CORPUS RUBENIANUM
LUDWIG BURCHARD

PART VII
THE LIFE OF CHRIST
AFTER THE PASSION

BY DAVID FREEDBERG
CORPUS RUBENIANUM
LUDWIG BURCHARD

AN ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE RAISONNÉ
OF THE WORK OF PETER PAUL RUBENS
BASED ON THE MATERIAL ASSEMBLED
BY THE LATE DR LUDWIG BURCHARD
IN TWENTY-SIX PARTS

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AND EDITED BY THE 'NATIONAAL CENTRUM VOOR DE PLASTISCHE KUNSTEN
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RUBENS
THE LIFE OF CHRIST
AFTER THE PASSION

BY DAVID FREEDBERG

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THIS SEVENTH PART of the Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard contains a catalogue of all known representations by Rubens of the Life of Christ after the Passion. It includes the representations of the Assumption of the Virgin, the Last Judgement and associated eschatological scenes, and all subjects from the Acts of the Apostles, with the exception of the Martyrdom of St Stephen. It also contains non-narratival subjects, such as Christ and the Penitent Sinners (No. 11) and the various forms of Christ Triumphant over Sin and Death (Nos. 12-16), which show the appearance of Christ after the Resurrection. Representations of scenes from the Life of Christ after the Passion painted in collaboration with other artists will be included in Part XVII of the Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard: examples are the various recorded scenes of the Noli me Tangere and the Way to Emmaus, where the landscape background was painted by other artists. Several of the ceiling paintings for the Jesuit Church in Antwerp contain scenes which fall into the present iconographic group, but these are dealt with in the separate volume assigned to that series.

As in the other volumes of the Corpus Rubenianum all works regarded as authentic by Burchard have been listed here. It should be made clear, however, that Burchard's attributions do not always reflect my own opinion, and in such cases the reasons for disagreement are set forth under the appropriate entry. Burchard's classification under the present rubric has largely been followed, except in cases where subsequent research has shown that they may more suitably be assigned to other parts of the Corpus. Thus, the panels with Music-making Angels in Liechtenstein are more likely, in the light of the representations of Joachim and Anna on their reverse, to have been associated with an Immaculate Conception than to have formed part of a triptych of the Coronation of the Virgin, and will therefore be included in Part IV; the black chalk drawing in Oxford of a Nude Man Seen Partly from Behind is more probably, as Burchard himself acknowledged elsewhere, to have been made in connection with the Rais-

1. Included in Vlieghe, Saints, II, Nos. 146-149.
2. Martin, Ceiling Paintings.
3. K.d.K., p. 66.
4. See the discussion on p. 143 under No. 49. Burchard himself hesitated between the two possibilities: while classifying his notes on these panels under the present rubric, he noted the probability that they were more likely to have been associated with an Immaculate Conception, or possibly with another Marian subject.
5. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, black chalk heightened with white, 31.5 x 36.7 cm.
ing of the Cross" than with the 'Great' Last Judgement (although used in modified form there as well), and will therefore appear in Part VI; and the pen and ink drawing in Rotterdam (Fig.154) which Burchard regarded as an early study for an Assumption of the Blessed Virgin and the early Hero and Leander will thus be included in Part XI. Three further items have not been included in the present volume for different reasons: the oil sketch in Philadelphia said to be a Paul and Barnabas at Lystra can on no grounds be identified as such (it is almost certainly a representation of The Seven Sages Dedicating a Tripod to Apollo, as Elizabeth McGrath has pointed out to me) and is in any event not from Rubens's own hand, although it may conceivably record a lost composition; the grisaille sketch of the Landing of St Paul at Malta recorded along with a Martyrdom of St Paul in the will of Don Manuel de Benavides, Duque de Santisteban in 1776 cannot otherwise be traced; and the oil sketch entitled Christ Called Upon on Behalf of Poor Families on deposit from the Commissie voor Openbare Onderstand in the Museum in Antwerp is probably misidentified as such and is almost certainly not by Rubens. Finally, Julius Held now believes that the Princes Gate modello of the Coronation of the Virgin was intended as a study for an independent commission, contrary

7. K.d.K., p.36.
8. For further argument, see on p.211 under No.49c.
9. Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, No.V.104; pen and brown ink with traces of red chalk, 18.7 x 30.3 cm.
11. See p.217 under No.51.
12. Philadelphia Museum of Art, John G. Johnson Collection, No.688; canvas transferred from panel, 33 x 49.8 cm; Goris-Held, No.A.71, with earlier literature; other copies recorded in 1939 at Goudstikker in Amsterdam and at the Christie's sale, London, 16 January, 1925, No.136. For a full discussion, see now Held, Oil Sketches, Cat.No.A.40 (tentatively called St Paul Pointing out the Unknown God), with further reasons for rejecting it. The work recorded at Charlottenburg by M. Österrich, Description de tout l'intérieur des deux palais de Sans-Souci, de ceux de Potsdam et de Charlottenbourg, Potsdam, 1773, p.126, No.566, may be related to one of Jordaens's versions of this subject; but it may also be the work recorded at Goudstikker in 1939.
14. Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, No.710; oil on panel, 28.4 x 41 cm.
15. Rooses, II, p.202; exh.: P. P. Rubens, esquises, dessins, gravures, Ateneum, Helsinki, 1952-53, No.2, pl.II; Rotterdam, 1953-14, No.21. Despite the inclusion of the work in Held, Oil Sketches, pp.528-539, No.391; and despite his claim that 'its unfavourable impression comes from its poor state of preservation and some later restoration', I still see no reason for admitting it to the canon of authentic works. Held dates it to c.1615-17, and gives it the title of Christ's Aid Implored for Orphan Boys. It might perhaps be noted here that of all the works included by Held in his corpus of the oil sketches which fall under the rubric of the present volume, only two are rejected by me: this one and the panel of the Assumption of the Virgin in Hamburg—for which see under No.41, Copy (1) below.
to the usual view that it was prepared in connection with the commission for the ceiling paintings for the Jesuit Church in Antwerp (on which grounds it has already been included in Part I of the present series).17

The compositions discussed in the present volume count amongst Rubens's most widely copied works. For this reason—and because of the variety of compositions often treating the same subject—the number of sales references to particular subjects is often exceptionally large. An attempt has here been made to list all relevant sales references, but the difficulty of associating isolated references to an Assumption of the Virgin, for example, should be noted. Clear references to now lost copies or adaptations of Rubens compositions have been omitted when they are not obviously of relevance to the entries in the Catalogue Raisonné. It will be seen that the lists of copies of certain works—the Fall of the Damned, for example—are quite exceptionally long, and further copies will no doubt emerge in the future.18 Copies of copies, where such can be determined, have largely been omitted.

Three further features of the Catalogue Raisonné should be noted here. Dedication of the engravings after Rubens's compositions have been given, in the belief that they may be of interest; but straightforward titles consisting simply of the appropriate biblical text have been omitted, unless they are particularly distinctive. Where, as in the case of the triptych of the Resurrection of Christ (No.1), a work has not been successfully photographed, rather more extensive pictorial and colouristic details have been provided than usual in this series. And finally, the sections on Christ Triumphant over Sin and Death and the Assumption of the Virgin have been preceded by separate introductions dealing with material appropriate to these iconographic groups as a whole, while separate sections are devoted to specific problems relating to the Conversion of St Paul and the Fall of the Damned.

It remains for me to record my debt to all those who have helped in the preparation of this volume. In the first place I have to thank Professor R.-A. d'Hulst for his initial invitation to me to contribute to this series and for his constant encouragement and support. At the Rubenianum in Antwerp, Carl Van de Velde, Nora De Poorter, Paul Huvenne and Arnout Balis were ever willing to provide assistance and counsel, while my colleagues at the Courtauld Institute, John Shearman, Lorne Cambell, Jennifer Fletcher, Michael Hirst and Michael Kitson

17. Martin, Ceiling Paintings, pp.118, 119, No.18a.
18. Amongst these may be mentioned the works known to me only from slides shown in a lecture by Professor M. Jaffé at the Courtauld Institute of Art on 1 November, 1977: a black chalk drawing after the young apostle bending forward in the foreground of the Assumption of the Virgin in Augsburg (No.42), a study in oils of apostles' hands in the Assumption of the Virgin in Düsseldorf (No.41), and a black chalk study after the head of the apostle in the background on the right of the same painting.
gave ready advice when consulted about a wide range of iconographic and stylistic problems. To Elizabeth McGrath, who for over a period of five years has patiently tolerated a constant stream of queries and has taught me to take nothing in the field for granted, I have to record my special thanks. My greatest debt is owed to Hans Vlieghe. He worked with me closely at all stages in the preparation of this volume and unstintingly gave of his unparalleled knowledge of Flemish painting in the seventeenth century. I could not have wished for a more helpful or more learned collaborator. Naturally it was necessary to consult a large number of scholars about specific problems, and for their always generous responses I have to thank Dr. R. Baumstark, Mr F. Baudouin, Dr. K. Belkin, Dr. D. Bindman, the late Professor Anthony Blunt, Mr B. Boucher, Mr J. Byam Shaw, Mrs G. Cavalli Björkman, Mr R. A. Cecil, Dr. R. Cormack, Dr. T. Falk, Dr. I. Geismeier, the late Professor J. G. van Gelder, the late Dr. I. I. E. van Gelder-Jost, Mr J. Giltay, Professor E. Haverkamp Begemann, Mr R. Hodge, Mr J. Ingamells, Dr. W. Kaufhold, the late Dr. U. Krempel, Dr. B. Magnusson, Mr G. Martin, Dr. B. Meij, Dr. A. Mayer Meintschel, Dr. H. Mielenke, Sir Oliver Millar, Dr. J. Montagu, Dr. W. Prohaska, Dr. K. Renger, Mr J. Rowlands, Dr. R. Rubinstein, Mr M. Rotten, Dr. S. Shaheffer, the late Count Antoine Seilern, Dr. L. Slawiček, Dr. H. von Sonnenburg and Professor Sir Ellis Waterhouse. Without their help, and without the help of the staffs of the Nationaal Centrum voor de Plastische Kunsten van de 16de en de 17de Eeuw in Antwerp, the Witt Library of the Courtauld Institute of Art and the Warburg Institute Library, this work would not have been possible. Financial assistance was provided at various stages by the Central Research Fund of the University of London and by the British Academy.

The text of this volume was completed in December 1978, but subsequent literature has, where relevant, been noted. By far the most important work on Rubens to have appeared since 1978 is Julius S. Held, The Oil Sketches of Peter Paul Rubens, two volumes, Princeton, 1980, and the fact that I have been able to take account of this landmark in Rubens scholarship has provided ample compensation, if compensation were needed, for the unforeseen delays in the production of my own volume. Apart from Held’s inclusion of two works which I reject (see p. 8 and note 15 above; cf. also p. 167), and apart from our reversal of the priority of the London and Prague paintings of the Annunciation (of the Death?) of the Virgin (see pp. 135–137 below), it has given me great pleasure to discover that our differences over attributional and chronological matters are minimal; and these have been recorded in the appropriate places.

London, 1983
ABBREVIATIONS

Literature:

Aust

Bartsch
A. Bartsch, Le Peintre-Graveur, I-XXI, Vienna, 1803-1821.

Baudouin, 1972

Baudouin, Altars
F. Baudouin, Altars and Altarpieces before 1620, in Rubens Before 1620, ed. by J.R. Martin, Princeton, 1972, pp.45-92.

Bellori

Berbie
[G.Berbij], Description des principaux ouvrages de peinture et sculpture, actuellement existans dans les églises, couvens & lieux publics de la ville d’Anvers, 3rd ed., Antwerp, 1757.

Bernhard, Verlorene Werke

Blanc, Trésor

Bredius
A. Bredius, Rembrandt, Gemälde, Vienna, 1935.

Burchard, 1950

Burchard-d’Hulst, 1956

Burchard-d’Hulst, 1963

Burckhardt, ed. Gerson

Catalogue, Düsseldorf, 1770
Catalogue des tableaux qui se trouvent dans les galeries du Palais de S.A.S.E. Palatine à Dusseldorf, Düsseldorf, 1770.

De Blainville
De Blainville, Travels through Holland, Germany, Switzerland, but especially Italy, London, 1757.

De Bruyn
J.-F.H. De Bruyn, Trésor artistique des églises de Bruxelles, Louvain, 1882.

De Maeyer
ABBREVIATIONS

Denucé, Konstkmers  J. Denucé, De Antwerpse 'Konstkmers'. Inventarissen van kunstverzamelingen te Antwerpen in de 16de en 17de eeuwen, Antwerp, 1932.

Denucé, Na Peter Pauwel Rubens  J. Denucé, Na Peter Pauwel Rubens, Documenten uit den Kunsthandel te Antwerpen in de XVIIe eeuw van Matthijs Musson, Antwerp, 1939.


De Wit  J. de Wit, De kerken van Antwerpen, met aanteekeningen door J. de Bosschere en grondplannen (Uitgaven der Antwerpse Bibliotheken, Nr.25), Antwerp–The Hague, 1910.


Dillis  G. von Dillis, Verzeichniss der Gemälde in der königlichen Pinakothek zu München, Munich, 1838.


Evers, 1942  H. G. Evers, Peter Paul Rubens, Munich, 1942.

Evers, 1943  H. G. Evers, Rubens und sein Werk, neue Forschungen, Brussels, 1943.
ABBREVIATIONS

Hollstein

Hymans, 1893

Jaffé, 1977

Jaffé, Exhibitions

Judson-Van de Velde

K.d.K.

K.d.K., ed. Rosenberg

K.d.K., Michelangelo

K.d.K., Van Dyck

Karsch
G. J. Karsch, Designation exacte des peintures dans la galerie de la residence à Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf, 1719.

Kieser

Knipping

L.
F. Lugt, Les marques de collections de dessins et d’estampes, Amsterdam, 1921.

Legenda Aurea ed. Graesse

Levin, 1905

Levin, 1906

Levin, 1911

Lexikon christl. Ikon.

Liste Lorraine, Antwerp, 1777
A son Altesse Roiale, Monseigneur le duc de Lorraine ... liste détaillé des tableaux les plus précieux que les mainsmortes possèdent...
ABBREVIATIONS

Logan


Lugt, Louvre, Ecole flamande, II, 1949


Lugt, Répertoire


Madsen


Magnusson


Maîle, Après le Concile de Trente


Marggraff

R. Marggraff, Die ältere königliche Pinakothek zu München – Beschreibendes Verzeichnis, Munich, 1865.

Mariette


Martin, Ceiling Paintings


Martin, Pompa


Mechel

C. von Mechel, Verzeichnis der Gemälde der kaiserlichen königlichen Bilder Gallerie in Wien, Vienna, 1783.

Mensaert


Michel

E. Michel, Rubens, sa vie, son œuvre et son temps, Paris, 1900.

Michel, 1771

J. F. M. Michel, Histoire de la vie de P. P. Rubens, Brussels, 1771.

Mitsch


Monballieu, Rockox-epitafium


Müller Hofstede, Beiträge


Müller Hofstede, Review


Notice, 1796

Notice des tableaux des écoles française et flamande, exposés dans la grande Galerie du Musée central des Arts, Paris, 1799.

Notice des tableaux des écoles française et flamande, exposés dans la grande galerie, Paris, 1801.

Notice des tableaux exposés dans la Galerie du Musée, Paris, 1814


R. Oldenbourg, Peter Paul Rubens, ed. by W. von Bode, Munich–Berlin, 1922.


N. de Pigage, La Galerie Electorale de Düsseldorff ou Catalogue Raisonné et Figuré de ses Tableaux, Basle, 1778.


C. Piot, Rapport à M. le Ministre de l’Intérieur sur les tableaux enlevés à la Belgique en 1794 et restitués en 1815, Brussels, 1883.


ABBREVIATIONS

Renger, II
K. Renger, Rubens Dedit Dedicavitque. Rubens' Beschäftigung mit
der Reproduktionsgrafik. II. Teil: Radierung und Holzschnitt –
Die Widmungen, Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen, XVII, 1975,
pp.166-213.

Reynolds
J. Reynolds, A Journey to Flanders and Holland in the year
MDCCCLXXVI, printed in The Literary Works of Sir Joshua Re­

Rombouts and Van Lerius, Liggeren
P. Rombouts and T. Van Lerius, De Liggeren en andere histori­
sche archieven der Antwerpse Sint Lucagilde, I–II, Antwerp –
The Hague, s.d.

Rooses
M. Rooses, L'Oeuvre de P. P. Rubens, histoire et description de ses
tableaux et dessins, I–V, Antwerp, 1886–1892.

Rooses-Ruelsens
Correspondance de Rubens et documents épistolaires concernant sa
vie et ses œuvres publiés, traduits, annotés par Ch. Ruelens (I),
par Max Rooses et feu Ch. Ruelens (II–VI), Antwerp, 1887–1909.

Rubens-Bulletijn
Rubens-bulletijn, Jaarboeken der ambiëlle Commissie ingesteld
door den Gemeenteraad der Stadt Antwerpen voor het uitgeven
der Bescheiden betrekkelijk het Leven en de Werken van Rubens,

Sanderus
A. Sanderus, Chorographia sacra Brabantiae, sive celebrium ali­
quot in ea provincia Ecclesiarum et Coenobiorum descriptio, I–II,
Brussels, 1659.

Sanderus, 1727
A. Sanderus, Chorographia sacra Brabantiae, sive celebrium ali­
quot in ea provincia Ecclesiarum et Coenobiorum descriptio, II–III,
The Hague, 1727.

Sandrart, ed. Peltzer
Joachim von Sandrarts Accademie der Bau-, Bild- und Mahlerey­
Künste von 1675. Leben der berühmten Maler, Bildhauer und Bau­
meister, ed. by A.K. Peltzer, Munich, 1925.

Schiller
G. Schiller, Ikonegraphie der christlichen Kunst, I–IV, Gütersloh,

Schrade
H. Schrade, Ikonegraphie der christlichen Kunst. Die Sinngehalte
und Gestaltungsformen. I. Die Auferstehung Christi, Berlin–
Leipzig, 1932.

Seilern
[A. Seilern], Flemish Paintings and Drawings at 56, Princes Gate,

Seilern, Addenda
[A. Seilern], Flemish Paintings and Drawings at 56, Princes Gate.

Seilern, Corrigenda and Addenda
[A. Seilern], Corrigenda and Addenda to the Catalogue of Paintings

Smith, Catalogue Raisonné
J. Smith, A Catalogue Raisonné of the Works of the Most Eminent

Sonnenburg, Bildaufbau
H. von Sonnenburg, Rubens' Bildaufbau und Technik, I–II, in:
H. von Sonnenburg, F. Preusser, Rubens. Gesammelte Aufsätze
gur Technik, Munich, 1979–1980, (reprinted from Maltechnik –
ABBREVIATIONS

Staedel
E. Staedel, Ikonographie der Himmelfahrt Mariens, Strasbourg, 1915.

Tessin
N. Tessin, Studieresor i Danmark, Tyskland, Holland, Frankrike och Italien, ed. by O. Sirén, Stockholm, 1914.

Tietze, Tintoretto

V.S.

Van de Velde, 1975

Van Gool

Van Puyvelde, Esquisses

Visschers
P. Visschers, Iets over Jacob Jongelinck, Metaalgieter en Penning-snijder, Octavio van Veen, Schilder, in de XVIde eeuw; en de gebroeders Collyns de Nole, Beeldhouwers, in de XVde, XVIde en XVIIde eeuw, Antwerp, 1853.

Vlieghe, Saints

Vlieghe, Verslag

Waagen, Galleries
G. F. Waagen, Galleries and Cabinets of Art in Great Britain, IV [the supplement volume], London, 1857.

Waagen, Kunstwerke

Waagen, Treasures

Wetkey

Exhibitions:

Amsterdam, 1933
Rubenstentoonstelling, Gallery J. Goudstikker, Amsterdam, 1933.

Antwerp, 1816
Tableaux recouvrés par cette ville sur les objets d’art revenus de France, exposés au Musée, Antwerp, 1816.

Antwerp, 1927

Antwerp, 1930
Tentoonstelling van Oud-Vlaamsche Kunst, World Exhibition, Antwerp, 1930.

Antwerp, 1956
Tekeningen van P. P. Rubens, Rubenshuis, Antwerp, 1956.
Antwerp, 1977

Brussels, 1910

Brussels, 1937

Brussels, 1938–1939

Brussels, 1953

Brussels, 1965

Cologne, 1977

Detroit, 1936

Florence, 1977

London, 1912

London, 1927

London, 1950

London, 1977

Los Angeles, 1946

New York, 1951

Paris, 1977

Rotterdam, 1935

Rotterdam, 1938

Rotterdam, 1952

Rotterdam, 1953–1954

Vienna, 1977

Vienna, Albertina, 1977


L'art belge au XVIIIe siècle, Museum, Brussels, 1910.

Esquisses de Rubens, Museum, Brussels, 1937.


Sixty Paintings and Some Drawings by Peter Paul Rubens, Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, 1936.


A Loan Exhibition of Sketches and Studies by Peter Paul Rubens, Dowdeswell Galleries, London, 1912.

Loan Exhibition of Flemish and Belgian Art, 1300–1900, Royal Academy of Arts, London, 1927.


Loan Exhibition of Paintings by Rubens and Van Dyck, Los Angeles County Museum, Los Angeles, 1946.

A Loan Exhibition of Rubens. Wildenstein, New York, 1951.


Choix de dessins, exposition organisée à l’occasion du XVIIIe Congrès International d’histoire de l’art, Museum Boymans, Rotterdam, 1952.


INTRODUCTION

THE MAJORITY of the works discussed in the present volume were painted by Rubens in the years between his first great successes in Antwerp and his departure from Antwerp to Paris at the beginning of 1622. It is a period which coincides broadly with the twelve year truce established in 1609 and the firm restoration of the Catholic faith under the Archdukes Albert and Isabella. These were the years in which Rubens received a large number of local commissions, at a time when a substantial programme of church building and rebuilding was undertaken in both Antwerp and Brussels; and it was for the newly built or restored chapels—following in the wake of the iconoclastic depredations of the late sixteenth century—that Rubens received many of the commissions recorded in this volume.

Almost immediately after the death of Albert in 1621, Rubens was entrusted with the first of a series of major diplomatic missions; he left Antwerp at the beginning of 1622, and the period of substantial local patronage was over. Although he did undertake a few major commissions for large altarpieces in the third decade, the only one in this volume is the Assumption of the Virgin for the High Altar of Antwerp Cathedral (No.43; Fig.116), which itself had been commissioned in the second decade, but was only completed on one of his periodic visits home in 1626-27. The number of works under the present rubric dating from the last decade is small, although Rubens continued to receive religious commissions such as the Assumption of the Virgin for the Carthusian Church in Brussels (No.44; Fig.122), the late Coronation of the Virgin (No.48; Fig.132), and the Ascent of Souls from Purgatory for the Cathedral in Tournai (No.54, Fig.173).

Most of the works discussed here were intended as altarpieces for churches in Antwerp and Brussels; but in the case of several smaller devotional paintings, such as the Holy Women at the Sepulchre from the earlier period (No.6 ; Fig.8), and the late Supper at Emmaus now in Madrid (No.9; Fig.16), it has been impossible to discover the original patrons. One important patron from the end of the second decade deserves mention: Count Palatine Wolfgang Wilhelm of Neuburg, who commissioned from Rubens some of the largest works he ever painted, including the Descent of the Holy Spirit (No.27; Fig.60) and the 'Great'

1. See A. Pasture, La Restauration religieuse aux Pays-Bas Catholiques, sous les Archiducs Albert et Isabelle, Louvain, 1925; and E. de Moreau, in Algemene Geschiedenis der Nederlanden VI, Utrecht—Antwerp, 1953, pp 307-335.
2. Apart from the works cited in the preceding note, see also the good summary in Baudouin, 1972, p.45.
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_Last Judgement_ (No.49; Fig.137) for churches in Neuburg.³ The _Conversion of St Paul_ in the Princes Gate Collection (No.30; Fig.67), the 'Small' _Last Judgement_ (No.51; Fig.146), and the Munich _Fall of the Damned_ (No.52; Fig.158) are also recorded in the Electoral collections in Düsseldorf at an early date, but the original provenance of the first two at least is not certain.

Here some remarks on the function of the works discussed in this volume may be appropriate. Most, as has already been observed and will be apparent from the relevant entries, were painted as altarpieces. But within this broad grouping, an important group were intended to serve as epitaph monuments: the _Resurrection_ triptych (Nos.1–5; Figs.1–5), the triptych with the _Incredulity of St Thomas_ (Nos.18–22; Figs.48, 50–52), the _Giving of the Keys_ (No.23; Fig.53); _Christ's Charge to Peter_ (No.24; Fig.54), a _Christ Triumphant over Sin and Death_ (of No.14) and probably several other works as well, including the _Christ and the Penitent Sinners_ (No.11; Fig.22). All these works were painted in the years between 1610 and 1620; they deal, appropriately enough, with themes showing the resurrected Christ; and they show similar stylistic characteristics. All are of fairly limited size, in the half-length format, and the figures are painted in an austere relief-like fashion against a plain background, in a relatively restricted range of bold and unbroken colours. Such characteristics were entirely suited to their function as epitaph monuments;⁴ as in the case of most paintings like these they combined their memorial function with that of chapel altarpiece, but at the same time partook to some extent of the nature of the _Andachtsbild_.⁵ Other devotional works whose function is less clear are paintings such as the _Holy Women at the Sepulchre_ (No.6; Fig.8) the _Supper at Emmaus_ (Nos.8 and 9; Figs.14, 16) and the other versions of _Christ Triumphant over Sin and Death_. These may in certain cases have served as altarpieces, and a few were possibly epitaph paintings as well. Finally there is a group of works which probably had no overt devotional purpose, including the various representations of the _Conversion of St Paul_ (Nos.29–31; Figs.64, 67, 69–71, 74), the _Fall of the Damned_ (No.52; Fig.158) and the _Assumption of the Blessed_ (No.53; Fig.170), and perhaps even a picture such as the late _Supper at Emmaus_ (No.9; Fig.16); in all these works the decorative intention appears to have supplanted the devotional one.

As has often been emphasized, the Council of Trent left its mark on the icono-

³ In addition to these works he also commissioned the _Nativity_ (K.d.K., p.198) and the _St Michael Striking Down the Rebellious Angels_ (Vlieghe, Saints, II, No.134), both now in Munich.
⁴ For a further discussion of the relation between the function of Rubens's epitaph paintings and their distinctive stylistic features see Freedberg, Rubens as a Painter of Epitaphs, pp.68–71.
⁵ Ibid., pp.68–69 for an outline of the difficulties of establishing the boundaries between epitaph monument, devotional painting and _Andachtsbild_.

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graphy of devotional painting in the time of Rubens.\(^6\) Certain themes received new or different emphases (particularly in response to Protestant criticism), a greater concern for the iconographic accuracy of scriptural subjects was displayed, closer adherence to the canonical texts was demanded, and all new paintings were submitted to ecclesiastical scrutiny before being accepted, in accordance with the Council's decree on painting of 1563.\(^7\) But one should guard against overestimating the Tridentine influence on painting in the years of Catholic renewal under the Archdukes. Certainly there is little infringement of the spirit of the Council, but Rubens's iconography can rarely be taken for granted. Even in such apparently straightforward cases as the Resurrection of Christ (No.1), Rubens's treatment of the subject is surprisingly innovative. While his many representations of the Assumption are undoubtedly to be seen in the context of the Catholic Church's renewed emphasis on the role of the Virgin in the Christian faith (in the face of Protestant attacks both on her cult and on the importance accorded to her as an intermediary between man, Christ and God),\(^8\) Rubens nonetheless included several elements taken from the Legenda Aurea\(^9\) — a book which could by no means be regarded as canonical and which was viewed with disapproval by several of the Counter-Reformation apologists.\(^10\)

Two features of Rubens's iconography may be mentioned in the present context. In the first place, several instances arise where a conflation of traditional sources has occurred (instead of reliance on a particular text). In cases such as the Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin (No.46; Fig.129) and Christ's Charge to Peter (No.24; Fig.54) there are admittedly important antecedents for the combination of disparate sources; but in a painting like the Incredulity of St Thomas (No.18; Fig.48), the resulting treatment of the subject is without precedent. The second feature characteristic of certain of the works under consideration is their dependence—albeit limited—on Protestant iconography. This applies particularly to the various scenes of Christ Triumphant over Sin and Death (Nos.12–16; Figs. 26, 27, 28, 31, 34, 35).\(^11\) While these works are entirely in accordance with—and in the spirit of—Catholic dogma, their most direct predecessors are only to

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8. Cf. Mâle, Après le Concile de Trente, pp.29-48 on Protestant attacks on the Virgin, and on Catholic response; see also p. 54 below under No.10.
11. See Schrade, pp.298–302 on the theological origins and dissemination of this subject.
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be found in Protestant works of the sixteenth century.\textsuperscript{12} Such cases of what may be called contamination—prompted, we may assume, by impeccable orthodox motives—are worthy of note when considering the position of Rubens’s religious iconography in the context of the Counter-Reformation in the Netherlands.

This volume includes Rubens’s illustrations of the \textit{Last Judgement} and the associated scenes of the \textit{Fall of the Damned} and the \textit{Assumption of the Blessed}. The Last Judgement itself is not a common subject in the seventeenth century, and the two other subjects were primarily chosen, perhaps, as a means of displaying the artist’s virtuosity in representing the nude and near nude figure in a multiplicity of poses and from a variety of viewpoints. But although these subjects were unusual in the seventeenth century, Rubens was able to turn to Netherlandish works of the sixteenth and fifteenth centuries for his inspiration. The ‘Great’ \textit{Last Judgement} (No.49, Fig.137) is barely conceivable outside the context of those infinitely lesser works—by Pieter Pourbus, Crispin van den Broeck, and Jacob de Backer—which followed in the wake of Michelangelo’s \textit{Last Judgement};\textsuperscript{13} while the separation of the scenes of the \textit{Fall of the Damned} (No.52; Fig.158) and the \textit{Assumption of the Blessed} (No.53; Fig.170) into two distinct panels harks back to a yet more firmly established tradition: their inspiration is to be found in the fifteenth-century representations of these scenes by Dieric Bouts and Hieronymus Bosch, and possibly even in the wings of the great Last Judgement altarpieces by Roger van der Weyden and Hans Memling.\textsuperscript{14}

This use of the earlier Netherlandish tradition—both of the fifteenth and the sixteenth century—is evident in much of Rubens’s work, even when he is at his most innovative. Rubens’s relationship with the fifteenth century has already received some attention in Part XXIV (The Costume Book) of this series; what emerges from the present volume is his wide-ranging reference to the work of Flemish masters of the late sixteenth century. A picture such as the \textit{Christ and the Penitent Sinners} (No.11; Fig.22) finds its closest precedent in the painting of a similar subject by Otto van Veen, while the high altarpiece for the Church of the Shod Carmelites in Antwerp (No.17) makes use of a pictorial scheme already adumbrated in the triptych of the \textit{Triumphant Christ} by Marten de Vos.\textsuperscript{15} Indeed, in all Rubens’s representations of the \textit{Christ Triumphant over Sin and Death} the pictorial allusions to late sixteenth-century works are especially close, as discussed at greater length in the relevant entries (Nos.12-16).


\textsuperscript{13} Details on pp. 202-3 below.

\textsuperscript{14} Cf. pp. 202 and 224 below.

\textsuperscript{15} Pp. 56 and 76 below.
A final feature of several works in this volume may be mentioned in connection with Rubens's place in the Netherlandish tradition. Throughout the second decade, and particularly in his epitaph paintings, Rubens continued to use the triptych format\(^{16}\)—even at a time when it was becoming outmoded\(^{17}\) and was being supplanted by the newer single panel altarpiece enclosed in an architectural framework.

In these significant ways Rubens remained attached to his Netherlandish heritage; but the Italian sources of his work—which have so long formed a staple of Rubens scholarship—should not be overlooked either. It is hardly surprising that Raphael's tapestry designs should have provided at least the partial inspiration for his treatment of the *Conversion of St Paul* and *Christ's Charge to Peter*, and that the paintings of the *Last Judgement* and the *Fall of the Damned* should be indebted in a fundamental way to Michelangelo's *Last Judgement* on the wall of the Sistine Chapel; the same may be said of the influence of Titian's *Frari Assumption of the Virgin* on Rubens's many conceptions of that scene. But in the case of Titian there are other borrowings. Rubens's late *Supper at Emmaus* (No. 9; Fig. 16), for example, depends not only for its pictorial composition on the Venetian master's painting of the subject now in the Louvre, but also—as in many of the works of the last decade—for its broken colours and the tonalities of the landscape in the background. His study of the works of Tintoretto, on the other hand, is revealed in the wild action and dramatic illumination of the two earlier *Conversions of St Paul* (Nos. 29–30; Figs. 64, 67), and in both the lighting and the figure painting of the *Last Judgement* scenes and of the *Moretus Resurrection* (No. 1; Fig. 3).

It was particularly at the beginning of the second decade that Rubens seems to have been most attracted to the stylistic achievements of Caravaggio. His influence may be detected in the clear expanses of colour and relief-like depiction of figures against a plain dark background in works such as the early *Supper at Emmaus* No. 8; Fig. 14), the *Incredulity of St Thomas* (No. 18; Fig. 48), and *Christ's Charge to Peter* (No. 24; Fig. 54). Naturally, however, Rubens's Italian experience is reflected in his borrowings from other artists on any number of specific occasions; here it is sufficient to mention the importance of Pordenone's fresco in the dome of Treviso Cathedral for the putti surrounding the Virgin in the early *Assumptions* (cf. Nos. 35–37), of Lodovico Carracci's *Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin* in Corpus Domini in Bologna for the modello of this subject in Lenin-

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16. Cf. not only the Moretus and Rockox epitaph paintings in the present volume (Nos. 1–5 and 18–22), but also the epitaph painting for Jan Michielsen (K.d.K., pp. 100–101) in Antwerp.
17. For a discussion of the implications of the use of this format, see Eder, p. 44.
grad (No.46), of Ludovico Cardi, il Cigoli, for the Healing of the Lame Man (No.33), and of Girolamo Muziano’s paintings of Christ’s Charge to Peter in Santa Maria degli Angeli in Rome for Rubens’s representations of the same subject (cf. especially No.25). It should be remembered, however, that in the treatment of well-known themes like the Assumption of the Virgin and the Last Judgement a number of converging influences are likely to be found: in the Assumptions, for example, from Annibale Carracci as well as from Titian, in the Last Judgement from Michelangelo above all, but also from Tintoretto and the minor sixteenth-century masters already mentioned above. But none of these borrowings detract from the originality which sprang from his apparently effortless incorporation of the lessons he had absorbed from both his Netherlandish and his Italian predecessors.

Almost all of Rubens’s larger works—as well as many of the less important smaller paintings—reveal his use of workshop assistance to a greater or lesser degree. It seems clear, for example, that much of the painting of the ‘Great’ Last Judgement and the various Assumptions of the Virgin was entrusted to the studio, and that apart from the initial conception and design, Rubens was simply responsible for the final stages of modelling and finish. But the extent of Rubens’s own participation varied enormously, as many of the entries in this volume will reveal. I believe that in certain cases the matter may be defined a little more closely than has generally been acknowledged. Amongst the Assumptions, for example, the Augsburg, Brussels, and Düsseldorf paintings (Nos.42, 38 and 41; Figs.112, 98, 105 respectively) seem to show the greatest degree of studio participation; those in Antwerp and Liechtenstein (Nos.43 and 44; Figs.116, 122) rather less (the Antwerp picture, intended for the High Altar of Antwerp Cathedral, must have been a commission of particular concern to Rubens, while that in Liechtenstein was painted during the last decade, at a time when Rubens seems by and large to have been more personally involved in the actual painting of his large religious commissions than previously). The Assumption in Schleissheim (No.40; Fig.104) appears to be almost wholly the work of assistants, but even here Rubens may have been responsible for the final stages of retouching. In no case in the present volume, with the possible exception of the picture in Schleissheim, does the studio seem to have been responsible for the entire painting of a work.

Rubens’s usual procedure in preparing his larger compositions appears to have been the production of a quick preliminary sketch—in pen and ink, chalk, or even in oils, as in the Courtauld sketch for the Conversion of St Paul (No.30b; Fig.70)—then a more finished oil sketch or modello, and then finally the detailed studies for individual figures drawn from the live model. For that part of the Vienna Assumption (No.37; Fig.87) also represented on the modello of the As-
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sumption and Coronation of the Virgin in Leningrad (No.46; Fig.129) an unusually large number of carefully finished preparatory studies from the life survives (Nos.37a-e; Figs.92, 93, 95-97). But in the light of the role played by the studio in the execution of the larger works discussed here, it is perhaps surprising that not more of such drawings have survived.

There remains one problem which presents itself more frequently in the present volume than in the preceding parts of the Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard (with the exception of Part XXI, Book Illustrations and Title Pages, where the problem is a somewhat different one)—the question of retouched drawings and engravings. Several carefully executed drawings after Rubens’s compositions survive, which appear to be preparatory drawings for the engravings after these compositions. All would seem to be from the hands of the engravers concerned, but the difficulty is to determine whether the often extensive corrections and retouchings they display are to be attributed to the hand of the engraver or to Rubens himself. As these engravings were made under Rubens’s supervision, it is tempting to assume that the latter would be the case, and I believe that in a number of examples the retouching may indeed be attributed to Rubens himself (cf. Nos.6a, 27a, and 44d; Figs.10, 62, 126). But it should be made clear that such judgements about the hand responsible for the retouching are less than normally secure and represent my personal opinion.

The same problem applies to the retouched proof of the engraving by Witdoeck of the late Supper at Emmaus (No.9a; Fig.19) and the retouched counterproof of the engraving by Pontius after the Düsseldorf Assumption of the Virgin (No.41a; Fig.107). In any event, each case has of necessity to be judged by its own criteria, and general conclusions about the authorship of such retouchings cannot be drawn. It will be noted, for example, that the retouchings on Witdoeck’s drawing after the late Emmaus (No.9a; Fig.19) have here been attributed to Rubens, while those on the late Assumption (No.44d; Fig.127)—which has an identical provenance—have not. The same apparent inconsistency will be detected in the judgements made here about the retouched drawings by Pontius after the Descent of the Holy Spirit (No.27a; Fig.62) and the Düsseldorf Assumption, No.41, Copies (11, 12).

18. As also, for example, in the case of the St Francis Xavier altarpiece for the high altar of the Jesuit Church in Antwerp (Vlieghe, Saints, II, Nos.11,2b-3d), and the Raising of the Cross in Antwerp (Burchard-d’Hulst, 1963, Nos.55 to 58, with further drawings listed on pp.95-96).

