

Connoisseurship

Essays in Honour of Fred G. Meijer

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Rembrandt's pupils?

The attribution of early drawings to Gerbrand van den Eeckhout and Jan Victors

Eric Jan Sluijter and Nicolette Sluijter-Seijffert

When writing the chapters on Gerbrand van den Eeckhout (1621-1674) and Jan Victors (1619-1676/77) in *Rembrandt's Rivals. History Painting in Amsterdam 1630-1650*, I, Eric Jan, examined closely the early paintings of the two artists and came to the conclusion that neither Van den Eeckhout nor Victors had likely been Rembrandt's pupils.¹ Even though the paintings they produced in the first decade of their respective careers demonstrate considerable knowledge of Rembrandt's works of the 1630s, both artists' approach to painting form and light is fundamentally different. Apart from compositions and figure types that recall pre-Rembrandtists more than Rembrandt, these works show little understanding of *houding* and *schikschaduw*, which for Rembrandt were essential means to suggest three dimensions and create a convincing ordonnance.² Van den Eeckhout and Victors would have absorbed such means – as was emphatically the case with Govert Flinck (1615-1660) and Ferdinand Bol (1616-1680) – if they had been apprenticed for some time in Rembrandt's workshop.³ I became convinced that the Rembrandtesque features in their early paintings are a superficial overlay, easily adopted in Amsterdam at a time when Rembrandt was in high fashion; they might have learned the basics of their styles with such painters as François Venant (c. 1591-1636), Claes Moeyaert (1591-1669) and/or Salomon Koninck (1609-1656).⁴

This raised the question whether my conclusion based on Van den Eeckhout's and Victors's early paintings could be confirmed by their drawings. I needed to have a close look at and read up on the early drawings by both masters, but to tread the field of drawings from the Rembrandt-school is a tricky business for someone who mainly studied (and still studies) paintings. In matters of attribution one tends to trust the few experts who have been scrutinizing such drawings for many years; but this approach would not suffice when aspiring to assess whether drawings from the second half of the 1630s and beginning of the 1640s attributed to Van den Eeckhout and Victors could clarify the issue of their training in that period. Trying to get some grip on this material, I realized that, especially in the cases of these two artists, the field was even more tricky than I had assumed. Renowned experts had confidently attributed a considerable number of early drawings to the two young masters (drawings supposedly made between 1635 and 1640 during a period of apprenticeship in Rembrandt's studio), but I could not find any



1. Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *The Angel Appearing before Gideon* (1640), oil on canvas, 64 x 75 cm, remnants of a signature and date, Stockholm, Nationalmuseum, inv. no. NM 419

firm ground on which these attributions were built.⁵ Woldemar von Seidlitz's four points to which attributions of drawings in the Rembrandt-school have to comply, often quoted by those experts, did not seem to be valid when attributing drawings to these two 'pupils'.⁶

For this reason we decided to do some more research together for a paper on this matter. Though we feel like amateurs, dreading to enter this highly specialized field, it seemed an appropriate subject for a *Festschrift* devoted to connoisseurship in honor of the internationally renowned *kenner* Fred Meijer.

Drawing experts have attributed a considerable number of drawings to Van den Eeckhout and Victors that are assumed to date from the 1630s and were formerly assigned to Rembrandt. When examining the arguments for these attributions, the first stumbling block is that they take it for granted that both Van den Eeckhout and Victors were in Rembrandt's studio between c. 1635 and 1640.⁷ Again and again they state that both artists were Rembrandt's pupils around that time. Sometimes this assumption is qualified by the word 'probably' or, in the case of Van den Eeckhout, 'according to Houbraken', but in most

instances they present it as an established fact. However, documents to support this supposed apprenticeship are missing entirely, while, as I have argued extensively, their early paintings do not support this notion either. Their first signed and dated paintings, Van den Eeckhout's *Angel Appearing before Gideon* of 1640 (fig. 1), and Jan Victors's *Magnanimity of Scipio* of 1640 (fig. 2), for example, would have looked very different if the artists had been in Rembrandt's studio for some time, being taught by the master and copying his work. The figure types, the facial features, the poses, the use of light and shadow and the rendering of surface, as well as the manner in which the figures are modelled and placed in relation to each other and to their surroundings, are closer to François Venant and Claes Moeyaert in the case of Van den Eeckhout, and to Salomon Koninck in that of Victors, than to Rembrandt; this stands in great contrast to the way in which Govert Flinck and Ferdinand Bol internalized the essential elements of Rembrandt's manner.⁸

As for Jan Victors there is no reason at all to assume he apprenticed with Rembrandt, except for superficial similarities in subject matter and use of costumes in his paintings. Van den Eeckhout is another case, because he was named as a pupil by Arnold Houbraken (1660-1719), who also stated that he and Roelant Roghman (1627-1692) were good friends of Rembrandt.⁹ Moreover, Houbraken recorded that Van den Eeckhout kept working in Rembrandt's manner, citing a late work as an example (fig. 3); this painting indeed immediately recalls Rembrandt's work of the 1640s.¹⁰ However, in contrast to his early paintings, Van den Eeckhout's late biblical paintings were more Rembrandtesque than his previous work and hark back to Rembrandt's paintings and prints of an earlier period. It seems likely

that Houbraken assumed that Van den Eeckhout would have been a pupil on the basis of his knowledge of the artist's late works (he only mentions late paintings) and on his information that Van den Eeckhout was on good terms with Rembrandt. Werner Sumowski even stated that Houbraken called him 'Rembrandt's Lieblingsschüler', but this is Sumowski's assumption and not Houbraken's assertion.¹¹

Though Sumowski and Wolfgang Stechow emphasized in the 1960s that Van den Eeckhout's early works, both paintings and drawings, showed strong ties with pre-Rembrandtists, Pieter Lastman (1583-1633) in particular, they did not doubt his apprenticeship with Rembrandt.¹² It was Joshua Bruyn who, in his review of volume II of Sumowski's monumental *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, concluded that there was nothing that corroborated Houbraken's statement about Van den Eeckhout being a pupil: no document, nor his early works.¹³ In a footnote Bruyn suggests an apprenticeship with Claes Moeyaert or François Venant, though he still thought it possible that he came to Rembrandt at a later date.¹⁴ Indeed, with regard to his early paintings, Venant or Moeyaert seem to be likely candidates. In Van den Eeckhout's two paintings of Gideon with the angel, *The Angel Appearing before Gideon* of 1640 (fig. 1) and *The Sacrifice of Gideon* of 1642 (also read as 1640) (fig. 4), the figures, the types, and poses of the figures are decidedly Moeyaert-like, while the only earlier known depiction of the subject is by François Venant and definitely shows similarities in the attitude of the angel lighting the fire on the altar.¹⁵

Jan Victors has been called a pupil by many scholars since Roeland van Eijnden and Adriaan van der Willigen,¹⁶ though there is no reason to assume this. A few art historians, like Ben Broos, expressed serious doubts, but, as Broos rightly states, 'by tradition it is always Rembrandt's name that crops up first'.¹⁷ We are of the opinion that an apprenticeship with Rembrandt can be ruled out. When we examine his early paintings his knowledge of Rembrandt appears to be very superficial and regards motifs that anyone working in Amsterdam could have picked up. Debra Miller suggested that Claes Moeyaert might have been his teacher, but nevertheless assumes that after Moeyaert he went to Rembrandt.¹⁸ Considering the first signed and dated painting we know by his hand, however, the ten years older Salomon Koninck seems a more likely candidate. Victors's *Magnanimity of Scipio* recalls in many respects Koninck's *Joseph Explaining Dreams to Pharaoh* (mid to late 1630s).¹⁹ Victors emphasized the verticals in an additively arranged composition, which unfolds parallel to the picture plane. The illusion of space is mainly created by an overlap of the figures, painted with sharp outlines. All this was anathema to Rembrandt. Had Victors been Rembrandt's pupil in the second half of the 1630s, he would certainly have conceived such a group – their placement in space, the modelling, pose and movement of the figures, the use of light and shadow and the rendering of surface – in an entirely different way.²⁰



2. Jan Victors, *The Magnanimity of Scipio* (1640), oil on canvas, 195.5 x 223.5 cm, signed and dated at bottom centre (on the ledge): 'Jan · Victors · fc · 1640', St Petersburg, The State Hermitage Museum, inv. no. GE-716



3. Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *Christ Teaching in the Temple of Nazareth*, (1658), oil on canvas, 61 x 79 cm, signed and dated at bottom right (on the pavement): 'G. V Eeckhout Fe. A° 1658', Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland, inv. no. 253

