.3 cm. Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada (II A 64)

Appendix 2

A satellite investigated

The painting reproduced in fig. 2, measuring 54.3 x 47.3 cm, was discovered in 1904 in the attic rooms of the Friesland estate, 'Dekema State'. It is neither signed nor dated, but displays so many Rembrandtesque characteristics that following its discovery the pre-eminent Rembrandt expert of that time, Abraham Bredius, was invited to give his opinion of the painting. He thought he recognized in it a work by Rembrandt and published it as such in his 1935 survey of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre.[1] Bode also considered the painting to be an autograph work by Rembrandt; and on the basis of his judgement it was acquired in 1926 by the Berlin collector Dr Walter Heiligendorff as a work by Rembrandt.[2] It has remained in this collection to the present day. However, the painting was not accepted as an autograph work by Bauch, Gerson and Tümpel.

In 2008 the painting was shown to the Rembrandt Research Project for their assessment. In its technical execution and its application of pictorial means it demonstrated a clear affinity with Rembrandt's work from the early 1630's. Dendrochronological research provided strong backing for this judgement. The youngest annual ring of the oak panel is from 1608, the earliest possible date of painting 1617[3]. In its overall quality, however, the painting differs so markedly from Rembrandt's works from the early Amsterdam period that it cannot be considered a work from his own hand. Yet the subject and the composition are so clearly related to Rembrandt's *Young woman (Esther? Judith?) at her toilet* of 1633 in Ottawa (fig. 1) that, in the light of our understanding of this aspect of Rembrandt's teaching practice and workshop production, it can be considered a free variant of the Ottawa painting. This was the reason it was decided to investigate the work in more detail.

In the putative prototype in Ottawa, the identity of the sumptuously dressed young woman, groomed by an older woman, cannot be ascertained with any certainty. (Is it Esther or Judith – or perhaps even Bathsheba?) But in the present painting the fact that the similarly richly clad young woman seems to be holding a folded document (fig. 4) suggests that we are looking here at Esther (see the Old Testament Apocryphal Book of Esther: VIII: 8-10).

X-radiographic investigation shows that the painting underwent a complex genesis (fig. 3).

- Beneath the now visible wooden dais there was an obliquely running dark repoussoir with undulating contours, perhaps some form of drapery. In addition the treatment of light in that zone of the painting seems to have been different.
- The woman seems to have been originally turned slightly more three-quarters to the right. This is suggested by the position of two earlier hands, roughly indicated in lead white-containing paint (to the right of her now visible right hand and on the right next to her left hand). The course of the contour of the woman's left arm and shoulder also contribute to this surmise.
- The radio-absorbency of the cloak leads one to suspect that this was not originally intended to be brown but a lighter colour. In its original form the left contour of the cloak ran a different course.
- A strip running obliquely down to the left from the waist can be followed through the present right hand.
- The boundary between the left upper edge of the cloak and her 'blouse' ran less obliquely.
- The contours running away from both shoulders followed a different course.
- The light patch beside the woman's left hand may be considered to be an indication of an earlier left hand. This means that the hand with the document was moved during the course of the work. However, a clearly reserved shadow of the document on an earlier stage of the skirt, in a zone showing up light, indicates that at that early stage the document was intended to be placed there. The way that part of the skirt was initially painted is closely similar to the way the cloak hanging over the back of the chair was painted in its first underpainted stage.
- According to the X-ray image, in the place where a green shawl now lies on a flat golden dish, a different object was painted which, despite its clearly defined form, cannot be identified. One cannot exclude the possibility that this form is connected with an earlier version of the shawl.
- In the more or less radio-absorbent background round the upper half of the figure there is a larger reserve for the woman's hair. This substantial reserve takes up considerably more space than Esther's hair now visible in the paint surface. The reserve by her left shoulder and upper arm similarly betrays a more capacious original intention.