19. For a somewhat more cautious viewpoint, see Vlieghe, Saints, II, Nos.11,2b, 12b, and 13b (on the retouched engravings by Witdoeck after the St Ildefonso Receiving the Chasuble, by Vorsterman after the Martyrdom of St Laurence, and on the retouched drawing after the Martyrdom of St Peter).

20. And as it has not been possible to examine the latter drawing, this judgement in particular has to remain provisional (cf. pp.108-110, 104, 107 below).
Such are the characteristics of Rubens's compositions of the Life of Christ after the Passion, and these are some of the problems they raise. They count amongst his most popular compositions, as witnessed by the large number of surviving copies after individual works, or after elements within them. They were mostly painted in the decade after Rubens's return to Antwerp from Italy, at a time when his reputation was being firmly established. A wide range of primarily local patrons commissioned them, and certain subjects were painted with striking frequency. But despite the exigencies of patronage and iconography, all bear testimony to the extraordinary originality of Rubens's art, an originality tempered by his keen awareness of the achievements of Italian art and a deep understanding of the Netherlandish tradition. And whatever the role assigned to his assistants in the purely mechanical aspects of the execution of these works, we are rarely left in doubt about the fluency of his painting, the faultless effectiveness of his drawing, and the fertility of his invention.
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1-5. THE TRIPTYCH OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST (MORETUS TRIPTYCH) (Fig. 2)

Painted for the tomb of Jan I Moretus (1543-1610) and his wife Martina (1550-1616) in the Chapel of St Barbara in Antwerp Cathedral

1. The Resurrection of Christ (Fig. 3)

Oil on panel; 185 × 128 cm.
Antwerp, Cathedral.


Christ steps from his tomb, holding in his left hand the red banner of the Resurrection and in his right a palm branch. The awakened soldiers either look on in astonishment, shield their eyes from the radiance of Christ, or rush away. A spaniel crouches in the lower right corner. The heads of five cherubs appear in the clouds around Christ, while two more (not visible in reproduction) occur in the sky to the left, faintly indicated in pink. Christ’s red banner provides the strongest accent of colour in the panel, echoed by the crimson of St Martina’s dress on the right hand wing (No.3; Fig.5) and reflected by the shoulders of the helmeted soldier and the tunic of the soldier in the foreground. A brilliant blue sky with a golden glow in it is visible above the landscape on the left. There are virtuoso contrasts between the light gleaming on Christ’s torso and the shadowed areas of his thighs and calves; similar effects play across the muscles of the soldiers in the foreground.

Rubens’s treatment of the subject is unusual. Instead of stepping from his sarcophagus—the commonest form of depicting the scene, though by no means the only one—Christ steps directly from the rocky cavern. Rubens thus avoids the contemporary controversy as to whether Christ’s tomb was open or sealed at the time of his Resurrection. There are Netherlandish precedents for the absence of the sarcophagus (or the decrease of its prominence), including the well known engraving by P. (?) Galle after Bruegel, the drawing by L. van Noort in the Teyler Museum in Haarlem, dated 1561, the painting by P. Claeissins in St Salvador in Bruges, and the painting by Jan Soens in the Museum in Parma. In all of these, with the exception of the Bruegel engraving, Christ’s arms are both outstretched, as they are in the relief panel of 1547 by Jacques Dubroocq from the rood-screen in St Waudru in Mons, which may have had some influence on the lower half of Rubens’s composition. The possibility of Italian influences should not be excluded either: amongst the closest parallels are the engraving by Giorgio Ghisi after Giulio Romano which also shows Christ stepping directly from a rocky tomb, and Tintoretto’s painting of the same subject in the Scuola di San Rocco—which may have been a source of inspiration for the dramatic contrasts of light and shade in the present work.

There are many precedents for the occurrence of this subject on epitaph monuments in sixteenth century German art, while its use in the Netherlands is mentioned at least three times by Van Mander, in the lives of Jan Vermeyen, Pieter Vlerick, and Lucas de Heere. The Mortus picture is the first in a series of epitaph paintings by Rubens in which he uses the triptych format. The subject occurs at least three times more in works by Rubens: in the Breviarium Romanum of 1614, in the composition for the ceiling of the Jesuit Church in Antwerp, and in the predella panel now in Marseilles from the altarpiece in St John’s Church in Mechlin. In each case Christ
rises directly from his rocky sepulchre, as here, and the compositions are all strikingly similar to the present one. The figure of the risen Christ in the Jesuit Church ceiling painting more or less directly reproduces the equivalent figure here, except that appropriate allowance is made for the different viewpoint.

Other works by Rubens in which reminiscences of elements in this composition occur are the drawing for the Munich Lion Hunt in London, and, possibly, the central figure in the Temple of Janus from the Pompa Introitus Ferdinandi. The figure of the soldier in the foreground recurs in modified form in the two later paintings of the Conversion of St Paul (Nos.30-31; Figs.67, 74) and on the lower right of the great Last Judgement in Munich (No.49; Fig.137).

Amongst the later Flemish works probably influenced by Rubens’s composition are A. Vinckenborch’s Resurrection of Christ in the Rosary series in St Paul’s Church in Antwerp, and the marble sculpture of the resurrected Christ by Lucas Faydherbe on the tomb of Archbishop Andreas Creusen in St Romuald in Mechlin.

The altarpiece of which this panel forms the central part was painted for the tomb of the printer Jan I Moretus (died 22 September, 1610) and his wife Martina (died 17 February, 1616), the daughter of Christopher Plantin. It was commissioned by Martina herself and painted during her lifetime, as the text of a copper plaque beneath the monument makes clear:

‘CHRISTO resurgenti sacrum/ JOANNI MORETO Antverpiensi/ magni Plantini genero/ ... Vixit, praeclarum suis honesti exemplum/ Annos LXVII mensae IV/ Obiit, insignem in Deum pieta- tem testatus/ X Kal. Octobr. MDCX./ MARTINA PLANTINA/ optimo marito cum lacrymis optime appreciata/ sibi et posteris mortalitatis memor/ P. C.’

Payment, however, was made by Balthasar II Moretus (the son of Jan), according to the receipt for 600 gulden signed by Rubens on 27 April, 1612:

‘Ic onderscreven bekenne ontfanghen te hebben van Sr Balthasar Moretus de somme van seshondert gulden eens tot betalinghe van zijn vaders saligher Epitaphium door my gheschildert tot bevestiginge der waerheyt hebbe dese quittantie met mijn hande ghescreven en ondertekent dese 27 April 1612 (signed) Pietro Paolo Rubens.’

That this sum was for the painting alone we know from a letter from Balthasar Moretus to J. Bleuwart of 16 November, 1617, in which he refers to the monument:

‘Nos vero pro imagine, quam optimo parenti posuimus, sexcentos florenos persolvimus: pro imagine inquam sola: nam tabulae ligneae pretium alius accepit, qui parerga adornavit, et haud vilem operae suae mercedem exe- git...’

Payment for the panel itself and the surrounding sculpture was made separately to the sculptor, Otmar van Ommen. The expenses in all came to 200 florins. There is no record that Rubens was responsible for the design of the monument as a whole.

The altarpiece was originally placed in the chapel of St Barbara, the second chapel on the south side of the choir, where it still hangs today. But at the time of the French occupation it was taken down and removed; at the beginning of 1797 the wings were given to the Misses Moretus for safekeeping while at the beginning of the following year the monument itself was sold by the commissioners for six florins. The central panel, however, was sent to Paris, where it was exhibited in the
It remained there until 1815, when it was returned (after having been displayed in the 1816 exhibition of paintings returned from Paris) to the Moretus family, on condition that it was restored before being set up in the Cathedral again. This finally took place in 1819, with a new monument to the designs of W. J. Herreyns and sculptures of angels by J. F. van Geel. The costs were borne by F. J. Moretus and his sister Maria Petronella Moretus-de Pret, as may be deduced from an addition to the words of the original inscription on the monument: ‘Priori coenotaphio saeculo elapsvo optimo progenitori liberi et nepotes nobis Dn· Francisci Joannis Moreti ejusque sororis nobis Dn· Arnoldi Francisci Josephi Baronis de Pret novum erexerunt anno MDCCCXIX’. The altarpiece itself was restored in 1965 by F. Bender. It is generally in good condition, with a painted addition of 3.5 cm. all round.

1. On the iconography of the Resurrection, see the fundamental work by Schrade; for Rubens, see P. 342.
5. R. Heidke, Jacques Dubraecq von Mons, Strasbourg, 1904, plates V and XIX.
6. B., XV, p. 328, No. 5.
7. Raphael’s design for a Resurrection tapestry (illustrated in Schrade, pl. 32, fig. 132) is a further example of the emerging of Christ from a tomb situated in a wooded rock, but there is no significant similarity with the present composition.
8. Tietze, Tintoretto, fig. 302.
10. C. van Mander, Het Schilder-Boek, Haarlem, 1604, ff. 224* (Vermeyen), 231* (Vlerick) and 235* (De Heere). The subject also occurs frequently in the designs for epitaph monuments by Cornelis Floris and Vredeman de Vries; see, for example, R. Heidke, Cornelis Floris, Berlin, 1931, I, pl. X, fig. 2, and J. Vredeman de Vries, Pictures, Statuarii ... variis comemoratiorum formas, Antwerp (Heronymus Cock), 1563, p. 26.
11. A discussion of the implications of the adoption of this increasingly outdated format is to be found in Eisler, p. 44; cf. also Nos. 18-20.
12. Judson- Van de Velde, p. 99, No. 9, Martin, Ceiling Paintings, pp. 94-96, No. 12, and Kd.K., p. 156 respectively. Later sale references to small panels of the Resurrection (on which see Martin, Ceiling Paintings, pp. 96-97) probably refer to these compositions, or to compositions of Christ Triumphant over Sin and Death (Nos. 12-16), rather than to modelli or sketches for the present altarpiece.
13. British Museum, No. Oo.9-18; Glick-Haberditzl, p. 94 (cf. the figure rushing out on the left here). For the Munich painting, see Kd.K., p. 154.
15. Illustrated in A. E. Brinckmann, Barock-Skulptur, Berlin, 1917, p. 303; for a full discussion of how this figure was adapted by Faydherbe, see Durian-Ross, p. 337.
19. For full details of all the outgoings, as well as of the various other craftsmen involved in the construction and adornment of the monument, see the accounts transcribed in Rosse, II, pp. 149-150, from the documents in Antwerp, Museum Plantin-Moretus, Archives, No. 102 (Diverses langues, Papiers de la famille Moretus, 1606-23), pp. 227, 236.
20. Piot, pp. 18-19.
22. It appears in the 1814 Notice des tableaux exposés dans la Galerie du Musée, but not in the Notices of 1801, 1803, or 1816.

2. St John the Baptist (Fig. 4)

Oil on panel; 185 x 56 cm.
Antwerp, Cathedral.

EXHIBITED: Antwerp, 1816, No. 31.

LITERATURE: Papenbrochius, IV, pp. 434-435; J. F. Verbruggen, Beschrijvingen der

The left wing of the Moretus epitaph shows John the Baptist, the patron saint of Jan I Moretus, standing beneath a tree in a green landscape, and silhouetted against a blue sky. His left hand is raised, and a sword lies at his feet in the foreground.

There is a small pentiment around the lower right contour of his cloak. A painted strip of approximately 3.75 cm. has been added all round the panel. For the frame see under No.4.

At the time of the French occupation, both this panel and its companion wing on the right of the altarpiece (No.3) were given to the Moretus family for safekeeping on 19 January, 1797. Although they do not appear in the Notices of the Musée Central, they must, however, have been sent to Paris at some point during this period, as they appear both in the Liste des tableaux ... enlevés ... par les commissaires français and in the report on the condition of works of art returned to Antwerp in 1815. All three panels of the altarpiece were reunited in the Cathedral following the reconstruction of the monument in 1819.

It is possible that the two saints on these wings are to be regarded as intercessors for the departed souls, as in the case of many wall-epitaphs of the late middle ages.

2. Plot, pp.18-18, No.12.

3. St Martina (Fig.5)

Oil on Panel; 185 x 56 cm.

Antwerp, Cathedral.

Copies: (1) Drawing, Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, Kongelige Kobberstiksamling, 'Rubens Cantoor', No.III, 62; black chalk, pen and brown ink,
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27 x 11 cm.; (2) Engraving by S. A. Bolswert, St Barbara (V.S., p.113, No.23); (3) Engraving by L. Vorsterman, St Catherine (Fig.7); V.S., p.114, No.34, lit. H. Hymans, Lucas Vorsterman, Brussels, 1893, p.97, No.56).

EXHIBITED: Antwerp, 1816, No.32.


The right wing of the Moretus epitaph. St Martina, the patron saint of the wife of Jan I Moretus, Martina Plantin (see under No.1), was a Roman noblewoman who, having converted to Christianity, prayed successfully for the destruction of a statue of Apollo. After being thrown to the lions and then into a fire—on both occasions to no avail—she finally died by the sword, probably in 235 in the reign of Alexander Severus.1 Here she is shown standing on an antique plinth, in front of the remains of the temple which collapsed as a result of her prayer. Behind her on the right can be seen the statue of Apollo.

She wears a steely grey-black cloak over a rich crimson dress. Blue sky is visible beyond the temple in the background. This panel also has a painted strip of approximately 3.75 cm. added around it. For further details about the frame, see No.4.

The inscription on the engraving by Vorsterman, ‘ex marmore antiquo’ (Fig.7), suggests that the figure of St Martina may have been derived from an antique statue. In fact, it clearly goes back to a late Hellenistic Ceres type, of which a number of Roman copies are preserved, each of which differs only slightly from the other.2 As Baumstark pointed out, the statue from which Rubens most probably derived this figure is the Ceres in Poggio Imperiale.3 But the possibility that it comes from a statue once in the Villa Borghese should not altogether be excluded.4 At all events, however, the figure has here
been turned so that it is seen from the side.


3. Baumstark, op. cit., p.120 (repr.), p.130, pl.4. This statue was also the source for Rubens's painting of Ceres in a Niche in the Hermitage (K.d.K., p.83) and for the figure of Peace in the Flight from Beis (K.d.K., p.261).

4. F. de Clarac, Musée de Sculpture Antique et Moderne, 1839-41, V, Statues, pl.979, No.2518. It may be noted that a similar figure occurs in reverse in the niche of Raphael's tapestry cartoon for the Blinding of Polyxena (Dussler, pl.181), which Rubens certainly knew as well (cf. Jaffé, 1977, p.25).

4. Two Angels guarding the Tomb of Christ (Fig.1)

Oil on panel; each 185 x 47.7 cm.
Antwerp, Cathedral.


The motif of two angels holding the doors of a tomb slightly ajar also appears in Rubens's design for the apparently unexecuted tomb of Jean Richardot, probably dating from a few years earlier. As in the case of this design, Rubens has here adapted the group of two winged Victories holding the half open doors of Hades on a first-century funerary altar for two children formerly in the Mattei collection but now in the Vatican. In both cases Held rightly noted that 'the idea of resurrection and immortality already present in the classical work was thus given a specifically Christian turn by this angelic transformation of the Victories'. Certainly the reference in Luke XXIV to the two angels who guarded Christ's tomb would readily have sprung to the mind of beholders of the present work.

Both figures are derived from individual antique prototypes, that on the left from the Flora Farnese, although the position of the head and right arm differ slightly. The exact prototype of the angel on the right is more difficult to determine: the
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closest parallel seems to be the Ceres from the Este collection in the Vatican, while the hairstyle specifically is almost identical to that of the Apollo Belvedere.5

The panels give the appearance of being painted in brown grisaille; in fact, the figures are done in a sepia-grey mixture highlighted with white against a brown background.

It will be noted that the painted surfaces of these panels are narrower than those of the interior of the wings (Nos.2 and 3). The frames, consequently, are wider here, and a carved vertical band of fruit and foliage has been added in the centre (attached, in fact, to the right hand panel) to make up for the remaining space. It seems likely that at some stage in their history (possibly between 1794 and 1797, when the altarpiece was dismantled) the painted surfaces were damaged round the edges, thus necessitating the making of a frame wider than on the inside. This hypothesis is reinforced by the fact that the outside edges of the angels' wings and wrists are now painted onto the frame, which has been planed down to accommodate these additions. Given that the outer panels of an altarpiece often tend to be neglected, the paint surface is in relatively good condition.

1. Held, I, No.171, pp.163-165, fig.36; dated by Held to c.1609. See also J. Held, Rubens' Designs for Sepulchral Monuments, Art Quarterly, XXIII, 1960, pp.267-270 for this and other aspects of Rubens's work in this area.


4. The Flora Farnese was also engraved after a design by Rubens in Ph.Rubens, Electorurn Libri Duo, Antwerp, 1607; see also Burchard, 1950, p.12. (Judson-Van de Velde, No.3, fig.43).

5. The parallels with Michelangelo's Leah and David suggested by Kehrer, op. cit., pp.158-159, may be discounted.

5. Portrait of Jan Moretus

Oil on panel; oval, c.30 x 40 cm. (?) Lost.


The existence of a portrait of Jan I Moretus surmounting the Moretus epitaph monument is confirmed by the reports of De Wit ("boven is een portret, ovaal"). Berbie, Mensaert and Descamps, as well as by the *Liste des tableaux ... enlevés ... par les commissaires français*. While there is evidence to suggest that it was removed in 1794, it never appears to have come to the Louvre and does not feature in the *Procès-Verbal de la Commission pour le Déballage et la Réception des Tableaux récupérés sur la France et appartenants à la Ville d’Anvers* of 1815. The present portrait above the monument appears to be painted in the style of the early nineteenth century, and may well be by the hand of W. J. Herreyns, the Director of the Antwerp Academy who was entrusted with the redesigning and restoring of the Moretus epitaph prior to its final return to the Cathedral in 1819. The portrait is supported by the two angels sculpted by W. van Geel at that time. Its identification may further be confirmed by comparison with the very similar portrait of Jan Moretus in the Museum Plantin-Moretus in Antwerp.

6. The Holy Women at the Sepulchre (Fig.8)

Oil on panel; 112 × 146 cm. *Pasadena, California, Norton Simon Museum of Art.*

**PROVENANCE:** Bought by D. Artaria for the collection of Johann Rudolf, Count Czernin (Vienna, 1757–1845) c. 1804; Czernin collection, Vienna; on loan to the Residenzgalerie, Salzburg, from 1955 to 1975; sold to Norton Simon in 1976.

**COPIES:** (1) Painting (Fig.9), Melk Abbey; canvas, 161 × 224 cm.; for references see under No.7; (2) Painting, Dunkirk, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Inv. No. P.146; panel, 52.5 × 89 cm. *PROV.* Bergues, St Winnoc’s Abbey. LIT. H. Hymans, *Notes sur quelques œuvres d’art conservées en Flandre et dans le nord de la France*, Bulletin des Commissions Royales d’Art et d’Archéologie, XXII, 1883, p.239; Rooses, II, p.152; (3) Painting, Besançon, Musée des Beaux-Arts; copper, 45 × 21 cm. *PROV.* given to the museum in 1843 by Canon Thiébaud. LIT. A. Castan, *Histoire et Description des Musées de la Ville de Besançon*, Paris, 1889, p.93 (as T. van Thulden); (4) Painting, whereabouts unknown; canvas, 92.5 × 115.5 cm; signed immediately below the right foot of the second angel with the letters RVB (?). *PROV.* London, Herbert Gilham, 1901 (letter from Herbert Gilham to Max Rooses, 30 March, 1901, in Rooses documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp); (5) Painting, whereabouts unknown; 83 × 110 cm. *PROV.* Antwerp, S. Hartveld; sale, Brussels (Palais des

1. De Wit, p.18.
2. Piot, p.18.
3. Ibid., No.13.
4. Odevaere, No.9.
Beaux-Arts), 21 May, 1951, lot 123; (6) Painting, whereabouts unknown; canvas, 96.5 x 81.3 cm. PROV. Sir Ian Walker, Bart.; sale, London (Christie's), 17 May, 1946, lot 77 (as The Foolish Virgins).


The event shown is that of Easter morning, when the Holy Women arrived at the tomb of Christ to find the stone rolled away from the tomb, and angels in shining garments announcing to them that Christ had already risen. Of the three gospel accounts, Matt. XXVIII, 1-8; Mark XVI, 1-8; and Luke XXIV, 1-10, Rubens comes closest to the account in Luke (although the text on Vorsterman's engraving—see under No.6a—comes from St Matthew): 'Now upon the very first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And they found the stonerolledawayfromthesepulchre...

And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold two men stood by them in shining garments: And as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them. Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen...' (Luke XXIV, 1-6). The passage in Luke is the only one where the number of women exceeds three; it refers to 'Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them' (Luke XXIV, 10), whereas Matthew XXVIII, 1 mentions only two—Mary Magdalene and the other Mary—and Mark XVI, 1 only three—'Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome'. It is also the only passage (apart from the very brief one in John XX, 12) where two angels, rather than one, are mentioned. It will be noticed that Rubens attends to details of the event by suggesting the time of day (early morning in all the accounts) and including containers for the ointment and spices referred to in Mark XVI, 1 and Luke XXIII, 56 and XXIV, 1—a basket held by the woman second from the left, and a cup held by the woman in front of her. He also depicts the radiant white garments of the angels referred to in the accounts by Matthew and Mark.
Although the subject is common in early Christian and medieval art⁴ and occasionally occurred in earlier Netherlandish painting⁵ its representation in the seventeenth century was fairly unusual.³ But Rubens's painting is almost entirely without precedent not only in details such as the apparent omission of the sarcophagus altogether (apart, perhaps, from the stone cover beneath the feet of the angels), but also in the austerity of the composition. The nearly isocephalic arrangement of the heads is only slightly relieved by placing the angels a little higher than the compact group of the Holy Women. No anecdotal details appear in the background; the sole feature there is the heavily rusticated architecture of the entrance to the tomb, which pushes the figures forward and serves to emphasize the relief-like aspect of the composition. Its geometric rigidity is only mitigated by the diagonal slab on which the angels are placed (and, possibly, their extended arms). The high formality of the composition, its relief-like characteristics and the especially strong contrast between light and dark (here, of course, necessitated by the biblical account as well), are all sufficient to suggest a dating between works such as the Supper at Emmaus (No.8; Fig.14) and, at the latest, the Rockox epitaph (No.18; Fig.48) say c. 1612-14. Burchard suggested a dating of 1614-15; I am inclined to a slightly earlier date, possibly even prior to 1612. As, however, the work was evidently executed with a considerable amount of studio assistance, it is impossible to arrive at a more precise dating.

Several of the figures here derive from the antique: the woman in the centre with the antique sandals from the famous Pudicitia statue which Rubens was later to use for the woman on the left of the centre panel of the Ildefonso altarpiece in Vienna,⁶ the woman nearest the tomb from the sculptures of Leda (at some remove) such as those in the Villa Borghese and formerly in the Museo Torlonia,³ and possibly some of the other figures as well. While the foremost women bear a probably coincidental resemblance to early Christian ivories of this subject,⁶ it is more likely that Rubens derived his idea for the isocephalic disposition from the engraving of the Three Holy Women Going to the Sepulchre by Agostino Veneziano (Bartsch 33); the veiled woman seen in profile on the extreme left of the painting in particular seems to resemble the pleurcur-like women in Agostino's engraving. It may perhaps be noted here that the heads of all the women in Rubens's painting are covered, with the exception of the figure seen from behind on the left, who may simply have been intended as a servant carrying the basket of spices for the Holy Women.

Apart from the white garments of the angels, the woman nearest the tomb is in dark blue with a green mantle, the second in lilac over dark green, and the figure seen from behind in dark red. The condition of the work on the whole is good, despite some isolated paint loss in the draperies of the woman on the right and the angel on the left.

X-rays show that the right hand of the woman seen from behind, which is now covered by her dress, was originally extended (Fig.13), just as in the engraving by Vorsterman (No.6a; Figs.10, 11). It was largely as a result of the apparent omission of this feature in the present work that Burchard decided against its authenticity in favour of the version in Melk (No.7; Fig.9). But the execution of that work seems altogether too weak to be by Rubens, and should, in my opinion, be judged a copy.
A small (51 x 53 cm.) painting of this subject attributed to Rubens, with an angel sitting on the stone (the more usual iconography of this scene), was sold at the de Roore sale, The Hague, 4 September 1747, lot 27 to J. van Spangen, London.7 Nothing more is known about this work.

1. For examples, see Schiller, III, pp.18-31.
2. As in the Eyckian painting in Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, No.2449.
3. For another notable example, see the painting of 1644 by Ferdinand Bol in Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, No.77.
5. C.L. Visconti, Monumenti del Museo Torlonia, n.d., No.60.

6a. The Holy Women at the Sepulchre: Retouched Drawing (Fig.10)

Black and a few traces of red chalk, pen and brown ink and wash, heightened with white; 34.6 x 44.9 cm. Inscribed A van Dyck in the lower right hand corner in a much later hand.
Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen.
Inv. No. L. Vorsterman – 1

copy: Engraving by L. Vorsterman (Fig.11); dedication: Lectissimis Matronis, D. Mariae Nerot, D. Lodoici Clarisse, Senatoris Antverp. Conjugi: nec non D. Magda­laenae De Schotte, D. Rogerii Clarisse, L. Fr. Urbi Eleemosynis, Conjugi Cognomines Divas, observantiae testand, ergo offerebat Lucas Vorsterman; from the mouth of the angel nearest to the women issue the words (from Matt. XXVIII, 5–6): Nolite timere vos: scio enim quod Jesum qui crucifixus est quaeri­tis. Non est hic: surrexit enim sicut dixit et videte locum ubi positus erat Dominus (V.S., p.56, No.412; H.Hymans, Lucas Vorster­man, Brussels, 1893, p.84, No.37).


A preparatory design for the engraving by Vorsterman after Rubens’s painting in Pasadena (No.6). Although the drawing in chalk is almost certainly by Vorsterman, the reworking and corrections in pen and brown ink may be due to Rubens himself. As Renger and the authors of the catalogue of the Bilder nach Bilder exhibition also observed, these reworkings are fairly extensive: the contours have been outlined in pen, and their shading, especially in the lower areas, has been more clearly indicated by parallel hatching; there is a similar redefinition and clarification of the shading in the stone and around the entrance to the tomb, while the modelling and details of faces, hair and hands have been reworked with a more delicate use of the pen. The outline and shading of the two feet visible on the lower left of the drawing have been somewhat altered. Nonetheless, it can still not be regarded as certain whether Rubens reworked all these areas himself (particularly as the drawing has been rather heavily rubbed), or whether he simply gave instructions to Vorsterman to do so—although this seems a less likely possibility.

It will be noted that Vorsterman dedi-
icated his engraving to the wives of two members of the prominent Antwerp merchant family, the Clarisses. The Roger Clarisse mentioned here, however, is not to be identified with the Clarisse of the same name who was married to Sara Breyll, and of whom Rubens painted the portraits in the same period as he executed the painting in Pasadena (No.6). The engraving was probably made around 1620, at about the same time as Vorsterman's engraving (dated 1620) of St Francis of Assisi Receiving the Stigmata, which was itself dedicated to Roger and Louis Clarisse.1

It is impossible to identify more precisely the drawings of The Holy Women at the Sepulchre sold at the S. van Huls sale, The Hague (Swart), 14 May, 1736, lot 506, and at the Jacob de Wit sale, Amsterdam (de Leth and van Schorrenburgh), 10 March, 1755, lot 15.


2. V.S., p.97, No.20, after Vlieghe, Saints, I, No.90.

7. The Holy Women at the Sepulchre (Fig.9)

Oil on canvas; 161 x 224 cm.

Melk, Abbey.


Burchard considered the present work to be an original by Rubens. He noted that in comparison with the engraving by Vorsterman (No.6a; Figs.10, 11) and the version now in Pasadena (No.6; Fig.8) the figures occupied a larger proportion of the picture space, with the architectural elements curtailed at the springing of the arch above, and the dress of the woman seen from behind cropped by the edge of the painting below; the same applied to the contour of the garment of the angel on the right. In this connection, Burchard maintained that the extension of the picture space in the engraving was reasonably characteristic of the Rubens engravers. He also pointed out that the contour of the stone on which the angels stand was far livelier than in the engraving. Despite these arguments, however, the execution of the painting in Melk seems altogether too weak to be by Rubens, while the rather coarse delineation of the women's faces, particularly in comparison with the sensitive modelling of the painting in Pasadena, may well be dependent on the engraving. In my opinion, therefore, the version in Melk is to be judged a copy, despite the minor differences from the engraving (the curtailment all round and the extension of the stone beyond the feet of the left hand angel). The fact that it is painted on canvas would tend, if anything, to support this assertion.

8. The Supper at Emmaus (Fig.14)

Oil on canvas; 205 x 188 cm.

Paris, St Eustache.

PROVENANCE: (?) De Man collection, Delft, by 1610–11; given by the Musée Central, Paris, to the church of St Eustache during the First Empire.

COPIES: (1) Painting, Palacio de Liria, Madrid, Alba collection; panel, 192 x
183 cm. Prov. bought by D. Carlos Miguel, fourteenth Duke of Alba, during the second quarter of the nineteenth century.  


Christ's miraculous appearance to two of his disciples after his resurrection is shown according to Luke XXIV, 29-31: '... And it came to pass, as he sat at meat with them, he took bread, and blessed it and brake, and gave to them. And their eyes were opened, and they knew him...'. Here the precise moment of recognition is shown, at the moment of the breaking of the bread. The scene takes place before a plain dark backdrop (cf. No.9), with a young servant bringing in food on the left and an old woman holding up a glass of wine on the right. The young disciple stretching out his hands in surprise on the right is probably the Cleopas referred to in Luke XXIV, 18. The second disciple, here starting up on the left, is not usually identifiable, although he is sometimes said to be Peter.3

Christ's crimson robe and the white tablecloth form the strongest colour accents here, with the white turban of the old woman standing out against the dark area around it. The rising disciple on the left has a cream mantle over his green robe, while the young disciple on the right is in a greenish grey, providing a subdued reiteration of the steely blue over Christ's left shoulder. Genresque details such as the dog on the lower left and the carefully painted still life on the table may be noted.

This clear and simple composition, with its figures sharply set off by the unrelieved dark background (apart from the glow round Christ's head), comes very close in spirit to compositions by Caravaggio such as the London Supper at Emmaus of c. 1596 to 1600.3 Here—apart from the obvious contrast of light and dark and the relief-like qualities of the figures—one finds similarities not only in the disposition of the figures round the table (with the exception of the old woman), but also in the painter's conception of their movements at the moment of revelation. There are other possible sources of influence: Rubens may well have seen Titian's painting of this subject now in the Louvre when he was in Mantua,4 although that work, despite the obvious similarities,3 seems to have served rather as a source of inspiration for the late Supper at Emmaus discussed in the following entry (No.9; Fig.16); certain aspects of the composition may be likened to late sixteenth-century Netherlandish representations of the Last Supper, such as that by Willem Key in Dordrecht;5 and the attitude of Christ's head and the
way he is dressed are very close to Veronese’s compositions in the Louvre and in Rotterdam. But the main inspiration for Rubens’s work undoubtedly came from Caravaggio. It forms one of a group of compositions, painted mainly between 1610 and 1615, all of which testify to a deep interest in the adaptation of the main stylistic features of Caravaggio’s work. Exceptionally, this painting may be dated still more closely.

The dated engraving by W. Swanenburg (Fig. 15)—the earliest dated engraving after a Rubens composition—provides a terminus ante quem of 1611. And on stylistic grounds the work can hardly have been painted before 1609: while some of the figures (like the old woman with the turban and wrinkled brown face) may be found in compositions throughout the first two decades, it is in the years immediately after the return from Italy that one finds quite specific parallels within Rubens’s own work. The facial type of Christ, for example (and the angle of his head), recurs in the central panel of the Resurrection triptych (No. 1), the old woman is particularly close to the one in Samson and Delilah painted around 1610 for Nicolaas Rockox, now in the National Gallery in London, and the face of the young attendant is identical with that of the St Matthew in the Apostolado Lerma (although both are recollections of the very similar head in the early Crowning with Thorns in Grasse). The Lerma series was painted in 1610-12 and it provides the closest parallels with the present Supper at Emmaus. In confirming the date of the Apostolado Lerma, Vlieghe noted that ‘the dense filling of each of the panels, the monumental and sculptural impression made by each of the figures, and the local colouring with accentuated contrasts between dark and light parts’ was typical of the period 1610-12. This description applies equally well to the present work.

The painting in St Eustache is marked by an almost total absence of the swift impasto, otherwise so characteristic of Rubens, in the highlights. Indeed, the highlighting appears in places to be so lacking in vigour that one may doubt the presence of Rubens’s hand altogether: parts such as Christ’s robe, for example, give the impression of a rather pedestrian execution, which may suggest that the work is a copy of a lost composition by Rubens. On balance, therefore, the present writer—contrary to Burchard—is inclined to this view.

The condition of the painting is relatively good. There appear to be no major paint losses. Although the area in the lower right hand corner was intended to be in shadow, it has darkened to such an extent that the details are now obscured.

The frame is probably larger than originally intended, which would account for the horizontal strip of canvas about 6 cm. in width visible across the bottom of the painting. Similar strips of approximately 1 cm. in width run down either side. Moussalli claimed that the painting was extended above, a few years after the engraving, by Rubens himself. The fact that the engraving appears to be cropped in comparison with the painting does not seem to support this assertion. But the horizontal seam in the canvas about 25 cm. below the top should in any event be noted.

There are a number of pentimenti. These include alterations in the position of the head of the disciple on the right (originally lower), in the position of Christ’s hands, in the size of the cut orange and a number of smaller changes.

The early provenance of this painting is not clear, and the issue is not clarified by
the many inventory and sale references to other pictures attributed to Rubens of the same subject.\textsuperscript{15} On the basis of the inscription on Swanenburg’s engraving (see under Copy 7 above), most of the writers on the present work, with the exception of Moussalli, have followed Rooses in concluding that the painting belonged in 1611 to a collector in Delft called De Man.\textsuperscript{16} This may well be the case, but the evidence is not conclusive. Nor does the fact that the painting was engraved in 1611 and 1643 by artists living in Holland prove beyond doubt that it was in Holland in the first half of the seventeenth century, although this does seem likely. Three paintings of an \textit{Emmanuel} are listed in the inventory of Rubens’s estate,\textsuperscript{17} but these are probably to be identified with the Prado work (No.9; Fig.16) and with copies of this or another composition.\textsuperscript{18} But Sanderrart may well have owned a copy of the present work which may in turn be identified with one of the items in Rubens’s estate.\textsuperscript{19}

Rembrandt seems to have been inspired by the present composition: there are reminiscences both in the Louvre \textit{Supper at Emmanuel} of 1648\textsuperscript{20} (the act of breaking the bread, the clutching of a table napkin in astonishment), and in the doubtful painting in Copenhagen\textsuperscript{21} (the inclusion of the wrinkled old woman with the turban, etc.). It will be recalled that his teacher in Leiden, Jacob Swanenburg, was a brother of the first engraver of this work by Rubens.

A chalk and water-colour drawing by Jordaens of about 1655–60 in Brussels (de Grez collection)\textsuperscript{22} may also refer back to the Rubens, especially in the group of Christ and the disciples; for the rest, however, this drawing is more profitably to be related to other works by Jordaens himself, including the painting in Dublin\textsuperscript{23} referred to at greater length in connection with No.9 below.

1. M. Velasco, \textit{A Little Known Picture by Rubens}, Burlington Magazine, LXXI, 1942, p.198. For the resonance in Spain of Rubens’s composition, see the imitations by Juan de Sevilla in the Convento de San Antonio and the Hospital del Retugo in Granada (probably after Swanenburg’s engraving listed as copy 7 above) and by an anonymous Spanish artist reproduced in Alfonso E. Perez Sanchez, \textit{Rubens y la Pintura Barroca Española}, Goya, CLXXX–CLXXI, 1977, p.94.


3. London, National Gallery, No.172; Friedländer Caravaggio Studies, No.18A, pl.24; but see also the version in the Breda (ibid., No.18B, pl.35) for other similarities, such as the inclusion of the old woman.


5. Such as the way the boy who brings in food on the left holds the plate.


7. Pignatti, I, Nos.90 and 171; II, plates 136 and 448 respectively.

8. For the strongest expression of this interest in Caravaggio towards the end of this period, see No.18 (\textit{The Incredulity of Thomas}) and No.24 (\textit{Christ’s Charge to Peter}).


15. For these, see pp.50–51 below.


18. See the discussion on p.50–51, under No.9.

19. J. von Sandrart, \textit{Tentliche Academie}, II, ii, Nuremberg, 1670, Sandrartische Kunstkammer, p.87, and see p.51 below. It could be speculated that this work is to be identified with the painting now in the Alba collection, but the latter appears to have been painted after the 17th century, perhaps even after the end of the 18th.

20. Bredius, 578.
9. The Supper at Emmaus (Fig.16)

Oil on canvas; 143 x 156 cm.

Madrid, Prado. No.1643.

Provenance: Bought by King Philip IV of Spain from Rubens's estate; by 1657 in the ante-sacristy of the Escorial; transferred to the Prado in 1839.