Jan Victors: the 'early' drawings

Taking as an undisputed fact that both Van den Eeckhout and Victors were Rembrandt's pupils in the second half of the 1630s, a number of drawings which are thought to originate from Rembrandt's studio during that period (most of them originally attributed to Rembrandt), have been assigned to the two masters over the last decades. Holm Bevers's opening statement in his article 'Drawings by Jan Victors. The shaping of an oeuvre of a Rembrandt pupil' in *Master Drawings* is characteristic.²¹ After recording that no signed drawings exist, nor drawings that served as preliminary studies for paintings, he asserts: 'Each pupil or assistant working in Rembrandt's studio produced drawings in the style of the master. This must be true for Victors as well'.²² This notion seems to function as a license to start attributing drawings in Rembrandt's style of the 1630s to Victors. In the next paragraph it is announced that it was Victors's frequent practice to produce drawings on both sides of a sheet; this is perfect circular reasoning, since the considerable number of sheets with drawing on the *recto* and *verso* assigned to Victors consists entirely of attributions.²³ Many of these drawings had tentatively been attributed to him by Sumowski, that is to say, in many cases only one side of the sheet. Bevers added with great confidence a few more double-sided drawings in his articles of 2007 and 2011, and of all of these sheets he ascribed both sides to Victors.²⁴ He mentions in a footnote that Volker Manuth, who drew up a catalogue of Victors's biblical paintings in his dissertation, doubted whether any drawing at all can be attributed to the artist, but he does not further examine such doubts.²⁵

The starting point on which most of his arguments are built, is a sheet in Bremen of which one side shows a pen drawing with *Haman Begging Esther for Mercy* in the loose sketchy style that resembles Rembrandt's manner of the mid-to-late 1630s (it had



4. Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *The Sacrifice of Gideon* (1642), oil on canvas, 87 x 78 cm, signed and dated at bottom right: 'G. V. Eeckhout 1642' (also read as 1640), present whereabouts unknown (formerly sale Luzern [Fischer], 10 November 1983, lot 2157)

still been accepted as Rembrandt by Wilhelm Valentiner, but rejected by Otto Benesch) (fig. 5), while the other side, showing the same subject, is drawn in a very different technique: with 'a thin-nibbed pen combined with the point of the brush and brown wash, with some white heightening, over freely handled preliminary indications in black chalk' (fig. 6).²⁶ The latter has a painterly appearance and meticulous attention to ornamental detail, as the author rightly notes. Both sides of the sheet show an enraged Ahasuerus with Haman begging Esther for mercy, and both are, in Bevers's view (and Sumowski before him), related to paintings by Victors: the 'painterly' one to the *Banquet of Esther* (depicting *Esther Accusing Haman*) in Cologne (fig. 8), attributed by Sumowski and dated by him to the late 1630s, and the other with *Haman Begging Esther for Mercy* in Braunschweig (fig. 7).²⁷

The canvas in Cologne, however, which, according to Sumowski, would have been painted before the earliest secure work by Victors, is certainly not by this master. It has not been accepted by Debra Miller in her oeuvre-catalogue, nor by Volker Manuth in his and the latter tentatively attributed it to Govert Flinck.²⁸ We agree entirely; the painting has no relation whatsoever to the first secure paintings of Victors, not in manner of painting, nor in types of faces and hands and, indeed, recalls Govert Flinck in many respects.²⁹ In contrast, the painting in Braunschweig, signed and dated 1642, is one of Victors's



5. Formerly attributed to Jan Victors, *Haman Begging Esther for Mercy*, pen and brown ink, over isolated traces of red chalk, 149 x 170 mm, not signed, Bremen, Kunsthalle, inv. no. 09/730 (*recto*)



6. Formerly attributed to Jan Victors, *Haman Begging Esther for Mercy*, pen and point of the brush and brown ink, brown wash, opaque white, over black chalk, 170 x 149 mm, not signed, Bremen, Kunsthalle, inv. no. 09/730 (*verso*)

secure early paintings, and also one of the most attractive works he ever made. All the characteristics of his style, which remains remarkably consistent from his earliest paintings onwards, are present in this work. Nevertheless, resemblance to the Bremen drawings is lacking. For this painting Victors took Lastman's composition of *David Giving Uriah the Letter* as point of departure, but it is clear that he also knew Lastman's rather violent rendering of *Haman Begging Esther for Mercy*, in which Esther struggles with Haman (figs. 9 and 10).³⁰ Victors eliminated all suggestion of movement, simplified the torsion of the figures, and placed them strictly parallel to the picture plane. There is not the slightest thrust into depth. The composition is enlivened by a strong diagonal, but it runs completely parallel to the picture plane as well. Thus, Victors constructed a simple composition with a clear design, effective gestures, and attractive coloring, while meticulously describing innumerable details, especially in the extravagant jewelry and costumes. Faces, hands and all other volumes and shapes are closely observed and represented with precision through a careful rendering of light and shade. The frozen effect of a *tableau vivant* (*vertoning*, so popular on the stage of that time), seems to be portrayed with deliberation.

The rather inept pupil or amateur who created the painterly, detailed drawing of the *verso* of the sheet (fig. 6), also produced a variation of one of Lastman's compositions. This drawing – which was cut on all sides to adapt it to the format of the Rembrandt-like drawing at the other side (which thus became the *recto*). – is in every respect the work of a beginner learning to draw in an Amsterdam studio, probably under supervision of a pre-Rembrandtist artist. Everything is clumsy about it: the weird shape of Ahasuerus' shoulders, arms and hands, his tiny face that looks like a Venetian mask, the awkward figure of Esther with her strange arm and small, triangular face, the impossible perspective of the table, not to speak of the perspective of the crudely drawn chair. If this is a drawing by Victors (though there is no evident reason to assume this), it was made at a very young age when he just started drawing.

In our opinion it makes no sense to attribute the drawings on the *recto* and *verso* of the Bremen sheet (fig. 5 and 6) to the same hand and to suggest that this draughtsman worked in those two different styles at the same time.³¹ The *recto* composition is certainly related to the *verso* drawing, but the former was clearly made by a fine draughtsman educated in Rembrandt's studio (fig. 5). With a few forceful pen strokes this artist skillfully situated the three figures in space – creating dramatic movement from middle distance to foreground: from the imposing Ahasuerus behind the table, whose anger is cleverly suggested, his dark, threatening look clearly connecting him with the begging Haman, to the convincing pose of Esther turning away her upper body and averting her face, drawn in a confident shorthand, towards the kneeling figure of Haman in the right foreground. It seems as if an accomplished (former?) Rembrandt-pupil showed the beginner how it really should be done.



7. Jan Victors, *Haman Begging Esther for Mercy* (1642), oil on canvas, 192 x 167 cm, signed and dated at bottom left: 'Jan. Victors. 1642', Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, inv. no. GG 253



8. Formerly attributed to Jan Victors, *Banquet of Esther*, oil on canvas, 128 x 169.5 cm, not signed, Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum & Fondation Corboud, inv. no. WRM 1016



9. Pieter Lastman, *David Giving Uriah the Letter* (1619), oil on panel, 41.5 x 62.5 cm, signed and dated at bottom right: 'P. Lastman fecit 1619' (PL in ligature), New York, The Leiden Collection, inv. no. PL-100



10. Pieter Lastman, *Haman Begging Esther for Mercy* (161[?]), oil on panel, 52 x 78 cm, signed and dated at top centre: 'P. Lastman fecit. A 161[?]', Warsaw, National Museum in Warsaw, inv. no. M.Ob.558 MNW

It is a mystery to us why this drawing should be identified with the hand of Victors; in no way does it recall Victors's manner of arranging and modelling figures, nor does it show his figure types as we know them from his early paintings.³²

As far as we can see, none of the other attributions to Victors are convincing and none of them show a persuasive relation to his paintings.³³ Several of the double-sided drawings attributed to Victors demonstrate an extreme difference in quality: clumsy 'painterly' drawings on the one side and accomplished Rembrandt-like pen drawings at the other. Since Bevers considers them to be by the same artist who draws in two different styles at the same time, this has curious consequences. One example: a sheet in the Albertina shows on the one side *Abraham's Sacrifice of Isaac* in a 'painterly' style (fig. 11), and has on the other a Rembrandtesque *Lot and his Family Departing from Sodom* (fig. 12). Similar to the previously discussed Bremen work, the Albertina sheet was cut down to fit the format of the Rembrandtesque drawing, the latter thus becoming the *recto*.³⁴ This drawing was described by Benesch as 'one of the most vigorous compositions by Rembrandt of 1636'.³⁵ Reviewing Benesch's work in 1961 Sumowski had expressed doubts and suggested Govert Flinck as a possibility, but later he returned to the assumption that it was by Rembrandt.³⁶ Bevers however, is convinced that it is by the same hand as the drawing on the *verso* side, and thus a work by Victors. To maintain that this expressive drawing, with



11. Formerly attributed to Jan Victors, *The Sacrifice of Isaac*, pen and point of the brush and brown ink, brown wash, opaque white, black chalk, 235 x 226 mm, not signed, Vienna, Albertina, inv. no. 8767 (*verso*)