To begin with, one has to conclude from the differences between the X-ray image and the finally executed work that the present background was introduced over a background painted earlier, preparatory to working anew on the figure. It could be that the original background round the upper half of the figure was lighter than it is now. According to the infra-red photograph, however, the paint in this zone contains charcoal as well as lead white (fig. 5). It must therefore have been grey. But more importantly, the reserve betrays an originally different conception of the painting – albeit probably retaining the same subject. This idea is corroborated by 'disturbance' in the X-ray image of the head and around it: the face was probably originally placed slightly more to the right and, more especially, higher. The latter surmise is suggested by the light zone obliquely above and to the right of the present forehead. The way this zone has been painted shows marked similarity with the light – showing earlier stage of the

1. Bredius 495.
2. Formerly Hamburg, coll. C.A. Mandl; sale Amsterdam 13 July 1926, no. 655.
3. Dendrochronological report by Dr. P. Klein, Hamburg.

Fig. 2. Free variant after fig. 1, *Esther,* panel 54.3 x 47.3 cm.
Private collection (Br. 495)

Fig. 3. X-Ray

Fig. 4. Detail of fig. 2 (turned 90°)

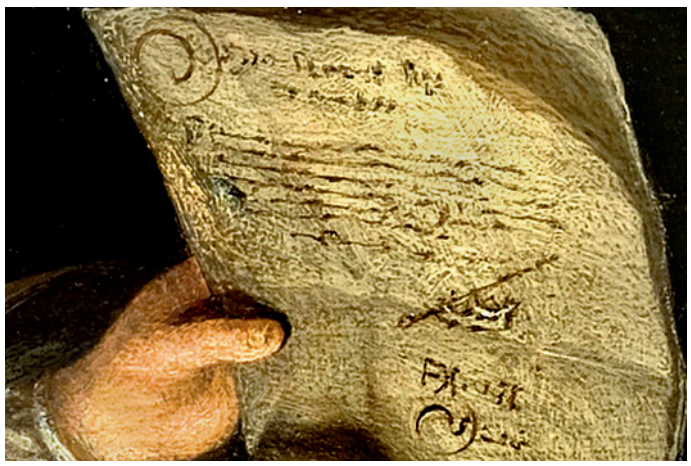


Fig. 5. Infrared photograph

cloak and the zone of the skirt in which the shadow of the document is reserved.

When all these deviant elements are compared with what one sees in the surface image, one is led to suspect that two hands may have worked on this painting. The robustness, for example, with which the reserve of the shoulders, hairdo and head was introduced, the emphatic way form was given to the cloak thrown over the back of the chair, the way in which the foreground was originally conceived, this all betrays a very different artistic temperament, not only as far as the execution is concerned, but also with regard to the conception as a whole. What stands out conspicuously with the foreground is that no account has been taken there of the wooden dais that was apparently later introduced on top of grey tiles.

In this painting, therefore, much more has happened than that a pupil straightforwardly produced a free variant, basing himself on a work by the master. One artist began the work and a second artist finished it, in the process taking a whole series of liberties. We are familiar with this phenomenon from several other works that were earlier attributed to Rembrandt or to one of the painters from his school (cat. V 7, 8, 24). Another striking example is the portrait of Prince Rupert of the Rhine in the Getty Museum (see p. 5). It is our view that in all these cases the first lay-in is to be attributed to Rembrandt, and that painters in his immediate circle, almost certainly his pupils, completed the final versions, often taking marked liberties. One could go so far as to say that these are satellites painted on top of more or less completed originals by Rembrandt himself. An example that would seem to be relevant to the present case is the *Esther and Ahasuerus* in Bucharest (III B 9), whose first, unfinished version must have originated in the same period as the Ottawa prototype (see also Chapter V p. 319) and the satellite dealt with here. In that case, however, the superimposed painting was by a pupil executed in the 50's more than 20 years after Rembrandt had stopped his work on the underlying work.[4]

To come back to the present painting: there are several points of correspondence between the vaguely outlined, roughly laid-in first version visible in the X-radiograph of the present painting, and paintings which we consider to be authentic Rembrandts. There is a striking similarity between the reserve of head, shoulders and hairdo with the X-ray images of the Ottawa prototype (*Corpus* II A 64 fig. 2) and *'Sophonisba'* in Madrid (*Corpus* II A 94 and Addendum in *Corpus* III p. 775). In all three paintings these amply contoured reserves seem to have been wiped from the lead white-containing background with the same flair.