Copies: (1) Painting, El Escorial, Museos Nuevos; canvas, 55.7 x 76 cm. Lit. Francisco de los Santos, Descripción Breve del Monasterio de S. Lorenzo el Real del Escorial, Madrid, 1657, f.142; A.Ponz, Viage de España, 3rd ed., II, Madrid, 1788, p.82; J.A. Cean Bermudez, Diccionario de los mas ilustres Profesores de las Bellas Artes en España, Madrid, 1800, IV, p.273; V.Poleró y Toledo, Catalogo de los Cuadros del Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo del Escorial, Madrid, 1857, p.173, No.909 (as sketch for the painting in the Prado); A.Rotondo, Descripción de la gran basílica del Escorial, Madrid, 1875, pp.89, 142; El Escorial, 1563-1963, II, Arquitectura-Artes, Madrid, 1963, p.444 (repr. as sketch by Rubens for the painting in the Prado); (2) Painting, Madrid, Convent of the Descalzas Reales; panel, approximately 75 x 90 cm.; (3) Painting, whereabouts unknown; panel, 126.5 x 103.5 (oval). Prov. In 1931 in the collection of the Ing. A.Troost, Antwerp; photograph in Burchard documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp; (4) Painting in grisaille by M.Cheeraerts, the setting and the position of the disciples slightly altered; Chokier, church of 'St Marcellinus; photograph in the Netherlands Art Institute, Lnr.30078; (5) Drawing by H.Witdoeck (Fig.17), Florence, Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe, Inv. No.2373F; black and red chalk, reinforced with brown and grey ink, beige and grey body colour, 42.1 x 47.2 cm., indented for transfer with a stylus. Prov. bought in Antwerp in 1659 for the collection of Cardinal Leopoldo de' Medici (1617-1675). Lit. P.N.Ferri, Catalogo riasunto della raccolta di disegni antichi e moderni posseduti ... degli Uffizi, Rome, 1890, p.17; [Cat. Exh.] E.K.J.Reznicek, Disegni Fiamminghi e Olandesi, Florence, 1964, p.60; W.T.Kloek, Beknopte Catalogus van de Nederlandse Tekeningen in het Prentenkabinet van de Uffizi te Florence, Utrecht, 1975, No.625; [Cat. Exh.] Omaggio a Leopoldo de' Medici, Florence, 1976, p.117; A.-M.Logan, Rubens Exhibitions 1977, Master Drawings, XV, 1977, p.416 (as possibly retouched by Rubens); see also under No.44d below; (6) Drawing, whereabouts unknown; red chalk, 42 x 49 cm. Prov. Sale, Brussels (Fievez), 14-15 December, 1923; (7) Engraving after (5) by H.Witdoeck, 1638 (Fig.18; V.S., p.57, No.418); (8) Engraving published by Van Merlen (V.S., p.37, No.419).

Literature: Génard, Nalatenschap, p.85; Francisco de los Santos, Descripción Breve del Monasterio de S. Lorenzo el Real del Escorial, Madrid, 1657, f.43; A.Sanchez Rivero, ed., Viaje de Cosme III de Medicis por España y Portugal (1668-69), Madrid, 1933, p.128; A.Ximenez, Descripción del Real Monasterio de San Lorenzo del Escorial, 1764, p.289; N.Caimo, Voyage d'Espagne fait en l'année 1755 ... traduit de l'Italien par le P. De Livoy, Paris, 1772, II, p.150; Verdadero orden de las pinturas del Escorial en los sitios que están colocadas con los nombres de sus autores, Año 1776, ed. A.Custodio Vega, in Documentos para la historia del Monasterio...

**E x h i b i t e d:** Exposición Homenaje a Rubens en el IV Centenario de su Nacimiento. La pintura flamenca en la época de Rubens, Reales Alcázares, Seville, 1977-78, not numbered (repr.).

Instead of breaking the bread with both hands, he raises his right hand in blessing. The two disciples, now grouped together on the opposite side of the table along with a fat-faced host, start up at the moment of recognition. Cleopas raises his broad brimmed hat in a gesture of reverence. All three figures are more rustically conceived than in the earlier version. In addition to features already present there, like the dog and the still life on the table, the parrot on the tie-rod above adds a further genreque touch.

Transitions from light to shadow are handled with great delicacy in this picture, and they form one of its most charming features. Dark areas on either side of the composition enclose a bright centre, emphasized by the white tablecloth and the glowing landscape. The landscape shows the considerable variations in texture and colour characteristic of Rubens’s last years.

Although some aspects of the setting (such as the vaulted arch) may go back to ll Romanino’s Supper at Emmaus in Brescia, the closest antecedent for Rubens’s conception of the subject here is Titian’s painting now in the Louvre which Rubens may have seen either in the Gonzaga collection in Mantua, or later in the collection of Charles I at the time of his visit to England. It is true that both the disposition of the figures round the table in that work and the young servant on the right are perhaps more like the painting in St Eustache (No.8; Fig. 14); but now, in the picture in Madrid, Rubens takes the setting on a porch with a view out to the landscape beyond from Titian. Both works are informed by a similar sense of the outdoors. The position of Christ’s hand is almost the same, and so is the action of the disciple on the left. There are also more distant reflections, especially in the archway behind the scene, of
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Cigoli's painting of this subject now in the Uffizi. The full face of the innkeeper recurs in the figure seated beside Herod's concubine in the Edinburgh *Feast of Herod,* as well as in a number of earlier works, including the *Woman taken in Adultery* in Brussels and the *Meeting of Abraham and Melchizedek* in the Eucharist series. The lightly bearded face of the young disciple is the same as that of the youthful figure who occurs in many of the mythological paintings of the last decade. Such features, along with the way in which the light is allowed to glow in the distance and play gently over the surfaces of the figures in the foreground, the soft treatment of the hair, the warm tints, the rich variety of textures in the paint surface, the freedom of handling in passages such as the innkeeper's left hand—all these suggest a dating in the very last years of Rubens's life, certainly after 1637.

Two derivations from this composition may be mentioned. A painting of the same subject attributed to G. de Crayer in Berlin is probably a pastiche of the two *Emmaus* compositions by Rubens, although in the figure of Christ and the face of the young disciple (transposed to the near side of the table) it comes closest to the present work. The latter also seems to have inspired Jordaens's *Supper at Emmaus* in Dublin. Amongst Jordaens's spirited adaptations of and borrowings from Rubens's work are the figure of Christ, the fat innkeeper on the left, the view through an arch, and the parrot perching on a tie-rod, here seen obliquely above the arch instead of stretching across the picture-plane. The rest of the composition consists of further variations, of slighter importance, on elements in the Rubens composition, as is the case with the painting attributed to De Crayer as well.

On the whole, the condition of this recently cleaned and restored work is good, despite some heavy craquelure. There is a horizontal seam in the canvas just above the foremost tie-rod. It might be argued that the absence of the vault would lend a greater degree of intimacy to the scene, and it is true that the foliage in the centre immediately above the foremost tie-rod appears to be painted more thinly above the beam, but neither of these factors can be regarded as conclusive evidence against the possibility that Rubens made the addition himself. The engravings all include the vaulted part of the arch, and the copies in the Escorial and the Descalzas Reales also show it to be truncated to more or less the same degree as here. At any rate, there is a horizontal strip of about 2.5 cm. across the very top of the picture, which is certainly not part of the original composition.

It is probably this version of *The Supper at Emmaus* which Philip IV bought from Rubens's estate for 800 florins, and it may well have been amongst the forty-one pictures which, according to Palomino, the King ordered Velazquez to transfer to the Escorial in 1656. From the inventory of Rubens's estate to nineteenth century sale records, there are many references to pictures of the *Supper at Emmaus* by Rubens. In almost all cases it is impossible to associate a particular reference with a particular painting or its copy, for the following reasons: hardly any of the references are given in sufficient detail to enable a distinction to be made between the two rather different compositions of this subject by Rubens; as is usually the case when many copies survive of a particular composition, one can rarely be certain—in the absence of necessary detail—whether original or copy is being referred to (and if a copy, which
one?); references could also be to sketches which are now lost; and when—as in this instance—a work is referred to simply as an Emmaus, the possibility cannot be excluded that it is a representation of the Road to Emmaus, rather than the Supper.

Apart from the painting presumably to be identified with the present work, there are two more items in Rubens's estate which are listed simply as an Emmaus. One was given to the owner of the Gulden Leeuw in Brussels, and the other to Albert Rubens. The latter version was valued along with a Susannah (both copies) at 90 florins. It seems likely that both these versions of the Emmaus were copies, but the possibility should not be excluded that one of them may be the picture at present in St Eustache (No.8; Fig. 14) as claimed by Moussalli, although this seems less likely. Albert Rubens's Emmaus remained in his possession until his death, and either it or the Gulden Leeuw picture may be the one owned by Sandrart, which he designated as a copy. Sandrart's description of his picture is quite specific: it depicted how Christ took the bread and broke it, and therefore refers to a composition like the one in St Eustache, rather than the later type represented by the painting in the Prado, where Christ is shown in the act not of breaking but of blessing the bread. In 1669, Matthis Musson sold 'een schoustuk den Emaus van Rubens'.

De Piles refers to a Pèlerins d'Emmaus amongst the paintings Rubens is supposed to have made for the Emperor. But this and the painting which appeared in the Jacob de Wit sale in 1741 ('een uitvoerig landschap vol Boomen en bywerk') sold then to P. Fouquet for 209 florins, must refer to a representation of the Road to Emmaus. Whether the extra schoon Stuk, veerbeeldende Ons Heer met zijn Discipelen te Emmaus door Petrus Paulus Rubens' sold in Mechlin on 26 October, 1756 is to be identified with the painting in the Jacob de Wit sales can also not be determined.

A painting of Christ breaking Bread was sold at the Lafontaine sale, London (Phillips), 7 May, 1824, lot 20, which may be the same as the picture sold six years later at the R.Westall sale, London (Phillips), 14 May, 1830, lot 48. It is possibly also the picture in the Alba collection, No.8, copy (1), which was acquired by the fourteenth duke of Alba in the second quarter of the nineteenth century, but this is not certain. Because the reference in this case is to the breaking of the bread it is at any rate not the type of composition represented by the late painting in the Prado.

A drawing by Jacob de Wit 'met coulereen getekend', measuring c. 33.4 x 45 cm., was sold at the Hendrick de Wacker van Zoon sale, Amsterdam (de Leth), 26 October, 1761, lot 189, to J. Bosch; a black and red chalk and ink drawing after the Prado composition is recorded in the P.C. van Hasselaar sale, Amsterdam (Posthumus and Haverkorn), 28 November, 1797, lot 2.

1. Brescia, Pinacoteca Tosio e Martinengo, No.78; G. Panazza, La Pinacoteca e i Musei di Brescia, nuova edizione, Bergamo, 1908, p.121 (repr.).
2. Wethey, I, No.143, pl.88.
3. [Cat. Exh.] Mostra del Cigoli e del suo ambiente, San Miniato, 1950, No.21, pl.XX; for a further note on the possible influence of Cigoli's work of the 1590s on Rubens, see Jaffé, 1977, p.51, and below, p.114.
5. K.d.K., p.54.
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7. Such as the Meleager and Atalanta and the Shepherd and Shepherdess both in Munich (K.d.K., pp.331 and 415 right respectively).


10. Génard, Nalatenschap, p.85, No.XLIII ('een schilderij van onse L.Heere in Emmaus, geteekend no.138').


12. Génard, Nalatenschap, p.82, No.XXXIX, and p.88, No.LXVII.

13. Ibid., p.82, No.XXXIX.

14. Ibid., p.88, No.LXVII.


16. Staet ende Inventaris van den Sterfhuyse van wylen Mynheer Albertus Rubens ende Vrouwe Clara Del Monte (Brussels, 3-6 December, 1657), published by M.Rooses, in Rubens-Bulletijn, V, 1897, p.28. It is therefore unlikely that this is the copy of the Prado Emmaus now in the Escorial, which appears to have been there already in 1657 (see Santos, op. cit., f.142) but the latter work may be the copy given to the owner of the Golden Leeuw; see, however, the discussion above.


23. This is possibly the work now in the depot of the Hermitage, Inv. 22,525, which is in turn probably to be identified with a painting mentioned in the estate of Sebastian Leersse in 1661. 'Een lantschap Bruegel gestoffeert van Rubens... Ons Heere met twee Apostelen gaende naer Emaus' (Denudé, Konstknamers, p.360; cf. J.Müller Hofstede, Rubens und Jan Brueghel, Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen, X, 1968, p.225). But as all these references are clearly to collaborative works between Rubens and Jan Brueghel, they will be dealt with in Part XVII of the Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard dealing with Rubens's collaboration with other artists.

24. Lugt, Répertoire, 933; Hoet-Terwesten, III, p.166, No.4 (according to Rooses, II, p.135, the sale of the Counsellor Beckmans).

25. Lugt, Répertoire, 10,602.

26. Lugt, Répertoire, 12,371.

27. [Cat Exh.] L'Art flamand dans les collections espagnoles, Groeningemuseum, Bruges, 1958, p.98.

9a. The Supper at Emmaus: Retouched Proof of Engraving (Fig.19)

430 x 452 mm.

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes. Inv. No. Ca.34j (rés.)

PROVENANCE: Bourlamaque sale, Paris, March, 1770; P.J.Mariette (Paris, 1694 to 1774); purchased in 1775 from the latter's estate by Hugues-Adrien Joly, keeper of the Cabinet des Estampes.


A few examples of Witdoeck's 1638 engraving (V.S., p.57, No.418) survive in chiaroscuro, with the black engraved line printed on ochre. As these coloured engravings all bear Rubens's privilege, it may be assumed that Rubens was responsible, at least in part, for the decision to print the plate in this technique. Renger was the first to observe that the present retouched proof should be seen in connection with the evolution of the chiaroscuro print. A light brown wash has been applied to the almost completed proof.
followed by further corrections in a darker brown; white body colour (especially in the sky, the vault of the arch, and the garments of Christ) indicate highlights to be suggested by the removal of some of the engraved lines on the plate; and, as Renger correctly noted, some of the narrow strokes of white body colour, applied with the point of the brush, correspond to the recesses of the colour block. All these alterations and corrections are clearly by Rubens’s own hand, and must be regarded as the basic stage in the adaptation of the copper plate to a chiaroscuro print.

This is the only instance of the use of this technique in Rubens’s œuvre, and it was presumably inspired by his intense involvement with the chiaroscuro woodcut in the 1630s, in collaboration with Christoffel Jegher.2 Rubens would have known of the use of coloured engraving from publications such as Hubert Goltzius’s Vivae omnium fere imperatorum imagines, the first edition of which appeared in Antwerp in 1557. It was for this work that Rubens designed a title page in 1637 to 1638,3 thus at the same time as the engraving by Witdoeck appeared.

2. See Renger, II, pp.100-109 for a full discussion of this aspect of Rubens’s work.

10. The Virgin interceding before Christ

Whereabouts unknown; presumably lost.


The iconography of this subject, where the Virgin appeals to Christ’s mercy by revealing her breast, may be found in a variety of sources, the earliest of which is probably a late tenth-century text attributed to the Patriarch Germanos of Constantinople, where the breasts of the Virgin are likened to the chalices of the eucharistic sacrifice.4 More important for the representation of this subject, however, was the twelfth-century text by Arnaldus of Chartres,4 which was then adapted in chapter XLIX of the Speculum Humanae Salvationis. It is this text which served as the caption to the print by van Panderen after Rubens (see above) and which, in the sixteenth century, was attri-
buted to St Bernard (and here wrongly given to Germanos). It should be noted that the text refers in fact to the double intercession of the Virgin and Christ (the latter by showing his wounds to God the Father), but Rubens has chosen to show the intercession of the Virgin alone. That some reservations were held about the gesture of the uncovering of the breast by the Virgin appears from the reference to this subject in Molanus's chapter XXXI entitled 'Multa in picturis & imaginibus esse toleranda quae probabilia sunt apud doctos quosdam aut vulgum', where part of the same text as that on the present engraving appears, attributed to St Bernard. It will be noted how tactfully Rubens here manages to convey the gesture of uncovering the breast without its being liable to the charge of immodesty. The theme and the use of the texts attributed to Germanos and that by Arnaldus may be found in many seventeenth-century sources, including the Cort Onderwijs by 'Christianus Philomarius' and the Apologeticus Mariam by J. Paludanus. Apart from an anonymous engraving of 1600, it will also be found in early Netherlandish art, in connection with related subjects such as the Last Judgement (on that day the Virgin intercedes before Christ for the salvation of souls) and the Redemption of Souls from Purgatory. The idea of intercession is represented in a similar fashion in the considerably later St Teresa Interceding for Bernardino de Mendoça, also in Antwerp.

The subject is not to be confused with the related one, even more frequently represented, of the Appearance of Christ to the Virgin, derived largely from the apocryphal Gospel of Bartholomew and found in many texts including the Golden Legend. Amongst representations of this kind which may be mentioned here are those by Roger van der Weyden, Titian in Medole, and the early (c. 1624) painting by Gaspar de Crayer in the Kapellekerk in Brussels.

On stylistic grounds, the present composition should be dated between 1612 and 1616. One may compare, for example, the Munich Christ and the Penitent Sinners (No.11; Fig.22) where the relationship between Christ and the Magdalen bears some resemblance to that between Christ and the Virgin in the present composition, and the modelling of Christ's torso—as far as can be judged from an engraving—is similar. A terminus post quem for the engraving with its dedication by Theodoor Galle to Laurentius Beyerlinck is provided by the date of the latter's elevation to the offices mentioned (canon and archdeacon of Antwerp cathedral) in 1614.

The figure of Christ seems to be fairly closely based on Michelangelo's statue of the Risen Christ in Santa Maria sopra Minerva in Rome; it recurs in the Rubensian sketch of Christ as Protector of Orphans in the Antwerp Museum. The idea of intercession is represented in a similar fashion in the considerably later St Teresa Interceding for Bernardino de Mendoça, also in Antwerp.

No evidence survives for Rubens's original design for this composition. It is therefore impossible to say whether the engraving was done from a large painting or from modello or drawing prepared especially for the engraver.

The relation between this composition and The Virgin interceding with Christ attributed to Rubens in the R. Cosway sale, London (Stanley), 18 May, 1821, lot 47, is uncertain.

1. P. G., XCVIII, col.399. It may be noted that the works of Germanos were edited and published several times in the seventeenth century: see, for example, the same passage as the one cited here in the Magna Bibliotheca Veterum Patrum ... a Margarino de Labigne composita, postea studio doctissimorum
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Colonistium theologorum ac professorum aucta, XII, Paris, 1654, coll. 385.


4. This gesture, as demonstrated by Panotsky, op. cit., p. 302, may in part be derived from a variety of classical literary sources, including Iliad, XXII, 70, and Ovid, Metamorphoses, V, 301.

5. See note 3, above.

6. But for the Virgin uncovering her breast in a somewhat different iconographic context, see the Augustinian between Christ and the Holy Virgin in the Academia de San Fernando in Madrid, of approximately the same period as the present work (Vlieghe, Saints, I, No. 66 and pp. 97–98).

7. Christianus Philomarianus, Cort Onderwijs..., 2nd ed. annotated by G.Livius, Nijmegen, 1613, fol. 1; J. Paludanus, Apologeticus Marianus, Louvain, 1623, pp. 28–29; and see also Knipping, II, p. 33 for a further discussion of these and related texts.


9. Notably in Jan Provost’s Last Judgement of 1525 for the Bruges Town Hall and now in the Groeninge Museum there (along with a late sixteenth-century copy by Jan van den Coornhauze, where, however, the Virgin’s breast is covered; Friedländer, IXb, pls. 169 and 170, Nos. 156 and 156b respectively).

10. Several examples in Knipping, II, pp. 37–38; but see also Rubens’s own representation of this theme discussed below (No. 54).

11. See Durian-Ress, p. 251 for a good discussion with examples.


13. Right hand panel of the Granada-Miraflores altar (Friedländer, II, pl. 2, No. 1 and replica in Berlin, pl. 3, No. 14.)


17. Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, No. 710, on deposit from the Commissie voor Openbare Onderstand.


II. Christ and the Penitent Sinners
(Fig. 22)

Oil on panel; 147 x 130 cm.
Munich, Alte Pinakothek. No. 329.

PROVENANCE: In the Düsseldorf collection of Johann-Wilhelm, Prince Elector of the Palatinate, by 1705; sent to the Hofgartengalerie at Munich, 1806.

COPIES: (1) Painting, Turin, Galleria Sabauda; canvas, 157 x 144 cm. LIT. Michel, 1771, p. 313; Smith, Catalogue Raisonné, II, p. 156. No. 545; A. Baudu di Vesme, Catalogo dell Regia Pinacoteca di Torino, Turin, 1969, No. 271; (2) Painting, Cambridge, Mass., Fogg Museum of Art; canvas, 117.5 x 99 cm. PROV. Cambridge, Mass., Professor and Mrs J. Tucker Murray; (3) Painting, whereabouts unknown; canvas, 118 x 101 cm. PROV. Waubach-Limburg (The Netherlands). J. A. Heinrichs; sale, Lucerne (Fischer), 27 November–1 December, 1956, lot 2571; 2 photograph in the Burchard documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp; (4) Painting, whereabouts unknown. PROV. Genoa, Palazzo Gavotti.


EXHIBITED: De Meesterwerken van de Pinacothek van München, Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, 1948, No. 85.

LITERATURE: Karsch, No. 185; Van Gool,
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II, p.554, No.13; De Blainville, p.60; Catalogue, Düsseldorf, 1770, p.39; Michel, 1771, p.302, No.39; Pigage, No.274; Reynolds, p.223; Smith, Catalogue Raisonné, II, p.66, No.190; IX, p.268, No.94; Dillis, No.266; Parthey, p.420, No.95; Marggraff, p.55, No.261; Reber, No.746; Rooses, II, pp.204, 205, No.381; K.d.K., ed. Rosenberg, p.95; Dillon, pl. LXXXIX; K.d.K., p.176; Oldenbourg, 1922, p.108; Mâle, Après le concile de Trente, p.70; Knipping, II, p.99; Evers, 1942, pp.141-142; Evers, 1943, p.127; K. Arndt, Studien zu Georg Petel, Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen, IX, 1967, p.198; Vlieghe, Saints, I, p.32; Freedberg, Rubens as a Painter of Epitaphs, p.69; Dittmann, pp.45, 46.

The resurrected Christ is shown appearing before the four penitent sinners, Mary Magdalen, the Good Thief, David and St Peter. The subject is one which became popular in the Counter-Reformation period, probably in response to Protestant denials of the status of penitence and confession (the importance of the latter sacrament allegedly being replaced by that of baptism). In its fourteenth session the Council of Trent reaffirmed the role of penitence within the Christian Faith, and the theme was taken up by a number of subsequent writers, most notably, perhaps, by St Robert Bellarmine.

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The group of penitent sinners in the presence of the resurrected Christ may well have been suggested to Rubens by Titian's altarpiece of Christ Appearing to His Mother in Medole, but a more direct source for his composition (at any rate in terms of its iconography) must have been Otto van Veen's altarpiece of 1608 now in Mainz (Fig.21)—although in that painting the fourth penitent is the Prodigal Son (replacing Peter), and there are subsidiary scenes in the background.

The picture of the Penitent Saints before the Virgin and Child in Kassel (probably a collaborative work by Rubens and Van Dyck) shows the Magdalen in a pose almost identical to that which she adopts here, although all the figures are shown in full length. Another full-length composition of this subject which may be mentioned here is a painting attributed to Jan Boeckhorst recently on the London Art Market. Half or three-quarter length compositions include the engraving by Jacob Neeffs after G. Seghers, and the paintings by Van Dyck in the Louvre and in Augsburg. Both these compositions by Van Dyck are clearly inspired by that of Rubens, although the first shows only David, the Prodigal Son and Mary Magdalen before the Virgin, while the second (which like the present work by Rubens also comes from the collection of the Elector
Palatine Johann-Wilhelm formerly in Düsseldorf) shows the Magdalen, the Good Thief, the Prodigal Son (?) and Peter before the Resurrected Christ.

With regard to the individual figures in the present work, it is possible that the Magdalen was suggested by one of Titian’s representations of that saint in penitence (although the Magdalen as a solitary penitent was a common enough theme throughout the sixteenth century), but the position of her hands may well be derived from the figure of the Magdalen in W. Key’s Lamentation. The figure of Christ, on the other hand, is almost identical with that in the Rockox epitaph of 1613–15 (No. 18; Fig. 48). The derivation of the pose of the Good Thief from Michelangelo’s famous statue of Christ in Santa Maria sopra Minerva, via the engraving by C. Cort (after M. Coxcie?) is discussed at some length by Arndt.

Although the work shows formal similarities to the Rockox epitaph of 1613–15 (No. 18; Fig. 48), both the composition as a whole and the handling of the paint are more fluid; I am therefore inclined to date it to c. 1616. The head of the Magdalen recurs in the painting of Christ in the House of Simon in Leningrad, while that of the Good Thief is the typical youthful male figure of the middle of the second decade that one finds, for example, in the Rape of the Daughters of Leucippus. But the softness of the tonal nuances is surprising even for these years. Instead of the rather harsh treatment of the flesh tones in the Rockox, Damant and Bruegel epitaphs (Nos. 18, 24 and 23; Figs. 48, 54 and 53) the modelling of the flesh is achieved with a far greater delicacy and sensitivity. In general the paint is more freely handled than in those works, most noticeably in the white cloak of the Magdalen. The background, too, is no longer plain and dark, but is broken by the white edged clouds and the glowing sky. The solid and firm brushwork of the earlier epitaphs is here replaced by features such as the relatively thinly painted rocky outcrop on the right; in parts the rather free brushwork of the background does not coincide precisely with the contours of the figures, as in the small unpainted gap between the sky and David’s hair. All these features may suggest a difference of several years between the present panel and the epitaphs mentioned above.

There are a few relatively minor penitenti, as in the contour of the left forearm of the Good Thief, the crossbeam of the Cross, and in Christ’s left fingers. For the rest, the painting is well preserved and in good condition.

Nothing is known about the original circumstances of the commission of this work. In view of its format and its similarity in terms of both composition and subject matter to the epitaph paintings for the tombs of Rockox, Damant and Bruegel (Nos. 18, 24, 23; Figs. 48, 54, 53) already mentioned above, it is possible that it too may have served as an epitaph painting. But no documentary evidence survives to support this hypothesis.

The painting of this subject mentioned in the inventory of Rubens’s estate must refer to the work now in Kassel, in view of its description as a large work on canvas stuck to panel (‘une grande pièce des pêcheurs repentis, sur toile, et collé sur de bois’).
private collection in Bruges from the Ruffo de Bonneval de la Fare collection, sold in Brussels on 23 May, 1900 as Van Dyck (112 x 84 cm.), and which he assumed to have come from the Daniel Mansveld sale, Amsterdam (Schley), 13 August, 1806, lot 149 (c.113 x 87 cm.) and earlier from the G. J. de Servais sale, Mechlin (P.J.Havicq), 21 July, 1775, lot 114 (c.113.6 x 86.7 cm.).

2. This could also be the painting which was sold at the A. Bout sale in The Hague in 1733 referred to in the preceding note, or possibly the one mentioned by Rooses, II, p.205, as being in the Hallier collection in Brunswick. All such references, however, could refer to yet other copies of the present composition.

3. Cf. Conc. Trid. Sessio XIV, De Sanctissimo Poenitentiae Sacramento, Canon II: 'Si quis Sacramenta confundens, ipsum Baptismum Poenitentiae Sacramentum esse dixerit, quasi haec duo Sacramenta distincta non sint, atque ideo Poenitentiam non recte secundam post naufragium tabulam appellari: anathema sit'. Details of the many Protestant arguments against penitence, as well as a thorough discussion of the Catholic viewpoint may be found in A. Michel, La pénitence de la Réforme à nos jours, Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique, XII, Paris, 1933, cols.1050-1127.

4. Especially in his De Sacramenta Poenitentiae, printed in Disputationes Roberti Bellarmini ... de Controversionum christianae fidei adversus hujus temporis haereticos, III, Ingolstadt, 1605. Mâle, Après le Concile de Trente, pp.65-71, excerpts a number of passages from this work directly related to representations of this theme, and Knipping, II, pp.98-109 outlines discussion of the subject in the Netherlands.

5. A variety of references in Knipping, II, pp.95, 104-109.


8. Werhey, I, No.13, pl.111.

9. Mainz, Gemäldegalerie der Stadt.


12. Reproduced in Knipping, II, fig.63.

13. K.d.K., Van Dyck, pp.221 and 62 respectively.


17. K.d.K., p.179.

18. K.d.K., p.131 ('1615-17').

19. For a further discussion of the formal and iconographic similarities between this work and the other epitaph paintings, see Freedberg, Rubens as a Painter of Epitaphs, pp.69-71.

20. K.d.K., p.120.

THE PAINTINGS OF CHRIST TRIUMPHANT
OVER SIN AND DEATH: A NOTE ON THEIR ICONOGRAPHY [12–17]

The theme of the resurrected Christ triumphant over sin and death is based largely on Psalm XCI, 13 ('Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet') and Psalm CX, 1 ('The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool'), and on the New Testament passages most often connected with these verses: the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians XV, 24–26 ('Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death') and 1 Corinthians XV, 54–56 ('... Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin...'). This theme already lay at the basis of early Christian representations of the *calcatio* but it was in the Reformation, largely as a development of Luther's belief in Christ's triumph over sin and death through his resurrection,⁸ that the subject came to be widely represented. One of the earliest and certainly one of the most influential treatments of the theme was Cranach's print of c. 1529–30; and while the subject can be found in several paintings from the Cranach workshop, it was also treated by Netherlandish artists such as Heemskerck, Marten de Vos and a number of anonymous sixteenth century masters, all of which Rubens may have known. The Cranach print probably influenced the title page illustration in the Plantin Bible of 1566, the Resurrection engraving in the *Institutiones Christianae ... iuxta SS. Concilii Tridentini Decretum*, Antwerp (Plantin), 1589, as well as pl. 134 (*Resurrectio Christi Gloriosa*) in the *Evangelicae Historiae Imagines* by H. Wierix after B. Passer, appended to H. Natalis (recte J. Nadal), *Adnotationes et Meditationes ... in Evangelia*, Antwerp (M. Nutius), 1595, a work which Rubens almost certainly knew. The engraving by J. Sadeler after M. de Vos of 1589 (Fig. 30) is especially close to a number of representations by Rubens, and its relationship with the Resurrection theme is spelt out by the caption: 'In Christo omnes vivificabuntur'.

At least one of Rubens's paintings of this subject is known to have served as an epitaph painting (see under No. 14 below). In this connection it is worth noting the designs for epitaph monuments by Cornelis Floris and Vredeman de Vries (Fig. 23) which show precisely this theme of the resurrected Christ triumphant over sin and death—or closely related themes—and which constitute important precedents for Rubens's treatment of the subject. These designs may well have provided the strongest stimulus for representing the subject in an epitaph painting, and it may be that at least some—if not all—of Rubens's other representations of it were intended as epitaph paintings as well. Van Mander records at least two instances of epitaph paintings with the same theme.¹²

Clearly, however, the borderline between epitaph painting and *Andachtsbild* is very fluid indeed, especially when the theme of the *Man of Sorrows* is combined
with that of the Resurrection, as in several of the designs by Cornelis Floris and Vredeman de Vries (Figs. 24 and 25), and it may not be necessary in all cases to distinguish between the two functions. Whether or not Rubens was specifically influenced by any one of these representations in painting or sculpture is, of course, difficult to determine, but it is clear that the theme was widely current in the Netherlands in the later sixteenth century, probably as an indirect result of Protestant treatments of the subject.

We are thus provided not only with further instances of Rubens's indebtedness to the Northern past, but also of cases where the ultimate source may ironically have been Protestant. On the other hand, the theme was used at least twice by Spranger (in his paintings for the Peterle epitaph in the Church of St Stephen in Prague and the Muller epitaph now in the National Gallery there, No. 01574) and was developed in the seventeenth century by diverse Counter-Reformation streams, including the Jansenists.

It will be noted that Rubens's treatment of the subject varies not only in pictorial and stylistic, but also in iconographic details, which are discussed under the relevant entries below. Indeed, it may be that the appellation Christ Triumphant over Sin and Death is too broad to define the subject of each of these pictures with sufficient precision. Schiller has shown how from the twelfth century onwards one sometimes finds a conflation of the Victorious Christ theme with that of the Majestas Domini; and how from the thirteenth century the Victorious Christ was clearly turned into the Christ of the Resurrection, often taking on the characteristics of both the Man of Sorrows (revealing the wound in his left side, for example) and the Judge (the Christ of the Last Judgement). All these elements are variously present in the paintings by Rubens, and in most of them there is considerable influence (as had by then become traditional) from eschatological passages, particularly from those usually brought into connection with the Last Judgement. Thus it may be that a more accurate title for the picture associated with the Cock tomb (No. 14; Fig. 28) and its preparatory sketch (No. 14a; Fig. 31) would be Christ as Judge (note especially the angel blowing the trumpet on the left), for the Strasbourg picture (No. 12; Fig. 26) Christ as Ruler, and so on. While such titles do not account for all the elements in these compositions (especially the symbols of sin and death alluded to above), the wide scope for iconographic conflation and contamination should be borne in mind when dealing with each of the following works by Rubens.

1. Schiller, III, pp. 32-33, with further relevant biblical passages as well.
2. See Martin Luthers Werke, Kritische Gesamtausgabe, II, Weimar, 1884, p. 696 ('Auff den schlangen un basilicken solt zu gehen, und auff en lawen und drachen solt zu treten (das ist alle stereke und list dess tauffels werden dyr nichts thun) dan hat yn mich vortraget Ich wil yhn erlossen...'), and cf. III, 1885, p. 562 ('... hoc autem fuit bellum Christi in die passionis eius contra diabolum').
5. Examples illustrated in Schiller, III, figs. 533-534, and D. Koeppelin and T. Falk, op. cit., pl. 275; see also Cranach's Wittenberg altar of 1547, illustrated in O. Thulin, Cranach-Altere der Reformation, Berlin, 1955, figs. 4-11.
6. Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, Catalogue, 1951 and 1969, No. 207; Friedländer, XIII, pl. 104, No. 206. See also the anonymous engraving after Heemskerck and published by Cock in 1556 which holds a key position in terms of the subsequent Netherlandish development of this subject (repr. in L. Wuyts, Het St. Jorisretabel van de Oude
7. Good range of reproductions in *Held, A Protestant Source*, figs.10-12 and discussion, on pp.82-83. To these should be added at least two engravings after Marten de Vos, the one by an anonymous engraver and the other by Hieronymus Wierix and dated 1585. Both are reproduced in A. Zweite, *Marten de Vos als Maler*, Berlin, 1980, pls.217, 218. See also Zweite's p.203 and notes for a brief discussion of the theme in relation to Marten de Vos.

8. The late 16th century painting in the St John's Hospital in Bruges published by R.Liess as an early Rubens’ (R.Liess, *Entdeckungen im Frühwerk des Rubens, Mitteilungen der Technischen Universität Carole-Wilhelmina zu Braunschweig*, XIII, Hft 1/II, 1978, pp.57-58), while certainly not by Rubens’ own hand is one of several 16th century Flemish paintings which provide, as already noted by *Held, A Protestant Source*, p.83, an important pictorial and iconographic precedent for Rubens’ representations of the theme, in this case for the works in Columbus and formerly in Brooklyn (Nos.13 and 14).

9. See below, pp.139, 141 and Freedberg, *A Source for Rubens’ Miscello*.

10. J.Vredeman de Vries, *Pictores, Statuarii ... varias coemataphorum formas*, Antwerp (Hieronymus Cock), 1563, p.27, and the engravings by Floris reproduced in R.Hedicke, *Cornelis Floris*, Berlin, 1913, II, pl.XII, figs.4 and 5. Although the embodiment of sin is not clearly depicted—if at all—in these engravings by Floris, the formal similarities with Rubens’ compositions are very close indeed and probably have the same iconological origins. Amongst the related designs actually executed by the Floris workshop, see the monument of Adolf van Baussel in Louvain, reproduced in Hedicke, op. cit., II, pl.XVI, fig.3.


12. The Beat i Servi engraving reproduced in Hedicke, op. cit., II, pl.XII, fig.4 (cf. also the Statutum est Homines engraving, ibid., fig 6); J.Vredeman de Vries, op. cit., p.23.


16. Apart from many passages in Apoc.I, IV, VI-VIII, the other most relevant biblical passage is Matt.XXIV, 30-31 (‘And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven; ... and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together the elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other’).

12. Christ triumphant over Sin and Death (Fig.26)

Oil on panel; 175 x 135 cm. 
*Strasbourg, Musée des Beaux-Arts.*
Inv. No.235.

**PROVENANCE:** Ewout van Dishoeck, Lord of Domburgh sale, The Hague, 9 June, 1745, lot 11; sale, Amsterdam, 6 November, 1749, lot 1; sold by an ‘English nobleman’ in 1784;1 Vincent Donjeux sale, Paris (Lebrun et Paillot), 29 April, 1793, lot 106; Citoyen Robit sale, Paris, 11-18 May, 1801, lot 107; purchased by Naudon; Alexis Delahante; ?Sir Simon Clarke, Bt., 1830; Charles Scarisbrick sale, London (Christie’s), 18 May, 1861, lot 488; Thomas Kibble sale, London (Christie’s), 5 June, 1886, lot 19; purchased by Morand on behalf of W.Bode; deposited in the Strasbourg Museum in 1890.

**EXHIBITED:** *Paris, 1977, No.115 (repr.).

In this representation of Christ Triumphant over Sin and Death (indicated by the skull and snake beneath his left foot), it is the Majestas Domini theme which receives the strongest emphasis (although Christ’s role as Salvator Mundi is also implied). Christ appears to be enthroned in the clouds; he wears a regal cloak of red held across his shoulders by a jewelled clasp; his right hand rests on the sceptre, his left on the orb of the world; behind him on the right an angel holds up the palm of victory. On the left an angel with butterfly wings holds part of his cloak to reveal the wound in his side; a third small angel gestures towards Christ on the lower right. That the subject is still evidently a representation of the resurrected Christ is made clear by the wound revealed in his side, and by the small portion of his white loincloth visible at his waist. But the sarcophagus present in Rubens’s other paintings of the subject is omitted altogether. In this respect it is more like representations of the Christ Triumphant theme such as Marten de Vos’s altarpiece for the Oude Voetboog of 1590 and Rubens’s own later altarpiece for the Shod Carmelites in Antwerp (No.17a; cf. Fig.40) although it lacks the specific iconographic references to context and commission present in both these works, and unlike them is set entirely in the clouds.

The work is in reasonably good condition, although somewhat dirty and covered with a yellowish varnish. There is some loose and flaking paint, and it has been retouched in parts, especially in the damaged areas of Christ’s torso, but also, for example, in the angel’s feet on the lower right. The three panels of approximately equal width which make up the support are rather warped, and there is a certain amount of damage (now restored) along the left hand join. Apart from the bodies of Christ and the angels, the work is thinly painted, with the ground showing through in many areas. Christ’s drapery is rather flat and undifferentiated; this and several other areas—such as that around the angel on the lower right—show a certain lack of precision. There are a number of pentimenti, including the thin cloud painted over the angel’s leg on the left, at the junction of his wings and shoulder, in the upper right arm of Christ and in his left leg. One may assume that the work was largely executed with the aid of studio assistance, and that Rubens retouched the angels’ heads and hair, and was responsible for much of the modelling of Christ’s torso.

A dating of 1613–16 may be proposed on the basis of similarities in pose and handling with other works painted by Rubens at the same time. For example, the head and torso of Christ may be compared with that in the central panel of the Rockox epitaph of 1613–15 (No.18; Fig.48) and in the ‘Great’ Last Judgement of 1615–16 (No.49; Fig.137). The smooth modelling of the flesh and relatively undifferentiated handling of the drapery is entirely characteristic of this period.