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its strong spatial movement, is by the same hand as the *verso*, and as a corollary that it is by Victors, is beyond us.³⁷ The author even argues that ‘the thicker pen accents in the neck of Isaac correspond in character, rhythm, and color with the looser pen draftsmanship of the *verso* [should be *recto*]’, thereby placing next to each other details of the rather crude dashes in Isaac’s neck and the graceful lines in the costume of the angel leading Lot.³⁸

Both the Bremen and the Albertina sheets were showcased in the exhibition *Drawings by Rembrandt and his Pupils. Telling the Difference* in the J. Paul Getty Museum, mounted by Lee

Hendrix and Peter Schatborn, in collaboration with Holm Bevers and William W. Robinson. The exhibition was meant to present the scholarship on Rembrandt and his pupils to a wider public with ‘carefully selected pairs of drawings by Rembrandt and a given pupil, in which the visuals would tell most of the story, accompanied by precise and comprehensible prose that would lay out the scholarly method’.³⁹ A detail of the figure of Lot, his face and expressive gesture, even served as a vignette for Victors’s style.⁴⁰ In the entry on *Lot and his Family* the drawing is compared with Rembrandt’s *Ruth and Naomi* in Rotterdam, demonstrating that in Rembrandt’s drawing the essential



12. Formerly attributed to Jan Victors, *Lot and his Family Departing from Sodom*, pen and brown ink, brown wash, 226 x 235 mm, not signed, Vienna, Albertina, inv. no. 8767 (recto)

forms had been more effectively suggested by varied line thickness, and that in the other drawing these were less assured and more uniform. One sentence is devoted to the attribution to Victors's, telling us that the *verso*, *Abraham's Sacrifice of Isaac* 'is quite typical for Victors'; this *verso* appears to be 'an important piece of evidence' of the attribution, since 'other early examples of his draftsmanship utilize both sides of the paper as well, one drawing executed with a pen, the other with a brush'.

In Bevers's *Master Drawings* article on the shaping of Jan Victors's oeuvre only one drawing was related to a painting, apart from the Bremen drawings mentioned above that were

supposedly related to a painting that is definitely not by Victors and to the Braunschweig painting respectively (figs. 8 and 7). It regards the *verso* of a drawing in Dresden of *Haman before Ahasuerus*, also in the 'painterly' manner (figs. 13 and 14). The *recto* (fig. 13), together with a similar drawing in Dresden, was formerly attributed to, among others, Jan Gillisz van Vliet (1600/10-1668), but had been tentatively attributed to Victors by Sumowski (fig. 13). Sumowski's attribution was subsequently confirmed by Bevers who saw obvious parallels with the Bremen *verso* (fig. 6) and even assumed that it was made around 1640, after Victors left Rembrandt's studio.⁴¹ We disagree: there is, in



13. Formerly attributed to Jan Victors, *Haman before Ahasuerus*, pen and point of the brush and black ink, grey and black wash, opaque white, 243 x 302 mm, not signed, Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstich-Kabinett, inv. no. C 1472 (*recto*)



15. Jan Victors, *The Finding of Moses* (1653), oil on canvas, 175 x 199 cm, signed and dated at bottom left: 'Jan Victors fe. 1653', Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, inv. no. 1615



14. Formerly attributed to Jan Victors, *Four Studies of a Young Woman's Head*, red chalk, 302 x 243 mm, not signed, Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstich-Kabinett, inv. no. C 1472 (*verso*)

our opinion, neither a connection with the 'painterly' drawing in Bremen, nor with the one in the Albertina (fig. 11), so even if one would accept those Dresden drawings as by Victors, it seems clear that this is another artist than the draughtsman of the other two works. To assume that Victors still drew such awkward and slightly comical figures in 1640, the year of his first known paintings, offers a peculiar notion of the artist's development. The red chalk drawing of four different views of the head of a girl on the *verso* was – as a corollary – also attributed to Victors by Bevers (fig. 14). Though Thomas Ketelsen in his catalogue of the Dresden drawings thought that these head-studies did not support the attribution to Victors,⁴² Bevers, stated that 'In my opinion, there can be no doubt that they are by Victors's hand. One need only compare [...] the details of heads in the Dresden painting [the *Finding of Moses* of 1653; (fig. 15)]: they are rather heavy and sturdy, with pointed chins and bare foreheads. The outlines of the faces, the noses, the mouths, and the eyebrows are clearly accentuated. The artist tried to emphasize the three-dimensionality by turning strongly lit heads, rather stiffly, in different directions'.⁴³ In our view the coarse heads in the drawing and the carefully modelled heads in this painting lack any similarity, apart from the fact that these are also young women with their heads turned into different directions.

The conclusion must be that the arguments used to attribute a number of drawings to Jan Victors – based on the 'certainty' that he was a pupil in Rembrandt's studio in the second half of the 1640s – are spurious. We do not see valid reasons to assign the 'Rembrandtesque' drawings discussed above to Victors.



16. Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *Study for Gideon's Sacrifice* (c. 1640-1642), pen and brown ink, brown and grey wash, 161 x 179 mm, signed at bottom right: 'G. v Eeckhout', Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, inv. no. Z 330

Gerbrand van den Eeckhout: the 'early' drawings

The issues regarding Van den Eeckhout's early drawings are different, because, in contrast to Jan Victors, a number of drawings that can be securely attributed and even dated, do exist. However, no drawings from before c. 1640 are known; therefore, the assumption – certainty for the authors – that he was an apprentice in Rembrandt's studio between 1635 and 1640, functions as a license to attribute a substantial number of drawings formerly attributed to Rembrandt to this artist. It might be good to keep in mind how young Gerbrand van den Eeckhout was in those years, between 14 and 19 years of age (he was born in 1621).

An elaborate article, in which twenty four drawings are attributed to Van den Eeckhout's period of apprenticeship with Rembrandt, was published in 2010 in *Master Drawings* by Holm Bevers.⁴⁴ Before him, Martin Royalton-Kisch and Peter Schatborn had already assigned several drawings to this young master, all of which used to be attributed to Rembrandt and dated in the mid to second half of the 1630s.⁴⁵ It is a significant feature of those publications that Van den Eeckhout's earliest secure drawings (signed or directly related to paintings and dating from c. 1640-1643), were never the starting point to find related drawings that could be attributed to the young Van den Eeckhout. It was the other way around: in search for a name, and Gerbrand van den Eeckhout being considered the obvious candidate, good drawings from Rembrandt's studio in the style



17. Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *Study for Gideon's Sacrifice* (c. 1640-1642), pen and brown ink, with gray wash, 175 x 152 mm, monogrammed at lower left: 'G. v E.', Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, inv. no. Z 242

of the 1630s that had been recognized (often quite recently) as *not* by the hand of the master were superficially connected to two secure drawings by Van den Eeckhout, both rendering the *Sacrifice of Gideon* and both in the Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum (figs. 16 and 17).⁴⁶ Before these authors, Werner Sumowski had, in volume III of *Drawings of the Rembrandt-school*, very tentatively, attributed four drawings as originating in Van den Eeckhout's supposed period of apprenticeship.⁴⁷ In Sumowski's catalogue, however, we also find more drawings showing the same style as the two Braunschweig sheets (figs. 16 and 17), and dating from the early 1640s (for example, figs. 26-29). Several of those can be firmly attributed and were already known in the literature as works by Van den Eeckhout. Apart from referring to the two Braunschweig sheets, the above mentioned authors

were obviously not interested in the other secure drawings from c. 1640-1645.⁴⁸

In Bevers's *Master Drawings* article comparisons to the two secure Braunschweig sheets only turn up after 18 pages in which a large number of ex-Rembrandt drawings are described and compared to drawings considered genuine works by Rembrandt and to each other. Pivotal to this chain of attributions is *St Paul Preaching at Athens* in the collection of the British Museum, which was attributed to Van den Eeckhout and dated c. 1635-1640 by Martin Royalton-Kisch in his 1992 catalogue of *Drawings by Rembrandt and his Circle* (fig. 18).⁴⁹ In the entry on this drawing, Royalton-Kisch proposed that 'of the known possibilities, Gerbrand van den Eeckhout made the drawings that provide the closest analogy with the present work', but concedes



18. Formerly attributed to Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *St Paul Preaching at Athens*, pen and brown ink, brown and reddish-brown wash, some white heightening, touched with red chalk, 180 x 207 mm, not signed, annotated at bottom right (in a later hand): 'remt:' (?), London, British Museum, inv. no. T,14.7



19. Formerly attributed to Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *The Crucifixion*, pen and brown ink, brown and grey-brown wash, a few touches in opaque white, a large paper correction stuck down on the right, 218 x 179 mm, not signed, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, inv. no. KdZ 12954



20. Formerly attributed to Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *A Quack Addressing a Crowd*, pen and brown ink, brown wash, traces of opaque white, 188 x 166 mm, not signed, London, The Courtauld Gallery, inv. no. D.1978.PG.186

that comparisons are mitigated by the dating in the 1640s of the drawing he referred to: one of the two Braunschweig drawings (fig. 17). Nevertheless, he pointed out similarities in the 'facial profiles of St Paul and Gideon, with the fish-like anatomy of their mouths; the somewhat loose delineation of their legs and feet, the characterization of the angel which resembles several of the listeners in the present drawing, some of the faces being rendered in a similar shorthand; the lack of effective spatial recession, the unvaried tone of the wash applied in the background; and the unruly calligraphy of the subsidiary penwork'.