The way in which the brush has been handled in the roughly in-laid underlying version of the painting is strongly reminiscent of what can be made out in the lead white-containing underpainted areas in the 1633 *Christ in the Storm*, II A 68 (for instance, to the left of the ship's bow); in the 1632/33 *Raising of the Cross*, II A 69 (left of the soldier in the foreground); the New York *Woman with a fan* also painted in 1633, II A 79 (near the original left-side contour of the chair).

Taking all in all, it is likely that someone in Rembrandt's immediate proximity introduced the variant over a first design executed by Rembrandt himself.

This account is of course of a more or less hypothetical nature. But there is a point in publishing such tentative reconstructions of what took place in Rembrandt's workshop: the more such case histories are reconstructed, however tentatively, the clearer our view of the regime of training and production in his workshop – and possibly also in those of other artists – will gradually become.

4. Another possible example of this is the Braunschweig *Scholar* (*Corpus* I C 15), the light-showing parts of whose first design – in as far as they are visible in the X-radiograph – are very similar in their execution to the painting discussed here (figs. 2 and 3).

The question naturally springs to mind as to who the relevant pupil in this case might have been. Painters such as Jouderville (1612/13 – 1645/48), Govaert Flinck (1615 – 1660), Willem de Poorter (1608 – after 1648), Dirck Santvoort (1610/11 – 1680) are all possible candidates. But whether one wishes to make connections, on the basis of style and painting, technique between the earliest signed works by these artists and the work in question here depends on the tenacity – not to say compulsiveness – with which one is driven to attach the name of a painter to every painting. One has to remember that, in general, we only know by chance the names of Rembrandt's pupils (see *Corpus* II pp. 45-47). Consequently it is impossible to know how many young men populated the workshop of Rembrandt and Uylenburgh and who they were. Some of them – who may have died at an early age – will remain anonymous, simply because their names have never been recorded in connection with Rembrandt.

It may be relevant to this question of who the author of the (visible part) of the present painting could have been, that there exists a copy after the painting (fig. 6) which, given the dendrochronological dating of the panel (youngest growth ring dating from 1625), could have originated in the first half of the 17th century (see note 3). In that regard, the present case is comparable to that which is discussed in the following Appendix.

Fig. 6. Copy after School of Rembrandt, *Esther*, panel 67.1 x 51.5 cm. Leiden, Museum De Lakenhal, on loan from the library of the University Leiden (inv. S 177)

Fig. 1. Rembrandt, *The angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family*, 1637, panel 66 x 52 cm. Paris, Musée du Louvre (III A 121) [Version A]

Appendix 3

Two nearly identical variations on Rembrandt's 1637 *The angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family* in the Louvre*

Three similar paintings, the versions A, B and C
(figs. 1-3)

According to its signature painted in 1637, the Louvre version of this composition (version A) belongs to Rembrandt's most important small-scale history paintings from the 1630s.[1] In view of its genesis, the technique and manner of painting, and of its superbly Rembrandtesque quality, there can be no doubt that it is a work by the master himself (fig. 1).

The subject is taken from the (apocryphal) Book of Tobit 12:21-22. Having guided young Tobias on his journey to Rages in Media, and having instructed him how to cure his father's blindness upon their return to Nineveh, the angel Raphael reveals his identity and then disappears. He is seen flying upwards in the midst of swirling clouds.

In 1983 we were confronted with another version (version B) of the same scene which basically differed from the Paris version only in the position and gesturing of the flying angel. Given the technique and execution of version B and the type of oak panel on which it was painted we did not have the slightest doubt that the painting was produced in the 17th century and, in all probability, in Rembrandt's workshop. The general quality of the execution of the painting was less outstanding than in the Paris painting (version A), from which we concluded that version A was the prototype of version B.