Nothing is known about the early history of this work, although as in the case of the other paintings by Rubens of the subject it is possible that it was intended as an epitaph painting. On 24 November, 1735 a painting was submitted for authentication to the Guild of St Luke in Antwerp, the description of which corresponds to the present work.

A copy of a painting by Rubens re-
presenting Christ Triumphant over Sin and Death is recorded in the inventory of Ruben's estate as having been given to a certain Jean Colaes, a mason at Steen. But whether it was a copy of the present work or any of the other versions of this subject is impossible to determine.

2. See the discussion about iconographic contamination and conflation on pp.59-60 above.
4. See also the design for an epitaph monument by J. Vredeman de Vries in his Pictores, Statuarii, architecti, latomi... coenotaphiorum, Antwerp (Hieronymus Cock), 1563, p.27 (Fig.23), where, however, the relationship with the Resurrection is clearly indicated by the forward movement of Christ's body.
5. As suggested by Held, A Protestant Source, p.81.
6. Cf. the discussion on pp.59-60 above.
7. Rooses, II, p.202, citing the Archives of the Guild of St Luke, Resolutieboek, II, fol.14r; the work was declared to have been painted by Rubens.
8. Génard, Nalatenschap, p.83, No.XLII.

13. Christ triumphant over Sin and Death (Fig.27)

Oil on canvas; 211.5 x 170.8 cm.

Columbus, Ohio, The Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts. Inv. No.64-10.

PROVENANCE: N.B.Collins, New York City, c.1882; Hermann Linde, Detroit and Bridgeport, 1901-1910; Mrs Marie Linde (sister of the preceding), 1911; Geheimrat Moritz Leffmann (Düsseldorf, ob.1928); sale, Düsseldorf (Paffrath), 12 November, 1932, lot 44; bought by Eugen Abresch, Neustadt, in whose collection it remained until 1954; Benno Griebert, Konstanzt, 1956; bought by the Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts from Colnaghi's, London, in 1963.

COPY: Drawing, Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, Kongelige Kobberstiksamling, 'Rubens Cantoor', No.IV, 9; black and red chalk, the outline of Christ's feet reinforced with pen and ink, 30.2 x 23.1 cm.


The resurrected Christ is shown seated on his sarcophagus, while attendant angels free him from his shroud. The symbols of sin and death beneath his left foot are reinforced by the flames of hell discernible in the lower right corner, thus emphasizing his triumph through the Resurrection. The triumph itself is further indicated by the laurel crowns and palm branch held by the angels on the left.

It may be noted that Christ is shown in a somewhat more active pose than in the Strasbourg painting (No.12; Fig.26), where he is already seated in the clouds, and in the later painting associated with the Cock epitaph (No.14; Fig.28); in the present work Christ appears to be about to rise from his sarcophagus. The sense of movement appears more clearly in the painting in the Pitti (No.16; Fig.35) in which Christ is shown in an almost identical pose, but where the symbols of sin and death are omitted. It is in the painting in Columbus, therefore, that the ideas of resurrection...
and the conquest over sin and death are most clearly combined: in the Pitti panel it is the resurrection which is stressed, while in the painting related to the Cock epitaph the triumph receives the greatest weight.

Apart from the white winding-sheet (the epitaphios) of Christ, the main colour accents here are the highlighted red cloak of the angel on the right and the dark blue mantle of the angel on the left. A number of pentimenti may be detected, including a slight reduction in the thickness of the forearm holding the banner and an expansion of the right side of Christ’s torso. The work is in fairly good condition, although Christ’s features at least appear to have been repainted to some degree. It must be regarded as largely the product of the studio.

Similarities between the treatment of Christ’s torso here and in the Charge to Peter in the Wallace collection of c.1616 (No.24; Fig.54) as well as in the slightly earlier ‘Great’ Last Judgement (No.49; Fig.137), and again between the head of the angel on the lower right and any number of heads occurring in works dating from slightly closer to 1620 (cf. the Madonna on the left wing of the Michielsen triptych) would seem to provide sufficient justification for a dating between 1616 and 1620.

The early provenance of this work is difficult to establish, particularly in view of its thematic similarities to the several other paintings by Rubens of this subject. It is thus impossible to determine whether a work such as the Christ Triumphant over Sin and Death sold at the Henry Hope sale, London (Christie’s), 27–29 June, 1816, lot 89, was the same as the present composition or refers to another.

14. Christ triumphant over Sin and Death (Fig.28)

Oil on canvas, 181.5 x 229.5 cm. 
Antwerp, Collection of Dr. J. Declercq.

PROVENANCE: Church of St Walburga, Antwerp; ?Vinck de Wesel sale, Antwerp, 27 April, 1813 et seqq., and 16 August, 1814 et seqq., lot 3; purchased there by J.F.Wolschot; ?George Watson Taylor, 1831–32; Sir William Knighton, Blindworth Lodge, Hampshire, 1885; Sedelmeyer, Paris, 4th Series, 1897, No.32; Sarenens sale, Brussels (Galerie Royale), 8 June, 1925, lot 25; from 1956 in the collection of Dr J.Declercq, Antwerp.

COPIES: (1) Painting, Lisbon, Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, on loan to Belém Palace; canvas, 225 x 261 cm. PROV. Mercês monastery; (2) Painting, Turin, Galeria Sabauda, canvas, 50 x 86 cm. LIT. H.Hymans, Zur neuesten Rubensforschung, Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst, N.F. IV, 1893, p.15 (as Jordaens); (3) Painting, whereabouts unknown; panel, 52.5 x 67 cm. PROV. in 1938 in the collection of L.Seyffers, Brussels; photograph in the Burchard documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp; (4) Drawing by P. van Lint, before 1632, Paris, Institut Néerlandais, Fondation Custodia, Inv. No.433; black chalk, 98 x 75 mm.; on page of sketchbook together with studies after the horsemen on the right wing of the Raising of the Cross (K.d.K., p.36); LIT. H.Vliegh, De leerpraktijk van een jonge schilder: het notitieboekje van Pieter van Lint in het institut néerlandais te Parijs, Jaarboek Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerpen, 1979, pp.272 (Fig.70), 274. (5) Drawing of Christ’s torso, Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, Kongelige Kobberstiksamling, ‘Rubens Cantoor’, No.V, 42; black chalk heightened with white, 31.5 x 27 cm.; (6) Etch-
ing by R. Eynhoudts (Fig. 29; V.S., p. 56, No. 408); (7) Engraving by S. A. Bolswert (V.S., p. 56, No. 410); (8) Engraving (with the angels omitted) by H. Witdoeck (V.S., p. 56, No. 411).


LITERATURE: De Wit, p. 137; Descamps, Vie, p. 321; Mensaert, I, p. 251; Berbie, p. 36; Descamps, Voyage, p. 158; Michel, 1771, p. 79; J. de Roveroy, Chronyke van Antwerpen, Antwerp, 1775, p. 48; Liste Lorraine, Antwerp, 1777, p. 117, No. 4; Reynolds, p. 167; Smith, Catalogue Raisonné, II, p. 8, No. 9, p. 171, No. 597; IX, p. 144, No. 4; Mariette, V, p. 89; Génard, Verzameling, II, pp. LXXI, CIII, CXILIII, 313, 315; Piot, p. 302; Rooses, II, pp. 200–201, No. 378; Rombouts and Van Lerius, Liggeren, II, p. 144 n. 4; Held, A Protestant Source, pp. 79–95; Glen, pp. 100–101, 239–240; Freedberg, Rubens as a Painter of Epitaphs, pp. 63–65.

Christ is shown seated on his sarcophagus, with a skeleton and a snake beneath his feet. In his right hand he holds the banner of the Resurrection; his white loincloth is almost completely covered by a red mantle over his legs. Three angels bear attributes which reinforce the notions both of judgement and of the triumph over death conveyed by this work:³ one on the left blows a trumpet, another on the right places a laurel crown over Christ's head, while a third, more to the rear on the right, bears a palm branch. All the figures are seen at an angle which suggests that the painting was originally intended to be hung in a fairly high position.

It is difficult to date the work on stylistic grounds alone, especially in view of its poor condition (see below). The rather severe composition, with Christ seated in the centre on a sarcophagus stretched lengthwise across the front of the picture plane, would suggest a dating in the second decade—and the pose, torso and type of Christ are clearly related to Rubens's other paintings of this subject from around the middle of the decade (Nos. 12 and 13); but the angels recur more closely in the Marie de' Medici series, notably in the Birth of Marie.⁴ In view of the similarity in technique between the sketch for the present work (No. 14a) and several of the sketches for that series, a tentative dating of between 1618 and 1622 (but probably no later than that) may be suggested on stylistic grounds.

All the eighteenth-century writers listed above record that a painting of Christ Triumphant over Sin and Death hung over the tomb of Jeremias Cock and his family in the church of St Walburga in Antwerp. Although their descriptions of the painting correspond to the present work,⁵ the precise circumstances of the commission are completely unknown. Génard noted that no funerary inscription survived.⁶ When exactly the painting left the church is not known either. It does not appear to have been taken to Paris at the time of the French occupation, as one may deduce both from its absence from the Liste Générale des tableaux et objets d'art arrivés de Paris…, drawn up by Joseph Odevaere in 1815⁷ and from a letter to the sous-intendant of Antwerp written by the priest and wardens of the parish of St Paul's (into which that of St Walburga had been incorporated) dated 24 August, 1815. In that letter, the paintings taken to Paris were clearly numbered, while it was simply recorded that 'une autre pièce qui étoit au cheeur: un tableau de la famille De Cock. Il représente J.-C. assis sur le sépulcre, foulant aux pieds la Mort, également du fameux Rubbens' was no longer in the
possession of the church. Its disappearance from there may thus be dated between 1794 and 1815, but its subsequent history is not clear.

In his article on Rubens's treatment of this subject, Held quoted a passage from Génard to the effect that a Jeremias Cock paid 40 gulden for his tomb in 1627 ('Eod. A° 1627 JEREMIAS COCKX gaff 40 gul dens voor de sepulture ende kelder daer hy en syne huysvrouwe daer naer in begraven zou zijn') without noticing that the passage is in fact taken from a chronicle of the St George's church in Antwerp, drawn up in the mid-eighteenth century by J.B. van der Straelen. That a Jeremias Cock was indeed a member of the St George's parish is known from his payment of 150 gulden in 1624 for freedom from the kerkmeesterschap. The most likely possibility, therefore, is that there were two men with the name of Jeremias Cock during this period in Antwerp, one a member of the St George's parish, and another for whom the painting in St Walburga was made.

But not even this is certain. A thorough search in the Schepenregisters in the Antwerp archives for the years between 1608 and 1627 reveals the repeated presence of only one Jeremias Cock—already married to Maria Willems on 29 April, 1608 and still married to her at least as late as 8 March, 1623. He is variously referred to as simply a merchant or as a paint merchant. That he was wealthy may be deduced from his repeated purchases of property in various parts of Antwerp. It is just possible that this figure is the Jeremias Cock for whom the painting in St Walburga was made, as on 26 June, 1617 he is recorded as paying rent for a house in the Braderijstraat—which is in the immediate vicinity of the church of St Walburga. And he may have moved to within the parish of St George in 1622, as on 21 February, 1623 he is recorded as making payment for a very large house in the Kammerstraat which he had bought in the previous year.

This Jeremias Cock may well have been the same dealer responsible for the consignment of Rubens's paintings of the Nativity, the Pentecost (No.27; Fig.60) and the 'Great' Last Judgement (No.49; Fig.137) to Count Wolfgang Wilhelm of Neuburg: in a letter of 30 April 1620, Rubens wrote to the Elector's agent in Brussels, Hans Oberholtzer, beginning as follows:

'Monsieur: J ay consigne les peintures au mesme marchand (in margine: Ilsapelle Jeremias Cocq) auquel j ay livre la peinture du jugement car il me montra ordre dun sieur correspondent de Francfort lequel estait du charge du role de part de son Altesse. Il me dit d'estre bien assourse de bon adres. Ayant eu devant quinze jours avis de Coulogne quils estoyent arrivees en bon estar et incontinent depesches outre'.

On the basis of the existing evidence, therefore, there are several possibilities. Either there were two men with the name of Jeremias Cock, one a member of the parish of St George's, the other of St Walburga; or the same Jeremias Cock moved from St Walburga, having commissioned a painting from Rubens for his tomb there, to St George's. But the latter possibility is complicated by the fact that he is recorded as having paid for his tomb in St George's in 1627—and the eighteenth century writers recorded the existence of a Cock tomb in St Walburga. A final possibility is that there is some contamination from the St Walburga archives in the chronicle drawn up by Van der Straelen, but this is very unlikely. In any event, it is certain that the date of 1627 recorded in
the chronicle (even if it did refer to the church of St Walburga) cannot be used as evidence for the dating of the painting. It is entirely possible that such a painting should have been commissioned several years before the actual purchase of a burial place. There is therefore nothing in the documentary material to confirm a dating as late as that originally proposed by Held.21

Already in the eighteenth century the painting above the Cock tomb in St Walburga was said to have been in parlous condition: 'een zeer schoon stuk van Rubbens, maar grootelyck verschaedigt';22 'ce tableau, sans être du premier mérite, a bien besoin d'être réparé, il s'écaille par tout, il est presque perdu';23 'cette pièce s'étant écaillée en divers endroits est présentement rétablie par une bonne main'.24 That the painting which survives should be in an extensively repainted and much restored condition is therefore not surprising. It has obviously been considerably worn and damaged, and very little of the original brushwork survives. But a few passages such as the right hand contour of Christ's torso and the angel bearing the laurel crown are sufficient to suggest that the present work is to be identified with the painting from St Walburga, rather than a copy after a lost original. It was most recently cleaned and restored in 1976-77.25

A small copy of this composition (measuring c. 49.5 x 65.1 cm.) was sold at Antwerp on 8 June, 1784,26 lot 1. A coloured drawing after it by J. de Wit was sold at Amsterdam (van der Schley), 17 July, 1775, lot 1; whether this is the same work sold at the F. van de Velde sale, Amsterdam (Ploo of Amstel, de Winter, Yver and Schut), 16 January, 1775, lot 66, is uncertain, as the description of the latter ('Een zinnebeeldige ordantie verbeel-

dende de Zaligmaker triumpherende over Dood en Helle, vergezeld van twee vliegende Kindertjes die Triumph- en Vredeteeken dragen: boven in de Wolken vertoonen zig enige Sera-phim...') coincides more precisely with the composition represented by the painting formerly in Potsdam (No. 15; Fig. 34).

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1. Held, A Protestant Source, p.86, n.4 maintained (contra Rooses, II, p.201) that the work in the George Watson Taylor collection was the sketch (No.14a) for this painting, on the grounds that Smith, Catalogue Raisonné, IX p.244, No.4, described Christ's mantle as white (as in the sketch, and not red as in the painting). But Smith quite clearly stated that his following number (Smith, Catalogue Raisonné, IX, p.244, No.5) was the sketch for the work in the Taylor collection. Under the circumstances it is possible that Smith simply assumed that the colour of Christ's mantle was the same as in the sketch (white); a second possibility, in the light of the condition of the present painting discussed above, is that the mantle was repainted in red at a later date, although this seems less likely.

2. The work exhibited was the picture from the George Watson Taylor collection. See the preceding note for a discussion of its identification.

3. See pp.59-60 above on the possibility of iconographic conflation in the case of this and related works.

4. K.d.K., p.244.

5. Cf. De Wit, p.137: 'een sittende Christus op syn graf de dood vertredende, met nogh 3 engelen'. It must be admitted, however, that descriptions such as these correspond to a slightly lesser extent to the composition represented by the work in Columbus (No.13).


10. Chronyckhe of Beigensel ende Voorganck van de parochiale Kercke van St Joris binnen Antwerpen, reproduced in Génard, Verzameling, II, pp.XCl-CXIX.

11. F. Prins, Geschiedenis van Sint Joriskerk te Antwerpen, Antwerp, 1923, p.120.


13. Ibid., Schepenregisters, 501, f.75.

14. He is referred to as a verveveroper, ibid., Schepenregisers, 487, f.40, 538, f.208 for example.

15. Ibid. Schepenregisers, 544, f.24.

16. Ibid. Schepenregisers, 561, ff.60 and 75. I have been unable to find the date of his death in any of the
archival or genealogical sources; it is not preserved in the usual parish records either.

20. Especially as his membership of the St George's parish is confirmed by the document relating to his exemption from the duties of the Kerkmeesterschap there (note 11).
21. 'not too far' from 1627, Held, A Protestant Source, p.81. Following correspondence with me, however, Held, Oil Sketches, p.302, brought the dating forward to c.1620-24. On the same page in his book on the oil sketches, Held erroneously ascribed to me the information that the epitaph was originally in St George's. This appears to have arisen from a misunderstanding of the complex material relating to Jeremias Cock outlined here and communicated by me to Held (this material not available in Held, Oil Sketches, p.502, No.308).
23. Descamps, Voyage, p.158.
24. Michel, 1771, p.79.
25. I have to thank Mr. F. Bender for allowing me to see the work while in restoration at the Antwerp Museum.
26. Lugt, Répertoire, No.3738.

14a. Christ triumphant over Sin and Death: Oil Sketch (Fig.31)

Oil on canvas, transferred from panel; 30.5 x 28.5 cm.
Whereabouts unknown.

PROVENANCE: 12th Duke of Hamilton sale, London (Christie's), 17 June, 1882, lot 60; purchased by Winkworth; Prince Demidoff, Pratolino; Mrs S.D. Warren sale, New York (American Art Association), 8–9 January, 1903, lot 89; purchased by A.A. Healy and bequeathed by him to the Brooklyn Museum in 1921; stolen, 1933.

COPY: Drawing (Fig.33; on the right another view of a similar composition, see No.14b), Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, Kongelige Kobberstiksamling, 'Rubens Cantoor', No. IV, 10; black chalk and ink, 16.2 x 30.8 cm.

LITERATURE: Smith, Catalogue Raisonné, IX, p.244, No.5; The Studio, CVI, July–December, 1933, p.47 (recording the theft of ten paintings from the Brooklyn Museum); Held, A Protestant Source, pp.79 to 95, and fig.1; Held, Oil Sketches, p.502, No.368.

This sketch differs only slightly from the final version (No.14; Fig.28). Instead, of having a rectangular format, however, it is almost square. The angels are consequently brought closer to Christ's body, while the trumpet-and the laurel-bearing angels are almost perpendicular, instead of being aligned at angles across the picture plane. Christ is more strongly foreshortened than in the painting. He wears a white mantle over his legs, and the Cross does not appear on his banner. The features of the angels are somewhat different from the painting (although the latter has been so extensively repainted that this may not always have been the case), while that on the right appears to be older and holds his arms in a different position.

Because the work was stolen from the Brooklyn Museum in 1933, it is known only from an old (but good) photograph (Fig.31). It has clearly been transferred from panel to canvas, and some parts (especially the angel on the right) appear to be rather worn. The brushwork is firm and vigorous, and Held rightly noted that the 'dryly firm application of lead white' to be found in sketches for the Marie de' Medici series, may be seen in the present work as well. The closest parallels in terms of its technique are to be found in the series of bozzetti preserved in the Hermitage, particularly in those exe-
cured towards the beginning of the project, c.1622. But, as has already been noted in the discussion of the final version (No. 14; Fig. 28), the composition is more characteristic of the latter half of the second decade and is very close to the other paintings of this subject executed then. It should thus perhaps be dated a little earlier than the Medici sketches, possibly in the period between 1618 and 1622.

1. For the possibility of an earlier owner, see note 1 of the preceding entry, and Held, A Protestant Source, p. 86, n. 2.
2. Held, A Protestant Source, p. 81 (dating the work to the period of the last Medici sketches).

14b. Christ triumphant over Sin and Death: Oil Sketch

Oil on panel.

Whereabouts unknown; presumably lost.

Copies: (1) Drawing (Fig. 33; to the left another view of a related composition, see No. 14a), Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, Kongelige Kobberstiksamling, 'Rubens Cantoor', No. IV, 10: black chalk and ink, 16.2 × 30.8 cm. LIT. Held, A Protestant Source, p. 80; (2) Drawing of Christ’s torso (Fig. 32), Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, Kongelige Kobberstiksamling, 'Rubens Cantoor', No. V, 45: red chalk heightened with white and outlined with the pen, 20 × 15.5 cm.

Literature: Held, A Protestant Source, p. 80.

It is possible that Rubens made a second modello for the painting of Christ Triumphant over Sin and Death from St Walburga in Antwerp (No. 14; Fig. 28). This is suggested by the sheet in Copenhagen listed above (Fig. 33), where to the right of a drawing after the known modello formerly in Brooklyn (No. 14a; Fig. 31) there is another closely related drawing of a similar composition. In this Christ is seen more from the side, he raises his left arm, the skull is under his left rather than his right foot, and the flying angel, now on the right, blows the tibiae instead of a trumpet. In view of the more or less equal size of each of the drawings on this sheet, it is possible that the lost work was the same size as the Brooklyn modello, and that like it was an oil sketch rather than a preparatory drawing.

Although one should not entirely exclude the possibility that the right hand drawing on the Copenhagen sheet simply represents a student’s variation on the known modello, the existence of a hypothetical second sketch (proposed both by Burchard and by Held) is to some extent supported by a second sheet in Copenhagen (Fig. 32), which shows an almost—but admittedly not quite—identical view of Christ’s torso.

15. Christ triumphant over Sin and Death (Fig. 34)

Oil on panel; 189 × 143 cm.

Whereabouts unknown; presumably lost.

Provenance: Potsdam, Sanssouci from 1763 at the latest until 1942.

Of all Rubens's paintings of Christ Triumphant over Sin and Death, the relationship with the Resurrection is nowhere more forcefully indicated than here (cf. Nos. 12 to 14). Christ is shown stepping directly from his tomb, with the flames of hell (over which he triumphed through his Resurrection) burning in the lower right corner. Although the figure of Christ in both the Columbus and the Pitti pictures (Nos. 13 and 16; Figs. 27 and 35) recalls that of the resurrected Christ on the central panel of the Moretus epitaph (No. 1; Fig. 3), it is the present work which comes closest to that monument in terms of the sense of movement. It is the only one of this group of related works in which the wounds in Christ's left hand and foot are revealed. He wears a white loincloth and a red mantle blows over his shoulders. The latter is only thinly painted at its extremity—one of the few details of technique (along with the blush on his cheeks and some of the shading) still visible in a photograph. It may be assumed—to judge from the photograph—that the painting was largely executed by the studio, if it is not in fact a copy after a lost original by Rubens, as Burchard suspected. On the basis of a comparison with the other paintings of this subject, it should probably be dated c.1615-17. Similar cherubic heads may be found in other works painted around this time, as in the so-called Garland of Fruit and the Madonna in a Flower Garland, both in Munich.  

1. In all these respects Rubens comes close to the anonymous engraving after Marten de Vos reproduced in M. Zweite, Marten de Vos als Maler, Berlin, 1980, pl. 217. Cf. also p. 61 n. 7 above.
3. But see p. 67 above.

16. The Resurrected Christ Triumphant (Fig. 35)

Oil on canvas; 183 x 155 cm.
Florence, Palazzo Pitti. Inv. No. 479.

PROVENANCE: Ferdinando de’ Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany (1663–1713)

EXHIBITED: Florence, 1977, No. 89 (repr.).

Christ is seated on his sarcophagus, on which are laid blades of wheat; in his left hand he holds a standard. Two cherubs on the left carry a laurel wreath, while the angel in red with a deep green sash on the right holds up Christ’s winding sheet. The painting is closely related to Rubens’s representations of Christ Triumphant over Sin and Death, in particular to the work in Columbus (No.13; Fig.27): Christ’s pose is almost identical, and the action of the angel lifting the shroud is very similar. But the symbols of sin and death present there have been omitted altogether (unless they have been painted out). Nonetheless, it is Christ’s triumph over death through the Resurrection which is emphasized here, by the way he dominates the sarcophagus, by the standard, and by the laurel crown. The connection with the Resurrection is strongly suggested by the dynamic pose of Christ, which (like that in the Columbus picture) is dependent on that of Christ in the central panel of the Moretus epitaph (No.1; Fig.3). There is also a eucharistic reference in the blades of wheat resting on the sarcophagus, which makes the relationship between sarcophagus and altar even clearer. This feature may also be found on the central panel of the Michiels triptych of 1617–18. Like it, and like at least some of the paintings of Christ Triumphant over Sin and Death, the present work may have served as an epitaph painting.

A dating of c.1616 may be proposed, on the basis of its technical and compositional resemblances to the iconographically related paintings of Christ Triumphant over Sin and Death executed at about the same time (Nos.12–15); but there are also close similarities in the types and in the treatment of hair and drapery in a work such as the St Stephen triptych in Valenciennes, particularly in the right hand exterior panel. Minor pentimenti may be detected around the right hand side of Christ’s loincloth and the left outline of his shroud. Apart from minor scattered paint losses (most noticeable in Christ’s torso and legs), the work is in good condition.

2. This in turn may be seen in the context of the Easter Sepulchre theme; compare the iconography of works which refer to the Elevatio of the Host on Easter Morning discussed in B.G.Lane, ‘Deposito et Elevatio’, The Symbolism of the Selern Triptych, Art Bulletin, LVII, 1975, pp.21-30, especially pp.20-27.
5. Vlieghe, Saints, II, Nos.146-149, broadly dated by Vlieghe to c.1615-20.
6. Vlieghe, Saints, II, No.149.

16a. An Adult Angel: Drawing
(Fig.37)

Buff paper. A large triangular fragment cut away on the lower right. Black chalk heightened with white; 20.2 x 17.9 cm. Below on the left the mark of J.G. de la Gardie (L. 2722a).

Stockholm, Nationalmuseum.

Inv. No.636/1973

PROVENANCE: Count Jacob Gustaf de la Gardie (Löberod, Sweden, 1768–1842) who inherited in 1799 the collection of his father-in-law Count Gustaf Adolf Sparre and received in 1801 a parcel of drawings from Duke Albert of Sachsen-Teschen, which the latter had acquired at the Prince Charles de la Ligne sale, Vienna, 4 No-
vember, 1794; Count Pontus de la Gardie, Borrestad, Skånen, Sweden, until 1973, when it entered the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm.


This drawing, presumably from the life, was used as a study for the adult angel holding the winding sheet on the right of Rubens’s painting of the Resurrected Christ in the Pitti (No.16; Fig.35). As Burchard-d’Hulst pointed out, it may also have served as the basis for the angel lifting up one of the blessed on the centre left of the ‘Great’ Last Judgement in Munich (No.49; Fig.137; but see too the preparatory drawings for this work of c.1615-16, Nos.49b and 49c; Figs.141 and 142, especially the group on the right of the latter). A dating of c.1615 would therefore be justified. A similar figure to the angel here appears again, in reverse, in the Pietà with St Francis in Brussels,1 engraved by Pontius.2

Rubens redrew the forearm and elbow of the angel on the lower left of the sheet. There may have been another study which interfered with the angel’s elbow on the lower right and which was possibly cut off by a later owner to form a separate fragment.

Although the drawing has been doubted by Magnusson, both the chalk work and the heightening with white seem to be of a sufficiently high quality to maintain the attribution to Rubens.

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2. V.S., p.52, No.368; reproduced in Rooses, II, pl.112.

17. The Glorification of the Eucharist

Oil on panel; approximately $355 \times 395$ cm. *Whereabouts unknown; presumably lost.*

**Provenance:** High Altar of the Church of the Shod Carmelites, Antwerp.


This painting—the iconography of which will be discussed in the entry for the surviving modello (No.17a)—was painted for the church of the Shod Carmelites in Antwerp. Sanderus records that above the High Altar (dedicated to the Holy Sacrament) there hung a painting ‘quae Christum mystagogam repräsentat, Rubeniana inventione, non penicillo, nobilis, mysterii exhibitione, quam alibi non reperias nobiliorem’.1 This is corroborated by the rather fuller details in Papebrochius’s obituary of G.Seghers (1591-1651):

‘Eiusdem altitudinis [as the paintings of the High Altar in the Jesuit Church in Antwerp] est alia [sc. pictura] praegrandis apud patres Carmelitas, Christum exhibens quasi, post resurrectionem, gloriosum supra mundi globum, de eoque triumphante per institutionem Eucharisticii sacrificii; cuius typum videntur exhibere hinc sacerdos Melchisedech, inde Elias propheta; supra caput
autem volitat geniorum coelestium
nubes portans omnia sacri Mysterii in­
strumenta.  

This description, with its reference to
the resurrected Christ triumphant over
the globe through the Eucharist. Melchi-
sedecand Elijah on either side, and a cloud
of putti bearing the instruments of the
Eucharistic sacrifice. corresponds, for all
practical purposes, with the oil sketch
which presumably served as the modello
for the final painting (No. 17a; Fig. 40). The
work itself, therefore, appears to have
been painted by Gerard Seghers (as stated
by De Wit and all the eighteenth-century
writers who saw it as well) after a design
by Rubens. That it was commissioned by
Sibilla van den Berghe, wife of Philippe
de Godines, Lord of Cantecroy, Receiver-
General of Finances in Antwerp, is re-
corded not only by Sanderus,3 but also in
a manuscript description of the church of
the Shod Carmelites by Norbertus a Sancta
Juliana (recte Hermans; Brussels 1710–
Antwerp 1757). The manuscript not only
go into some detail about the construc-
tion of the altar itself, but also provides
further information about the date of
execution:

'Summum Altare in Choro marmo-
reum Sanctissimo Sacramento Sacrum,
erectum per D.Johannem van Meldert,
Sculptorem; iuxta delineationem Dni.
Petri Pauli Rubbens, dono dedit Prae-
nobilis Domicella Sibilla van den Berge,
Domina de Cantecroy, Morselen, et
Edegem; vidua praenobilitis Dm. Philippi
de Goddines, eorumdem locorum Do-
mini, Receptoris Generalis Financiarum
Suae Regiae Majestatis in districto Ant-
verpiensi &c. Altare altitudinis est 54
pedum latitudinis 28 pedum, et in­
choatum est Anno 1637 atque perfec-
tum ante Pascha Anni 1638 et constitit
6500 flor. pictura huius Altaris represen-
tans Christum Dominum sacerdotem
magnum Novae legis, et S. Eucharistiae
Authorem inter Melchisedech, Eliam
prophetam, Paulum Apostolum et
S.Cyriillum patriarcham Alexandrinum
depicta est a D. Gerardo Seghers Ant-
verpiensi. Gradus marmoreos huius
Altaris ordinavit D.Henricus Verbrug-
gen Antverpiensis Sculp tor et Architec-
tus famosus.5

This passage thus confirms and sup-
plements the evidence of Sanderus dis-
cussed above; it provides a terminus ante
quem of Easter 1638 for the completion
of the altar; and it gives further informa-
tion about the marble altar itself. This is
reported to have cost 6500 florins, and was
constructed after Rubens's design by Hans
van Mildert.6 The measurements given in
the manuscript account (54 ft. by 28 ft.)
differ somewhat from those in the earlier
description by Sanderus, who states that
it was 66 ft. high—but this may simply be
due to the inclusion of elements either at
the bottom or the top of the altar not
taken into consideration by the author of
the manuscript.

Some evidence of what the actual frame
looked like is provided by the sketch in
New York (No. 17a; Fig. 40) now unfortu-
nately cut across the top. Whether Corin-
thian or Solomonic columns were chosen
for the sides of the altarpiece (both appear
on the sketch) is difficult to determine,
but it should be noted that both painted
copies after the sketch show Corinthian
columns on either side (unless this simply
represents a rationalization of the alter-
native presented by the sketch). The very
top of the altar may well have looked
similar to the sketch for the crowning of
an altar portico in a private collection in
England (Fig. 38),8 in view of the similarity
between the scrolls on the gable and the
angels' feet resting on them, just visible
at the top of the New York sketch and the copy after it in Antwerp.

It will be noted that a set of arms appears above the foremost Corinthian column on the sketch. That they appeared at the base of the altar as well is recorded in another passage by Sanderus (which also refers to the use of a variegated green and white marble amongst the materials): 'In stereobatae, quads, inter subviridis albo lineatim discurrente variegati marmoris scindulas, exprimuntur Genuano stem­
mata Praenobilib Goddini Cantecroyij, Mortzelae &c Toparchae, necon suavissi­
mae Conjugis, qui millia florenum decem fortunatissime huc insumperunt.' The fact that the arms of Philippe de Godines and those of his wife appeared at the base of the altar provides further confirmation of the commission recorded by Hermans in the manuscript description quoted above.

The High Altar of the church was consecrated in 1642 by the Bishop of Antwerp, Gaspar Nemius, during the priorate of Petrus Wastelius. One may assume, therefore, that the execution of the work by Seghers was due to the death of Rubens, who may not even have begun to paint it, in the light of the completion of the altar itself only in 1638. The construction of the latter was undertaken during the priorate of the famous Livinus Canisius (1637-42), who was responsible for the important reform of the Antwerp order of Shod Carmelites in the same year.

In the same church there also hung the painting which Rubens had painted over twenty years earlier for the tomb of Iodoca van der Capelle. That the work was still in situ in 1777 may be judged from its presence in the inventory ordered by Charles of Lorraine in that year. Nothing is known of its sub-
sequent history. The church itself was destroyed in 1798.

Whether the 'Allegorie. Le Seigneur sur le globe du Monde, quatre figures représentant l'ancienne et la nouvelle loi' sold in Brussels on 12 May, 1771 was a copy of the present work cannot be determined.

4. Notitia succincta de ecclesia Carmelitarum Calectorum Antverpiar, Burchard documentation, Rubenianum Antwerp, No.5/86.
5. Ibid., p.5.
6. The altar is not mentioned in I. Leysens, Hans van Mildert, Gentse Bijdrogen tot de Kunstgeschiedenis, VII, 1941, pp.73-136. Van Mildert was also responsible for the execution of several other altars designed by Rubens, including those for the Kapellekerk in Brussels (see under No.45), St Michaels in Antwerp, now in Zundert (Leysen, op. cit., pp.118-121, and for the Jesuit Church in Antwerp (cf. Baudouin, 1972, pp.101, 104, 113-116).
7. It seems less likely that these copies (listed under No.17a) were taken directly from the painting itself, in view of the fact that they, like the New York sketch, have been curtailed above. The hypothesis that Corinthian columns were chosen is to a certain extent supported by the fact that the closely related design of a frame for the High Altar of the Jesuit Church in Antwerp (Glück-Haberdiel, p.130; Vienna, Albertina, Inv. No.8.247) originally had Solomonic columns on either side, which were then turned into Corinthian ones on the finished altar (cf. E.Mitsch, in [Cat. Exh.] Vienna, Albertina, 1977, pp.76-79).
8. Although this sketch is probably to be related to the design for the High Altar of the Jesuit Church in Antwerp; see Baudouin, Altars, pp.85-86 and Fig.42. The sketch was exhibited at the Rubens exhibition in Antwerp in 1977, No.96.
10. See also Génard, Vergameling, V, p.273.
11. Génard, Vergameling, V, pp.273, 343; De La Croix, op. cit., p.188. For further details of all the Carmelite priors, see the interesting manuscript in the Antwerp City Archives, Chirographia Sacra Carmelli Antwerpensis ... Stadsarchief Antwerpen, Kerken en Kloosteren, 576. It also contains the passages quoted here from Sanderus (on ff.13-14) and the arms of Goddines (f.14).
12. Cf. Génard, Vergameling, V, p.343, and De La Croix, op. cit., p.188.

14. Liste Lorraine, Antwerp, m ~ , p.149.

15. Tableaux déposés au Collège de Bruxelles et provenant des églises des ci-devant Jésuites de Bruxelles, de Louvain, de Namur, de Nivelles, de Malines, d'Alost et de Mons le 12 Mai, 1771, Brussels, 1771, No.220; the work measured nine foot two by six foot nine

**17a. The Glorification of the Eucharist:**

**Oil Sketch (Fig.40)**

Oil on panel; 71.1 × 48.3 cm.
New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art.
Inv. No.37.160.12.

**Provenance:** John Campbell, fourth Duke of Argyll (1693-1770); sale, London (Langfords), 22 March, 1771, lot 71; John Jeffreys Pratt, second Earl and first Marquis of Camden (1759-1840), Bayham Abbey, Lamberhurst, Kent, from 1797 to 1840; sale, London (Christie’s), 12 June, 1841, lot 65; Charles A. Bredel, London, until 1851; the Misses Bredel, London, until 1875; sale, London (Christie’s), 1 May, 1875, lot 123; Grant, 1875; Leopold II, King of the Belgians, until 1901; F. Kleinberger and Co., Paris, 1909; August de Riddler, Schönberg, Cromberg, until 1924; sale, Paris (Galerie Georges Petit), 2 June, 1924; Pietro Stettiner, Rome, 1924; Ogden Mills, New York; bequeathed by the latter to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 1929.

**Copies:** (1) Painting, whereabouts unknown; panel; 105 × 72 cm. Prov. sale, Berne (Galerie Dobiaschofsky), 20–21 October, 1972, lot 542; (2) Painting, Antwerp, collection D. Hertoghe; canvas, 61 × 44.5 cm. Lit. J. De La Croix, *La Glorification de l'Eucharistie de Rubens et les Carmes*, Metropolitan Museum Journal, II, 1969, pp.185 to 186, fig.8; (3) Painting, arched on top, whereabouts unknown; 183 × 100 cm.

**Provenance:** London (Sotheby’s), 19 May, 1965, lot 77; (4) Etching by Ch.-A. Waltner (1846-1925), 1879, in *L'Art*, XVII, 1879, facing p.112.


Although the iconography of this sketch has much in common with that of Rubens's other paintings of the Resurrected Christ Triumphant over Sin and Death, it is clear that the emphasis has shifted to the Eucharistic Sacrifice as the main agent of Redemption. Christ in a rose mantle surmounts the globe encircled by a serpent; a skeleton lies crushed beneath it. He holds aloft the chalice and the host in his right hand, while in the sky putti bear various instruments associated with the Eucharistic sacrifice: in addition to the angel on the left carrying a loaf and a cruse for Elijah, one of the putti on the right brings forward the water and the wine on a paten, while a second swings the censer. Still higher on the left the putti bring forward another ewer, a napkin, a missal, and a candle and a cross. God the Father is seated at the very top; between him and Christ hovers the Holy Spirit. Two figures stand on either side of Christ, while the whole is enclosed in an architectural framework, unfortunately cropped at the top. In the pose of Christ, in the fact that he tramples sin and death beneath his feet (as well as the orb of the world), and in the disposition of two figures on either side of him, the work comes especially close to Marten de Vos's representation of Christ Triumphant on the centre panel of the altarpiece for the guild of the Oude Voetboog from Antwerp Cathedral (Fig. 39) which Rubens must almost certainly have had in mind when he planned this work. The figure of Christ, however, may well have been derived from Giovanni da Bologna's Christ on the Altar of Liberty in the Duomo at Lucca (see especially the similarity in the relative placing of the feet). The precise iconography of the work (which has been thoroughly analysed by De La Croix) is largely explicable in the light of the fact that it was intended as a preliminary design for the High Altar of the church of the Shod Carmelites in Antwerp, as has already been noted in the preceding entry.