We fail to be convinced by any of these comparisons. The style of the two Braunschweig drawings is very specific, as Thomas Döring rightly remarks in his catalogue of Rembrandt-school drawings in Braunschweig, *Aus Rembrandt's Kreis* of 2006: 'Der zeichnerische Stil ist höchst individuell, ja manieriert: Umrisse und Binnenzeichnung der Figure und der Landschaft bilden ein einziges schlingerndes Linienspiel'; regarding the drawing that functions in Royaltan-Kisch's comparison (fig. 17), he notes that 'die ornamentale Verspiltheit des Strichs' is even more manifest.⁵⁰ Earlier authors, such as Sumowski, Stechow and Egbert Haverkamp Begemann had called them 'pre-Rembrandtist', 'Lastmanesque', or 'in the Lastman-style' (though we would say that the figure types – not the drawing style – are more reminiscent of Claes Moeyaert).



21. Formerly attributed to Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *The Departure of Rebecca*, pen and brown ink, brown wash, 185 x 306 mm, not signed, annotated at bottom left (in a later hand): 'Rembrandt', Stuttgart, Staatsgalerie, Graphische Sammlung, inv. no. C 1965/GL 936



22. Formerly attributed to Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *The Centurion of Capernaum Kneeling before Christ*, pen and brown ink, brown wash, some opaque white, 197 x 171 mm, not signed, Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, inv. no. R 4



23. Formerly attributed to Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *Christ between Two Soldiers before a Highpriest*, pen and brown ink, brown wash, some corrections in opaque white, on light brown washed paper, 203 x 100 mm, not signed, Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. RP-T-1901-A-4526

Not only the 'subsidiary penwork' shows this 'unruly calligraphy': all over the two sheets we see a characteristic manner of drawing, in which almost every form is drawn with a variety of longer and shorter curly lines, and small curvy scribbled marks and dots (fig. 16 and 17). This is entirely different from anything in the British Museum drawing (fig. 18). Some sharply drawn lines are visible only in the figures, among them 'the fish-like anatomy of their mouths'.⁵¹ Indeed, both mouths show a similar shorthand for an open, speaking, mouth in profile. When scrutinizing the heads of Gideon and St Paul more closely, however, it becomes clear that young Van den Eeckhout drew Gideon's profile with three separately drawn short strokes: nose, mouth – with an open space between nose and mouth – and chin (fig. 17). In contrast, the same profile features of St Paul (nose, the space between nose and upper lip, the mouth and chin) are drawn in one stroke (fig. 18). Bevers would later show that we also see this 'fishlike' mouth of St Paul in another drawing he attributes to Van den Eeckhout; but, as a matter of fact, he could have referred just as well to drawings dating from the same period attributed to Ferdinand Bol, Govert Flinck or Rembrandt himself, where we see the same technique, which is definitely different from that used in secure early drawings by Van den Eeckhout.⁵²

Regarding Royalton-Kisch's other characterizations: we discern no significant resemblance in the 'somewhat loose delineation of their legs and feet', while the 'shorthand' with which the angel's face is drawn seems to us quite distinct from that of the audience in the British Museum drawing. The use of washes is also different: in Van den Eeckhout's two secure drawings the washes are clearly distinguished in a light grey wash and a darker, grey or brown, wash.⁵³ In the British Museum drawing – as is true for the drawings mentioned below – the differentiation between light and dark wash is more fluent and the wash indicates the shadowed parts in a freer and broader manner.

A chain of drawings has been connected with the *St Paul preaching*. Indeed, these show similarities amongst one another; notably a *Crucifixion* in the Berlin Kupferstichkabinett (fig. 19),⁵⁴ a *Quack and his Public* in the Courtauld Gallery (fig. 20),⁵⁵ the *Adoration of the Magi* in Berlin, and a *Departure of Rebecca* in Stuttgart (fig. 21).⁵⁶ Another group seems to us to be drawn by a different hand and shows more elongated figures in rather stiff additive compositions, among them *Young Salomon Riding a Mule*, in the Louvre; *The Centurion of Capernaum Kneeling before Christ*, in the Fondation Custodia; the same subject in the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen in Rotterdam (fig. 22); and *Daniël Interpreting Dreams of Nebuchadnezzar* (location unknown).⁵⁷ Some drawings with larger figures will be discussed below (figs. 23 and 24).⁵⁸ Though thoroughly comparing the drawings to each other, Royalton-Kisch's arguments were more or less repeated when it came at last to bringing the secure Braunschweig drawings into play. Bevers admits that the penwork of the Braunschweig drawings is 'curlier and slightly more meticulous', but subsequently follows the conviction that they show similar 'broad uniform areas of wash', again the 'gaping'



24. Formerly attributed to Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *Manius Curius Dentatus Refusing the Gifts of the Samnites*, pen and brown ink, brown wash, opaque white, 148 x 187 mm, not signed, Warsaw, University of Warsaw Library, Print Room, inv. no. d. 4279

(also 'fish-like') mouths; the 'diagrammatic heads' of the background figures is supposed to be similar to the one background head of the onlooking figure in one of the *Gideon* drawings (fig. 16), which is compared to the head of a figure to the right in the *Departure of Rebecca* in Stuttgart (fig. 21);⁵⁹ the latter also seems to have similarities regarding 'the very detailed curlicues in the leafwork' (which are, in fact, very different!). Furthermore he notes similarities in the clumsy, glove like manner of presenting hands, and the tendency to add *repoussoir* motifs, another feature where we see no significant resemblances.⁶⁰

As was the case with the double-sided drawings assigned to Jan Victors discussed at some length above, the attributions of the British Museum drawing of *St Paul Preaching at Athens* (fig. 18), and *The Crucifixion* in Berlin (fig. 19) were 'sanctioned' by including them in the Getty exhibition *Drawings by Rembrandt and his Pupils. Telling the Difference*.⁶¹ Naturally, an extensive comparison with genuine Rembrandt drawings to characterize what distinguishes them from Rembrandt and demonstrating why Rembrandt is better takes centre stage in the catalogue entries. Only a very summary comparison with the two Braunschweig sheets is given to substantiate the attribution (figs. 16 and 17); 'the same restless, tangled lines, flat brush washes, and regular, parallel hatching' and 'similar agitated pen lines, identical washes and related head types', and 'finally, one might point out a salient detail in the fishlike mouths'.⁶² Two other



25. Ferdinand Bol, *Manius Curius Dentatus Refusing the Gifts of the Samnites* (c. 1655), pen and brown ink, grey wash, black chalk, 382 x 328 mm, not signed, Vienna, Albertina, inv. no. 9554



26. Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *Tobias and his Wife Taking Leave of Rachel* (c. 1638-1640), pen and brown ink, grey wash, over a sketch in black chalk, 138 x 193 mm, signed verso: 'G:v:Eeckhout', Gdańsk, National Museum in Gdańsk, inv. no. MNG/SD/276/R



27. Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *Hagar in the Desert* (c. 1640-1645), red chalk, 249 x 198 mm, signed at bottom centre: 'Gveeckhout', Vienna, Albertina, inv. no. 9548

drawings, the *Quack and his Public* (fig. 20) and *Study of a Woman in an Elaborate Costume* are also displayed in this exhibition as by Van den Eeckhout, and dated c. 1637-1640 and c. 1638 respectively; apparently, in the catalogue entries no substantiation of why they should be considered as by the hand of Van den Eeckhout was deemed necessary; only the characteristics that connect them with the other drawings from this group are mentioned as typical of Van den Eeckhout and therefore without doubt by this pupil.⁶³

A special case are attributions to the early Van den Eeckhout already proposed by Peter Schatborn in his 1985 article on Rembrandt-school drawings in the Rijksmuseum,⁶⁴ all of which were included in Bevers's article in *Master Drawings*. Among them were *The Captivated Christ before a High Priest* (fig. 23) and *Manius Curius Dentatus Refuses the Gifts of the Samnites* (the Rijksmuseum owns a copy of the drawing in Warsaw, the latter being assigned to Van den Eeckhout; fig. 24), as well as the already mentioned *Daniel Interpreting Dreams to Nebuchadnezzar* and the *Departure of Lot and his Family*.⁶⁵ Remarkably, only the differences with Rembrandt and the similarities with each other are described; apart from saying that Van den Eeckhout was a pupil 'at the end of the 1630s', no argument is put forward why these drawings should be considered as made by this artist in his early period.⁶⁶ Any grounding in evidence is lacking; no secure drawings by the latter are mentioned, nor is any relation to one of his paintings given.