Satellites

We were intrigued by version B because, precisely during this period, we had begun to be aware of a phenomenon which had significant consequences for our understanding of the way Rembrandt's studio functioned both as a training and production workshop: the phenomenon of the 'satellites', free workshop variants based on 'principalen' (prototypes) by Rembrandt (see pp. 259-275). Version B of the Paris *Tobit,* the painting that had surfaced in 1983, was in our view just such a 'satellite'.

It seemed natural that such free variants, like version B, would vary from one pupil to another and in that sense would be unique efforts by the individual pupils. Given that assumption, we were then rather astonished to discover that a duplicate of version B appeared to exist. The German owners approached us in 2005 by sending a photograph of this 'Doppelgänger' (fig. 3).

Our first reaction was to assume that this painting (referred to as version C in the following) would be a later copy after version B. From the photograph, we at first thought it to be a much later – possibly even 19th-century – copy after version B, made at a time when that version may have been considered to be an original by Rembrandt. Our response was largely dictated by what would later turn out to be the extremely bad condition of the paint, and the many restorations which appeared to have affected the stylistic properties of the work. We advised the owners to have the oak panel investigated by Prof. Dr. Peter Klein, Hamburg. To our surprise the dating of the annual rings of the wooden panel, comprising three boards, made it likely that version C was painted in or after 1639, although an earlier dating, from *c.* 1634 onwards, could not be excluded. We should remember that Rembrandt's prototype in Paris is dated 1637.

This dating of version C immediately raised the possibility that both paintings could have originated in Rembrandt's workshop. But even if this were the case, there was no way around the assumption that one of these two satellites of version A should be a copy of the other – version C after B, or B after C.

The ideal way to sort out this problem would be to study both paintings (B and C) simultaneously under the best possible conditions – an unlikely situation, but nonetheless one which happened to present itself. At about the same time that Prof. Klein had investigated version C, version B resurfaced after we had virtually lost track of the painting between 1983 and 2006. Thanks to the kindness of the owners of the two paintings, we now had the chance to study both paintings simultaneously.

The angels

What first drew our attention in this comparison of the two paintings were the similarities as well as the difference between the similar flying angels in versions B and C. In these two paintings, the approaching angel is depicted from a different angle compared to the angel in the prototype of this composition (version A). It is therefore most probably an invention on the part of one of the painters of the versions B or C. The choice of precisely this variation on a prototype by Rembrandt draws attention to a coincidentally similar case – Rembrandt's autograph *Abraham's sacrifice* from 1635 in St Petersburg and its 'satellite' from 1636 in Munich (p. 265, 21a and b).

In that case too an angel approaching from a different angle in the satellite was the most significant element conceived by the pupil himself, even though we know that this pupil must have based this variation on a rough sketch by Rembrandt in the British Museum (p. 201 fig. 123). Also in the *Abraham* case, one observes a clear difference of style and quality between the angel and the (much greater) part of the painting where the pupil was on solid ground in working after Rembrandt's painted prototype. If we wanted to gain further insight into the painterly qualities of the painter of the original satellite (B or C) of Rembrandts *Tobit* painting, we had to concentrate especially on the angel.

In a comparison of the two angels in versions B and C, a specific detail of the angel in version B is conspicuously weaker than the same detail in version C. In version B the

* Report written by E. van de Wetering on the basis of investigations together with Karin Groen, Peter Klein, Martin Bijl, René Gerritsen and Leonore van Slooten.