It is clear that the central feature of the work is the triumph over sin and death through the Eucharist, while the saints who surround Christ in turn emphasize the importance of the Eucharist itself. The figure on the extreme left, in goldenyellow over red, is Melchisedec, who holds a loaf of bread in his left hand and an amphora of wine at his feet—both symbols of the earliest Old Testament prefiguration of the Eucharistic sacrifice; beside him stands Elijah, clothed in olive green, with the angel who brought him restorative bread and water in the desert above him. These two Old Testament prefigurations of the Eucharist occur as well in one of Rubens's designs for the Eucharist tapestry series. At the same time, however, it should be noted that Elijah had a special significance for the Carmelites, as he was regarded by them as the true founder of their order.

On the right hand side of the sketch stands St Paul, in an aubergine-coloured gown, one of the earliest to bear witness to the Eucharistic sacrifice: 'The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?' It was Paul too who spelt out at length the parallel between the priesthood of Christ and that of Melchisedec. At St Paul's side, on the lower right of the sketch, kneels a figure in the garb of a Carmelite monk, a cardinal's hat and an archiepiscopal staff at his feet, and—significantly—the pallium reserved for popes, patriarchs, and archbishops round his shoulders. De La Croix convincingly demonstrated that
this can be none other than St Cyril of Alexandria, whom the Carmelites insisted had also belonged to their order (an assertion rejected as a fabrication by Baroniuss, and defended by several Antwerp Carmelites, amongst others, at the beginning of the seventeenth century). His significance lay in the fact that he had presided at the Council of Ephesus where he had condemned the Nestorian heresy for denying the vivifying power of the Eucharist. In this figure, therefore, one may see a final assertion of the power of the Eucharist—which is the main burden of the painting—by one whom the Carmelites were intent on presenting as a member of that distinguished group which had belonged to their order from Elijah onwards.

The architectural framework for the altarpiece, sketched in light brown tones here, presents alternative possibilities for the surround. On the left a Corinthian pilaster and column may be seen, while on the right are the twisted Solomonic columns so often used by Rubens but which may have been proposed here because of their traditional fitness for the decoration of ciboria. The crowning part of the frame is not shown in the sketch (apart from the scrolls on which the two pairs of angels' legs may be seen, and the base of a niche), but some idea of what it may have looked like may be gained from the sketch of the crowning of an altar in a private collection in England (Fig. 38) probably for the High Altar of the Jesuit Church in Antwerp.

The sketch is in good condition. Several pentimenti may be observed, most notably in the architectural details. The panel does not retain its original borders and there is no margin beyond the painted surface. It has evidently been cut by several centimetres at the top of the composition, and presumably on the sides as well.

The work clearly postdates the sketches for the Eucharist series, but by how many years is uncertain. While—as noted above—the final painting was only executed in the latter half of the thirties, the technique and handling of the present sketch is closer to works such as the sketch for the Apotheosis of Buckingham in London. A dating of c.1627–30, as proposed by Burchard-d’Hulst, would therefore be acceptable.

5. 1 Kings XIX, 10–18.
6. De Poorter, Nos. 7 and 8.
7. For the sixteenth and seventeenth century defences of this tradition, see De La Croix, op. cit., pp. 179–185.
8. 1 Cor. X, 16.
11. Ibid., p. 101 for a good discussion.
13. Held, *Oil Sketches*, pp. 533–534, No. 395. See also Banden, *Alters*, pp. 85–90 and fig. 42. Held provides a few additional arguments in favour of associating this sketch with the crowning section of the altar frame of the altarpiece under discussion here, but admits that its style suggests an earlier date. A closely related design for the frame of an altarpiece is that in the Albertina in Vienna, No. 8447, Glück-Haberditzl, p. 130, which was in all likelihood intended for the High Altar of the Jesuit Church in Antwerp, but which already contains several of the elements visible in the present sketch. See also p. 74, n. 7 above.
17b. Study for the Figures of Melchisedec, Elijah and an Angel: Drawing (Fig. 41)

Brush and brown ink over preliminary drawing in red chalk; 24.1 x 16.3 cm. Fully mounted. A strip of paper at the lower right cut away and restored. Below on the left the mark of the Albertina, Vienna (L. 174).

Vienna, Albertina. Inv. No. 6.741.

Provenance: Prince Charles de Ligne (Vienna, 1759-1792); sale, Vienna, 4 November, 1794, lot 13.

Exhibited: Antwerp, 1956, No. 142; Vienna, Albertina, 1977, No. 47.


A preliminary study for the group of Melchisedec, Elijah and the bread-bearing angel on the left of the sketch in New York (No. 17a; Fig. 40). As pointed out by Burchard–d’Hulst, the figure of Melchisedec placing his right foot on a plinth was also used in the Martyrdom of St Catherine in Lille of before 1621. The present drawing, however, is to be dated somewhat later than that work, although there has been considerable discussion about the precise period in which it was made. In 1956, Burchard–d’Hulst suggested 1625 to 1628; in 1963, the same authors proposed a dating of 1627-30, presumably on the basis of stylistic and technical similarities with a drawing in the Louvre which Burchard regarded as having been copied after Mantegna’s Triumph of Caesar seen by Rubens on his visit to London in 1629 to 1630; Müller Hofstede thought that the drawing should be dated slightly later than the English trip, c. 1630-32, on the basis of a not altogether convincing comparison with the drawing for the right wing of the Ildefonso triptych now in the Gemeentemuseum, Amsterdam. Most recently however, another argument has been put forward in favour of the earlier dating. Mitsch has made the plausible suggestion that the drawing was made at the same time as Rubens’s preoccupation with the Eucharist tapestry series, and possibly even in connection with it. This hypothesis is reinforced by the further suggestion that the present drawing and the two following ones may once have formed a single rather wide sheet. The format of the latter would thus have resembled the shape of the central compositions of the Eucharist series, which bear so close an iconographic relationship to the subject of the altarpiece from the church of the Shod Carmelites in Antwerp (No. 17).

In 1974, Held suggested that only the underlying drawing in red chalk in this and the following three drawings was by Rubens himself, while in 1977 Logan proposed that they were all a pupil’s copies after the composition represented by the oil sketch in New York (No. 17a; Fig. 40). In 1980, Held had strengthened his view, and, maintaining that the draw-
ings were 'marred by surprisingly inept passages', concluded that 'the four drawings in their present state are so problematical that they are best disregarded in a study concentrating on the New York sketch'. With this progressive relegation of the drawings I cannot agree, and I believe—along with Mitsch and the other earlier writers on them—that they are all to be taken into account, as by Rubens, in any consideration of the evolution of the composition of the altarpiece of the Glorification of the Eucharist.

1. Burchard-d’Hulst, 1963, p.223. The full references to the views of the other authors cited here will be found under the Literature heading above.

2. Vlieghe, Saints, I, No.78.


5. Mitsch, p.110.

6. Made by Dr B. Magnusson of the Nationalmuseum in Stockholm and cited by Mitsch, p.110. See also Magnusson, p.81.

7. Mitsch, p.110; Magnusson, pp.81-83.

8. See now De Poorter on the series as a whole.


11. Held, Oil Sketches, p.531.

17c. Study for Three or Four Saints: Drawing (Fig.42)

Brush and brown ink over preliminary drawing in red chalk: 23.8 x 16.2 cm. Fully mounted. Below on the left the mark of the Albertina, Vienna (L.174). Vienna, Albertina. Inv. No.8642.

PROVENANCE: Prince Charles de Ligne (Vienna, 1759-1792); sale, Vienna, 4 November, 1794, No.14.


A preparatory study for the group on the right of the oil sketch of the Triumph of the Eucharist in New York (No.17a). In that work, however, the figure of an old woman on the right of the present drawing has been omitted. There appear to be two figures on the left of the drawing, although Burchard-d’Hulst simply regarded the head on the extreme left as a variant in profile of the figure seen at full length. In any event, it is this latter head which makes the relationship with Saint Paul of the sketch clear. The kneeling figure is to be regarded as St Cyril of Alexandria, and not, as argued by Burchard-d’Hulst, St Cyril of Constantinople: as the latter was never a patriarch or archbishop, and the pallium worn by the saint in the sketch was reserved for these ranks, the identification cannot be regarded as tenable.

It seems likely that the present drawing once formed the right hand part of a broader sheet made up of two further fragments, one in Vienna (No.17b) and the other in Stockholm (No.17d), as discussed under the preceding entry. For doubt about the authenticity of this drawing, see pp.78-79.

17d. The Resurrected Christ Triumphant: Drawing (Fig. 43)


PROVENANCE: Prince Charles de Ligne (Vienna, 1759-1792); sale, Vienna, 4 November, 1794, No. 22; given along with a large parcel of drawings by Duke Albert of Sachsen-Teschen to Count J. G. de la Gardie (1768-1842) in 1801; Count Pontus de la Gardie, Borrestad, Skåne, Sweden, until 1973, when it entered the Nationalmuseum, Stockholm.


This drawing, which shows Christ triumphant above a globe and two fallen figures, may once have formed the central section of a broad sheet (along with the two preceding drawings in Vienna) used as the basis for the oil sketch of the Triumph of the Eucharist in New York (No. 17a; Fig. 40).1 The pose of Christ is fairly close to that in the sketch, although there he holds the chalice and host in his upraised right hand, while the labarum has been relegated to his left. There is considerable similarity between drawing and sketch in the representation of Christ’s mantle, despite the fact that it does not, in the drawing, fall over his right shoulder. Like the preceding drawings (Nos. 17b and 17c; Figs. 41 and 42), the present work may be dated to the period between 1625 and 1630, possibly towards the beginning of the period. For doubts about its authenticity, see above, pp. 78-79.

1. See the discussion and references on p. 78 above, as well as Magnusson, op. cit., pp. 116-117 and fig. 92.

17e. Study for Melchisedec, Elijah, an Angel and Christ: Drawing (Fig. 44)

Brush and brown ink over preliminary drawing in red chalk; 29 x 24 cm. RR inscribed in the lower left corner. Whereabouts unknown.

PROVENANCE: C. A. de Burlet, Berlin; Duits, London.

EXHIBITED: Amsterdam, 1933, No. 79.


This drawing, in which the figures of Melchisedec and Elijah and the angel appear alongside that of Christ, provides further support for the hypothesis suggested above that the three preceding drawings once formed a single broad sheet. Whether the present drawing too was cut on the
right hand side, or whether it simply represents another trial for the figure of Christ and the two figures on the left of the sketch in New York, cannot be determined on the basis of a photograph alone. In any event, it seems probable that it postdates the preceding drawings (which it closely resembles in technique) by a short while: the final position of the legs of Christ here, the firmly drawn left hand of Melchisedec, and the rather more amorphous base on which his right foot rests, are all closer to the sketch than to the drawing of these figures in the Albertina (No.17b; Fig.41). There cannot, however, have been more than a short period separating these two drawings. Compositionally they are still much closer to each other than to the sketch in New York (No.17a; Fig.40), in which the head of Elijah is turned backwards to the angel, who there appears slightly behind him, rather than in front as in the drawings; and their technique, as noted above, is almost identical. For doubts about the authenticity of the entire group of drawings, see above, pp.78-79.

18-22. THE TRIPTYCH OF THE INCREDULITY OF ST THOMAS (ROCKOX TRIPTYCH) (Fig.45)

Commissioned by Nicholas Rockox (Antwerp, 1560-1640) to serve as an epitaph monument to himself and his wife Adriana Perez (1568-1619) to hang beside their joint tombstone in the Church of the Recollects in Antwerp.

18. The Incredulity of St Thomas (Fig.48)

Oil on panel; 143 × 123 cm.


PROVENANCE: Church of the Recollects, Antwerp; seized by the French Commissioners in 1794 and taken to the Musée Central, Paris; brought back to Antwerp in 1815 and deposited at the newly founded Museum there.

COPIES: (1) Fragment (through doorway) of A Banquet in the House of Burgomaster Rockox by Frans II Francken (Fig.46), Munich, Alte Pinakothek, No.858; panel, 62.3 × 96.5 cm. LIT. S.Speth Holterhoff, Les peintres flamands de cabinets d’amateurs au XVIIIème siècle, Brussels, 1957, pp.20-21, 84-86, pl.80; Alte Pinakothek München, Katalog I. Deutsche und Niederländische Malerei zwischen Renaissance und Barock, Munich, 1961, p.26, no.858; F. Baudouin, Nicolaas Rockox, ‘vriendt ende patroon’ van Peter Paul Rubens, Deurne, 1977, pp.18-19 (repr.); (2) Fragment of The Studio of a Young Painter by G. Thomas (Fig.47), whereabouts unknown; canvas, 90 × 114 cm. PROV. Honolulu, Academy of Arts; Sale, New York (Sotheby-Parke Bernet), 24 September, 1969, lot 50. LIT. Mottballieu, Rockox-epitafium, p.148, fig.10; (3) Painting, Antwerp, Museum Plantin-Moretus; canvas 130.5 × 119.5 cm. LIT. M. Rooses, Catalogues van het Museum Plantin-Moretus, Antwerpen, 1927, p.204; (4) Painting, whereabouts unknown; canvas laid down on board, 90.2 × 132.1 cm. PROV. Sale, London (Christie’s), 10 April, 1961, lot 170; (5) Painting, whereabouts unknown. PROV. A. Drentel; sold in 1940 to Jules Duwaerts, Brussels; (6) Painting, partial copy of the heads of the young apostle in the foreground and St Peter (Fig.49), whereabouts unknown; panel, 22.6 × 31.6 cm. PROV. Hamburg, Frau Kommerzienrat Renner, 1929; Hamburg, Dr. G. A. Remé, 1929-37. Photograph in
Burchard documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp: for further discussion, see No.18a; (7) Drawing by Josef Danhauser (1805-45) in his 1842 Travel Sketchbook, p.22, Vienna, Albertina; black chalk, small sketch on page measuring 14.5 x 11.5 cm. Lit. M.Poch-Kalous, Josef Danhausers Reisenskizzenbuch in der Albertina: Deutschland, Holland, Belgien, Albertina-studien, IV, 1966, p.35 and pl.18; (8) Etching by P. Spruyt (V.S., p.59, No.433).

Exhibited: Antwerp, 1816, No.15; Antwerp, 1927, No.11.


The subject of this painting has traditionally been called the Incredulity of St Thomas.1 It can reasonably be objected, however, that Thomas does not thrust his hand into Christ's side, as required by the biblical account,2 and as in almost all representations of this subject;3 that no wound is visible in Christ's side (although it has possibly been painted out); that the text recording Thomas's incredulity requires the presence of eleven apostles4 (although the selection of just a few representatives of a scene would not be unusual for Rubens); and that none of the three apostles here can be identified with any degree of certainty.5

It is possible that the scene is to be regarded as a representation of the first part of John XX, 27: 'Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands', with the emphasis on the 'beholding' of Christ's
hands. But it was probably intended to evoke a theme traditionally connected with the account of Thomas’s incredulity, that of belief in the Resurrection of Christ which does not need to depend merely on the evidence of sight. The connection is reinforced by the fact that the theme may be found in the liturgy for the Feast of St Thomas both in the Missal and the Breviary. It is spelt out most clearly in Christ’s words to Thomas after the scene of the Incredulity: ‘Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed’, a theme which is again emphasized, and developed, in several passages from the works of Saints Peter and Paul. The most important of these are 1 Peter I, 8: ‘whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory’, 2 Corinthians IV, 18: ‘While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal’, and Hebrews IX, 1: ‘Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen’. Still further passages in Saints Peter and Paul connect the importance of Faith not dependent on the evidence of sight with belief in the resurrection of Christ, and they are probably the older figures represented here.

It was, therefore, not only out of pictorial tact that Rubens omitted the scene of Thomas thrusting his fingers into Christ’s side, and that he so reduced the significance of the wound. True faith in the Resurrection, as Thomas was made to realize and the passages from Saints Peter and Paul emphasized, did not require proof of this kind. This is the idea that Rubens expressed in this painting; and this is why he turned the standard form of the Incredulity into a brilliantly concise expression of an idea which transcended the specifically narratival moment and was self-evidently appropriate for a funeral monument.

Some further observations on the identification of the apostles represented in this work may be necessary. Saint Paul was not of course present at any of Christ’s appearances to the apostles, but his presence here would be justified by his subsequent association with these events and his affirmation of their significance, in the Bible as well as in the liturgy. The call to the priestly office was connected by both him and Saint Peter with the appearance to the apostles. St Peter would in this case be the old apostle in the centre, an identification supported by other works by Rubens, such as the epitaph paintings for Nicolas Damant and Pieter Bruegel (Nos. 24 and 23; Figs. 54 and 53). The presence of Saints Peter and Paul in connection with the Resurrected Christ may also be found in earlier Flemish paintings, such as Maarten de Vos’s triptych for the guild of the Oude Voetboog in Antwerp (Fig. 39).

There remains the youngest apostle. On the basis of his physical appearance, the temptation is to identify him as Saint John, an identification which would be supported by the fact that it is he who recorded an appearance to the apostles on the eve of Easter, as well as the subsequent appearance to Thomas. But in the light of the close connection between the theme of the painting as outlined above and that of the Incredulity of St Thomas, it may be regarded as almost certain that the youngest apostle is Thomas himself—which would at least account for the origins of the traditional title of this picture. And although Thomas is most often shown as an older man, he is here
wearing his usual green. Support for the identification of the three apostles here may be found in Jacob van der Sanden's annotations to his poem on Rubens's paintings in the church of the Recollects in Antwerp: '... toerijkende de regte hand aan den apostel Thomas, afgebeld als een blonten jongman en wetensbegeerig, nevens den grijaer Petrus, boogende het hoofd met oodmoedighheid, waer by Paulus als tweeden Prins der Apostelen, met bruijnen en langen baert in de kragt der mannejaeren aenschouwd met verwonderende ingetogentheijd den Heer, enopperleeraer van het Geloof'.

Despite the relatively late date of this document (1770-71), and the fact that it was probably based on an engraving, it is a description which is entirely consistent with the most likely interpretation of the subject, as proposed above.

This altarpiece was commissioned by Nicolas Rockox (Antwerp, 1560-1640), the burgomaster of Antwerp and antiquarian, who had already been instrumental in obtaining for Rubens the commission for the Descent from the Cross for the altar of the Guild of Harquebusiers in Antwerp Cathedral. Apart from the Samson and Delilah which hung in his own house, Rockox also commissioned Rubens to paint a Crucifixion and later the famous Coup de Lance for the church of the Recollects, where the present work also hung. It was intended to serve as an epitaph monument to Rockox himself and his wife Adriana Perez (1568-1619), and hung beside their joint tombstone on the north lateral wall of the chapel of the Immaculate Conception behind the High Altar in that church.

The strongest area of colour in the centre panel is Christ's red cloak (covering a just visible white loincloth). The youngest apostle is in a bluish green, and the bearded figure looking down in a subdued green-grey. Around Christ's chestnut hair there appears a thin outline of golden yellow. The third apostle recedes into the dark background. Characteristics such as the extensive grey shadowing of the modelling of Christ's flesh, the firm out-
lines and rather static poses of half- or three-quarter length figures seen against a plain dark background from which they stand out as if in coloured relief, the deliberately limited range of colours, and the controlled modelling of large expanses of relatively unbroken colour—all these features are specific to a group of works by Rubens datable to the years between 1612 and 1615. Some of these features are clearly derived from Caravaggio, in whose Incredulity of St Thomas still in Potsdam a closer precedent is to be found for the representation of this particular scene by a few figures in three-quarter length standing out from a smooth and unrelieved dark background, even though the individual motifs are quite different.

It was largely characteristics such as these which appear to have influenced the assessments of the eighteenth and nineteenth century commentators, whose varying opinions on the work may be worth noting here. Eighteenth-century writers like De Wit, Descamps, Mensaert and Michel acclaimed it, but in the nineteenth century, critics like Fromentin ('Çela un Rubens? Quelle erreur!') and even Max Rooses ('une peinture extrêmement soignée, ou le dessin est d'une regularité académique banale ... la hardiesse et l'inspiration manquent complètement') found its relatively high finish unacceptable. None of these writers, however, seems seriously to have doubted that the entire work comes from the hand of Rubens himself.

In 1794 the triptych was taken from its location in the Church of the Recollects and sent to Paris, where the wings were displayed apart from the central panel. It was returned in 1815 in good condition and housed in the Academy, which then served as the Museum.

A painting after this work by Balthasar Beschey (Antwerp, 1708–76) measuring c.146 × 122.5 cm. was sold at the Beschey sale, Antwerp (Caudron), 1 July, 1776, lot 20. Several other supposed copies may be found in eighteenth-century sale records, but these need not be listed here. A drawing of this subject said to be by Rubens and retouched by Jacob de Wit was sold at the de Wit sale, Amsterdam (de Leth and van Schorrenburgh), 10 March, 1755, lot 8.

2. John XX, 27: 'Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands: and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and he not faithless, but believing.'
3. Netherlandish exceptions are the painting attributed to A. Janssens—which may more correctly be called Christ Appearing to the Apostles with St Thomas sold in Brussels (Palais des Beaux-Arts), 30 January, 1950, lot 64 (illustrated in J. Müller Hofstede, Abraham Janssens, Zur Problematik des flämischen Caravaggismus, Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen, XIII, 1971, p.262, fig.30, here dated c.1615–16, thus shortly after Rubens's work), the painting by P. Soutman in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, where Thomas peers intently at the wound in Christ's side but does not actually thrust his finger into it, and Rembrandt's very different representation of the subject in the Pushkin Museum in Moscow (Kedrova, No.552).
4. See John XX, 26.
5. Indeed, each one of the apostles has been identified as Thomas in the past; for a summary of the various identifications, see Mombailleu, Rodok-epitaphium, pp.134–140. For the problems in identifying the apostles in the Apostado series (which can therefore not be used as a sufficient basis for the identifications in the present work) see Vlieghie, Saints, I, pp.14–15. It should be noted that doubts about the traditional appellation of the work were first raised by Müller Hofstede, Beiträge, p.204, n.110, and then by Mombailleu in the article cited above.
6. As suggested by Glen, p.157; cf. also the interpretation of the subject in terms of the Christum vide theme by Mombailleu, Rodok-epitaphium, pp.140–141. Glen's suggestion is not entirely convincing (although it is certainly an illuminating one), as Rubens has even avoided depicting that part of the passage in John XX, 27 which requires that Thomas reach forth his finger. The subject cannot be the first appearance of Christ to the apostles, because
the account of that event both required the presence of all eleven apostles and stated specifically that Thomas was absent (John XX, 24); the third appearance to the apostles must also be excluded, because there too all the apostles were said to be present, and the account also refers to the actual handling of the wounds (Luke XXIV, 39: 'handle me and see'). For a full discussion of all the appearances of Christ, see I. Haug, op. cit., cols. 1291-1301.

7. The theme will also be found in the works of contemporary commentators such as J. Tirinus (Commentarius in Vetus et Novum Testamentum, III, Antwerp, 1632, sub: Index variarum materiarum et conceptuum, Propria sanctorum [in festo S. Thomas apostoli], no page) whom Rubens would certainly have known.

8. 21 December. In the Missal, the whole account of Thomas's incredulity is read, concluding with the verse 'Dixit ei Jesus: Quia vidisti me, Thoma, credidisti: beati qui non viderint et crediderint' (John XX, 29). This verse is repeated frequently in the Antiphons of theCanonical Hours for the Feast of St Thomas as well. The Breviary also contains several allusions to the works of Saints Peter and St Thomas as well. The Breviary also contains the Antiphons of the Canonical Hours for the Feast of St Thomas.


10. This last passage is repeated in the reading at Lauds on the Feast of St Thomas.

11. E.g. 1 Peter 1, 21, Hebrews XIII, 2, and 2 Corinthians IV, 11.

12. For both the pictorial and the iconographic appropriateness of the paintings Rubens produced for epitaph monuments, see Freedberg, Rubens as a Painter of Epitaphs, p.51-71. An alternative hypothesis to the one proposed here is that the subject was chosen because of its suitability for a church of the Franciscan order. The parallelism between the wounds of Christ and the stigmata of St Francis has recently been emphasized in a discussion of the fresco of the very similar subject of the Witness of Christ's Stigmata by the Apostles in the Camposanto at Pisa; see J. Polzer, Christ Judge, Saviour, Advocate, Franciscan Devotion, and the Doubting Thomas, in Essays Presented to Myron P. Gilmore, ed. by S. Berelli and G. Ramakus, Florence, 1978, pp.301-310.

13. Cf., for example, Acts XIII, 26-33, one of the readings for Easter Tuesday, in the Missal.


17. John XX, 24-31, also the liturgical reading for the Sunday after Easter in the Missal.

18. Exceptions include the painting by Santi di Tito in the Cathedral at Borgo San Sepolcro.


21. If one turns to Rubens's Apostolado Lema series painted in the same period (Vlieghe, Saints, I, Nos.6-18), it is possible to find some support for the identifications suggested here; on the other hand, as not all the identifications in that series are certain (cf. Vlieghe, Saints, I, p.36), the issue may not thus be capable of elucidation. The figure in the centre of the present panel conforms to the type of apostle who is called St Thomas in the engravings in the Isselburg series; the St Thomas of the Rockmans series, however, agrees with the youngest apostle here—although the latter is in fact closest to the St John the Evangelist in both series. There is some resemblance between the undisputed St Peter in the Apostolado series and the figure in the centre here, but none between the undisputed St Paul and the figure here suggested as St Paul. In any case, as Rubens does not consistently use the same type for the same characters, such comparisons within his oeuvre are not necessarily likely to prove helpful (for example, the figure in the Apostolado identified as St Thomas in the Isselburg series and St Simon in the Rockmans series—Vlieghe, Saints, I, No.13—recurs as St Eligius on the exterior of the Antwerp Raising of the Cross, K.d.K., p.37). Although there is no substantial reason why Rubens should not have chosen to limit the number of figures present here simply in order to enhance their pictorial effectiveness, it may perhaps be pointed out that there are several possible Early Christian precedents for the restricted number of apostles (as opposed to the full complement required by the biblical account); cf., for examples, W. Medding, Erscheinung Christi (6) vor den Aposteln, in Lexikon christl. Ikon., I. col. 671.


23. It hangs above the fireplace in the painting of his collection by Frans II Francken now in Munich (Fig.46) already referred to above.

24. Rooses, II, p.84, No.287.

25. K.d.K., p.416, Rooses, II, p.97, No.298. Other works which may be mentioned here in connection with Rockox’s patronage are the Adoration of the Magi painted for Rubens for the Antwerp Town Hall in 1609 when Rockox was burgomaster, and the Return from the Flight which he gave c.1620 to the Jesuit Church in Antwerp. For these and other details of Rockox’s patronage, see Baudouin, op. cit., 1977, pp.15-26.

26. Sanders, 1727, III, pp.200, 213; De Wit, Plan VI, No.20; and Schoutens, op. cit., pp.242-243, 364-365. All these writers record that the present tripod hung over the tombstone of Rockox and his wife in the chapel (which he had built) of the Immacu-
late Conception (the exact location is made clear by the Plan in De Wit, who elsewhere mistakenly says it hung in the Portiuncula chapel). The inscription on the tombstone read: 'In Christo vita. Nicolauus Rockox Eques hujus Urb. consul VIII Adrianac Perez conjugi clariss. P. cum qua XXX ann. concors vixit. Decessit XXII septemb. an. MDCCX act. LI. Ille conjugem secutus pridie ides Decembris anno MDCCXL aetatis LX. Bene de sua bene de postera acetate meritus' (Sanderus, 1727, III, p.213; Rooses, II, p.190).

27. Cf. Eisler, pp.44-49 and Glen, p.23 for a discussion of the implications of Rubens's use of this format.

28. For further details both of the alterations in the paint surface and on the significance of the wound, see Monballieu, Rockox-epitafium, pp.149-150.

30. Compare, for example, the two paintings of Christ's Charge to Peter in the present volume (Nos.23 and 24), and see Oldenbourg, 1922, especially pp.112-131, and Friedberg, Rubens as a Painter of Epitaphs, pp.69-71 for a further discussion of these characteristics.

31. Friedländer, Caravaggio Studies, No.17a, pl.22.

32. Mensaert's comments may be regarded as representative of these: 'le tout peint très délicatement et avec goût et précision' (Mensaert, I, p.205).


34. Rooses, II, p.157

35. See the Notice, 1814, p.66, Nos.506-508, and especially the amusing comment in the Notice, 1796, p.31, No.83, cited on p.80.

18a. Study for the Heads of Two Apostles: Oil Sketch (Fig.49)

Oil on panel; 22.6 x 31.6 cm. Whereabouts unknown.

PROVENANCE: In 1929 in the estate of Frau Kommerzienrat Renner, Hamburg; passed then to Dr G. A. Remé, Hamburg, in whose possession it still was in 1937.

Certified as authentic by Burchard in 1930. The execution of the work, however, cannot be due to Rubens. Apart from the all too cursory treatment of hair and beards, the handling of the drapery is exceptionally coarse and vague, and the highlighting and shadows (for example, around the eyes) excessively pronounced. It would be unlikely for Rubens to have made so careful a preparatory study for just two out of three figures, and it may in any case be a fragment of a larger piece. The panel is clearly a copy of the foremost two apostles in the central panel of the Rockox triptych (No.18); if a fragment of a larger work, it too should be regarded as a copy of the central panel of the triptych.

19. Portrait of Nicholas Rockox (Fig.50)

Oil on panel; 145 x 56 cm. Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten. No.308.

PROVENANCE: Church of the Recollects, Antwerp; seized by the French Commissioners in 1794 and taken to the Musée Central, Paris; brought back to Antwerp in 1815 and deposited in the newly founded Museum there.

COPIES: (1) Painting (with a neutral background) by Pierre Maxmilien Delafontaine, Gray (Haute-Saône), Musée Baron Martin; canvas, 100 x 50 cm. l.t. A.P. de Mirimonde, Pierre Maxmilien Delafontaine, élève de David, Gazette des Beaux-Arts, 1956, p.36, fig.4; Catalogue du Musée Baron Martin à Gray, p.57, No.182; A.P. de Mirimonde, Le triptyque de l'Incrédulité de Saint Thomas de Rubens à Paris (1794-1815). Une copie davidienne du portrait de Nicolas Rockox, Jaarboek, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerpen, 1954-60, pp.25-29; (2) Painting by Baron Denon, whereabouts unknown. l.t. Catalogue de la collection du Baron Denon, Paris, 1826, II, No.150; A.P. de Mirimonde, op. cit., p.36, n.9; (3) Painting. Antwerp, Rockox House; canvas, 147 x 113 cm.; (4) Painting
(bust length), whereabouts unknown; panel, 38 x 29 cm. prov. Charles-Leon Cardon, Brussels; Cardon sale, Brussels (Fievez), 27–30 June, 1921, lot 105. exh. Brussels, 1910, No.298; photograph in Burchard documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp: (5) Painting (bust length), whereabouts unknown; canvas, 52 x 42.5 cm. prov. New York, Marcel Horowitz, in 1957; photograph in Burchard documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp.

EXHIBITED: Antwerp, 1816, No.15; Antwerp, 1927, No.16.


The inner side of the left hand wing of the Rockox triptych shows Nicholas Rockox (1560–1640), numismatist, antiquarian, connoisseur and nine times burgomaster of Antwerp. 1 He was closely connected with the commissioning of a number of works by Rubens, including the Descent from the Cross, 2 and was later to commission from him the ‘Coup de Lance’ (1620) for the High Altar of the church of the Recollects in Antwerp. 3 Where the present work also hung (cf. under No.18). Other works he commissioned from Rubens were a Samson and Delilah, 4 a Return from the Flight into Egypt, 5 and a Christ on the Cross. 6 His collection is to some extent represented on the so-called Banquet in the House of Burgomaster Rockox (Fig.46) by Frans II Francken in Munich. Apart from his generous gifts to the Jesuit Church in Antwerp, 7 Rockox was also responsible for subsidizing the building of the High Altar of the church of the Recollects and the chapel of the Immaculate Conception there, in which the present work was hung. 8

Rockox, clearly in his early 50s, is shown standing in three-quarter length in front of the junction between a pilaster and an arch, possibly in the ambulatory of a
church. He is dressed in black, except for a broad white ruff and a brown fur stole or tabard draped over his shoulders. Because the work has so darkened in that area, it is now barely possible to see the jewelled girdle and hilt of a sword below his left hand; in his left hand he holds a prayer book. Above his head the figures 1613 appear to have been changed to 1615. The view that Rubens began the altarpiece around 1613 and terminated it in 1615 is a plausible one, as discussed in the preceding entry; but it is not impossible, as Rooses suggested, that the present panel was completed by 1613.11

It will be noted that neither Rockox nor his wife are presented by their patron saints, as one might perhaps have expected.12 Their presence establishes the function of the work as an epitaph monument, in terms of passages such as John XI, 25-26: 'I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die', a passage also read in the Mass for the Dead; it also lends some support to the meaning of the work suggested in the preceding entry: Rockox and his wife bear witness to the belief in the Resurrection even though they do not have the tangible proof of the kind actually witnessed by the apostles in the central panel.

When this wing and its pendant were displayed in Paris in 1796, it was decided not to show the central panel along with them, because the Conservatoire felt that its subject 'pourrait entretenir le fanatisme'.13 The following observation appeared in the Notice for that year: 'Les pendans ci-dessus ainsi que la décollation et le martyre des deux Saint Jean servaient de volets à de plus grands tableaux du même Maître. C'est ainsi qu'on les montrait d'une manière mystérieuse à Antwerp.'14 But by 1799 all three parts of the altarpiece were hung together.15

1. For a recent biography and bibliography, see now H. de Smedt, Nikolaus Rockox, in National-Biografisch Woordenboek, V, Brussels, 1972, cols.724-730; but a fuller account is given by H. van Cuyck, Nikolaas Rockox de Jongere, Annales de l'Académie d'Archéologie de Belgique, XXXVII, 1886, pp.134-141; on Rockox as an antiquarian (and on his Album Amicorum preserved in the Rubens House in Antwerp), see now R.W. Scheller, Nikolaas Rockox als Oudheidkundige, Antwerp, 1978.
2. K.d.K., p.42. For these and the following commissions, see above, p.84 and Baudouin, op. cit., 1977, pp.15-20.
9. Van der Sanden, op. cit., n.2 (transcribed in Monballieu, Rockox-épitaphium, p.153) refers to his garb as indicating the office of Burgomaster: 'Op het swart kleedzel onder den open tabbaert, overeenkomstig aen het Borgermeesterlyk Am bt...'. For further portraits of Rockox, see N. Verhaegen in Bulletin de l'Institut Royale du Patrimoine artistique, V, 1902, pp.20-21, n.1; on Van Dyck's portrait of Rockox in Leningrad, see M. Hendrickx, Recherches sur le portrait de Rockox par Antoine van Dyck, Mededelingen van de Koninklijke Belgische Academie, Klasse der Schone Kunsten, XXI, 1939, pp.97-110.
10. Van der Sanden, op. cit., n.2 refers to these as indicating his rank: '... is ook aengetoond den ridderlyken staet door juweelen aen den gordel voor den degen'; cf. Monballieu, Rockox-épitaphium, p.144 for further details of the present condition of this area in the panel.

20. Portrait of Adriana Perez (Fig.51)

Oil on panel; 145 × 156 cm.
PROVENANCE: Church of the Recollects, Antwerp; seized by the French Commissioners in Antwerp in 1794 and taken to the Musée Central, Paris; brought back to Antwerp in 1815, and deposited in the recently founded Museum there.


EXHIBITED: Antwerp, 1816, No.15; Antwerp, 1927, No.17.


Adriana Perez (1568-1619), the wife of Nicholas Rockox, is shown on the right hand inner panel of the triptych. Daughter of Louis Perez and Marie van Berchem, she married Rockox on 5 September, 1589. Their marriage was childless. Here she is shown beneath a crimson drape, holding a crimson rosary in both hands. Like her husband, she wears a white ruff (which is broader than his) and is dressed in black. Her sleeves, however, terminate in meticulously painted lace cuffs, and a double string of beads hangs around her bodice and down the central seam of her dress.

Burchard thought that although Adriana Perez was still living at the time Rubens painted her portrait here, he did not paint her from the life. He suggested as a model the portrait he attributed to van Veen which was sold (along with a pendant portrait of Rockox) at Brussels (Salle du Cercle artistique), 6-8 April, 1925, although this work, dated 1600, clearly shows the sitter at a considerably younger age than in the present portrait.
21–22. The Arms of Nicholas Rockox and Adriana Perez (Figs. 52 a, b)

Oil on panel; each 145 × 56 cm.
Antwerp, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten. Nos. 309 and 311

PROVENANCE: Church of the Recollects, Antwerp; seized by the French Commissioners in 1794 and taken to the Musée Central, Paris; brought back to Antwerp in 1815 and deposited in the newly founded Museum there.


The left hand outer panel of the Rockox triptych shows the arms of Nicholas Rockox (or, a fess gules between three water-lily leaves vert; crest: on a wreath of the colours a pair of wings erect or, each wing charged as the shield), while the right hand outer panel shows those of Rockox and Adriana Perez on a lozenge (Rockox as above impaling quarterly 1 and 4 argent an eagle sable debruised by a bend argent; 2 and 3 barry of six or and azure). The arms of the person or persons commemorated may be found on any number of earlier Netherlandish epitaph paintings.

Beneath each shield a putto’s head surmounts a scrollly cartouche, from which hang almost identical garlands of fruit. The heads of the putti may well be by Rubens himself; the rest—especially the coat of arms—is probably the work of an assistant. There are a number of penti-menti around the heads of the putti, while the surfaces of the cartouches are rough and appear to have been overpainted. It is possible that the latter once contained—or were intended to contain—inscriptions.1


23. The Giving of the Keys (Fig. 53)

Oil on canvas; 182.5 × 159 cm.