Both Schatborn and Bevers consider the *Manius Curius Dentatus Refusing the Gifts of the Samnites* in Warsaw to be an early drawing by Van den Eeckhout; they date it around 1640 (fig. 24).⁶⁷ This demonstrates the dangers of assuming on the basis of style that such a drawing originated in Rembrandt's studio between 1635 and 1640. However, this subject had never been depicted in the Netherlands *before* someone – probably Jacob van Campen (1596-1657) and/or the burgomasters – devised this obscure theme from Roman history as a fitting subject for one of the mantle pieces in the Burgomaster's Chamber of the new Town Hall.⁶⁸ We see the same composition of the main figural group in a drawing by Ferdinand Bol (mid 1650s; fig. 25), who probably competed with Govert Flinck to receive the commission (which was given to Govert Flinck).⁶⁹ Apart from the question of attribution, this drawing in Warsaw cannot be from an earlier date than the mid-1650s.

When we turn to Sumowski, who, between 1979 and 1992, tried to arrange the immense mass of drawings by or attributed to artists from the Rembrandt-school in ten volumes, we notice that he was able to present a number of secure drawings by the young Van den Eeckhout;⁷⁰ apart from the two Braunschweig drawings, for example *Tobias and his Wife Taking Leave of Rachel* in Gdańsk (fig. 26), *The Dismissal of Hagar* in Berlin, both dated to the early 1640s,⁷¹ the (biblical) *Woman at her Dressing Table* in Dublin, signed and dated 1643; and two signed drawings, namely *Hagar in the Desert* (fig. 27) and the *Baptism of the Eunuch* in Berlin.⁷² Other drawings can be directly related to paintings of



28. Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *David Promises Bathsheba to Designate Solomon as his Successor* (c. 1642/43), black and red chalk, pen and brush and brown ink, 188 x 270 mm, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. no. 41.187.4 (Gift of Robert Lehman, 1941)

the mid 1640s, such as the *Judah and Tamar* (c. 1645) and *David Promises Bathsheba to Designate Salomon as his Successor* (c. 1643-1645) in New York (fig. 28),⁷³ while he could also attribute a few drawings that are clearly from the same hand and originating from the early 1640s, such as the *Vertumnus and Pomona* in New Haven (fig. 29).⁷⁴ Though in different techniques, they all show a remarkably consistent manner. Nothing in this group of drawings that can securely be given to Van den Eeckhout recalls the 'early', highly Rembrandtesque-drawings attributed to him over the last decades.⁷⁵

Should we really imagine that, as an adolescent, Gerbrand van den Eeckhout made many drawings in Rembrandt's manner – drawings so accomplished in technique and expression that they, until quite recently, have been considered as works by the master himself – but that as soon as he left Rembrandt's studio (assuming he was ever an apprentice there) started drawing in this very different, 'pre-Rembrandtist' manner, with



29. Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *Vertumnus and Pomona* (c. 1640-1645), pen and brown ink, grey wash, 184 x 156 mm, annotated at bottom left (in a later hand): 'Eckhout', New Haven, CT, Yale University Art Gallery, inv. no. 1961.63.47



30. Gerbrand van den Eeckhout, *Rebecca and Eliezer* (c. 1660), pen and brown ink, brown and grey wash, 166 x 241 mm, Brussels, Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, De Grez Collection, inv. no. 4060/3023

curvilinear penwork and more awkward, Moeyaert-like figures? This seems to us a very unlikely scenario for this artist's development.⁷⁶ It is true that, as also occurred in his (biblical) paintings from the late 1650s and 1660s, Van den Eeckhout's late drawing style became much more Rembrandtesque. Sumowski indicates a sheet with *Rebecca and Eliezer*, which is closely related to a painting of 1661, as the first one in this late manner (fig. 30).⁷⁷ This late style, used for rapid sketches, is indeed based on Rembrandt's style of drawing of the 1630s, but retains elements of Eeckhout's 'pre-Rembrandtist' manner. However, it seems to us impossible to infer from such drawings dating

from the 1660s that a direct relation exists to Rembrandt's drawings he would have made as a young apprentice in Rembrandt's studio.⁷⁸

After reviewing the drawings attributed to Jan Victors and Gerbrand van den Eeckhout that were supposedly made during their presumed stay in Rembrandt's studio between 1635 and 1640 and examining the arguments with which these attributions have been substantiated, our conviction that it is highly unlikely that both artists would have worked for some time as apprentices in Rembrandt's studio has only been strengthened.

* We are grateful to Jasper Hillegers and Sandra Racek for their thoughtful comments.

1 E.J. Sluiter, *Rembrandt's Rivals. History Painting in Amsterdam 1630-1650*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia 2015 (*Oculi. Studies in the Arts of the Low Countries*, vol. XIV), pp. 346-361 (Eeckhout) and pp. 362-373 (Victors).

2 Many scholars have argued that Rembrandt taught his pupils to study compositions by Lastman and might have given examples of the latter's work as study material to vary upon (for example, see note 12 below). However, this does not explain the fundamental difference in methods of painting and

in making an ordonnance through *houding* and *schikschaduw*, which would certainly have belonged to the basics of Rembrandt's teaching, as the early works of Flinck and Bol, and of his later pupils (Fabritius, Van Hoogstraten, Maes, Drost) demonstrate.

3 Sluiter 2015 (note 1), pp. 346-347 (Eeckhout) and p. 364 (Victors). On Flinck's early style, see: *ibid.*, pp. 99-106; and on Bol's: *ibid.*, pp. 336-345.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 347 and p. 444, note 58 (Eeckhout); p. 364 and p. 446, note 116 (Victors).

5 *Ibid.*, p. 444, note 57 (Eeckhout); p. 446, note 116 (Victors).

6 W. von Seidlitz, 'Review of F. Lippmann

and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Zeichnungen von Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn*, vol. 1, *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 17 (1894), pp. 116-127, especially pp. 116-117. Cited for instance, in: P. Schatborn & W.W. Robinson, 'The history of the attribution of drawings by Rembrandt and his pupils', in: H. Bevers, L. Hendrix, W.W. Robinson et al., exh. cat. *Drawings by Rembrandt and his Pupils. Telling the Difference*, Los Angeles (The J. Paul Getty Museum) 2009/10, pp. 31-41, especially pp. 35-36; P. Schatborn, 'The core group of Rembrandt drawings, I: Overview', *Master Drawings* 49 (2011), pp. 293-322, especially p. 293; and P. Schatborn & L. van Sloten, exh.