1 *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, Vol. III (1989), A 121.

angel's right arm seems to have the wrist growing from the shoulder, whereas this arm in version C is so constructed that although largely covered by the sleeve it is anatomically, and in its relation to the body, much more plausibly rendered. On the basis of this difference, it seemed at first that version C must have served as the model for version B. Further, the painter of version C, according to the X-radiographs, seemed to have explored more possibilities in the painting of this arm and the hand, which also contributes to the impression that version C was the original satellite and version B, particularly in the arm under discussion, a rather clumsy copy.[2]

In July 2006, in the course of an exhaustive discussion over the two paintings (versions B and C) and a 1:1 photograph of version A, all three works were thoroughly studied together with their associated infrared photographs and X-radiographs.[3] A comparison of tracings of the group of figures from the three paintings on transparent foil clearly indicated that mechanical copying techniques had been used in the production of versions B and C – presumably also through the use of tracings. According to 17th-century sources, when making tracings, one technique was to use paper soaked in oil to make it transparent.[4] During our investigation of the tracings, we found that the usual practice was apparently not to execute a single tracing of the entire composition (probably for reasons of paper format) but rather of parts – mostly consisting of one or more figures together – to be covered separately. As a result, in the transfer of the tracing, parts of the image could find themselves slightly shifted in relation to each other on the panel.

In this discussion around the question of whether version B or C was the actual satellite and the other work (C or B) a copy of it, we came to a stalemate. The problem at that point seemed insoluble. This confusion was only deepened by the fact that at some unknown time, version C had been deeply damaged in its material structure by the injudicious use of a (probably) very alkaline cleaning agent. As a result, for instance, paint samples taken from the two paintings B and C were incommensurable, and samples from version C could give no further indication of the painting's possible date of origin.

A breakthrough came in a subsequent session on the two paintings in the summer of 2007, when thanks to Leonore van Sloten, a staff member of the Amsterdam Rembrandt House Museum, we became aware of the striking kinship between two of the figures present in all three versions (viz. the kneeling Tobit and the young woman with clasped hands) and two figures in Ferdinand Bols' painting *The women at the tomb of Christ* in Copenhagen (fig. 5). This is an exceptionally ambitious work (280 x 385 cm) from 1644 which must have originated some years after Ferdinand Bol had become established as an independent artist (after Bol's arrival in Rembrandt's workshop as a pupil in *c.* 1637, he probably left the workshop around 1641).

The kinship between version A (Rembrandt's Paris prototype) and the above-mentioned painting by Bol had previously been discussed in the literature, for instance by Albert Blankert in his monograph on Bol.[5] In the subsequent course of our investigation of versions B and C, significant new points of view now presented themselves. First of all, our investigation of the relation between Bol's *The women at the tomb of Christ* and the three versions of the Tobit composition sharpened our eyes for many relevant differences between versions A, B and C and between these paintings and the Bol painting.

In this comparison, the position of the entwined hands of the kneeling Tobit in version A and the hands of the kneeling Mary at Christ's tomb in the Copenhagen painting were found to be most closely related to the hands of Tobit in version B. The hands in version C were placed slightly closer toward the knees. In addition, the head of the old woman (Anna) in version C deviated both in construction and proportions from the same head in versions A and B. These and similar observations meant changing our ideas about the mutual relations between the three versions of the Tobias composition. It now seemed more likely that version B was directly dependent on version A, which would mean that version C had been copied after version B. On the other hand, as well as the right arm of the angel there were other passages in version C that were better than the comparable passages in version B: for example, the proportions of the dog which were less monkey-like in version C than in version B. We know from various sources that 17th-century copyists attempted to improve on the prototype.[6] After comparison of many details of the three versions A, B and C we were convinced that version C, without direct knowledge of version A, was copied with a certain freedom after version B (see note 2 for a commentary on the right arm of the angel). Our provisional conclusion is now that version B was a free variant – a satellite – of the Paris prototype by Rembrandt and that version C was a rather free copy after version B.