PROVENANCE: Kapellekerk (Notre Dame de la Chapelle), Brussels; bought by Gerrit Braamcamp (Amsterdam, 1699–1771) in 1765; Braamcamp sale, Amsterdam, 31 July, 1771, lot 193; bought by J. B. van Lankeren; van Lankeren sale, Antwerp, 18 August, 1835, lot 87; bought by Regemorter for C. J. Nieuwenhuys; bought from the latter by Lord Northwick (John Rushout, 2nd Baron Northwick, 1770–1859) in 1836; Lord Northwick sale, Thirlstane House, Cheltenham (Phillips), 23 August, 1859, lot 1711; bought again by C. J. Nieuwenhuys; Lt. Col. W. L. Grant sale, London (Christie’s), 18 June, 1881, lot 115; bought by a Dutch dealer; Potemkin collection, Brussels, between 1882 and 1895; Valentin Roussel sale, Brussels, 14 June, 1899, lot 25; bought by Sedelmeyer; Sedelmeyer, Paris. The seventh hundred old master paintings, 1901, No. 38; W. R. Bacon, New York, c. 1905; Blakeslee, New York, c. 1908–12; Marczell von Nemes sale, Munich (Mensing, Müller, Cassirer and Helbing), 16–19 June, 1931, lot 70; A. S. Drey, Munich, 1931–33; Dresdener Bank, forfeited security; transferred by the State to the Berlin Museum in 1936.

COPIES: (1) Painting (made in 1765 to take the place of the original work), Brussels, Notre Dame de la Chapelle; canvas, c. 180 × 157 cm. Lit. Michel, 1771, pp. 61–63, 72; (2) Painting by B. Beschey, Madrid,


Christ gives the keys to Peter; with his left hand he gestures upwards. Four of the other apostles are represented here. Unlike the painting in the Wallace Collection (No. 24), no sheep are shown. The Berlin picture must thus be connected in the first instance with the account of the Giving of the Keys in Matthew XVI, 13–19, verse 19 in particular: ‘And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven’. But as Christ is shown with the wound in his side, and wears a white loin-cloth beneath his red mantle, the scene—despite the absence of the sheep—is probably to be taken as that moment, after the Resurrection, in John XXI, 15–17 (‘... Feed my sheep’) traditionally assumed to represent the fulfilment of the promise made in the earlier passage.4

Peter, as often in these scenes, wears yellow; the apostle next to him is in
green. None of the onlookers can be identified with certainty, with the probable exception of the youthful figure of St John the Evangelist, who wears red. They are types which occur in many works by Rubens, especially in those painted round 1612 and the years following shortly after. The head of Christ is the same as that in the epitaph paintings for Nicholas Rockox (No. 18, Fig. 48) and Nicholas Damant (No. 24, Fig. 54), with which the present work shares a number of further characteristics, such as the reduction in the number of protagonists in the scene, the relief-like grouping of three-quarter length figures against a plain dark background, the large expanses of relatively undifferentiated colour in the draperies, and so on. The composition shows a tendency towards, rather than a relaxation of the austerity of both these works: it is less compact than either of them; there is some variation in the lighting of the background; and so it is perhaps to be dated a little earlier than the Rockox epitaph painting (Nos. 18–22) completed in 1615. A date of c. 1613–15 may therefore be suggested.

The painting comes from the funeral monument of Pieter Bruegel I and his wife Maria Coecke in the third chapel of the south aisle of Notre Dame de la Chapelle in Brussels. It was commissioned by Jan Brueghel the Elder and later restored by David Teniers III, grandson of Jan Brueghel, as recalled by the following inscription (still in situ):

Petro Bruegelio exactissimae industiae artis venustissimae Pictori quem ipso rerum parent natura laudat perissimi artifices suscipiunt aemuli frustra imitantur itemque Mariae Coecke ejus conjugi Joannes Breugelius parentibus optimis pro affectu posuit. Obiit ille MDLXIX haec MDLXXXVIII. D. Teniers Jun. ex haeredibus renovavit aMDCLXXVI.6

The back of the painting is said to have contained a further inscription: 'Petrus Paulus Rubens pinxit David Teniers ex haeredibus renovavit anno 1676',7 but no such inscription is now to be seen.

On 27 September 1765 the church wardens of Notre Dame de la Chapelle decided to sell the work—despite the protests of the Bruegel heirs—in order to defray some of the expenses involved in recent works of construction and restoration to their church.8 The purchaser was required to replace it with a copy, and that copy has remained there until this day (although it now has a nineteenth-century frame and commemorative plaque). It was probably through the agency of J.-P. Tassaert that Gerrit Braamcamp bought the original work9 which then passed through the hands of many owners in the nineteenth and early twentieth century (as recorded under Provenance above), before its acquisition by the Berlin Museum in 1936.

The work remains in very good condition, with only slight damage visible along the vertical join in the panel about one third along from the left hand edge. There are no major paint losses or pentimenti. In the colouring, firm modelling and overall handling of the paint, the work is remarkably similar to the Damant epitaph painting in the Wallace Collection (No. 24, Fig. 54). It should be noted that the work is in fact on panel, and not, as recorded by Oldenbourg and others, on canvas.

A copy of either this work or the following one made by the Antwerp painter Balthazar Beschey (1708–76) and measuring 27.3 x 60 cm. was sold at the Beschey sale, Antwerp (Caudron), 1 July, 1776, lot 28;10 if this one, then presumably it is to
be identified with the painting from a Madrid private collection recently published by Díaz Padrón. A wash drawing by Fragonard after a representation of this subject by Rubens (again either the present or the following work) was sold at the Gros sale, Paris, 13 April, 1778, lot 77.12

1. Cited by M.Rooses, in Rubens-Bulletijn, II, 1883, p.87; but it has not been possible to identify this exhibition more precisely.
2. For full details of the iconography of this subject, see the following entry, No.24.
3. These colours may also be seen in the copy of the work at present in Notre Dame de la Chapelle.
4. Compare too the heads in the Apostolado Lerma series of c.1610-12 (Vlieghe, Saints, I, Nos.7-18), where, in addition, one finds a similar variation in the handling of the hair, from a smooth chestnut to a curly white.
5. For a discussion of these stylistic features, to be found on almost all of Rubens's epitaph paintings in the years between 1612 and 1618, see Freytag, Rubens as a Painter of Epitaphs, pp.60-71.
6. This inscription now appears to be on a 19th century tablet, but it may be assumed that it reproduces the earlier one.
9. Ibid., p.255.
10. A copy by Beschey after the Rockox epitaph (No.18) also appears to have been sold at this sale; cf. p.85 above.
11. M. Díaz Padrón, Varios pintores flamencos: Hemessen, Scored, Pietro de Lignis, G. Grayer y B. Beschey, Archivo español de Arte, LI, 1979, p.120.

24. Christ's Charge to Peter (Fig.54)

Oil on panel; 141 x 115 cm. London, Wallace Collection. No.P93.

PROVÉNANCES: Church of St Gudule, Brussels; sold c.1800 to Lafontaine; W.Champion; Pinney; bought by C.J. Nieuwenhuys for the Prince of Orange on 31 May, 1824; Richard Westall; King William II sale, The Hague, 16 August, 1850, lot 63; bought by Mawson for the Marquis of Hertford.

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37a, 1969, pp.22-23; (4) Painting, whereabouts unknown; canvas, 138 x 116 cm. prov. Ostende, private collection, in 1959; photograph in Burchard documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp; (5) Painting, whereabouts unknown. prov. Frankfurt, Franz Wiesner, in 1927; photograph in Burchard documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp; (6) Painting, partial copy of the heads of Christ and the apostle standing next to him, whereabouts unknown; canvas, 42 x 51 cm. prov. London, F.A. Szarvasy collection; sale, London, (Christie’s), 10 December. 1948, lot 55; (7) Drawing, possibly by van Dyck (Fig.55), Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen; pen and brown ink, 16.5 x 14.3 cm; the following notes written on the drawing: (above the head of the apostle on the left) De sonne met de keers gemengt; (on his mantle) purper; (on Peter’s mantle) geelt; (below Peter’s neck) blau; (above his head) dach; (above the apostle next to Christ) dese tronyie van datse daer ghebede is geschildert op de keers gemingelt met die vlache sonne; (to the right of Christ’s head) dese figure was geschildert op eenen sterken dach; (referring to Christ’s drapery, on the right) wit.2 prov. F.J.O. Boymans (Maastricht, 1767—Utrecht, 1847). lit. Müller Hofstede, Beiträge, pp.308-313, No.12; (8) Etching by P. Spruyt (V.S., p.33, No.185); (9) Engraving by F. Eisen (V.S., p.32, No.181); (10) Engraving by J. Hunin (V.S., p.32, No.182); (11) Engraving by J.L. Krafft (V.S., p.32, No.183); (12) Engraving by A. Cardon (V.S., p.33, No.186).


Christ is shown giving the crossed keys to Peter with his right hand; with his left he points to the sheep in the lower right corner of the painting. Only three of the other apostles look on. The wound in Christ’s right side is visible, and he wears the white mantle characteristic of his life after the Passion. The scene therefore represents
the fulfilment in John XXI, 15-17 ('... Feed my sheep') of the promise expressed in Matthew XVI, 13-19 ('... And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven'). By Rubens's time this conflation of the two scenes (the first of which took place before the Resurrection) had become traditional, both in the liturgy and the commentators, and it received its most notable expression in the sixteenth century in Raphael's tapestry design of the same subject—without which Rubens's whole conception is unthinkable. But it is most unusual—if not entirely unprecedented—for this conflation to occur outside the context of the Primatus Petri. The two keys, here so consciously differentiated by colour (brown and steely grey), usually symbolize the two degrees of remission, but they may also have further connotations of rank and status.

The identification of the three apostles who look on cannot be established with certainty. The young man in the centre should probably be identified as St John the Evangelist, but there are no consistent points of reference for the other two. The apostle on the left has a facial type similar to the St James the Greater in the Apostolado Lerma, but while that series shows a similar treatment of physiognomic types, it cannot be regarded as sufficient evidence for specific identifications. Very similar faces occur in the Rockox epitaph painting (No.18; Fig.48), but not even their identities can be regarded as altogether certain.

Christ is clothed in a white mantle which turns to shadow especially around the outer contours. Peter is in yellow, while the apostle on the left has a grey mantle over a deep green dress. The apostle in the centre, on the other hand, is clothed in a great expanse of red, which is reflected everywhere in the flesh tones adjacent to it. This type of light effect may be contrasted here with the treatment of the shadows, which are extensive and vary considerably in depth. Although the painting is rather dirty and has been discoloured by layers of old varnish, its overall condition does not appear to be as bad as it has often been claimed to be, ever since the eighteenth century. There are, however, numerous small paint losses, and the paint has worn very thin in parts, especially on Peter's right hand and towards the right side of the picture. Some restoration has taken place, most obtrusively the black outline on the ridges of Christ's drapery, and along the lower contours of his right arm and of Peter's hands. In areas such as Peter's green-blue garb beneath his mantle, the painting has darkened considerably.

Rubens has once again chosen one of Christ's appearances to his apostles after the Resurrection as a suitable scene for an epitaph painting. As in the case of the two other examples dealt with in the present volume—the Giving of the Keys from the Bruegel tomb (No.23; Fig.53) and the Incredulity of St Thomas from the Rockox epitaph (No.18; Fig.48) only a small group of apostles is represented and the scene is almost entirely stripped of anecdotal elements. The effect of concentration is heightened by the fact that the figures are seen in three-quarter length, standing out in austere relief against a plain dark background. The composition itself is a highly concentrated one, with the figures occupying a large proportion of the picture space, and in this case extending to both sides of the scene. These features, as well as the firm modelling and unrelieved
expanses of drapery, all reflect Rubens’s continued interest in certain Caravaggesque compositions (again the influence of Caravaggio’s _Incredulity of St Thomas_ is notable) in the years immediately after 1612.⁹ The physiognomic types, as noted above, may be compared to a number of heads in the _Apostolado Lerma_, and the compositional idea is very close indeed to the painting for the Rockox epitaph (No. 18; Fig. 48). That work is securely dated to 1613–15; the present one must therefore date from these years or perhaps slightly after. The slightly later date is probably to be favoured, because of the still greater concentration of the composition;¹⁰ the figures are cut off on all three sides, and their heads, arranged in an almost isocephalic row (with the exception of St Peter), reach almost to the upper frame. Stylistic considerations, therefore, suggest a date that can hardly be earlier than 1614 and probably no later than 1616. These dates are largely borne out by what is known about the original location and commission of the work.

All the eighteenth-century sources make it clear that the picture hung above a small altar on the right of the entrance to the chapel of the Miraculous Holy Sacrament in St Gudule in Brussels, where it served as an epitaph to Nicholas Damant.¹¹ Having trained as a lawyer, Damant (c. 1531–27 July, 1616) was rapidly promoted in the service of the Duke of Alba and the Archduke Ernest, before becoming President of the Council of Flanders in April 1585. Two months later he was made Chancellor of Brabant, and in 1587 became a member of the Council of State.Called to Madrid, he served as _Garde des Sceaux_ for the affairs of the Netherlands until 1596, when he was sent back to Brussels as an advisor to the Archdukes Albert and Isabella, which he remained until his death in 1616.¹² It is perhaps worth remarking that although he enjoyed the favour of Philip II and his regents in the Netherlands, and had a reputation for being devoted to them, Balthasar Zuñiga wrote of him to Philip III in 1603: ‘no tengo por muy español’.¹³

No documents relating to the actual commission of this work survive. Strictly speaking, one cannot exclude the possibility that the work was commissioned after Damant’s death. But the stylistic characteristics discussed above all point to a date certainly no later than 1616, the year in which he died and which may be taken as a _terminus ante quem_. As the inscription below the painting¹⁴ made no mention of descendants or relatives, it seems most likely that the work was commissioned by Damant himself in the two years or so before his death (his wife Barbara Brant had already died in 1591).¹⁵

But why should a representation of the _Giving of the Keys_ have been chosen? Apart from the general suitability of one of Christ’s appearances after his Resurrection for an epitaph monument, the answer is not immediately apparent. It may be, however, that the painting is to be understood as a reference to certain aspects of Damant’s role in political life. In 1585 he was appointed to the presidency of the judiciary body of the Council of Flanders, but the members of that body objected to his appointment on the grounds that he had been born in Brabant.¹⁶ The step was then taken of granting him the privilege of _ubique natus_, on the grounds that his father had also been in the service of the state, thus rendering the objections invalid. It seems possible, therefore, that the present subject was intended as a final justification of his office, especially in view of the notion, emphasized by the symbolic significance of the keys, that
political office, like religious office, ultimately depended on the order of God. And even if a recollection of this particular episode was not intended, it is worth recalling that the investiture with the keys was regarded as conferring both the clavis ordinis and the clavis iurisdictionis, or as the clavis discernendi scientia and the clavis potestia iudicandi. Although these interpretations are unusual outside the ecclesiastical context, their relevance to the offices held by Damant (including that of Garde des Sceaux) can hardly have been overlooked.

One additional factor should be taken into account in seeking an explanation for the choice of subject here. It appears that Damant's father, who was named Peter (and who had been a chancellor of Charles V), was buried in front of the same altar. This was recorded on the same inscription which reveals that Damant had restored the tomb of his mother and father after its destruction by the iconoclasts in 1581. The Petrine subject here may therefore have been intended to recall—at least partially—the burial of Peter Damant on the site and the subsequent restoration of his tomb. But it cannot have been the main motivation for the subject; that is most likely to be found in the political career of Nicholas Damant.

There is no foundation for De Bruyn's assertion that the work was given to the Church of St Gudule at the end of the eighteenth century by Baron Cuypers de Rymenam—unless the assertion is taken to refer to a copy of the original which served as a replacement for it after it had been sold.

A painting of this subject by Rubens belonging to Richard Westall was exhibited at the British Institution in 1824, No.104. If that work is to be identified with the present one, then Westall should naturally be added to the list of owners recorded above.

1. Pinney and W. Champion are two regrettably vague references; but Nieuwenhuys himself stated that he bought the work from Pinney, who in turn had it from W. Champion (C. J. Nieuwenhuys, op. cit., 1834, p.204). These two names are also given by Smith, Catalogue Raisonné, II, p.52, who, however, omits the unlikely name of Richard Foster, given by Nieuwenhuys (C. J. Nieuwenhuys, op. cit., 1834, p.203) as the purchaser of the work from Lafontaine.

2. These notes, therefore, all correspond to the colours and lighting of the original work. For a discussion of their meaning and significance, see Müller Hofsteile, Beiträge, p.309.


4. Cf. J. Shearman, op. cit., p.66 for a full discussion; Cornelis a Lapide, op. cit., Commentaria in Matt. XVI, 19, p.319 suggests they signify the 'summa potestas tum ordinis tum iurisdictionis in totem Ecclesiam', thus returning to a distinction made by Thomas Aquinas, Summa, Additio ad tertiam partem, Quaestiones XVII-XVIII; but see pp.97-98 of the present entry for a further discussion of the iconography of the keys and their possible relevance to the commission of the work.

5. Vlieghe, Saints, 1, No.9, Fig.26.


8. Frieldänder, Caravaggio Studies, No.173, pl.22.

9. Cf. pp.45 and 85 above, under Nos.8 and 18 for other instances of Rubens's interest in Caravaggio as evidenced by works discussed in the present volume.

10. In this case one would have to assume that this
aspect of the work precedes (as seems likely) the compositional relaxation visible in works of the latter half of the decade.


12. All these details may be found in the article on Damant by L. Galesloot, in Biographie nationale de Belgique, Ill, Brussels, 1972, cols.647-649.


15. Rombaut, op. cit., p.187 specifically states that 'Deze Schildery is gemaekr by last, en diend voor een Graf-teeken aen het Graf van den Heere Kancellor Damant';


17. A suggestion first made by Müller Hofstede, op. cit., 1974, p.135-

18. Thomas Aquinas, Summa. Additiones ad tertiam partem, Quaestiones XVII-XVIII (P.L., CXCI, cols.885f.); both this source and the one given in the preceding note are cited in the illuminating discussion by Shearman, op. cit., p.66 of the symbolic significance of the keys.


25. Christ's Charge to Peter: Drawing

? Pen and brown ink and bistre wash; approximately 27 x 20 cm. Whereabouts unknown; presumably lost.

COPIES: (1) Drawing (Fig.56), Hamburg, Kunsthalle, Inv.No.22,443; pen and brown ink with bistre wash over black chalk, 27.2 x 20.4. cm. PROV. ?John Barnard sale, London (Phillips), 16 April, 1798 et seqq., lot 294; W. Roscoe sale, Liverpool (Winstanley), 23 September, 1816 et seqq., lot 480; sold to Watson. LIT. M. Jaffé, Figure Drawings attributed to Rubens, Jordaeae, and Cassiers in the Hamburg Kunsthalle, Jahrbuch der Hamburger Kunstsam­mungen, XVI, 1971, pp.47-48, n.30; J. Müller Hofstede, Two Unpublished Drawings by Rubens, Master Drawings, XII, 1974, pp.133 to 137, pl.6; J. Held, Some Rubens Drawings—Unknown or Neglected, Master Drawings, XII, 1974, p.254; (2) Drawing, Paris, Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, Inv. No.20330; pen and brown ink and bistre wash, 27 x 20.8 cm. LIT. Lugt, Dessins flamands, II, 1949, p.50, No.1198.

While it is clear that the drawing in Hamburg, Copy (1), Fig.56, is closely based on an original by Rubens, it cannot itself be regarded as autograph. The hatching throughout lacks the subtlety and sensitivity characteristic of Rubens's own drawings (one may note, for example, the eyebrows and facial hair of the apostle on the extreme left, as well as the shading round the nose of the Evangelist), and the drawing in every element of the composition is either too pedestrian or too weak
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(ningly in the treatment of the clouds on the left and in individual passages such as the heads of the sheep and the lowered hand of the apostle in the centre at the back). Indeed, the drawing of every one of the hands in the Hamburg work betrays a far less fluent draughtsman than Rubens. Nonetheless one may assume that it reproduces fairly faithfully an original drawing by him.

Rubens presumably knew Girolamo Muziano’s painting of this subject in Santa Maria degli Angeli in Rome of c.1580 which provides a fairly close precedent for the position and relationship of the two central figures at least, and which may thus have played an intermediary role between Raphael’s tapestry design of Christ’s Charge to Peter and the working out of the present composition. The relationship with the Raphael design is even clearer than in the painting in the Wallace collection (No.24; Fig.54); on this basis alone it seems likely that the drawing by Rubens referred to here would have preceded the painting, providing an intermediate stage in Rubens’s adaptation of the Raphael composition before he finally evolved the design for the Damant epitaph painting. I am therefore inclined to date the original drawing around 1614 (as suggested by Müller Hofstede), rather than after the painting (as proposed by Held). In the prominence accorded to Saint John and in certain other features, such as the sheep on the left, the drawing is particularly close to Raphael, while Christ’s right hand and the attitude of Peter is already closer to the version in the Wallace collection. The fact that the drawing also shows the figures in full length, while both the Damant and the Bruegel epitaph paintings (Nos.23 and 24; Figs.53 and 54) have been reduced to three-quarter length, also speaks in favour of the development proposed here.

It may be noted that Raphael’s composition was engraved, in the same sense as Rubens’s drawing, by P. Soultman (Fig.57). In the latter the caption ‘Tu es Petrus, et super hanc Petram aedificabo Ecclesiam meam: et portae inferi non praevalebunt adversus eam’ is from Matthew XVI, 18, while the present drawing, with greater prominence accorded to the sheep, may suggest a closer connection with John XXI, 14-21. In both cases, however, one finds the standard conflation of the two scenes, as discussed in the preceding entry.

A drawing of this subject was sold at the S. van Huls sale, The Hague (Swart), 14 May, 1736 et seq., lot 504; but in the absence of further details it cannot be definitely identified with the present example. A drawing of this subject by Fragonard (but with the figures in half length) measuring 35.2 x 32.5 cm. was sold at the J.A. Gros sale, Paris, 13 April, 1778, lot 77.

1. Although the drawing in the Barnard sale was described as ‘the original and compleat design of the celebrated picture in the church of St Gudule, at Brussels’, the catalogue of the sale also stated that ‘the figures are whole length—pen and ink and bistre’; the reference, therefore, must be either to the drawing in Hamburg or to the lost original on which it is based.

2. It is of course conceivable that this reference in the Roscoe sale is to the drawing in the Louvre: Copy (2).


26. The Ascension of Christ: Oil Sketch (Fig. 58)

Oil on panel; 45.3 x 33.6 cm. Whereabouts unknown.


COPIES: (1) Painting, whereabouts unknown; 65 x 47 cm. Prov. private collection, Cologne, 1905. (2) Engraving by S. A. Bolswert (Fig. 59; V.S., p.59, No.436).

EXHIBITED: Board of Manufacturers, Loan Exhibition, Old Masters and Scottish National Portraits, Edinburgh, 1883, No.203.


Although the depiction of the Ascension alone (as opposed to its combination with the Resurrection) diminished somewhat in the seventeenth century, there are two other representations of the scene in Rubens’s work: in the design for the Missale and Breviarium Romanum and in the canvas for the ceiling for the Jesuit Church in Antwerp, for which the sketch survives in the Akademie in Vienna. The design for the Missale Romanum is of the same type as the present work, but its more symmetrical composition is closer to that of other seventeenth-century representations of the scene. The diagonal ascension of Christ seen here (emphasized by the line of the apostles’ heads) is more unusual, and implies the immediate sequel to the Resurrection (which is also suggested by the rocky outcrop on the right).

The present panel was seen by Burchard in 1952, when it was in the possession of the Hallsborough Galleries in London. He noted then that the work was in good condition; it was made up of two vertical supports of equal width, the right hand one being much narrower than the left; the thinness of the ground allowed the surface of the wood to be seen through it; the left hand contour of the drapery of the apostle in the foreground on the left had undergone a considerable leftward extension; and the thinness of this extension made the pentiment clearly visible (scarcely apparent in a photograph). Burchard decided in favour of the authenticity of the sketch and dated it to around 1630.

To judge from a photograph, however, it is difficult to believe that Rubens had a share in the execution of the panel. The drawing is simply too weak in many places to have come from his hand, most notably in the case of Christ’s legs and in
the coarse execution of the faces of the two figures immediately below his right foot; the whole figure of the apostle on the lower right is also poorly drawn.

Although differences between preparatory design and engraving do not of course provide conclusive evidence for the rejection of the former, the following divergencies between the present oil sketch and the engraving by Schelte A. Bolswert may be noted: the number of heads on the lower left (directions as in sketch) has been reduced from three to two, the position of the left arm of the young apostle seen from behind standing on the right has been altered, and the older apostle next to him on the extreme right has been brought under the hand of the apostle next to him in the engraving.

Certain aspects of the sketch which recur in the engraving are uncharacteristic of Rubens, such as the curious elongation of the figure of Christ. Perhaps even more unusual for Rubens is the appearance of the heads of the apostles on the apparently unexplained lower level on the lower left of the scene. But as there are no other cases where the inscription on an engraving by Schelte A. Bolswert attributing the design to Rubens may be certainly disproved, it may be necessary to attribute the composition—or at least the conception of this design—to Rubens himself.

Recently, Vlieghe has made the plausible suggestion that the work is to be attributed to Erasmus Quellinus. He pointed out similarities between it and another grisaille modello signed by Quellinus of The Seven Princes of Milan for an allegorical engraving related to the genealogy of the House of Thurn and Taxis. Vlieghe went further and suggested that the composition itself was largely due to Quellinus, based only loosely on a quick drawn sketch (crabbelinge) by Rubens. This hypothesis may to some extent be supported by the fact that in the inventory drawn up after Quellinus’s death in 1678, two crabbelinge of this subject by Rubens are mentioned, in addition to sketches of it by Quellinus. It should however be noted that Abraham van Diepenbeeck appears as the inventor of this composition in the inscription on a plate (of a slightly widened format) by C.J. Visscher (numbered 18) in the quadrilingual Historiae Sacrae Veteris et Novi Testamenti published in Amsterdam by Nicolas Visscher around 1660.

Burchard did not suggest any stylistic reasons for his dating of c.1630, but observed that the three other grisaille sketches for book illustrations (B. Cordew, Catena Patrum, 1628, M. Sarbiewius, Lyricorum Libri IV, 1632, and Aedo y Gallaert, Viaje del Infante Cardenal, 1635) all date from around this time. Clearly, however, these works do not provide sufficient justification for the attribution of the present sketch to Rubens.

An Ascension in pen and red chalk was sold at Amsterdam (van der Schley and Pruyssemara), 22 March, 1802, lot 2 (as Rubens). But as representations of the Ascension are often confused with those of the Resurrection, due caution should be exercised when classifying sales references to this subject.

1. Letter from Professor August Rincklake to Max Rooses, in Rooses documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp.
2. This is the commonest type of the Ascension in the 17th century; for the earlier types, where Christ is shown either in the presence of the angels alone, or walking directly from a mountain top into heaven, or with just his feet disappearing into the clouds, or in conjunction with the Resurrection scene itself, see Schiller, III, pp.141-164, and Lexikon christl. Iben., II, cols.268-278.
3. For the other literary and liturgical sources, see Lexikon christl. Ikon., II, col.208.
5. Martin, Ceiling Paintings, No.14b.
6. For other engraved representations, see, for example, Evers, 1943, figs.167, 175-177.
7. Note in the Burchard documentation, Rubenianum Antwerp; the text of Burchard's certificate was printed in full in the catalogue of the sale at Brussels (Galerie Georges Giroux), 23-25 June, 1955, lot 121, p.37.
8. This feature, amongst others, may suggest an attribution to Jan Boeckhorst: cf. Boeckhorst's engraving of the Résurrection reproduced in Vlieghe, 1943, pl.2, 15-15. But see below for the more likely attribution to Erasmus Quellinus.
9. Reproduced in Vlieghe, op. cit., fig.50. Vlieghe also noted the similarities in the analytical detail treatment as well as the hard edges between the bright and shadowed parts to be found in both works (Vlieghe, op. cit., p.63).
10. 'Gescheytse Hemelvaert, Erasmus Quellinus... Twee crabbellinge van een Hemelvaert, Rubbeus, dubbium de una... Hemelvaert gescheyt, Erasmus Quellinus' (Denucé, Kenstkamers, pp.282, 280, 291).
13. The pen drawing for an Ascension by Rubens which appeared in the Tersmitten sale in Amsterdam in 1754 presumably refers to the preliminary design for this subject in the Missale Romanum (Judson-Van de Velde, No.24).

27. The Descent of the Holy Spirit (Fig.60)

Oil on canvas; 470 x 273 cm.
Munich, Alte Pinakothek. Inv. No.999.

PROVENANCE: Jesuit Church, Neuburg; brought to the Düsseldorf Gallery by the Prince-Elector of the Palatinate, Johann-Wilhelm, in 1703; transported to the Hofgartengalerie, Munich, in 1806; transported to the Alte Pinakothek in 1830, the year of its foundation.

COPIES: (1) Painting by W. van Herp (Antwerp, 1614-77), whereabouts unknown; panel, 94 x 81 cm. PROV. Mrs Greville Phillips, Friar's House, Hereford; sale, London (Christie's), 13 May, 1948.

The subject of this painting is taken from Acts II, 1-3: 'And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven ... And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.' Although the biblical text implies that only the apostles were present, Rubens has here chosen to show fifteen male figures and two female. But it is the preceding chapter in Acts (Acts I, 13-14) which provides the basis for the inclusion of the Virgin amongst the apostles (as in almost all representations of the scene from the twelfth century onwards) as well as for the inclusion of at least one other woman (behind the Virgin on the right) and for the representation of the event in an upper room (stairs on the lower right): 'And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room... These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.' The four extra figures may thus be seen as an attempt to take into account the four brothers of Christ, although this cannot be demonstrated with certainty, in the light of Rubens's frequent variation of the number of figures required to be present by the biblical account in other scenes as well. The Holy Ghost is, as usual, represented as a dove.

By the beginning of the seventeenth century, the representation of the Pentecost scene had become so common and so standardized that it is unnecessary to seek out a particular pictorial source for Rubens's depiction of the event. Rubens himself had earlier illustrated the scene in his design for the engraving in the *Breviarium Romanum* which he may have recalled in several of the figures in the present work.

The painting was commissioned by Count Palatine Wolfgang Wilhelm for one of the side altars in the Jesuit Church in Neuburg, and appears to have been completed by the end of 1619. Five letters from Rubens to the Count refer to this work. In the first, dated 11 October, 1619, Rubens adds a postscript to a discussion of the project for the High Altar of St Peter's in Neuburg (the *St Michael Striking down the Rebel Angels*), stating that the 'two works for the side altars' were nearly finished:

'Li due quadri per li altari collaterali sono ambidue di gia molto avanzati, di maniera che non ci manca si non l'ultimo finimento, che penso colla gratia divina di darli ben presto et con quella maggior accuratezza, che mi sara possibile.'

That the two paintings referred to here were the present one and the Nativity now in Munich appears from the letter of 7 December of the same year, in which Rubens writes that the paintings were completed and ready for dispatch:

'Non ho tralasciato fra tanto il travagliar attorno li due quadri della nativita di Cristo e del Spirito santo, li quali colla grazia divina ho ridotti a termine, che Vostra Altezza Serenissima sene po servire ad ogni suo bene placito. Io spero chella restara non solo sodisfatta della ottima mia volunta in questi opere verso il suo servizio, ma ancora delli effetti. Vostra Altezza potra dar tal ordine, che pur li parera a proposito per levarli e nominarmi persona che li debba ricevere de mia mano. Et me facera gracia d'impiegarmi in cose di suo servizio e gusto, che non mancaro di servirla puntualmente mentre havero vita.'

That these paintings were for the side altars of the Jesuit Church in Neuburg...
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(Rubens had already painted the 'Great Last Judgement—No.49 below—for the High Altar) is apparent from Sandrart's account of his visit to that church in the company of Leopold Wilhelm in 1646\textsuperscript{11} and from the records regarding their removal from the church to the Gallery in Düsseldorf in 1703.\textsuperscript{12}

But the works do not appear to have arrived in Neuburg as quickly as they were expected, as may be judged from Rubens's letter (marked 'cito cito cito') to the Count's agent in Brussels, Hans Oberholtzer, dated 3 April, 1620:

‘J a\'y consigne les peintures au meme marchand (in margin il sappelle Jeremias Cocq\textsuperscript{13}) auquel jay livre la peinture du jugement car il me montra ordre d\'un sieur correspondent de Francfort lequel estait du charge de role de part de son Altesse. Il me dit destre bien assouré de bon addres. Ayant eu devant quinze jours advis de Coulogne quils estoyent arrivées en bon estât et incontinent depesches outre. Voila tout ce que jay de certain et sil vous plait je vous envoydray par escrit tous les noms des marchans auquels ils sont addres\'ses de lieu en lieu. Mais je pense que ce peu suffira pour assurer son Altesse quelles sont tres bien adressées. Espé\'rant que nous aurions bien tost des nouvelles de leur bon arrivement.’\textsuperscript{14}

The subsequent safe arrival of the paintings in Neuburg may be gathered from Rubens's letter to the Count of 24 July, 1620, which at the same time refers to an unforeseen problem regarding their size. Rubens mentions the fact that, through no fault of his own, the paintings turned out to be a little short for the frames which were already in situ, and he offers to provide a design to remedy this (by making a small ornamental addition to the frames); at the same time, however, he expresses his concern about their proportions, adding that their height was due to the exigencies of their location:

‘Ritrovandomi questi giorni passati à Brusselles, intesi con molto mio gusto dal commissario Oberholtzer, che li due quadri mandati ultimamente à Vostra Altezza erano capitati a salvamento, ben mi dispiacque al incontro d\’intendere cherano riusciti troppo corti secondo la proportione del ornamento gia posto al suo loco, il qual errore pero non procede d\’alcuna mia negligenza ò colpa ò per essersi mal intese le misure, come appare per il disegno mandatomi da Vostra Altezza, il quale ancora mi ritrovo in mano et ha 16 piedi di Neoburgh d\’altezza e 9 piedi di larghezza essendovi ancora notata la misura del piede de Neoburgh, le quali misure si confrontano in tutto e per tutto colli telari sopra li quali furono attaccati questi quadri, che ancora sono in essere, pur mi consola, che spero la differenza non esser tanto grande, che non si possa facilmente rimediarsi con aggiungere qualche cosettà d\’alto ò da basso al ornamento, che senza pregiudicio della bona simmetria supplira a questo difetto. Et si Vostra Altezza sarà servita di farmi sapere quanta sia la differenza, io mìofferisco a far un disegno secondo la mia fantasia del modo che mi parera il più opportuno da potervi rimediare... (at side) Parve a tutti quelli que videro questi quadri in casa mia, essere la loro proportione troppo svelt ò da basso a alto ornamento, che sarebbono comparse meglio le fatiche impiegatovi in minor altezza, pur la necessità del sito scusa questo.’\textsuperscript{15}

There followed some delay in the payment Rubens was due to receive, as one learns from a note by Wolfgang Wilhelm
to his agent Reyngodt in Brussels, dated 12 October, 1620:

'... sunsten khombt uns befrembt fur, das unser Rhat unnd Agent Hanns Oberholtzer den Paulum Ruebens wegen der zwei Althar Gemahls noch nit befriedigt habe, dha wir uns doch desswegen zeitlich gnug fur seinen Abzug nach Notturfft erklert gehabt, welches Ir dan data occasione bey Ime zu entschultigen, unnd haben die anderwehrte Verordtnung gethan, das man Ime alsbald diesertwegen befri­dig­en solle.'16

The matter had still not been resolved by 5 January, 1621:

'Und da es noch nit geschehen, khonte der Rubens so woll wegen der Drei­thausend fl. alss auch die sechtzig Reichsthlr. daraus verehret werden... '17

(and this note from Wolfgang Wilhelm goes on to refer to the commissioning of the St Michael for the High Altar of St Pe­ter's in Neuburg).18 That Rubens finally received his payment of 3000 florins and an honorarium for the two works during the course of this month may be deduced from yet another note from Wolfgang Wilhelm to Reyngodt, dated 1 February, 1621:

'Wie gleichfals, dass Ir den Rubens berichtermassen contentirt habet, und diesweil derselb uns albereitsfur 14 tagen dafür gedanckhet... ',19 as well as from Rubens's letter to the Count of early in January (to which the preceding note refers):

'Ho tardato troppo a ringratiar Vostra Altezza serenissima per la buona ri­compensa, che si e compiacciuta di darmi per quelli duoì quadri fatti ultimamente con ordine suo. Io ho datto quittanza delle tre mille fiorini al Signor Ringout Agente di Vostra Altezza Serenissima in Brusselles, il quale mi ha trattato con molta cortesia sempre, si ancora mi ha fatto qualche ricordo a mia moglie.'20

On the basis of the compositional orientation of these works it may be assumed that the Descent of the Holy Spirit hung over the left hand altar, while the Nativity was placed above that on the right.

Unfortunately, it is not known what action was taken regarding the slight differ­ence in size between painting and frame referred to above. It may be noted, however, that the arched top of each work was slightly flattened at some point in its history, as appears from a horizontal seam in the canvas at the very top of the Descent of the Holy Spirit; but at what stage this alteration was made cannot be deter­mined. Although the present work is not in its original frame, its original edges are preserved, except for the loss of the small piece at the top; it is thus unlikely that it initially had a square format, as in the case of the engraving by Pontius (Fig.63).

For the rest, the work is at present only in fair condition; much of the paint sur­face has been worn and damaged, and there is considerable paint loss. Later retouchings may be seen, for example, in the figure of the apostle on the lower left, and (probably) in the face of the Virgin as well. There is some blistering in the top left hand corner, while several co­lours have darkened to such an extent that they now appear almost black. This applies in particular to areas such as the lower part of the green garment of the apostle on the left and the blue cloak of the Virgin (which has darkened so much that its folds are no longer clearly visible). The blue of the sky on the right is barely discernible through the layers of old varnish. On the other hand, the main colours of the apostles in the foreground

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—most notably the red mantle of the apostle with his head turned into the picture on the left of the Virgin, and the cream of the young apostle in the foreground on the right—still give some idea of the original colour effects (also the dark green of the apostle on the lower left, the blue of the figure immediately above him, and a subtly varied orange-brown in the apostle on the right). Some of the modulations of light have also been preserved, especially in the ruddy glow on many of the faces and hands. The rays bursting through the clouds descend both vertically and diagonally from the dove to illuminate most of the figures (but especially those around the Virgin) and the architectural features on the left. Pentimenti are visible around the shoulders of the figure of St Peter on the left of the Virgin.