- cat. *Old Drawings New Names. Rembrandt and his Contemporaries*, Amsterdam (Museum Het Rembrandthuis) 2014, p. 13.
- 7 For example: P. Schatborn, 'Tekeningen van Rembrandts leerlingen', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 33 (1985), pp. 93-109, especially p. 96; M. Royalton-Kisch, *Drawings by Rembrandt and his Circle in the British Museum*, London 1992, p. 198; H. Bevers, in: Bevers/Hendrix/Robinson 2009/10 (note 6), p. 102.
 - 8 See note 3 above. N.B. In Sluijter 2015 (note 1), p. 349, fig. VII-22, the painting in Stockholm is recorded as dated 1644, according to the traditional reading. However, in the catalogue by Görel Cavalli-Björkman, *Dutch and Flemish Paintings II. Dutch Paintings c. 1600-c. 1800*, Stockholm 2005, pp. 182-183, no. 184, it has been noted that the date should be read as 1640, which makes it the earliest dated painting by Van den Eeckhout. For Moeyaert, see: Sluijter 2015 (note 1), pp. 150-173; for Koninck: *ibid.*, pp. 199-213.
 - 9 A. Houbraken, *De groote schouburgh der Nederlantsche konstschilders en schilderessen* [...], 3 vols., The Hague 1718-1721, vol. II (1719), p. 100; vol. I (1718), p. 174.
 - 10 *Ibid.*, vol. II (1719), pp. 100-101; Sluijter 2015 (note 1), p. 346 and p. 444, note 51.
 - 11 W. Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, 6 vols., Landau/Pfalz 1983-1994, vol. II (1983), p. 719. Houbraken does write, after describing a (late) painting, that it proves that Van den Eeckhout might be rated among Rembrandt's best pupils'; Houbraken 1718-1721 (note 9), vol. II (1719), p. 100.
 - 12 Stechow concluded that his early drawings and paintings have stronger ties to Lastman than to Rembrandt (W. Stechow, 'Some observations on Rembrandt and Lastman', *Oud Holland* 84 [1969], p. 151), but nonetheless assumed that he was Rembrandt's pupil in 1635/36 (recorded as a fact, without reference), stating that some of his pupils 'were so thoroughly imbued [with Lastman's style] that when they started their career as painters it was quite natural for them to paint in a manner which shows occasionally a larger dose of Lastman's than of Rembrandt's style'.
 - 13 J. Bruyn, 'Review of W. Sumowski, *Gemälde der Rembrandt-Schüler*, vol. II', *Oud Holland* 101 (1987), pp. 222-234, especially p. 232, note 4.
 - 14 Bruyn stated that this would not have been before 1640, referring to an etching of an old woman by Van den Eeckhout after Salomon Koninck and dated 1640 ('sk. Pinx. 1640'), which does not show any sign of Rembrandt's style. Regrettably, this argument and, together with it, the reference to Salomon Koninck as a possible teacher, falls apart, because there is no reason to attribute the execution of this etching to Gerbrand van den Eeckhout (listed as such in: F.W.H. Hollstein, *Dutch & Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts ca. 1450-1700*, 72 vols., Amsterdam etc. 1949-2010, vol. IX [1953], p. 132, no. 2). For this information I am grateful to Joshua Rifkin, who did research on this matter which he shared with us. He concluded convincingly that this print is not by Gerbrand van den Eeckhout.
 - 15 A rivalry between Van den Eeckhout and his slightly older colleague Ferdinand Bol seems likely; Bol's depiction of *Gideon's Sacrifice*, dated 1640, the latter's earliest signed and dated painting, might have stimulated Van den Eeckhout, though there is a possibility that Van den Eeckhout's painting is also from 1640 and thus might predate Bol's work; Sluijter 2015 (note 1), pp. 335-338 (Bol) and pp. 348-351 (Van den Eeckhout). For Bol's etching of the same subject, see: L. van Sloten, 'Ferdinand Bol, de etser', in: N. Middelkoop (ed.), exh. cat. *Ferdinand Bol and Govert Flinck. Rembrandt's Master Pupils*, Amsterdam (Amsterdam Museum & Museum Het Rembrandthuis) 2017/18, pp. 211-212. Bol's painting clearly shows Rembrandt's lessons in the application of light and shade to arrange the ordonnance, and of subtle transitions in color and tone to create three dimensionality, both largely lacking in Van den Eeckhout's work, who also uses different figure types.
 - 16 B. Broos, 'Fame shared is fame doubled', in: A. Blankert, B. Broos, E. van de Wetering et al., exh. cat. *The Impact of a Genius. Rembrandt, his Pupils and Followers in the Seventeenth Century. Paintings from Museums and Private Collections*, Amsterdam (K. & V. Waterman) 1983, pp. 35-58, especially p. 50. Seventeenth-century sources are entirely lacking, see: Sluijter 2015 (note 1), pp. 362-364, with further references. There is one eighteenth-century mention of Victors's name in relation to Rembrandt in a Haarlem inventory of 1722: 'Een mansportraet door Bol off Fictor, de beste discipelen van Rembrandt'; P. Biesboer, *Collections of Paintings in Haarlem 1572-1745. Netherlandish Inventories 1*, Los Angeles 2001, p. 345, no. 79; cited in H. Bevers, 'Federzeichnungen bei Jan Victors: Einige Überlegungen und Neuzuschreibungen', *Kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* (2007), pp. 42-59 and p. 58, note 4.
 - 17 Broos 1983 (note 16), p. 50. Broos suggests the possibility that Flinck was his teacher, pointing to the influence of the latter's *Isaac Blessing Jacob* in the Rijksmuseum, and because Flinck took over the leadership of Uylenburg's studio. Since Victors's early style shows nothing of Flinck's manner, except that the composition of Flinck's influential *Isaac Blessing Jacob* would have been an example for him, this seems unlikely.
 - 18 D. Miller, *Jan Victors (1619-76)*, Ann Arbor 1985 (PhD diss., University of Delaware), pp. 19-20.
 - 19 For Salomon Koninck's works in the 1630s and 1640s, see: Sluijter 2015 (note 1), pp. 199-213. Koninck himself had as teachers Adriaen van Nieulandt, François Venant and Claes Moeyaert, but acquired intimate knowledge of Rembrandt's work of the late 1620s and early 1630s. I assume that he was, in the early 1630s, for some time collaborator in the Uylenburg workshop. His earliest dated painting is of 1641; therefore, it is difficult to assess his development in the 1630s. The *Joseph Explaining Dreams to Pharaoh* (formerly Kedleston Hall, coll. Viscount Scarsdale, only known from a black and white photograph) is probably the earliest painting we know; Sluijter 2015 (note 1), p. 203, fig. III-102; Sumowski 1983-1994 (note 11), vol. III (1983), p. 1652, no. 1078.
 - 20 See Sluijter 2015 (note 1), p. 364.
 - 21 H. Bevers, 'Drawings by Jan Victors: The shaping of an oeuvre of a Rembrandt pupil', *Master Drawings* 49 (2011), pp. 371-388.
 - 22 *Ibid.*, p. 371.
 - 23 Bevers mentioned this already as a fact in his article in the *Kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* of 2007 (note 16), p. 43. Both articles deal with a group of double-sided drawings, said to be characteristic for Victors.
 - 24 In Bevers 2007 (note 16), the following double sided drawings are mentioned: Bremen (figs. 1 and 4; W. Sumowski, *Drawings of the Rembrandt School*, 10 vols., New York 1979-1992, vol. x [1992], pp. 5258-5259, no. 2324^{xx}; and pp. 5290-5291, no. 2336^{xx}); Berlin (figs. 5 and 6); formerly Bremen (figs. 7 and 8; *ibid.*, pp. 5260-5261, no. 2325^{xx}); Göttingen (figs. 9 and 10); Berlin (figs. 11 and 12); Vienna (figs. 13 and 14; *ibid.*, pp. 5272-5273, no. 2329^{xx}); O. Benesch, *The Drawings of Rembrandt*, 6 vols., London 1954-1957, vol. I [1954], p. 36, no. 129, fig. 143 [*recto*]); and Cambridge, MA (figs. 15 and 16). Some of these do not return in the *Master Drawings* article of 2011 (Berlin [figs. 5 and 6]; formerly Bremen [figs. 7 and 8], Göttingen [figs. 9 and 10] and Cambridge, MA [figs. 15 and 16]). In the 2011 article were added: Amsterdam (figs. 6 and 34; Sumowski 1979-1992, vol. x [1992], pp. 5302-5303, no. 2342^{xx}; and pp. 5310-5311, no. 2345^{xx}); Moscow (figs. 7 and 35; *ibid.*, pp. 5304-5305, no. 2343^{xx}; and V. Sadkov, *The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts. Netherlandish, Flemish and Dutch Drawings of the XVI-XVIII Centuries. Belgian and Dutch Drawings of the XIX-XX Centuries*, Amsterdam/Moscow/The Hague 2010, pp. 269-271, no. 427); and a few single sheets (figs. 30, 31 and 33).
 - 25 Bevers 2011 (note 21), p. 386, note 4: 'Volker Manuth [...] expressed doubt whether any drawings at all can be attributed to the artist (verbally at the conference at Herstmonceux Castle 25-26 June 2009)'.
 - 26 *Ibid.*, p. 374.
 - 27 Bevers 2007 (note 16), pp. 44-46; Bevers 2011 (note 21), pp. 372-373; Sumowski 1983-1994 (note 11), vol. IV (1983), p. 2620, no. 1721; and p. 2628, no. 1729. See also: H. Bevers, exh. cat. *Zeichnungen der Rembrandtschule im Berliner Kupferstichkabinett. Kritischer Katalog*, Berlin (Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin) 2018, pp. 202-204, no. 105. Bevers mentions in footnotes that the Cologne painting was not accepted as by Victors by Volker Manuth; see Bevers 2007 (note 16), p. 58, note