2 After detailed comparison of versions A, B and C, it remained a possibility that the strange deformation of the right arm may have arisen through the introduction of the dark triangular patch to the left of the wrist and lower arm during a restoration. It is this patch which contributes most to the impression of anatomical deformity in this arm. There is no comparable dark patch in version C; instead, at the equivalent place, one sees the continuous left contour of a daringly but convincingly foreshortened lower arm. Perhaps this contour in version B was covered by the triangular dark patch which functions as the dark interior shadow of the sleeve. There appear to have been further interventions with dark paint in version B, possibly to cover abraded areas in shadowed passages. In this way, it is quite likely that the hinge above the head of the aged Anna has disappeared beneath black paint: this hinge is visible in both versions A and C. The black headscarf of Anna, the old woman in the group of figures, is probably totally overpainted with black paint.

3 The participants in this discussion were the scientist Karin (C.M.) Groen, the restorer/researcher Martin Bijl, the research photographer René Gerritsen and the writer of this report.

4 Arnulf von Ulmann, 'Rembrandt gepaust. "Das Gleichnis der Arbeiter im Weinberg" in der St. Petersburger Ermitage und eine weitere neu entdeckte Version mit einer Nachschrift von Ernst van de Wetering', in: *Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums 2007*.

5 A. Blankert, *Ferdinand Bol (1616-1680): Rembrandt's pupil*, Doornspijk 1982, cat. no. 17 (p. 97) and earlier by Roger Fry in: *Burl. Mag.* 44 (1924), pp. 189-192.

6 John Michael Montias, *Artists and Artisans in Delft*, …, Princeton 1982, p. 234.

Fig. 2. Version B, variant of version A, panel 65.5 x 50 cm. USA, Coll. N. Saban

Fig. 3. Version C, variant of version A or copy after version B?, panel 62 x 51 cm. Germany, private collection

Version B by Ferdinand Bol

What makes version B so interesting is that this pupilary work probably played an important role in the origin of Bol's *The women at the tomb*, the painting in Copenhagen. The hypothesis that will be argued below is that version B was painted by Ferdinand Bol during his apprenticeship with Rembrandt.

What triggered this hypothesis was a remark by Albert Blankert concerning a preparatory drawing for the Copenhagen painting, a drawing that is safely attributed to Bol (fig. 4), and its bearing on the above-mentioned relation between two figures in that painting (the kneeling Tobit and the standing veiled woman) and the corresponding two figures in Rembrandt's *Tobit* in the Louvre (our version A).[7] In the preparatory drawing, these two figures differ considerably from the corresponding figures in the Copenhagen painting: specifically, the position of the kneeling figure is different. This kneeling figure is represented obliquely from behind in the drawing, whereas in the painting it is shown obliquely from in front, similar to the placing of the old Tobit in Rembrandt's *Tobit* painting. The similarities in the details of the arms and hands in these two paintings and the rendering of the body are also striking. Blankert's remark refers to these same similarities when he closes his catalogue text relating to the Copenhagen painting as follows: "The kneeling woman leaning forward and the standing woman on the right are almost directly derived – only the arms of the standing figure were changed – from Rembrandt's *The angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family* (Paris, Louvre, III A 121), dated 1637. It is curious that the derivation in the final painting is more literal – hence more blatant – than in the preliminary drawing in Munich".[8]

It is indeed surprising that, with regard to the position of the kneeling figure, the Copenhagen painting is less like the preparatory drawing in Munich (fig. 4) than the Paris painting (our version A). Does this mean that when he came to paint the kneeling figure in *The women at the tomb* he then based himself on Rembrandt's painting? That would imply that seven years after the origin of Rembrandt's painting, Bol had the kind of access to this painting that allowed him to base two figures in his work almost literally on it. We know that this happened in the case of Bol's monumental (404 x 282.5 cm) version of *Abraham and the angels* from 1663,[9] in which the attitude of the Abra-

7 Blankert, op.cit.[5], Plate 201 (A).
8 Blankert, op.cit.[5], p. 97, cat.no. 17.
9 Blankert, op.cit.[5], cat. no. 2, p. 90.