The work is largely of studio execution. The draperies throughout are weak and often coarsely done (although to some extent this may be due to the condition of the work), but many of the heads are painted with a considerable degree of refinement, especially those on the left. On the whole, however, later retouchings may well account for the poor impression of certain aspects of this work.

The painting was transferred from the Jesuit Church in Neuburg to the Düsseldorf Gallery in 1703, along with its pendant—although the 'Great' Last Judgement had already been moved there in 1692. On 19 February, 1701, the Elector Johann-Wilhelm had written to his Resident in Rome, Antonio Maria Fede, of his intentions:

Wir wünschen, dass uns gestattet wird, von den beiden Seitenaltären der Jesuitenkirchen in Neuburg zwei Bilder herunterzunehmen, wogegen wir zwei andere von gleichem, wo nicht höherem Wert an die Stelle setzen wollen. Sie haben daher bei der Kongregation, von welcher diese Angelegenheit ressortiert, die notigen Schritte zu tun, um fur uns eine solche Erlaubnis auszuwirken.21

Negotiations in Rome, Augsburg and Neuburg must have been protracted,22 for it was only in the course of 1703 that the pictures were finally transferred to the Düsseldorf Gallery, as recorded in two of Johann-Wilhelm's letters dated 24 May and 13 June of that year.23

Apart from the design for the Breviarium Romanum already referred to above, Rubens represented this subject again in a grisaille sketch, now lost, for the ceiling of the Jesuit Church in Antwerp;24 in a painting for the Archduchess Isabella's Oratory in Brussels (No.28); and in the background of the Coronation of a Bishop etched by Soutman.25
Vos drawing, Rubens also has a priest-like figure present; as in the engraving after Coxcie, the number of apostles is considerably exceeded.

16. Published in Levin, 1905, p.102.
17. Ibid.
20. Rooses-Ruelens, II, p.266: the 'qualche ricordo a mia moglie' referred to here is presumably the 60 Reichsthaler mentioned by Wolfgang Wilhelm in his note to Reyngodts of 5 January, 1621, already quoted above, as suggested by Levin, 1905, p.111.
24. Martin, Ceiling Paintings, pp.101-102, No.10 (III); finally rejected for the cycle.
25. Vlieghe, Saints, II, No.160, fig.139.

27a. The Descent of the Holy Spirit: Drawing (Fig.62)

Black chalk and brown wash, reworked in pen and brown ink and grey and white bodycolour, with touches of pinkish red on some flesh areas; 59.1 x 42.2 cm. Fully mounted; on the mount the mark of the National Gallery, London (L. 1969c); outlines indentured for transfer.

London, British Museum.

PROVENANCE: P.Crozat (Paris, 1665–1740); Crozat sale, Paris, 10 April–13 May, 1741, lot 835; Hequet; Sir Thomas Lawrence (London, 1769–1830); entered the collection of Sir Robert Peel (London, 1788–1850) before 1844; National Gallery, London; transferred to the British Museum in 1935.

COPY: Engraving by P. Pontius, 1627 (Fig.63; V.S., p.60, No.438).


As observed by both Burchard-d'Hulst and Rowlands, the initial drawing in black chalk and brown wash is to all appearances by Paul Pontius. This was then extensively reworked by Rubens' with grey and white bodycolour, some pinkish red bodycolour in several of the faces, and a few touches with the pen and brown ink. The initial drawing copied the
painting fairly literally, but it has been extended both at the left and the right, and has been given a rectangular instead of an arched top. These changes may reflect an attempt to alter the 'proportione troppo svelta' of the original work, about which Rubens displayed his concern in his letter of 24 July, 1620 to Wolfgang Wilhelm (although the drawing has also been slightly extended at the bottom). All these additions may be considered to be by Rubens himself. His hand may also be detected in the considerable number of further differences from the painting; these include the direction of the Virgin’s gaze, and the arms of the apostle second from the right.3

Rubens was probably responsible for several of the pentimenti in the drawing as well, such as may be seen in the right hand and fingers of the apostle (St John the Evangelist) in the right foreground, in the profile of the woman on the right of the Virgin, and in the extended right hand of the apostle on the right. Major changes were also effected to the original drawing of the architectural elements: in the bases of the pilasters, and in the profile of the pilaster on the left; and Rubens has painted over all the architectural details between the two columns originally on either side of the Virgin, as well as on the right of the drawing. The whole of the area to the right of the first column has, as a result, been left dark in the engraving by Pontius (Fig.63), for which the present work was obviously the preliminary study. On the other hand, a pilaster may be seen in the niche in the engraving, whereas only its capital is visible in the drawing.

There are however further differences between the drawing and the painting which were carried over into the engraving. These include the omission of an apostle on the extreme right of the painting and of another apostle in the background on the right of the Virgin, the alteration in the direction and angle of the rays descending from the Holy Ghost, and the increase in age of the young apostle on the extreme right. On the other hand, the number of tongues of flame has been reduced in the drawing, but increased again in the engraving.

In the light of these extensive changes and the manner in which they were made, the suggestion that the drawing is entirely from Rubens’s own hand cannot easily be entertained.4 A sheet which served the same function as the present one and shows similar characteristics is the Christ Crucified between the Two Thieves also in the British Museum and which also came from the Crozat and Lawrence collections.5

The present drawing was probably executed c.1626; the engraving for which it served as a preparatory study is dated 1627. It may be noted that the drawing of the same subject in the Tersmitten sale, Amsterdam, 1754, lot 431, was in all likelihood the preparatory design for the engraving in the Breviarium Romanum, which Rubens was commissioned to execute in 1612 and which he recalled in designing the present composition.6

‘A capital drawing highly finished with white’ of this subject was sold as a Rubens at the Mrs Gordon sale, London (Christie’s), 2 April, 1808, lot 31.

1. As in the case of all such retouched preparatory drawings for engravings (Cf., for example, Vlieghe, Saints, II, Nos.104b and 192a, and No.6a above), the attribution of the reworking to Rubens himself cannot be regarded as altogether certain. But I am satisfied that in this particular case the reworking is sufficiently characteristic of Rubens’s hand to justify the attribution. For further justification, see the text above.
28. The Descent of the Holy Spirit

Oil on canvas; c.275.5 x 441 cm.

Whereabouts unknown, presumably lost.

Provenance:

Oratory of the Archduchess Isabella, Royal Palace, Brussels; bequeathed by her to the Chapel of the Holy Sacrament, St Gudule, Brussels, in 1639; sale, Brussels, 25 February, 1706.


A painting of this subject is recorded as having been commissioned by the Archduchess Isabella for her private oratory, where it hung along with a Nativity (as in the case of No.27 as well) and an Epiphany. The Archduchess bequeathed all three pictures to the chapel of the Holy Sacrament in St Gudule in Brussels, where Albert had already been buried and whither her own remains were transferred in 1650. There they remained until they were sold (along with several other paintings) in order to cover the cost of new panelling and a new organ for the church.

29. The Conversion of St Paul (Fig.64)

Oil on panel, 72 x 103 cm.

Courtrai, Private Collection.

Provenance: Nicholas Rockox (Antwerp, 1560-1640); Roose family, Antwerp, possibly since 1641; offered for sale, London (Sotheby's), 24 March, 1965, lot 94, but unsold; J. Sabbe collection, Courtrai.

Copies: (1) Painting, whereabouts unknown; canvas, 88 x 111 cm. prov. sale, Antwerp (Zaal Marnix), 2 December, 1964 (as Jordaens); (2) Painting, whereabouts unknown; copper, 41.5 x 56.5 cm.; dated 1638 on the lower left. prov. Munich Art Trade, 1970. lit. J. Müller Hofstede, Rubens in Italien, in [Cat. Exh.], Cologne, 1977, p.138; (3) Painting, private collection, Florence; panel. lit. Jaffé, 1977, p.113, n.27; (4) Drawing after the group of St Paul and the foremost soldier on the right (reversed), Paris, Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, Inv. No.20,325; pen and ink over red chalk, 31.4 x 41.5 cm. prov. L.T. de Montarcy (Paris, second half of the seventeenth century). lit. Lugt, Louvre, Ecole flamande, II, 1949, p.52.

Nothing is known about the subsequent history of the work, nor about its relationship with the painting of the same subject now in Munich (No.27; Fig.60). Although the measurements usually given indicate a greater breadth than height, Burchard thought it more likely that the opposite was the case.

1. État des reliquaires, reliques, tableaux, et autres objets de l'oratoire de la sérenissime Infante Isabelle, enrégistré le 27 Juillet, 1639, reprinted in De Maejer, pp.405-410 (Doc.255). Its cost has variously been recorded as 300 florins (De Maejer, loc. cit., No.27) or 500 florins (De Bruyn, p.12, and Rooses, I, p.198).

No. 1211: (5) Drawing after the mounted horseman on the right (reversed), Paris, Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, Inv. No. 20,326; pen and brown ink over red chalk, 42.4 x 27.9 cm. Prov. L.T. de Montarcy (Paris, second half of the seventeenth century). Lit. Lugt, Louvre, Ecole flamande, II, 1949, p. 52, No. 1212.

Exhibited: Antwerp, 1977, No. 2; Cologne, 1977, No. 4.


In this, as in Rubens’s other representations of the Conversion of St Paul, there are a number of additions to the rather brief biblical account in Acts IX, 3-5 (‘And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord?...’). No mention is made there of several features of Rubens’s composition which had long become standard, such as the mounted St Paul, the host of riders which surround him, and the nocturnal aspect of the scene. Here Paul is shown just after his collapse from his sprawling horse, surrounded by the rest of his train (including a caravan of camels on the left) all in various stages of amazement or disarray. A group of soldiers and youths attempts to help him to his feet on the left, others look on in astonishment, either at Paul or at the heavenly apparition, while beyond him three figures rush with fright in various directions. On the right, the horses themselves rear in panic.

The painting may be dated to c. 1602, on the basis of its analogies with other works by Rubens of this period. While the deliberate contrast between the nocturnal setting and the irruption of light emanating from a divine apparition in the centre above produces an overall effect not dissimilar to the 1605 Transfiguration at Nancy, Müller Hofstede has correctly pointed to closer similarities with works dating from earlier in the Italian period. Whereas the painting in Nancy appears to be lit for the most part by a single unified light source, the figures in the present work reflect light from a number of different directions. In this respect it is even closer to a number of works with rather similar contrasts of illumination and shadow, such as the 1602 Crowning with Thorns and the Borghese Entombment and Susanna, both of which are probably to be dated to 1601-02. Dramatic light effects combined with rearing horses and wildly gesticulating figures are also to be found in the more or less contemporary Fall of Phaethon in a private collection in London. Individual figures as well have parallels in other works of these years: Müller Hofstede pointed to the similarity between the facial type of Christ here and in the Entombment, between the bearded head in profile on Paul’s left and the foremost of the two men in the Susanna, and between the type of putto on the left of Christ and those which appear in the Grasse St Helena of 1602. The treatment of the mane of the horse in front of the camels and its thin fluttering strands may be paralleled in the equestrian portrait of the Duke of Lerma of 1603. Further connections are to be found with slightly later works of the Italian period: the face
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seen in three-quarter profile on the right looking upwards recurs in the figure on the extreme right of the Genoa Circumcision and the helmeted soldier looking outwards at the back of the right hand group reappears in the sketch for St Gregory the Great surrounded by other Saints in Berlin.9

As Müller Hofstede noted, the work is not painted on bolus, and the modelling and the tentative brushwork on the flesh, with its green and grey hues, consists of rather short brushstrokes. These are features which may be found in the other early works by Rubens cited above; also characteristic of the early years is the deep blue and green sky, and the use of bright and variegated colours in the garments, which already by the time of the Transfiguration had become more unified.

The Italian sources of the present scene have been well analysed by Müller Hofstede. It is, in the first instance, to be seen in the context of Rubens’s response to Leonardo’s Battle of Anghiari.10 The transformation of motifs from this work into a nocturnal scene with dramatic illumination should also be seen, as Jaffé rightly noted, in terms of his experience of Tintoretto and Elsheimer.11 Jaffé appropriately characterized the appeal for Rubens, in this and his subsequent representations of the subject, of ‘rearing and plunging horses, wild lightning and the intricacies of violence and speed’, which he would have found in a work such as Elsheimer’s Conversion of St Paul.12 As to the specific sources for this subject, Rubens had a multitude of precedents to draw upon, and it is likely that his impressions were reflected in a general rather than in a particular way in the present work. Nonetheless, a number of possible sources for particular aspects may be mentioned here. It is one of those depictions of the event which clearly show the presence of Christ (despite the fact that only a light from heaven is recorded in the apostolic text). In this respect it belongs to the iconographic group which derives from Raphael’s interpretation of the scene for the Sistine tapestries.13 Indeed, the relationship between Christ and St Paul in the scene by Raphael is close to that depicted here, and his figure of Christ—especially the relative position of the arms—may well be the source for the equivalent figure by Rubens.

Amongst the many intermediate sources which could be cited, the most important is perhaps the painting by Salviati in the Doria Gallery.14 But the motif of the figure of Paul falling off his sprawling horse with his legs still just round the horse’s body could almost equally well have been derived from Ercole Procaccini’s painting in S. Giacomo Maggiore in Bologna,15 or even from Boldrini’s woodcut after Titian16 (which may also have provided other elements for the present composition). In all likelihood, the idea for the saint lying on the ground assisted by one or more men bending over him, in this and in all subsequent representations of the subject by Rubens, came most directly from Michelangelo’s fresco in the Capella Paolina in the Vatican. Held has also noted the importance of an engraving by Marten de Vos (No.6 in a series of the Acts of the Apostles) for the motif in Rubens’s paintings of four soldiers mounted on excited steeds. It will be clear, however, that in view of the many versions of the event which are closely related to each other, none may be said with certainty to have been Rubens’s immediate source. The present work most likely constitutes a resolution of the general impressions he must have had of
the many representations of the subject available to him. 17

It is possible that the painting came from the collection of Nicholas Rockox. It was for many years in the possession of the Roose family, who took over the Rockox house after his death in 1640, in the same year as Jan Roose succeeded Rockox as Burgomaster of the city. Indeed, 'e'en schilderye olieverwe op pannel in sijn lijste wesende de bekeeringe van St Paulus' occurs in the inventory of Rockox's pictures taken upon his death, 18 and may well be the present work. But caution should be exercised in making this connection. In support of the identity of this work with the one cited in the inventory, Millier Hofstede claimed that apart from the two later paintings by Rubens (Nos.30 and 31), other 'Netherlandish representations from the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries have, as far as we can see, not been handed down.'19 But aside from the famous work by Bruegel in Vienna, other illustrations of the subject from the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries include the works by F. van Valckenborch in a private collection in Budapest, Kerstiaen de Keuninck in the collection of V.J. Mayring in Nuremberg in 1960, Joos de Momper on loan to the Niedersächsische Landesgalerie in Hanover in 1953, Cornelis van Haarlem in Prague, Jan Brueghel formerly in Vienna, 20 and a number of others. While the evidence from the Rockox inventory, therefore, is not conclusive, it remains strongly circumstantial.

Apart from its intrinsic interest and its importance as an addition to Rubens's early work, the significance of this painting in the context of the present catalogue lies in the fact that it represents the first in a series of compositions of this subject by Rubens. All the subsequent Conversions refer back, to a greater or lesser degree, to the present composition. They are discussed at greater length in the following entries.

1. For suggestions on the iconographic origins of Paul as a horseman, see E. von Dohrschütz, in Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft, I, 1920, pp.106-108.
2. K.d.K., p.15.
3. Vlieghe, Saints, II, No.111, Fig.34.
4. K.d.K., p.20 and p.19 left respectively.
5. (Cat. Exh.), Cologne, 1977, pp.145-146, No.7, and p.335 (repr.).
6. Vlieghe, Saints, II, No.110, Fig.31.
9. Vlieghe, Saints, II, No.109d, Fig.25.
12. Jaffe, 1977, p.53; for more precise details of the influence of this composition by Elsheimer on Rubens, see under No.30 below. It should be noted that the Elsheimer is almost contemporary with the Rubens; Andrews, op. cit., p.140 dates it to c.1598-99.
14. Conveniently illustrated in W.Friedländer, Mannerism and Anti-Mannerism in Italian Painting, New York, 1965, pl.29. This composition by Saliari was engraved by E.Vico in 1545 and was reflected in the well known tile picture of 1547 now in the Vleeshuis in Antwerp (see J.Douillez, 'De Bekering van Saulus'. Aanvullende Gegevens over een befaamd Tegeltableau in het Vleeshuis, Antwerpen, 1957, pp.45-47.
17. This applies to the later Conversions discussed in the following entries (Nos.30-34), where further possible sources will also be found. For a thorough analysis of the various iconographic traditions in the 16th century, see W.Friedländer, op. cit., pp.68-71, and Friedländer, Caravaggio Studies, pp.18-27, both with copious illustrations.

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30. The Conversion of St Paul (Fig.67)

Oil on panel; 95.2 x 120.7 cm.

London, Courtauld Institute of Art, Princes Gate Collection, Inv. No.21

Provenance: ?Prince of Orange sale, Het Loo;¹ collection of the Elector Palatine, Johann-Wilhelm von der Pfalz-Neuburg, Düsseldorf; transferred to the Hofgarten galerie, Munich, in 1806; transferred to the Alte Pinakotheck, Munich, in 1838, the year of its foundation; transferred to the Gallery in Speyer before 1927; bought by Count Antoine Seilern in 1938.

Copy: Painting, whereabouts unknown; panel, 96 x 125 cm. Provenance: Collection Pouppez, Brussels, 1926; Consul Fritz Schleif, Berlin, 1927; Berthold Waldner, Berlin, 1928; sale, Berlin (Lepke), 28 March, 1935.


Several recollections of the painting of this subject in Courtrai (No.29; Fig.64) may be found in the present composition, and both the overall mood and the pictorial effects are similar to those in the earlier work. Once again, the Conversion of St Paul appears to be shown as a nocturnal event (although the darkening of the sky may simply have been intended as a means of making the divine apparition all the more brilliant). Once again, Paul has tumbled from his mount and is encircled by a mêlée of men and horses. But here Paul has slipped further from his horse, and his body is turned so that his arms are parallel to the bottom edge of the painting. In the case of both the other paintings of this subject by Rubens (Nos.29 and 31; Figs.64 and 74) the horse is shown in the process of throwing Paul off its back; here, however, it is almost clear of the apostle and already begins to start up on its hind legs. The other horses, especially the great rearing horse in the centre of the composition, are shown in even greater disarray than in the previous
work. The eastern setting is emphasized (in the absence of camels) by the three turbaned riders, in particular the colourful contingent on the right.

For the group of the apostle and his horse and the foremost figure helping him to his feet, Rubens probably recalled the version of this subject by Taddeo Zuccaro in San Marcello al Corso in Rome² (although the position of the muscular attendant's hands is rather closer to that in the drawing for the present composition discussed below, No.3oa: Fig.69).

A closer parallel to the figure of Paul himself and the starting horse restrained by a youth may be found in the painting of the same subject by Elsheimer in Frankfurt.³ From Elsheimer too he may have derived the idea for the group of orientals at the right of the picture: as Held pointed out, they recall Rubens's drawing in London adapted from Elsheimer's Stoning of St Stephen (Fig.72).⁴ Various earlier Northern prints have been suggested as the source for several of the elements in Rubens's composition, but they are too vague to be of any particular significance here.⁵ Hans Baldung Grien's 1514 woodcut of this subject⁶ may, for example, be the source of the great rearing horse on its hind legs in the centre of the composition, but a closer precedent for this feature (and possibly others) is Michelangelo's Conversion of St Paul in the Cappella Paolina (or the engraving after it by Nicholas Béatrizet?). As in the case of No.29, the dramatic contrasts between light and darkness throughout the work reflect, in a general sense, Rubens's reaction to Tintoretto's paintings in the Scuola di San Rocco in Venice.

Count Seilern assigned a dating of c.1615 or slightly later to the present work whereas in his book on the drawings Feld suggested the period between 1612 and 1614. Held's arguments there are worth repeating, not because they provide sufficient or conclusive evidence in support of his dating, but because they cast some light on the evolution of certain motifs to be found within the painting. One of the heads on the drawing by Elsheimer already referred to⁸ recurs on the same sheet as a drawing for the Adoration of the Shepherds at Fermo of 1607-08;⁹ the young shepherd on the left of the Fermo altarpiece¹⁰ was used again in modified form for the youth with the naked torso in the right middleground of the composition, who shields his eyes and has a drapery billowing from his wrist; and this figure was finally turned into the man on the left of the Flagellation of 1617.¹¹ At first I was inclined to date the work to around 1613-14, but the marked similarities in technique and treatment with the predella panels of the Raising of the Cross of 1610-12¹² suggest a dating from that time instead.

This dating has now received support from Held in his most recent assessment of the work (in his book on the oil sketches). Here, furthermore, he put forward an additional hypothesis about the evolution of the final composition. On the basis of the many pentimenti revealed by the X-ray photos published by Count Seilern (Fig.68), he suggested the painting may have been altered at a later stage, and claimed that the figures of Christ and the two putti 'clearly belong to a reworking of c.1620, which may also be responsible for the addition of a turbaned man at the right, and possibly of other figures, and some modifications on the youth holding the saint's horse'. The suggestion gains further plausibility in the light of Rubens's renewed occupation with the theme around 1620 (cf. No.31a below), although it is by no means clear from the X-rays that the figures of Christ
and the putti are in fact a later addition. For the rest of the work, however, Held's discussion now firmly implies a dating of around 1610-12.

Amongst the changes in the painted surface revealed by the X-rays (Fig.68) but not noted by Held, the most important are these: Paul's right hand was originally extended directly upwards, slightly towards the spectator, while the nude figure helping him raised his left hand as if to shield his eyes from the glare of the heavenly apparition; the inclined head of a horse could be seen immediately above the head of the figure restraining the great horse in the centre of the composition (this and the preceding pentiment appear, significantly, in the drawing, No.30a below, as well); a second figure could be seen looking upwards alongside the horseman also looking upward on the left; the figure in the centre of the right half of the composition with his back turned away from the melée appears to be painted in a different medium (perhaps the oil was modified by the addition of stand oil or another such constituent) from the rest of the painted surface; and there are traces of a figure upside down in the upper right hand corner of the composition.

The condition of the work is good, and the rich tonalities of the colours (the remarkably deep blue of the sky, Christ's red cloak, the silver-grey rearing horse in the centre, the brown piebald in the foreground and the swirling bronze drape of the rider on the right) are very well preserved. Burchard suggested that a strip of about 2.5 cm. was added above and painted by Rubens himself. The work has clearly not been overpainted despite the negative judgements of Oldenbourg, Kieser and others. It was probably largely as a result of these that the work was transferred firstly to the Filialgalerie in Speyer, and then finally sold on the art market in Berlin in 1938.

This Conversion of St Paul must once have formed a pendant to the Defeat of Sennacherib now in Munich (Fig.66). The two works are the same size and both depict a sudden emanation of light from an unexpected divine apparition, which throws all below, horses and men, into confusion. As Count Seilern observed, the one painting is almost the mirror image of the other; but which hung on the left and which on the right is less easy to determine. If one imagines the Sennacherib on the left and the St Paul on the right, the rays of light converge towards the centre of the pair, with the two dominating horses rearing outwards in a contrary direction. The consequent tension they set up within the composition is arrested by the crowded group of horsemen at each outer edge, and the pair would then have been enclosed by the mounted figures in turbans. Several further elements in each composition suggest that they were balanced in this way, as observed by Count Seilern, but it should be noted that the engraving by Mechel of the relevant portion of the Düsseldorf Gallery shows the opposite arrangement, with the St Paul on the left, and the Sennacherib on the right. The fact that there would then be a central light source for the pair is an argument in favour of this disposition with the great rearing horses in the centre forming a further unifying feature. It is, therefore, rather difficult to establish in which way these works would have been intended to hang, although the first arrangement is perhaps slightly more likely in compositional terms alone.

Beyond such pictorial and compositional considerations, I have been unable to find
anydocumentaryoriconographic evidence to suggest the motives for the pairing of these two works; and their original function must also remain obscure.

The present work represents a further stage in the development of a pictorial theme first adumbrated in the Death of Hippolytus of 1609–11.¹⁰ A central figure lies sprawled or tossed from a rearing horse, while the other men and horses around him either flee or are in various states of fright, all amidst dramatic light effects. The theme and motifs are explored further in the Death of Sennacherib, and receive their most complex expression in the Battle of the Amazons of c.1619.¹⁷ Furthermore, the importance of the two main figures in the foreground for subsequent compositions by Rubens can hardly be overestimated. As Held has most recently noted, the upside-down figure of St Paul occurs again in the Death of Maxentius in the Constantine series, and, with some variation, in the Miracles of St Ignatius Loyola;¹⁸ while the figure of the crouching youth turning his head inward as he assists St Paul—which first appears in the drawing for this composition (No.30)—recurs not only in the later St Paul (No.31), but also in works such as the Stoning of St Stephen, the Miracles of St Ignatius Loyola, and the St Francis of Paola.¹⁹

It is possible that this is the Conversion of St Paul which the Amsterdam poet Jan Vos saw in the home of the Burgomaster of Amsterdam, Gerrit Schaap, between 1650 and 1660,²⁰ especially in the light of its purported later provenance from Her Loo. But the evidence is not specific and the reference could also be to another version of this subject by Rubens.

1. According to the 1922 Catalogue of the Alte Pinakothek, p.141.
2. Illustrated in Friedländer, Caravaggio Studies, fig.7.
4. British Museum, Inv. No. O0.9-30 (Hind, No.44); engraved by P. Surnam V.S., p.135, No.76; Held, p.197. On the relationship between Elsheimer's design and Rubens's drawing, see J. Jost, A Newly Discovered Painting by Adam Elsheimer, Burlington Magazine, CVIII, 1966, pp.3–6. The original source for these heads may well have been the turbaned rider on the left of Elsheimer's Stoning of St Stephen in Edinburgh, Andrews, op. cit., No.15; cf. Seilern, Addenda, p.20. In addition, the turbaned head of the figure on the extreme right of his drawing for the Forno Nativity (see note 10 below) in the Historisch Museum in Amsterdam (Held, No.18), which is probably also dependent on Elsheimer.
5. F. Lugt, Rubens and Stimmer, Art Quarterly, VI, 1943, suggested several similarities with the woodcut of this subject by Jost Amman in the Icones Novi Testamenti of 1571; he also pointed to a possibly closer connection with the woodcut by T. Stimmer in the Neue Kunsthische Figuren Biblischer Historien, Basle, 1576.
7. Bartch XV, 255, 33. The same powerful motif of the horse rearing was used earlier in the centre of the painting of the Death of Hippolytus, also in the Prince's Gate Collection, Courtauld Institute of Art (Seilern, No.6), a work whose importance in the origins of the theme of tumbling figures and rearing horses against a dramatically dark background should be noted here.
8. Note 4 above.
11. K.d.K., p.87.
13. As pointed out by Seilern, p.39, on the basis of the good X-rays published in Seilern, pl.LI.
14. K.d.K., p.150. It is not impossible that in both these compositions, Rubens may have recalled Antonio Tempesta’s engraving of the Death of Sennacherib and Jan Brueghel’s Battle of the Israelites and Amalekites in Dresden; see K. Ertz, Jan Brueghel der Jüngere, Die Gemälde, Cologne, 1970, pp.240–257.
15. In Pigage, pl.XX.
17. K.d.K., p.196. For the initial development of this theme, from the early Hippolytus to the present St Paul, see Kieser, op. cit., pp.655-657; and Seilern.
p.37; for the place of the *Death of Decius Mus* in the further evolution of this theme, see below, p.125.


19. *K.d.K.*, pp.158 and 204, *Held, Oil Sketches*, No.407, respectively; noted in *Held, Oil Sketches*, p.580, where the suggestion is also made that the derivation of this pose may well be from one, or perhaps two, engravings by Barthel Beham (Bartsch 16 and 17) depicting battles of nude men.


**30a. The Conversion of St Paul:**

**Drawing (Fig.69)**

Pen and brown ink with brown wash, heightened in a few places with white bodycolour, a few corrections in white chalk; 22.2 × 33 cm.; *left half*: 22.2 × 10.5 cm.; below on the left the marks of P.H.Lankrink (L.2090), Sir Joshua Reynolds (L.2364), and Sir Thomas Lawrence (L.2445); on the verso an inscription in black chalk: *Conversion of S Paul. Vandyck, Lawrence, Collin; right half*: 22.2 × 16.4 cm.; two strips of paper pasted on the sheet and drawn over by Rubens himself; below on the right the marks of P.H.Lankrink and Sir Joshua Reynolds; on the verso an inscription in pen by Sir Joshua Reynolds: *The picture is at Düsseldorf.*

London, Courtauld Institute of Art, Princes Gate Collection, Inv. No. 57.

**Provenance:** *left half*: ?J.P.Happaert (Antwerp, second half of the seventeenth century); P.H.Lankrink (London, 1628-1692); Sir Joshua Reynolds (London, 1723-1792); Sir Thomas Lawrence (London, 1769-1830); Oxford, Ashmolean Museum.

**Right half:** ?J.P.Happaert; P.H.Lankrink; Sir Joshua Reynolds; art market, Paris, c.1939-43; sale, Leipzig (Boerner), 30 March to 1 April, 1943, lot 124.

**Exhibited:** *left half*: London, 1950, No.42.


Apart from St Paul's horse in the centre, the groom restraining it, the general similarity in the figures helping St Paul, and the dog to the right of the horse, there are substantial differences between the present drawing and the painting. The most striking of these is the group of camels and their riders on the left half of the drawing (in which Rubens undoubtedly recalled the similar group on the left of the early painting in Courtrai, No.29; Fig.64). These suggest the Syrian context of the scene and may be found in many earlier representations of this subject. It has been observed that the motif of the mother and child with another child clinging to her back is derived ultimately from the Asa-Joram-Josaphat lunette in the Sistine Ceiling, but it may have been taken more directly from a similar group on a donkey in the engraving of the *Return of Jacob's Family from Egypt* by Cornelis Cort after Frans Floris. Most of the other figures and horses in the mêlée do not recur in the painting (with the exception of the fleeing horse in the background of the right half which appears in reversed
form on the left of the painting). Here as in the oil sketch (No.30b; Fig.70) St Paul lies parallel to the picture plane, and not at right angles to it, as in the painting.4

Despite these differences, however, the drawing, like the painting, displays a considerable number of pentimenti; and some of these involve figures which are significantly similar to ones initially represented on the painting, as revealed by the X-rays referred to in the preceding entry. In this respect it should be noted that one of the formulations of the figure helping Paul is in the same position as in the early version of that figure in the painting, with one hand extended upwards; that bending forward over Paul is the faintly indicated figure of a further attendant; and that immediately to the left of the turbanned figure in the centre of the composition is the inclined head of a horse—just as in the earlier stage of the composition revealed by the X-rays. The fact that none of these figures occurs in the sketch (No.30b below) may lend further support to the hypothesis proposed here: that the sketch was made after the drawing—perhaps, indeed, after the initial formulation of the painting as recorded by the X-rays.

Held noted the relationship between the 'spotty treatment of light' and the rather wild figures of this drawing with other works done around 1610–12.5 Apart from the Raising of the Cross and its predella panels,6 a similar treatment of both figures and light may be found in the Resurrection panel from the Moretus epitaph of 1611–12 (No.1; Fig.3). If one turns for comparison to the datable drawings, the graphic style of the present work seems close to the studies for the Presentation and Visitation of 16117 although it may represent a slightly greater degree of sophistication in the otherwise rather similar use of pen and ink with wash. A satisfactory dating would therefore seem to be c.1611–12, but possibly a little earlier.

That the drawing, now reunited in the Princes Gate Collection, existed as two separate sheets at quite an early date is suggested by the presence of the marks of Lankrink and Reynolds on both halves of the sheet (with Lawrence’s mark only on the left half). It will be noticed that the pen lines do not quite meet in the centre of the drawing. The simplest explanation for this is that the sheet must once have formed the opposite pages of a sketchbook, in which case Rubens would obviously have drawn across the centrefold without being able to continue right down to the binding. The suggestion made by Count Seilern, that Rubens may have torn out an earlier version of the right hand page, to draw the present half on the page underneath, should not be discounted as an explanation of the apparent lack of continuity between the lines in the centre of the sheet. It is also worth bearing in mind Count Seilern’s hypothesis that the abandonment of the left half of the composition in the final version is to be accounted for by Rubens’s subsequent decision to make the Conversion a pendant of the Defeat of Sennacherib.8

It seems possible that the drawing was originally owned by J.P. Happaert, Canon of Antwerp Cathedral in the second half of the seventeenth century, in whose collection three two-piece drawings are recorded.9 Two other such divided drawings survive: The Death of Hippolytus in Bayonne,10 and the Garden of Love in the Metropolitan Museum in New York.11

The now reunited St Paul drawings are in good condition. Pentimenti are especially noticeable on the right of the left half,
where lines once erased (including a figure leaning forward over Paul) have again become visible. A rectangular and a larger square piece of paper have been pasted over the right hand side of the right sheet, presumably in order to facilitate alterations to an original design.

1. As made clear in the course of this entry, this drawing was separated into two halves before being reunited by Count Seilern.

2. K.d.K., Michelangelo, p.85; observed by Held, p.107.

3. Reproduced in Held, I, fig.40; cf. ibid., p.107.

4. This figure is fairly close—though not identical—to the body at the bottom of the Defeat of Sennacherib (K.d.K., p.156) and the drawing for it in the Albertina (Burchard-d’Hulst, 1963, No.53).


6. K.d.K., p.36; for the surviving predella panel of The Miracle of St Walburga, see S.Heiland, Two Rubens Paintings Rehabilitated, The Burlington Magazine, CXI, 1969, pp.421-427. Comparison may also be made with the closely related Miraculous Draught of Fishes (K.d.K., p.31) engraved by Soutman (repr. in Oldenbourg, 1912, fig.31); wrongly said by Held, I, p.107, to be one of the predella panels of the Raising of the Cross.


8. K.d.K., p.150; cf. the discussion on p.116 above.


30b. The Conversion of St Paul:
Oil Sketch (Fig.70)

Oil on panel; 56 × 79 cm.
London, Courtauld Institute of Art, Princes Gate Collection, Inv. No.20.

Provenance: Galerie Louis Manteau, Brussels, 1925; bought by F.Koenigs, Haarlem, in 1936.

Exhibited: Amsterdam, 1933, No.9; Rotterdam, 1935, No.20; Brussels, 1937, No.29.


Although more cursorily depicted, the group of camels and the figures they bear is approximately the same as in the drawing (No.30a; Fig.69) for The Conversion of St Paul: so is the figure with the raised right arm immediately behind them. But the basic compositional structure of the drawing has been changed: the great S-like curve dominating the centre of the composition (in the painting as well) is absent, and the group of fleeing men on the lower left of the drawing is here supplanted by a dog. The figure of Paul has been brought to the very edge of the sketch, as in the painting (although there the saint lies at an angle to the picture plane). The two helpers on the left of St Paul are the same as in the drawing, but the figure immediately beyond him leaning over his chest is fully sketched in, unlike the rather vague depiction of the equivalent attendant in the drawing. The horse and its position are unlike both
drawing and painting. Held perceptively observed that the present sketch is the only one of Rubens's compositions of the subject to show the normal pattern of the Conversion (as it appears in both Raphael and Michelangelo) with the horse attempting to get away, despite the efforts of the groom. Beyond the horse is a broadly sketched rider—possibly wearing a turban—in a contrapposto pose on a horse seen directly from behind; this motif recurs in the painting. The man beyond him in the distance with his arms extended to the left may well be derived from a fairly standard figure in paintings of the Conversion scene, such as the one which occurs on the far right of Salvati's composition in the Doria Gallery, itself an important source for all Rubens's representations of this subject. A similar fleeing figure is to be found on the lower right of the Hippolytus drawing in Bayonne; and the position of the arms of that figure is in turn recalled by the child standing on the camel on the left of the present sketch.

Burchard, who was the first to publish this sketch and to note its connections with the painting from Count Seilern's collection, also remarked on its technical similarity with the presumably slightly later sketch for a Lion Hunt in Leningrad. The paint was initially laid on rather thinly with a soft brush. Some of the initial modelling of the forms was also done in this manner, but then a coarser and stiffer brush was used to apply thicker colours, especially in the highlights and in areas such as the figure bending over St Paul. The condition of the sketch is very good. It is of a much blonder overall tonality than usual in Rubens's sketches. Above on the left the sky is a light blue; the woman on the back of the camel is in red, as is the figure restraining the horse on the lower right. The figures in the foreground are painted in a thin buff-shaded layer. The extraordinary swiftness of the brushwork is nowhere more striking than in the almost white brushstrokes which delineate the horses and their riders on the right. Thicker impastos form the highlights on the armour of St Paul and the figure above him. Few other sketches by Rubens have been executed with the same impetuous brilliance and speed as this one.

Although Burchard dated the sketch to c.1613-14, Held has now firmly argued in favour of 1610-12. This dating is acceptable not only on technical and stylistic grounds, but also because it then fits logically into the most likely sequence of the various stages in the evolution of the final composition.

It is difficult, however, to determine whether the drawing preceded the sketch, or vice-versa. Count Seilern argued cogently in favour of the sequence: sketch—drawing—painting; but Held has raised the possibility that the drawing may have preceded the sketch. The following are the main arguments in favour of the possibility that the drawing came after the sketch: 1) this sequence would be more in accord with Rubens's usual practice; 2) the position of the horse and its relationship to St Paul in the painting is closer to the drawing than to the sketch; 3) the dog is in more or less the same position in the drawing as in the painting (whereas in the sketch it is on the opposite side of the composition; and 4) the great S-shaped curve in the centre of the composition, as observed by Count Seilern, is similar in the painting and the drawing. These are strong arguments, but they are not necessarily conclusive. There is no reason why Rubens should not have returned to elements in the drawing such
as those noted here after having produced the oil sketch. So much of the drawing is absent from the painting that one should consider the possibility, first suggested by Held, that the sketch represents an attempt to concentrate the rather sprawling composition of the drawing—particularly in view of the speed with which the sketch was evidently executed. In the latter, the group of Paul and the attendants has been brought closer to the foreground, 'giving it approximately the same place and weight as in the final painting', and the agitated group in the left hand corner of the drawing has been eliminated, to be replaced by the dog. Furthermore, while it could be argued that the group of camels on the drawing represents an elaboration of the same group on the sketch, it seems more likely that this area on the sketch, painted in swift strokes, reproduces a part of the composition which had already been developed, but was not yet to be discarded. The hypothesis proposed here, therefore, is that the sketch represents a quickly painted intermediate stage in the evolution of the composition, and that in the final painting Rubens returned, as was his wont, to some features of the earlier stage, here represented by the drawing. In the entry for the drawing (No.304), further arguments have been adduced in favour of this hypothesis, including the suggestion that the sketch may have been painted after the initial painting of the final composition: the drawing shows features which are present in the initial formulation on the panel but are significantly absent, as has been noted above, from both the sketch and the painting as it now appears. This suggestion would also go some way to accounting for the obvious haste in which the sketch was painted.