- 12; and Bevers 2011 (note 21), p. 386, note 11; see next note.
- 28 Miller 1985 (note 18), p. 353, no. R56; V. Manuth, *Ikonographische Studien zu den Historien des Alten Testaments bei Rembrandt und seiner frühen Amsterdamer Schule*, Berlin 1987 (PhD diss., Freie Universität), pp. 183-184, under no. 58.
- 29 See also: A.K. Ševčík, in: A.K. Ševčík (ed.), exh. cat. *Inside Rembrandt 1606-1669*, Cologne (Wallraf-Richartz-Museum & Fondation Corboud) / Prague (National Gallery) 2019/20, pp. 187-189, no. 54 (as Rembrandt-pupil of the 1630s; rightly refuting the attribution to Victors).
- 30 Sluijter 2015 (note 1), p. 367.
- 31 Sumowski 1979-1992 (note 24), vol. x (1992), pp. 5290-5291, no. 2336^{xx}. Sumowski attributed the drawing to Victors and dated it several years later, around 1642, connecting it with the painting in Braunschweig (as did Christian Tümpel before him, who even saw it as a preliminary sketch for the painting; Chr.L. Tümpel, *Studien zur Ikonografie der Historien Rembrandts. Deutung von bisher nicht oder falsch gedeuteten Historien*, Hamburg 1968 [PhD diss., Universität Hamburg], p. 425, note 461).
- 32 Surprisingly Sumowski, Tümpel and Bevers all see a direct connection with the Braunschweig painting (see the preceding note). Apart from the subject, however, there is little resemblance with that work and no reason at all to connect the two; the composition of the painting was mainly inspired by Lastman's *David giving Uriah the Letter*; the drawings only by the latter's *Haman Begging for Mercy*. In Bevers 2018 (note 27), p. 203, it has become a certainty that this Bremen drawing is by Victors because of the similarity with the Cologne and the Braunschweig paintings.
- 33 The double sided drawing in the Rijksmuseum, again an *Esther with Haman Begging for Mercy*, on the verso, by Schatborn in the catalogue of 1985 as Rembrandt-school and still dated in the 1650s, was also connected with Victors's Braunschweig painting, as well as with the painting with the same subject, formerly attributed to Rembrandt and dated in the 1650s in Bucharest, National Museum of Art of Romania (on the recto a *Woman with Child*): P. Schatborn, *Drawings by Rembrandt [and] his Anonymous Pupils and Followers*, Amsterdam 1985 (*Catalogue of the Dutch and Flemish Drawings in the Rijksprentenkabinet, Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam*, vol. IV), pp. 191-193, no. 90. Both were later given to Victors and dated in the second half of the 1630s, first tentatively by Sumowski, and then with confidence by Bevers: Bevers 2011 (note 21), pp. 375 and 384-385.
- 34 The only resemblance of the drawing on the recto with the 'painterly' drawing in Bremen is the fact that it too is rather detailed and also contains heavy washes, and that the manner of drawing has nothing to do with Rembrandt's studio; the style, however, is quite different from the exceptionally clumsy *Haman Begging for Mercy* on the Bremen verso.
- 35 Cited by Bevers 2011 (note 21), p. 377; also quoted in: M. Royalton-Kisch, 'Drawings by Rembrandt and his pupils', *The Burlington Magazine* 153 (February 2011), p. 99.
- 36 W. Sumowski, *Bemerkungen zu Otto Benesch's Corpus der Rembrandt-Zeichnungen*, 2 vols., Berlin/Bad Pyrmont 1961, vol. II, p. 4; Sumowski 1979-1992 (note 24), vol. x (1992), p. 5272, under no. 2329^{xx} (with reference to Benesch, no. 129).
- 37 Royalton-Kisch 2011 (note 35) writes in his review of the catalogue of the Getty-exhibition (see note 6 above) that the evidence is not strong, and he presents it as an example of how, in the Getty catalogue, no other possibilities are entertained and 'all the arguments presented either militate against Rembrandt's authorship or support Victors's'. Surprisingly, Royalton-Kisch does not observe that any argument convincingly supporting an attribution to Victors is totally lacking. Sumowski 1979-1992 (note 24) also attributes another drawing with this same subject to Victors (vol. x [1992], pp. 5272-5273, no. 2329^{xx}), again a drawing which could never be by the same hand (but this drawing does look like the kind of drawing one might expect from Victors).
- 38 Bevers 2011 (note 21), p. 379, figs. 18 and 19.
- 39 L. Hendrix, in: Bevers/Hendrix/Robinson 2009/10 (note 6), p. vii.
- 40 Bevers/Hendrix/Robinson 2009/10 (note 6), p. v. See also the catalogue entry on pp. 130-133.
- 41 Sumowski 1979-1992 (note 24), vol. x (1992), pp. 5266-5269, nos. 2328^{xx} and 2328a^{xx}; Bevers 2011 (note 21), pp. 375-377. Th. Ketelsen, in: Chr. Dittrich & Th. Ketelsen, *Rembrandt. Die Dresdener Zeichnungen*, Cologne 2004, p. 74, under no. 8: 'Die neuerliche Zuschreibung an Victors, von dem keine eindeutig bestimmbare Zeichnung bekannt ist, bleibt rein hypothetisch'. Sumowski was the first to connect the other drawing (*Joseph Interpreting Jacob's Dream*; the subjects of both drawings are uncertain) with Victors; it had been attributed to Van Vliet by Van Regteren Altena. Both drawings in: *ibid.*, pp. 71-74.
- 42 Ketelsen 2004 (note 41), p. 74: 'Diese in Röteln ausgeführten Studien unterstützen die Zuschreibung an Victors nicht'.
- 43 Bevers 2011 (note 21), pp. 379-380.
- 44 H. Bevers, 'Early Rembrandesque drawings by Gerbrand van den Eeckhout', *Master Drawings* 48 (2010), pp. 39-72.
- 45 Schatborn 1985 (note 7), pp. 96-99; Royalton-Kisch 1992 (note 7), pp. 201-202, no. 97. Earlier publications by Bevers on some of these drawings: H. Bevers, 'Ausstellungen zu Rembrandt im Rückblick', *Kunstchronik* 58 (2005), pp. 463-482; H. Bevers, *Rembrandt. Die Zeichnungen im Berliner Kupferstichkabinett. Kritischer Katalog*, Berlin 2006; Bevers 2009/10 (note 7), pp. 104-123, nos. 13-17.
- 46 Sumowski 1979-1992 (note 24), vol. III (1980), pp. 1330-1331, no. 610; and pp. 1314-1315, no. 602.
- 47 *Ibid.*, pp. 1734-1741, nos. 806^{xx}-809^{xx}. Bevers accepts all four attributions: Bevers 2010 (note 44), p. 68, note 8; in his article he only includes no. 808, *Daniel Explaining Dreams of Nebuchadnezzar* (his fig. 11), and no. 806, *The Departure of Rebecca* as a copy after Van den Eeckhout (his fig. 10).
- 48 See notes 70-75 below.
- 49 Royalton-Kisch 1992 (note 7), pp. 201-210, no. 97; Benesch 1954-1957 (note 24), vol. I (1954), p. 38, no. 138, fig. 148 (as Rembrandt).
- 50 Th. Döring, exh. cat. *Aus Rembrandts Kreis. Die Zeichnungen des Braunschweiger Kupferstichkabinetts*, Braunschweig (Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum) 2006, pp. 38-41. Remarkably, Döring does not mention the drawings that had, by that time, already been attributed to Van den Eeckhout by Royalton-Kisch, Schatborn and Bevers 2005 (note 45).
- 51 This characterization catches on; Bevers uses it too in his article in *Master Drawings* of 2010 (note 44), p. 60, in the catalogue of the Getty exhibition 2009/10 (note 6), p. 111, and he even reproduced details of the profiles of Gideon and St Paul in his *Master Drawings* article of 2010, p. 59, figs. 25 and 26; in fig. 27 he shows another detail, this time one from *The Departure of Rebecca* in Stuttgart (p. 47, fig. 9).
- 52 If we only restrict ourselves to the Getty exhibition, we can see it in Ferdinand Bol, no. 8.2 and fig. 8a; Govert Flinck, no. 5.2 (see also the detail on p. 59); and Rembrandt, fig. 15a. Van den Eeckhout's method with a space between nose and mouth is also to be seen in, for example, *Tobias and his Wife Taking Leave* in Gdańsk; Sumowski 1979-1992 (note 24), vol. III (1980), pp. 1306-1307, no. 603 (our fig. 26). As a matter of fact we see exactly the same type of nose-mouth-chin of St Paul also in a drawing that must be by Salomon Koninck; Sumowski 1979-1992 (note 24), vol. VI (1982), pp. 3426-3427, no. 1538^x: *Joseph Interpreting Pharaoh's Dreams*.
- 53 Döring 2006 (note 50), p. 38, gives for his cat. no. 8 (our fig. 17): 'grau laviert' and for the other, his cat. no. 7 (our fig. 16): 'grau und braun laviert'.
- 54 Also see: Bevers 2006 (note 45), p. 192. Clifford Ackley still accepted the drawing as Rembrandt in 2003/04: C.S. Ackley (ed.), exh. cat. *Rembrandt's Journey: Painter, Draftsman, Etcher*, Boston (Museum of Fine Arts) / Chicago (The Art Institute of Chicago) 2003/04, pp. 107-108, no. 41; Benesch 1954-1957, vol. I (1954), pp. 31-32, no. 108, fig. 114 (as Rembrandt).
- 55 See also: Bevers 2005 (note 45), p. 469; Benesch 1954-1957 (note 24), vol. II (1954), p. 94, no. 417, fig. 470 (as Rembrandt).
- 56 Benesch 1954-1957 (note 24), vol. I (1954), p. 44, no. 160, fig. 175; and p. 41, no. 147, fig. 159 respectively (both as Rembrandt).
- 57 Bevers 2010 (note 44), pp. 48-51, figs. 11-15. *Young Salomon*: Benesch 1954-1957 (note 24), vol. I (1954), pp. 40-41, no. 146, fig. 158 (as