Fig. 4. Ferdinand Bol, *The three Mary's at the Sepulchre*, study for fig. 8, 23.3 x 31.7 cm. Munich, Printroom, inv. no. 1842

ham figure is inconceivable without Rembrandt's prototype of 1646 with this scene (compare figs. 6 and 7). However, it is almost certain that Bol was then in possession of Rembrandt's small painting; after all, an *Abraham and the angels* by Rembrandt is listed in the inventory drawn up on the occasion of Bol's marriage in 1669 (see also cat. V 9).[10] One cannot entirely exclude the possibility that Bol could have had Rembrandt's *Tobit* painting from 1637 (our version A) in front of him when he painted *The women at the tomb* in 1644, seven years after Rembrandt painted the work and several years after finishing his apprenticeship with Rembrandt. But there is the alternative possibility that Bol made use of version B while he was working on his *The women at the tomb*. This is the hypothesis that will be argued below.

The *c.* 20-year-old Ferdinand Bol – already trained as a painter – was a pupil of Rembrandt during roughly the same period in which the latter was working on his Tobit scene (around 1637). We have indications, meanwhile,

Fig. 5. Ferdinand Bol, *The women at the tomb of Christ*, 1644, canvas 280 x 358 cm. Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst

10 Blankert, op.cit.[5], p. 77, no. 42: 'Abraham en de Engelen van Rembrant' (Abraham and the angels by Rembrant').

Fig. 6. Rembrandt, *Abraham serving the angels*, 1646, panel 16.1 x 21.1 cm. USA, private collection (V 9)

Fig. 7. Ferdinand Bol, *Abraham and the angels*, canvas 404 x 282 cm (detail). Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum (on loan in Het Noordbrabants Museum, 's-Hertogenbosch)

that 'satellites' often originated in Rembrandt's workshop at roughly the same time that Rembrandt was producing his prototype, and that Rembrandt apparently suggested or urged his pupils to depart from his prototype in on one or more respects. In this way they could develop their ability to find their own 'inventions'. It is thus possible that Bol could have painted version B, even if – in this stage of the present argument – this must remain no more than a conjecture. Because Bol's own style – like that of all Rembrandt pupils – only developed after he left Rembrandt, no putative pupilary work can be attributed to him or to any other pupil on stylistic grounds. It is rather a constellation of external evidence, discussed below, and the comparison of various details in version B with the same details in *The women at the tomb*, that draw one to the almost inevitable conclusion that Bol must have been the author of version B, which will turn out to have served as a model during his work on *The women at the tomb*.

As mentioned on p. 259, works produced in Rembrandt's workshop were sold for Rembrandt's own profit.[11] On the other hand, we know from archival records that the parents of his pupils sometimes possessed works 'after Rembrandt' that had apparently been painted by their sons during their apprenticeship period.[12] We also know that Rembrandt was acquainted with the father of Ferdinand Bol; he had painted his portrait.[13] Bol's father died in 1641. If he had purchased work by his son from Rembrandt, this could well have come into the possession of the young Ferdinand after his father's death. In the inventory of 1669 mentioned above, *'a Tobias'* is listed among the paintings in Bol's possession. This indication is not sufficiently specific, but in view of the modest status of the painting (a pupilary work), it could perhaps refer to version B. This kind of hypothetical argumentation is not necessary, however; at most it can only serve to show the plausibility of the thesis that Bol made use of version B and not Rembrandt's prototype (version A) when he was working on his *The women at the tomb* in 1644; and that it is therefore extremely probable that version B is a pupilary work by the young Ferdinand Bol.

From a comparison of the Copenhagen painting with version A and version B, it is unmistakably clear that in working on his *The women at the tomb* Bol made use of version B and not Rembrandt's prototype (version A). One sees this when one for instance compares the fingers of Tobit, the beads in the hair of the standing woman, or the way the woman's veil in version A functions like the eaves of a roof, as it were, to cast a shadow, a detail which has been worked out much more vaguely, even though in a comparable manner, in version B and in the Copenhagen painting.

'Rapen' (gleaning)

It is important to be clear about the main point here. The real thrust of the argument is not concerned with Ferdinand Bol's copying his own pupilary work when he worked on his *The women at the tomb*, but rather with the use (in the relevant figures) of a literal copy after Rembrandt's prototype. Blankert called the way in which Bol had made use of Rembrandt 'blatant', meaning that almost literally quoting was shameless. But he wrote that at a time when the idea of 'gleaning' (in Dutch 'rapen') and the workshop practice referred to by that term had not been raised in the art historical literature. 'Gleaning' refers to the way parts of other painters' works were used, sometimes copied out of sheer laziness. In other cases, however, such 'visual quotations' were considered perfectly respectable. In connection with gleaning, Philips Angel thus says 'it […] serves as a form of homage to the Master from whom it is taken'.[14] As Miedema observes, the term 'gleaning' can be used as a crude form of 'imitatio' but also as 'aemulatio', where the one who uses the visual quotation does so in a new context and in doing so introduces greater or

11 J. von Sandrart, *Teutsche Academie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey-Künste*, Nuremburg 1675 (ed. A.R. Peltzer, Munich 1925), p. 203; Strauss *Doc.*, pp. 594/5.

12 *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, Vol. II (1986), p. 49.

13 Blankert, op.cit.[5], p. 77, no. 54: 'Een conterfeijtsel van mijn vader door Rembrant' ('a portrait of my father by Rembrant').

14 Philips Angels, *Lof der Schilder-konst*, Leyden 1642, pp. 36/37.

Fig. 8. Rembrandt, *Danaë*, 1636-1643, canvas 185 x 203 cm. St Petersburg, The Hermitage Museum (III A 119) (digitally reconstructed with the help of fig. 10.)

Fig. 9. Ferdinand Bol, *David's dying charge to Solomon*, 1643, canvas 171 x 230 cm. Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland (probably cropped on all – except right – sides)

Fig. 10. Attr. to Ferdinand Bol, *Isaac and Esau*, *c.* 1636, panel 57.3 x 69.9 cm. Private collection

smaller changes.[15] This latter remark applies to Bol in his *The women at the tomb* (see also pp. 198/99).

In the same way, Bol also quotes Rembrandt's *Danae* (fig. 8) in his *David's dying charge to Solomon* in Dublin (fig. 9). There too Bol probably made use of a free variant painted by himself, the *Isaac and Esau* usually attributed to Bol, which is based on Rembrandt's *Danae* in its first form (fig. 10). Rembrandt completed his *Danae* in 1636 but this work certainly remained in his workshop during the early 40's before Rembrandt radically altered it.

Bol's quotation from Rembrandt's *Abraham and the angels,* mentioned above, can also 'be considered a respectable form of 'gleaning' (compare figs. 6 and 7).

The *raison d'être* of version C?

Dendrochronological investigation establishes that the origin of version C can certainly be placed from 1639 onward. One cannot exclude the possibility that it was produced in Rembrandt's workshop, but it is more likely that one of Bol's pupils copied it as an integral part of his training. In this way this pupil could have been initiated both in Rembrandt's manner of inventing and in the way that Ferdinand Bol varied it. We know the names of three of Bol's pupils. One of them was Frans van Ommeren who is only mentioned in a document.[16] We know two other pupils of Bol from Arnold Houbraken's *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*: Cornelis Bisschop (1634-1674) and the young German Godfried Kneller (1646-1723) who later became an important portrait painter in England.[17] But there were undoubtedly more young painters in Bol's studio who could have painted version C after Bol's variant of Rembrandt's *The angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family* (version A).

The relevance – if not importance – of this case is that this is the first case in which a satellite painting from Rembrandt's workshop can be attributed to one of his pupils with a probability which verges on certainty and that we can follow the fate of that satellite to an important extent in the first decade of its existence.

15 Karel van Mander, *Den grondt der edel vry schilder-const*, ed. Hessel Miedema, Haarlem 1604/Utrecht 1973, Vol. II, p. 389.

16 See Blankert, op. cit.[5], pp. 22, 74-75.

17 A. Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*, 3 vols, Amsterdam 1718-1721: II, p. 220 and III, p. 233.