- Rembrandt). For *The Centurion of Capernaum before Christ* in the Fondation Custodia, see also: P. Schatborn, *Rembrandt and his Circle. Drawings in the Frits Lugt Collection*, 2 vols., Bussum/Paris 2010, pp. 167-170, no. 60; L. van Sloten, in: Schatborn/Van Sloten 2015 (note 6), pp. 58-59, no. 13 (as Van den Eeckhout); the latter has also a distinctive light grey and darker brown wash like the two Braunschweig drawings, but for the rest we see no similarity in the manner of drawing; Sumowski had attributed this drawing to Salomon Koninck; Sumowski 1979-1992 (note 24), vol. VI (1982), pp. 3424-3425, no. 1537^x. For the drawing in Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, see also: *ibid.*, pp. 3376-3377, no. 1522^{xx} (as Philips Koninck). According to Jeroen Giltaij in his 1988 catalogue, doubts about an attribution to Rembrandt are not justified; J. Giltaij, *De tekeningen van Rembrandt en zijn school in het Museum Boymans-van Beuningen*, Rotterdam 1988, pp. 46-47, no. 6; Benesch 1954-1957 (note 24), vol. I (1954), p. 24, no. 76, fig. 86 (as Rembrandt). For *Daniël Interpreting Dreams*, see: *ibid.*, p. 24, no. 74, fig. 80 (as Rembrandt); Sumowski 1979-1992 (note 24), vol. III (1980), pp. 1646-1647, no. 763^x (as Van den Eeckhout).
- 58 Bevers 2010 (note 44), pp. 53-55, figs. 17 and 19.
- 59 Benesch 1954-1957 (note 24), vol. I (1954), p. 41, no. 147, fig. 159 (as Rembrandt).
- 60 Bevers 2010 (note 44), pp. 57-59.
- 61 H. Bevers, in: Bevers/Hendrix/Robinson 2009/10 (note 6), pp. 104-107, nos. 13.1 and 13.2; pp. 108-111, nos. 14.1 and 14.2.
- 62 *Ibid.*, pp. 107 and 111.
- 63 All the catalogue entries on Van den Eeckhout are by Holm Bevers: *ibid.*, pp. 112-119, nos. 15.1 and 15.2, and 16.1 and 16.2; Benesch 1954-1957 (note 24), vol. II (1954), nos. 417 and 316 respectively (both as Rembrandt).
- 64 Schatborn 1985 (note 7), pp. 96-99.
- 65 Bevers 2010 (note 44), p. 52, fig. 16; p. 55, fig. 19; p. 50, fig. 13; and p. 56, fig. 20 respectively. For *Christ Before a High-Priest*, see also: L. van Sloten, in: Schatborn/Van Sloten 2014 (note 6), pp. 61-63, no. 14. For the Warsaw drawing, see also: J. Talbierska, *Old Master Drawings. From the 15th Century to the 1820s. Netherlands, Flemish and Dutch Schools*, University of Warsaw, University of Warsaw Library, Warsaw 2019, pp. 127-130, no. 46. The same arguments as mentioned above, also in: Bevers 2018 (note 27), pp. 112-116 and 119-122, where it has become a complete certainty that such drawings as, for example, the *St Paul Preaching* in the British Museum (our fig. 18), the *Crucifixion* in Berlin (our fig. 19), and the *Quack* in the Courtauld Gallery (our fig. 20) are by Van den Eeckhout.
- 66 Schatborn also attributes a *Mercury and Argus* from the Rijksmuseum to Van den Eeckhout's late period 'when he still makes use of Rembrandt's manner of drawing from the 1630s' (Schatborn 1985 [note 7], p. 98, fig. 8) and he compares it with a drawing of *Christ and the Woman Taken Adultery* in Copenhagen (*ibid.*, p. 98, fig. 9).
- 67 Schatborn 1985 (note 7), p. 98; Bevers 2010 (note 44), p. 54; Benesch 1954-1957 (note 24), vol. I (1954), pp. 26-27, no. 86, fig. 94.
- 68 See A. Blankert, 'Art and authority in seventeenth-century Amsterdam. Painting for public places by Ferdinand Bol and others', in: A. Blankert, *On Dutch Painting. Selected Writings. Rembrandt, Van Beke, Vermeer and Others*, Zwolle 2004, pp. 45-92, especially pp. 55-56. We only know of depictions in Achille Bocchi's emblembook *Symbolicarum Quaestionum* of 1555, and as wall paintings by Hans Holbein in the Town Hall of Basel (now only known through a nineteenth-century copy in watercolour), and by Jörg Breu in a patrician's house in Augsburg (*ibid.*, pp. 55-56, figs. 44, 45 and 46). My guess is that Van Campen or one of the burgomasters owned a drawing after Holbein's work in Basel, which was shown to Flinck and Bol as example, because both seem to know elements of this composition (Bol: the chimney, the arches in the background, the large goblet with lid, the turnips lying next to the fire).
- 69 Neither Schatborn nor Bevers mention Bol's drawing in the Albertina, which was reproduced by Blankert, in: A. Blankert, *Kunst als regeringszaak in Amsterdam in de 17e eeuw. Rondom schilderijen van Ferdinand Bol*, Amsterdam 1975, p. 25, fig. 22; also in: Blankert 2004 (note 68), p. 62, fig. 57. See also: E.J. Sluijter, 'Govert Flinck and Ferdinand Bol in the Burgomaster's Cabinet', in: Middelkoop 2017 (note 15), pp. 132-141, especially pp. 137-138, fig. 171. Which of the two drawings, the one by Bol, or the sheet attributed to Van den Eeckhout is the first of the two is hard to say; the latter might be a late drawing by Van den Eeckhout, varying on Bol's composition (deleting all secondary figures); unlike Bol, this draughtsman does not show any signs of knowing the composition by Holbein mentioned above. Like Schatborn, Bevers also calls this drawing (by Valentiner and Benesch still considered to be by Rembrandt and dated to the early 1630s) typical of Van den Eeckhout's hand; Bevers 2010 (note 44), p. 54, fig. 19.
- 70 First in an article in *Oud Holland* of 1962 and subsequently in vol. III of his titanic work: W. Sumowski, 'Gerbrand van den Eeckhout als Zeichner', *Oud Holland* 77 (1962), pp. 11-38; and Sumowski 1979-1992 (note 24), vol. III (1980).
- 71 Both have long been recognized as early drawings by Van den Eeckhout and are very close to the Braunschweig drawings: Sumowski 1979-1992 (note 24), vol. III (1980), pp. 1316-1317, no. 603 (on the verso signed Van den Eeckhout). For *The Dismissal of Hagar*, see also: E. Haverkamp Begemann & A.-M. Logan, in: J.R. Judson, E. Haverkamp Begemann & A.-M. Logan, exh. cat. *Rembrandt after Three Hundred Years. An Exhibition of Rembrandt and his Followers*, Chicago (The Art Institute of Chicago) / Minneapolis (The Minneapolis Institute of Arts) / Detroit (The Detroit Institute of Arts) 1969/70, pp. 187-188, no. 165.
- 72 Sumowski 1979-1992 (note 24), vol. III (1980), pp. 1322-1327, nos. 606, 607 and 608.
- 73 *Ibid.*, pp. 1330-1331, no. 610, related to the painting of 1645 in the Pushkin Museum, Moscow, and *ibid.*, pp. 1320-1321, no. 605, related to the painting in the National Gallery Prague (formerly signed and dated 1646; probably a bit earlier, c. 1643-1645). See about the paintings: Sluijter 2015 (note 1), pp. 351-356; and L. Němečková, in: Ševčík 2019/20 (note 29), pp. 192-194, no. 56.
- 74 Sumowski 1979-1992 (note 24), vol. III (1980), pp. 1520-1521, no. 705^x (as c. 1642/43).
- 75 Apart from the two Braunschweig drawings, Schatborn, Bevers and Royalton-Kisch never refer to this group of drawings from the early 1640s.
- 76 Perhaps we should think more about the 'unknown possibilities', to paraphrase Martin Royalton-Kisch (see the sentence in our text above after note number 49). After all, Joachim von Sandrart, an eye-witness, speaks of Rembrandt's 'almost countless number' of pupils in this period, recording that he earned 2500 guilders a year by selling their paintings and prints; J. von Sandrart, *Teutsche Academie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey Künste*, Nuremberg 1675, p. 259; <http://ta.sandrart.net/-text-552>. Though undoubtedly exaggerated, the number of pupils would have been unusually large. Several names of pupils are known of which we have no work at all, while we have no clue how many talented pupils and collaborators may have remained anonymous, choosing for different careers or dying young.
- 77 Sumowski 1962 (note 70), p. 19.
- 78 Bevers 2010 (note 44), p. 46, sees this indeed as such: 'All of these features recur in later, secure drawings by Van den Eeckhout' (referring to the Joseph series of the 1660s).