Nonetheless, it is clear that neither drawing nor sketch is very close to the final version, and the possibility that yet another intermediate stage has been lost should not be excluded. In addition, whereas the drawing and the sketch may have been executed almost contemporaneously, it must be assumed that the painting was produced at a slightly later stage, as implied by the datings proposed above.⁷

1. Illustrated in W. Friedländer, Mannerism and Anti-Mannerism in Italian Painting, New York, 1965, pl.20; cf. p.113 note 14 above.
2. Burchard-d’Hulst, 1963, No.39; for the importance of this drawing in the development of Rubens’s treatment of the Conversion theme, see p.117 of the present volume.
6. Amongst the features to which Rubens reverted, see, for example the horsemans rushing off to the right in the drawing but to the left in the painting.
7. It is naturally possible to propose more complex sequences of development than those suggested here, especially if the possible intermediary role of the drawing after Elsheimer in London (Fig.72; see p.117, note 4 above) is taken into account, but these need not be considered here.

30c. Study of Three Horsemen: Drawing (Fig.71)

Pen and brown ink; 21.5 x 15.7 cm. Below on the right (in another hand): P. P. Rub.; on the verso the mark of Franz Koenigs. Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen. Inv. No. V.96.

PROVENANCE: V. Koch, London; sale, Amsterdam (Muller), 21 November, 1929, lot 32; bought by F. Koenigs (Haarlem, 1881–1941) in 1930; given by D.G. van Beuningen to the Stichting Museum Boymans, Rotterdam, in 1940.

EXHIBITED: Amsterdam, 1933, No.82; Meesterwerken uit vier eeuwen, Museum
Boymans, Rotterdam, 1938, No.342; Antwerp, 1956, No.52.

LITERATURE: Burchard-d'Hulst, 1938, pp.58, 59, No.52; Seilern, p.39.

This group of three riders, two of them wearing turbans, recalls, in general terms, Rubens's drawing in the British Museum adapted from a composition by Elsheimer (Fig.72). There is also a strong similarity between the head of the turbaned rider on the right—a similarity even closer in the painting—and that on the upper right of the drawing for the Fermo Adoration of the Shepherds in the Historisch Museum in Amsterdam.2

The two riders on the right of the drawing appear to be elaborations of the two similar figures on the right of the oil sketch for the Conversion of St Paul (No.30b; Fig.70): in the final version (No.30; Fig.67) only the rider on the lower right has been retained. The rider on the left of this drawing does not appear to occur in any of the surviving stages in the evolution of the composition, but is possibly reflected in the second turbaned head on the right of the painting (although it may conceivably have provided the basis for the horseman with the turban in the centre there).

The present drawing therefore appears to represent an intermediate stage between sketch and painting, but the possibility that it was executed before the sketch should also be considered. The most likely dating would thus seem to be c.1611-12, despite a superficial resemblance in graphic style to drawings of the Italian period, such as the Battle Group on the verso of the Edinburgh Hero and Leander sheet, and The Preaching of John the Baptist in Rotterdam.5

2. Held, No.18; Burchard-d'Hulst, 1938, No.41; cf. p.115 above.
3. The fact that this figure occurs in both the oil sketch (No.30b) and the painting (No.30) but not in the drawing (No.30a) provides further support for the argument on pp.121-122 above that the drawing preceded the sketch in the evolution of the final composition.
5. Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Inv. No. V.104; exhibited Cologne, 1975, No.30 (repr.; with full bibliography).

31. The Conversion of St Paul (Fig.74)

Oil on canvas; 261 x 371 cm.

Formerly Berlin, Kaiser Friedrich-Museum.

PROVENANCE: ?Władysław IV, King of Poland (1595-1658); Montesquieu family; ?Louis, Duc de la Roche-Guyon et de la Rochefoucauld d'Enville (d. 1792); A. Delahante; sale, London (Phillips), 23 May, 1806, lot 28; Hastings Elwin sale, London (Phillips), 24 May, 1810, lot 68; bought by G. Harris; R. Hart Davies; Sir Philip Miles, Leigh Court, Bristol; Miles sale, London (Christie's), 28 June, 1884, lot 63 (bought in); sale, London (Christie's), 13 May, 1899, lot 27; bought by Agnew's; Sedelmeyer, Paris, 1901; bought by W. von Bode for the Kaiser Friedrich-Museum, Berlin, in 1903.

COPIES: (1) Painting in grisaille, probably by A. van Diepenbeeck, whereabouts unknown; oil on paper, 43 x 58.5 cm.; prov. collection of the Earls of Northumberland; sale, London (Christie's), 9 April, 1954, lot 114; bought by the William Hallsborough Gallery; (2) Painting, Winterthur, O. Reinhardt; panel, 55 x 78 cm.; prov. Kolenyi sale, 26 November, 1917; Marczell von Nemes.
Munich; Steinmeyer, Lucerne, in 1924; (3) Painting, Pamplona, Bandres collection; copper, 28.5 x 18 cm.; lit. J. R. Buen­dia, Sobre Escalante, Archivo Español de Arte, XLIII, 1970, p.41; (4) Painting, Ghent, St Bavo; canvas; (5) Painting (excluding the figures on the left of the original composition), whereabouts unknown; panel; prov. E. J. Mayer, Toronto, 1951; photo­graph in the Burchard documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp; (6) Drawing, whereabouts unknown; pen and ink; prov. ?J. W. von Goethe; Grisar family; S. Hartveld, Antwerp; lit. C. Schuchardt, Goethes Kunstsammlungen, Jena, 1848, I, p.309, No.877; (7) Engraving by S. A. Bolswert (V.S., p.63, No.468); inscrip­tion: Illustrissimo ac Reverendissimo Domino, D. ANTONIO TRIST GaneSium, Dei gra­tia, Episcopo, S. Bavonis Domino, Ever her­gensi Comiti, Doctorum Maecenati, omnium ingenuarum artium admiratori, lau­datori, in Ecclesiam profuso, in pauperes benefico, in nobiles benigno, in omnes comi. a cuius manu nullus irremunera tus abijt, nullus moerens et spe sua frustratus, cum etiam absentium lacrinas munificentiae suae sponsia detergere consueverit. Vero, Aposto­licae doctrinae et vitae, haeredi magni S. Pauli amatori, imitator, e Saullo Paulum. S. A. Bols­wert MM.DD.SS.


This is the latest of Rubens’s paintings of the Conversion of St Paul. As Count Seilern pointed out, however, it cannot be regarded as the final version of the drawing and sketch in the Princes Gate Collection (Nos.30b and 30c): this stage is represented by the finished painting also in that collection (No.30). The present work is, in fact, a new composition, although it draws in several ways on the earlier works representing this scene.

In the first place, it will be observed that Rubens reverted to a figure of St Paul which is more or less parallel to the picture plane (as in the sketch and drawing for the Princes Gate painting) rather than at a near right angle to it (as in the painting itself). Indeed, the figure of the apostle, especially with respect to the position of his legs, is closest to Rubens’s first conception of the motif in the early work in Courtrai (No.29). Several other motifs in the earlier works are reworked here. The horse on the left, for example, is an almost identical counterpart of the horse seen on the right of the Princes Gate painting; and its origins may be found in the horse on the right of the Courtrai painting, although there it is seen from behind, rather than from the front. The great rearing horse in the
centre of the composition here is a reworking of the central horse of the Princes Gate painting, and so on. The attendant who helps Paul to his feet occurs with little variation in the earlier compositions as well.

As in the previous works, Rubens is here indebted in a general way to earlier Italian representations of the subject. Friedländer assessed this indebtedness in stating that, without any direct derivation, Rubens's Conversion effectively transposes a Salviati or a Zuccaro composition out of mannerist forms into Baroque. On the other hand, it may perhaps be said that the vividness of the saint's emotion is not to be found in such works, but rather in the illustrations of this subject by Michelangelo and Caravaggio. Indeed, the head of the saint and his expression is strikingly similar to the latter's famous work in the Cerasi Chapel of Santa Maria del Popolo.

It is instructive to consider the relationship and parallels with other works by Rubens himself. The horse from which St Paul has fallen is a variant of the related animal in the Death of Hippolytus, one of the founts of Rubens's treatment of the Conversion scene. The armoured rider with the standard recalls the same figure in the same position in the Munich Defeat of Sennacherib (Fig.66). The two horses on the right are to be found on the early drawing of the Battle of the Amazons in the British Museum. The two horses on the right occur in similar form on the left of the Death of Decius Mus of 1617-18.

Of all Rubens's works, however, the closest associations with the present composition are provided by the great series of Hunts. Similarities are to be found not so much in individual motifs, but rather in the structure of these compositions as a whole. In all the other works by Rubens cited above, a mêlée of a large number of figures is depicted extending into the background of the scene, and they are viewed from a relative distance; in the present Conversion and in the Hunts the number of participants—both animal and human—is reduced, they are brought much closer to the picture plane, and are much larger in relation to the available space; in fact, they extend to the very edges of the composition. Of all the Hunts, the which is closest to the present work is one probably the Munich Lion Hunt, in terms of composition, motifs, and handling. All the other Hunts (with the possible exception of the ex-Bordeaux Lion Hunt) have a more diffuse structure than either the Munich Lion Hunt or the present Conversion of St Paul. Specific similarities between these two works include the helmed and armed rider in each, the great rearing horse (seen from behind in the Conversion and from the front in the Lion Hunt), and the face of the man fallen to the ground. And the handling of the faces, as well as the type and features of the horses, also seem more closely allied to this Hunt than to any of the others.

It was cogently demonstrated by Burckhard and reaffirmed by Rosand that whereas the four hunting scenes for the Elector Maximilian were executed around 1615-16, the Munich Lion Hunt (which does not belong to this series) must date from c.1621. The present Conversion should therefore also be dated to around 1621—or possibly slightly earlier, as its composition is perhaps not as tightly organized as that of the Lion Hunt. The possible participation of van Dyck in both these works may be discounted on chronological grounds alone. But in view of the loss of the Conversion in the Flakturm disaster of 1945, I cannot provide first
hand comments on the more detailed stylistic and technical qualities of this work; even if there were some studio participation (which is likely), an assessment of the role of assistants is no longer possible—certainly not with the aid of the available reproductions.

Burchard thought that it may well have been this picture which De Piles stated to have been made, along with a Lion Hunt, for 'the King of Poland', presumably Władysław IV, who as a young prince had visited Antwerp in 1624. But the matter is by no means straightforward, as emerges from the remarkable series of letters of 1675-76 between the Paris dealer Jean Picart and Matthijs Musson in Antwerp, concerning a Conversion of St Paul, in which Picart had apparently made a considerable investment. Throughout 1675, Picart had eagerly been trying to buy paintings by Rubens, in order to sell them in Paris. On 20 December of that year he wrote to Musson asking him to enquire whether there was a Conversion of St Paul by Rubens in the Netherlands (of which a print existed). Picart's description of the work makes it clear that he is referring to the present composition—if not this particular version itself. The letter continues by asking whether Rubens's pupils made copies of his paintings which he then retouched; and it concludes with a request to Musson to let him know if he hears of anything good by Rubens:

'* soo bidde ic Ul. my de wete te laten waer het stuk gaet in print wt. soo bidde ic Ul. my de wete te laten waer het stuk is met den erste en ghelyk Ul. disipel heb ghwesest van Rubens, soo ghoelove dat Ul. de particulieryt van wet. Ook bidde ic Ul. my te laten weten ofte Rubens syn dingen heft doen Kopier van syn disipels ende hy selver gheretoucheert ofte overschildert. Soo Ul. it vernemt dat frai is van Rubens, bide my de wete te late...*'

Picart had thus bought a Conversion of St Paul—of the present type—about which some doubt was beginning to be expressed.

A fortnight later, on 3 January, 1676, Picart wrote to Musson, thanking him for a drawing of the Conversion. The painting he owned of this subject, we now learn, came from the late King's Mother (presumably Marie de' Medici). Some thought it to be a retouched copy; Picart believed it to be the original: it would be to his advantage—as he had taken a substantial risk in buying the picture—if one could find out where exactly the Netherlands copy was:

'* ic ben Ul. bedankende van Ul. tekening van de Paulles bekeering. Hier is een dat comt van de Reine mere, de moeder van den overleden konink. Hier synder die willen hebben dat een gheretoucheerde kopy is naer Rubens ende ic ghoelove dat het princepael dat men kost weeten waer dat de kopy is, dat saude my favoriseren, dan ic hebbe een groote wedding ghedaen.*'

Soon he seems to have obtained the relevant information. On 10 January, 1676 he wrote to Musson that Gerard Edelinck, the Flemish engraver living in Paris, had told him that the Conversion of St Paul in the Netherlands was in fact on an altar in St Jopskerke in Brussels. But there were
still some people—including a good painter and a connoisseur (who was devoted to Rubens's work)—who maintained that the painting Picart had bought was an ordinary copy which had been retouched. Picart thus implored Musson to establish the truth of the matter.

"Mr hier is eenen plaetsnyder van Antwerpen Edelinx ghenaemt die haut staen dat de Pauwels bekeering in Nederland is op eenen autaer tot Brussellen in S. Jopskerke, het stuk van St Pauls dat hier is. Daer is een van onse fraeste meesters ende eenen kender die Rubens dingen seer bemint, die hauwen staen dat het maer een ghemyn kopy en is geretouchert. Soo bidde ic Ul. my die vrintschap te doen dat ic de rechte waryt kan van weten ende ic sal Ul. grootelyk gheobligert syn'.

Four days later, in a letter to his friend Noirtier in Brussels, Musson asked him to go to the Brussels church to see whether a Conversion of St Paul by Rubens was there after all. Musson also describes the work and refers to the fact that there was a print after it. He concludes by asking for Noirtier's advice in the matter, as the Paris Conversion had aroused much dispute amongst connoisseurs and collectors:

"Ick ben Ul. bieden dat Ul my soo veel vrinschap beliefden te doen eens te gaan in Sint Jopskarck ende eens sien oft daer een stuck schilderye is van Riebens de Sinte Pauels bekeerink. Daer is een wiet peert at struickelt, daer Sint Pauel af vaelt, eenen die hem hout een bruyn peert dat achter wt (slaet, een) peert heel hoemoek (recte omhoog?) sprint daer een tuich (recte turck) in een gel kleet van achter over valt. Daer is een print af van het stuck. Ick biede Ul. dat eens te gaan sien ende my eens afieseren wat daer af is oft het selve is want te Paer ys grote diecoerde is om dat stuck onder de kunstliefhebbers. Ul. hebt my maer te... '(and the letter breaks off). But then Edelinck provided Picart with a new piece of information. Upon making enquiries of a friend in Antwerp, the engraver had been assured that Rubens painted the St Paul for the King of Poland. Disconsolately Picart comments on how strange it was that Musson did not know its whereabouts: if only the truth could be known; and again he refers to the great risk he had taken:

"Monsieur Edelinx plaetsnyder van Antwerpen die hier woon, die heft gbeschreven an eenen vrint van Antwerpen naer den Sint Paules van Rubens ende den persoon die versekert dat Rubens dat ghemaekt heft voer den konik van Polen. Ic hebbe eene groote wedding ghedaen. Tis vremt dat Ul nit en wet waer dat stuck ghebleven is. Ik waude de waryt wel willen weten."

All that we may conclude from this series of letters is that Picart had bought a Conversion of St Paul—of the type discussed in the present entry—from the Queen Mother, presumably Marie de' Medici. Another version was supposed to exist in the Netherlands. The King of Poland was believed to have bought the original. We may further assume that the 'liefhebber who was devoted to Rubens and his works' and who doubted the authenticity of the Conversion, was in fact Roger de Piles; and that Picart had hoped to sell the picture to the Duc de Richelieu (Armand-Jean de Vignerot du Plessis, duc de Richelieu, 1629–1715), for whom he was seeking several other works by Rubens—including a Bacchus and an Andromeda, at the same time. Presumably, because of the doubts raised about the authenticity of the Conversion, the sale fell through, just as in the case of the other works as well.
But the Duke does appear to have owned the Munich *Lion Hunt*, to which the present composition is so similar, and which was also thought, by De Piles, to have come from the King of Poland.\(^{27}\) For another work by Rubens which the Duke did buy, see under No. 52 below.\(^{28}\)

Although Burchard suspected that the provenance of the present *Conversion of St Paul* should be traced back to Wałdyslaw IV, another equally plausible hypothesis emerges from the documents discussed here. Could it be that the *Conversion* referred to by Peiresc in his letter of 4 May, 1623 as being too large for Cardinal Richelieu was in fact the one Picart stated to have come from the collection of Marie de' Medici?\(^{29}\) She would then have been the earliest owner of the present work, which we would therefore have to suppose to be identical with the painting about which such controversy raged in Paris in 1676. This would also dovetail a little more neatly with the eighteenth-century French provenance given by Waagen and Smith and recorded above. De Piles's reference to 'The King of Poland' may simply be a repetition of the information—not confirmed in any other source—supplied by Edelinck to Picart; and as his suspicion of a work he thought only to have been retouched by Rubens is consistent with the critical reservations he expressed elsewhere about Rubens compositions, there may not, in the end, be sufficient grounds to exclude the possibility that the work discussed at such length in these documents is in fact to be identified with the *Conversion of St Paul*.

That confusion should have reigned at an early date because of copies of this work is not surprising, especially in the light not only of the surviving copies, but also of the large number of works which have over the years been attributed to Rubens and are probably not by him.\(^ {11}\) Some of these are discussed at the end of the following entry, along with sale references to works of this subject which cannot certainly be identified with any of the known works by Rubens.

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1. See by Burchard at Tooth's in London on 14 January, 1954; extensive notes in the Burchard documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp. The attribution is Burchard's.

2. Several other copies survive, which are clearly copies of the engraving by Bolswert; cf. the reports in the Antwerp newspapers *De Nieuwe Gaget*, 17 July, 1970, and *Het Laatste Nieuws*, 23 July, 1970, for examples of such copies in private collections in Belgium.


4. The works referred to specifically are Salviati's painting in the Palazzo Doria (Friedländer, *Manierism*, pl. 29) and Taddeo Zuccaro's in San Marcello al Corso in Rome (Friedländer, *Caravaggio Studies*, fig. 77) cf. also pp. 112, 115 above.


6. Painting in the collection of Count Seilern, Seilern, p. 32, No. 9; engraved by Earlom and reproduced in *Oldenburg*, 1922, p. 82.

7. K.d.K., p. 130.


12. Copy formerly in Northwick Park, Spencer-Churchill collection, illustrated in Rosand, op. cit., fig. 5.

13. It may also be noted here that in the New York Wolf and Fox Hunt (K.d.K., p. 112), as in the Dresden *Lion Hunt* (K.d.K., p. 113), the Rape of the Daughters of Leucippos (K.d.K., p. 131), the Death of Decius Mus (K.d.K., p. 140) and the Defeat of Sennacherib (Fig. 66, K.d.K., p. 156), one finds the same large-bodied and rather sleek dappled grey horse which no longer occurs in the Munich *Lion Hunt* (K.d.K., p. 154) and the present *Conversion of St Paul*.

14. Burchard, 1950, under No. 20; Rosand, op. cit., p. 29.

15. Mainly but not exclusively on the basis of the fact that one of the preparatory oil sketches for it occurs on the recto of a study for the *Marriage of Marie de' Medici* (sketch in the collection of the Marquess

16. Suggested by Oldenburg in K.D.K., p.291, where he also noted the overall similarity of these works.

17. 'La Chasse au Lions, par exemple, & la Châte de S.Paul ont esté laires pour le Roy de Pologne', De Piles, Dissertation, 1681, p.25.


20. Ibid., No.505, p.428.

21. Ibid., No.507, p.430.

22. Ibid., No.508, pp.430-431.

23. Ibid., No.513 (3 February, 1676), p.434.

24. This emerges most clearly from Picart's letter to Musson of 24 January, 1676, Denœu, Na Peter Pauvel Rubens, No.510, p.432, where he refers to 'eenen groote gheeleerde persoon ende groot liefhebber van de schilderey van Rubens. Hy saude gheeren sy leven schryven. De seifden persoon set dat Rubens in syn leven hadde gheschreven de regelen van de schilderey in lateyn van syn eygen haut (rite haut) ende dat die gheschonken hadde aen Menheer de kannink Xaviës'.

25. This emerges not only from many of the letters of Picart to the Duke of Richelieu but he had been offended by the bad treatment he had received and no longer wanted them; there was no one else in Paris who would spend money on Rubens: 'Dan den hertoch de Richelieu daer de Rubenses voor waren die en begeren gheen meer ende buyten hem soo en wete is nit eenen liefhebber die gheelt voer eenen Rubens saude willen geven ende dat is waarachtich den hertoch, die is seer gheesgoutert van het kuade tractement dat men hem ghedaen heft sonder niement te numen' (Denœu, Na Peter Pauvel Rubens, No.510, p.438).

26. Cf. the letter quoted in the above note. It should be observed that in the year following this exchange of letters, a copy of a Conversion by Rubens by 'den jonghen Eykens' appears in the Musson records (Duverger, 1968, p.191); it is of course not certain that the copy was after the present composition or one of the others.

27. Cf. note 17 above. For the evidence for the identification of this reference with the Munich Lion Hunt, see A.Balis, Hunting Scenes, Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard, XVIII, II, under No.11.

28. For the many others, see B.Teyssèdre, op. cit. (note 24), pp.241-250.

29. For Peiresc's important letter, see Rosses-Ruelens, III, p.101. In it, he conveys the Abbé Maugis' suggestion that Rubens offer the Cardinal some smaller picture instead of the Conversion of St Paul, which was too large for a private house: 'figli (the Abbé Maugis) m'aggionse ehe se V.S. portava qualche quadretto di sua mano al detto S'Cardile (Richelieu) da potersi mettere in qualche studio, andarebba molto più facile tutte le cose sue. Io volsi parlare del suo quadro della conversione di S.Paolo, ma egli m'aggionse che la grandezza impediva di valesere in casa privata et poi che si era pagata 1000 lb. Neither the context of this passage, nor the matter of the payment of a thousand pounds is entirely clear; but particularly as it occurs in the midst of protracted discussion of the Luxembourg Palace and the Medici cycle, it does suggest the possibility, raised above, that the Conversion might have been bought by Marie de' Medici herself, at around this time.

30. I am grateful to Arnout Balis for having insisted on the possibility of this alternative provenance and for a lucid exposition of the relevant evidence.

31. A similar confusion is to be found in the variety of references given to this composition in Duverger-Van de Velde, op. cit., p.331.

31a. The Conversion of St Paul: Oil Sketch (Fig.75)

Oil on panel; 31.75 x 45.72 cm. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum.

PROVENANCE: ?Julienne sale, Paris (Remy and Julliott), 30 March, 1767 et seqq., lot 105; ?Van Schorel sale, Antwerp, 7 June, 1774, lot 7; Chevalier Dormer sale, Antwerp, 27 May, 1777, lot 141; Sir William Hamilton sale, London, 28 March, 1801, lot 19; William Russell (London, 1800-84); Major H.E. Morritt, Rokeby, Barnard Castle, Yorkshire; C.R. Disraeli; sale, London (Christie's), 18 December, 1936, lot 107; Percy Moore Turner; bequeathed by the latter to the Ashmolean Museum in 1957.

EXHIBITED: Brussels, 1937, No.28.

LITERATURE: Smith, Catalogue Raisonné, II, p.186, No.650; Waagen, Treasures, IV, 129

The present sketch represents a fairly early stage in the evolution of the painting of *The Conversion of St Paul* formerly in Berlin (No. 31; Fig. 74). The central group of St Paul, his horse, and his helper is the same as in the painting; so is the helmeted rider to the left of St Paul (although here his body and lance are at a more acute angle). The differences between the sketch and the painting are not as great as they may seem at first, as certain elements included in the former are simply used in different positions in the final version. The falling turbaned figure on the left, for example, appears in reverse behind St Paul in the painting; and the man shielding his eyes from the brilliance of the heavenly apparition is moved more towards the centre of the final composition. The man with the shield on the extreme right is retained. There remain, however, several features in the sketch (such as the man with the outstretched arms behind St Paul, the multitude of lances on the right, and the forelegs of the horse on the right hand edge) which were not used in the final version; but that work may be said to represent a greater degree of pictorial conciseness and a greater economy in the number of elements in the work as a whole. The size of the figures in relation to the available picture space is also increased in the painting in Berlin.

This spirited and vigorously executed sketch presents all the appearance of being in monochrome. For the most part it shows a bold and lively use of white, painted with the point of the brush on the brown prepared surface; but there are elements of colour such as the very pale crimson (almost pink) area in Christ’s cloak, and a touch of green-blue in the very centre of the composition. The brushwork in the lower right is of an almost entirely brown tonality.

When Burchard saw this work it was very dirty and he was unable to decide whether it was an original or a copy. Now that it has been lightly cleaned there can be no doubt of its authenticity. On the whole, its condition is good, although there is some damage and abrasion in the left quarter of the work. The lower contour of the tunic of the horseman on the left, for example, as well as the left hand edge, has been strengthened by restoration. In addition, there is a damaged strip of approximately 5 mm. wide about 6 cm. from the left edge, which has also been restored. A strip of panel about 3 mm. in width has been added to the right edge of the work. There are no significant pentimenti.

The sketch should be dated to a little before the final painting, probably to around 1620. It shows some parallels both in terms of motif and vigour of execution with the sketch for the *Lion Hunt* in Leningrad, which can be dated to 1621.¹

The early provenance of the present work is not altogether clear. A ‘Paulus Beeerine (zijnde een Graauw)’ by Rubens was sold at Amsterdam, 17 July, 1769, lot 10;² while another (identical?)
work, in ’t grauw (zijnde in Prent ge-graveert door Bolswert, op doek’ measuring 45 x 60 cm. was sold at Brussels, 23 July, 1767.3 Waagen saw a Conversion of St Paul sketch in the collection of W. Rus­sell, but maintained that it was different to the picture in the Miles collection (No.31).4 It seems possible, however, that in view of the differences from the latter work (as discussed above), he failed to see the connection between the two works. But in the absence of further documenta­tion the identification of the Russell work cannot be established with complete certainty. It will be seen from the listing on pp.132-133 that this kind of problem arises from the large number of sale and other references to this particular subject.

The suggestion has been made5 that a drawing in the Louvre (Fig.76)6 is a copy of a now lost earlier stage in the evolution of the final painting. The figures of St Paul and his attendant are admittedly almost identical with their equivalents in the painting, and the horses and their riders are close to two other works which Rubens may have had in mind when evolving the final composition; the animal in the centre recalls (in reverse) the central horse in the Death of Decius Mus;7 the horse on the left is rather like the animal on the right of that work as well; and the horse on the right of the drawing is the same as the equivalent one in the Leningrad Lion Hunt sketch.8 The first two are also fairly close to horses in the Princes Gate Conversion of St Paul (No.30; Fig.67). None of this seems to me to provide sufficient evidence for the suggestion that the drawing is a copy of an early stage in the evolution of the pre­sent composition. In any event, it is certainly not by Rubens, and is probably a pastiche of various motifs from the works cited here.

32. The Conversion of St Paul: Drawing (Fig.73)

Pen and brown ink and brown wash over black chalk and heightened with body colour; 32.1 x 30.4 cm. On two juxtaposed sheets; fully mounted; the marks of A.Coypel and R. de Cotte above right (L. 478 and 1963); on the lower left and right the marks of the Louvre (L. 1899 and 2207).


PROVENANCE: French Royal Collections.


LITERATURE: Lugt, Louvre, Ecole flamande, 1949, II, p.52, No.1210 (as Ecole et manière de Rubens); I.Q. van Regteren Altena, Het Vroegste Werk van Rubens, Mededelingen van de Koninklijke Academie voor Wetenschappen, Letteren en Schone Kunsten van België, Brussels, 1972, p.14 and pl.32.

This drawing is made up of two juxtaposed sheets. The bulk of the scene is drawn in an anonymous late sixteenth-century hand on a square sheet of paper, which has been cut above and on the right at least.
This was then enlarged by an inverted L-shaped sheet, on which the foliage of the trees on the left and the riders on the right have been completed by another hand in brown wash. It is this addition which shows Rubens's characteristic handling of wash; there is not sufficient evidence, in my opinion, to justify the attribution of anything in the main portion of the drawing to him. Van Regteren Altena ascribed the whole sheet to Rubens's early Antwerp period, and the main motif does show some resemblance to that in the Courtrai Conversion of St Paul (No.29; Fig.64); but the resemblance is in fact much closer to the later work formerly in Berlin (No.31; Fig.74), where horse, apostle, and their relation to each other are very similar indeed (although reversed). Jaffé thought that in addition to the juxtaposed sheet, the main sheet was also retouched by Rubens;1 but there would appear to be no reason why the work in brush and oil colour there should not be by the original author of the sheet, rather than by a later hand. Such reworking simply does not provide sufficient evidence for an attribution to Rubens.


A Note on other Representations of the 'Conversion of St Paul'

Other representations of the Conversion of St Paul which have at one time or another been attributed to Rubens but are not by him include:

(1) the highly finished oil sketch formerly in the collection of the Duke of Westminster; panel, 43 × 27.5 cm. PROV. Lempereur sale, Paris, 24 May, 1773 et seqq., lot 30; Prince de Conti sale, Paris, 8 April, 1777 et seq., lot 243; W.E. Agar sale, London (Christie's), 3 May, 1806, lot 19; Dukes of Westminster, Grosvenor House, London. LIT. W. Hazlitt, Sketches of the Principal Picture Galleries in England, London, 1824, p.115; Smith, Catalogue Raisonné, II, p.218, No.775; E. Kieser, Die Befehrung des Paulus bei Rubens, Cicerone, XIX, 1927, pp.656, 658; Rooses, II, p.332. EXH. British Institution, London, 1832, No.145 (this work is in fact very close to the painting by Marzio Ganassini in Prague);

(2) the grisaille sketch in Munich, Alte Pinakothek, Inv. No.1222; panel, 47.5 × 28.5 cm. (after the removal of additions of approximately 5 cm. on either side). LIT. Katalog der kgl. älteren Pinakothek in München, Munich, 1911, No.810 (as School of Rubens); E. Kieser, Die Befehrung des Paulus bei Rubens, Cicerone, XIX, 1927, p.658 (as wahrscheinlich van Dyck); Sonnenburg, Bildaufbau, pp.22, 26 (as Rubens-Werkstatt; the squaring incised into the ground indicates that the work was intended as a design for a stained glass window);

(3) the painting sold at the Jelinek sale, Hanover, 20 May, 1880, lot 99; canvas, 47 × 61 cm. PROV. C.G. Boerner, Leipzig; Dr L. Jelinek, Prague;

(4) the painting sold in London (Christie's), 10 February, 1967, lot 37; 137 × 175 cm.;

(5) the painting sold in London (Christie's), 21 May, 1971, lot 29; panel, 49.5 × 75 cm. PROV. sale, London (Christie's), 4 August, 1916, lot 147; Mrs Beddnell sale, London (Christie's), 23 April, 1917, lot 19; bought by Dubijk; sale, London (Christie's), 19 December, 1969, lot 69; bought by Drummond;
(6) the painting in the collection of the Duke of Newcastle, Clumber Park, Nottinghamshire, before 1938;

(7) the drawing in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Inv. No.55:174; pen and brown ink and wash, 28×41.9 cm.

In addition to works such as these (and there are many others), one finds a number of earlier sale and exhibition references to representations of this subject said to be by Rubens but which cannot certainly be identified with any of the surviving compositions by his hand. Apart from the problems posed by the usual brevity of sale catalogues, the very existence of a large number of copies of these compositions makes precise identification even more difficult. Such references will be given here, as the possibility must remain open that some of them are to be connected with items in the preceding entries for the Conversion of St Paul (works clearly stated to be copies or school pieces are omitted; references are to paintings unless otherwise stated):

(1) Stephen Rougent sale, London, 1755, lot 48; sale, London (Hobbs), 9–10 March, 1763, lot 42;

(2) Gerrit Braamcamp sale, Amsterdam, 4 June, 1766, Appendix, lot 11 (198 × 254 cm.);

(3) Baron Willebroeck sale, Brussels, 25 June, 1781, lot 13 (sketch, 51.4 × 67.7 cm.);

(4) Sale, London (Christie’s), 6 May, 1796, lot 108; bought by Colnaghi’s;

(5) Truchsessian sale, London (Skinner, Dyke and Co.), 28 March, 1806 (‘a spirited sketch’);

(6) The London Gallery, 22 Piccadilly, London, 1813, No.65 (Collection of H.C. Andrews; ‘Sir Anthony van Dyck ... the original sketch ... from the Royal French Collection’; canvas, 72.5 × 60 cm.);

(7) Andrews Harrison sale, London (Squibb), 24 May, 1821, lot 81 (sketch);

(8) Richard Cosway sale, London (Stanley), 9 March, 1822, lot 66 (as Van Dyck);

(9) National Exhibition of Works of Art, Leeds, 1868, No.712 (‘This and several other sketches appear to have been studies for the great picture in the possession of Mr Miles of Bristol—No.31 above—R.P. Nichols, Esq.’);

(10) Drawing in black and red chalk; W. Esdaile sale, London (Jones), 2 March, 1819, lot 19; J. Heywood Hawkins sale (Leigh, Sotheby and Co.), 29 April, 1850 et seq., lot 1289.

It should be emphasized that none of these works are necessarily by Rubens himself (the available measurements do not coincide with the dimensions of the surviving works by him), but the possibility remains that they may be copies of them.

33. The Healing of the Lame Man: Drawing (Fig.77)

Pen and brown ink; 25.1 × 19.5 cm.; inscribed on the lower right in a later hand, AVD; on the verso, the mark of F. Koenigs (L. 1023a) and inscribed in black chalk in a later hand, Van Dyck; two small pieces torn from the lower left and right; fully mounted.

Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen. Inv. No.V. 42.

Provenance: Pierre Dubaut (Paris, 1886–after 1956); Mellaert; P. Cassirer, Berlin; F. Koenigs (Haarlem, 1881–1941);
bequeathed in 1940 by D.G. van Beuningen to the Boymans Museum Foundation.

EXHIBITED: Antwerp, 1927, No.16; Amsterdam, 1933, No.81; Rotterdam, 1938, No.341; Selection of Drawings, Museum Boymans, Rotterdam, 1952, No.61; Antwerp, 1956, No.29; Dessins flamands et hollandais du 17ème siècle, Institut Néerlandais, Paris, 1974, No.91.


The scene shows the miraculous healing of the lame man by Peter at the gate of the temple, as in Acts III, 1-8: 'Now Peter and John went up together into the temple... And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple; ... Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have I give thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand, and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength...’ Rubens has here drawn variants of Peter's head and of the lame man in the upper left hand corner.

While Rubens's representation owes little—if anything—to Raphael's tapestry design of the same event, it is possible that he may have intended to recall one or the other of Masaccio's representa-
A drawing of this subject in pen and brown wash heightened with white was sold at the Johann Goll van Franckenstein sale, Amsterdam (de Vries, Brondgeest, Engelberts and Roos), 1 July, 1833 et seq., lot 8, to 'Buffa'.

1. Dussler, p.102 and pl.175.
2. Cf. especially the scenes with the Healing of the Cripples, the Death of Ananias, and the Resurrection of the Son of Theophilus; P. Volponi and L. Berti, I,'Opera completa di Masaccio, Milan, 1968, Nos.17h, 17K and 17G respectively.
3. Rubens showed his indebtedness to Cigoli on several other occasions as well, as in his Raising of Lazarus (K.d.K., p.217), Last Supper (K.d.K., p.203) and Descent from the Cross (K.d.K., p.51); but especially the drawing of this scene in Leningrad, Rurchard-d'Hulst, 1963, No.37) —to name only a few instances. Cf. H.Olsen, Rubens og Cigoli, Kunstmuseets Års­skrift, XXXVII, 1950, pp.58-73; W.Friedländer, Early to Full Baroque: Cigoli and Rubens, in Studien zur toskanischen Kunst, Festschrift für Ludwig Heydenreich, Munich, 1904, pp.65-82; and most recently, Jaffé, 1977, pp.12, 29, 51. See also Vlieghe, Saints, II, p.161.
5. M.Bucci et al., Mostra del Cigoli e del sue ambiente, San Miniato, 1959, No.30, pl.XXXIII.
6. Reproduced in Olsen, pl.7 (on the left).

34. The Annunciation of the Death of the Virgin (Fig.79)

Oil on panel; 92 x 74.3 cm.

London, Courtauld Institute of Art, Princes Gate Collection. Inv. No.300.

Copies: (1) Painting (Fig.80) attributed to Frans Luycx, Prague, National Gallery, Inv. No.DO.29; canvas, 34.5 x 34 cm.; Prov. Prague, Castle; exhibit: Chefs-d'œuvre de Prague, 1470-1750, Groeninge Museum, Bruges, 1974, No.40; lit. K.Köpe, Urkunden, Acten und Regesten aus dem k. k. Statthalters-Archiv in Prag (Quellen zur Geschichte der kaiserlichen Haussamm­lungen und der Kunstbestrebungen des Aller­durchlauchtigsten Erzhauses), Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöch­sten Kaiserhauses, X, 1889, p.C., Nos.6232 and 6234; Rudolfinum Catalogue, Prague, 1889, No.585; E.Ebenstein, Der Hofmaler Frans Luckx, Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses, XXVI, 1906, p.206 (as F.Luyckx); E. Berger, in Rudolfinum Catalogue, Prague, 1912, No.524; Evers, 1943, p.207; Catalogue of the Narodni Gallery, Prague, 1949, No.339; Catalogue of Flemish Masters in the National Gallery, Prague, 1968, No.39; Seilern, Addenda, p.15 (as Rubens); Held, Oil Sketches, pp.440 to 441. No.317A (as Rubens); (2) Painting, Prague, National Gallery, Inv. No.09433; paper on panel, 35 x 35 cm.; (3) Painting, whereabouts unknown; Prov. Mme Karel Ooms-van Eersel sale, Antwerp, 15-20 May, 1922, lot 124 (repr.); (4) Engraving by F. van den Steen (Fig.81; V.S., p.13, No.2); title: Anxia ne timeas Ignotam Virgo salutem,/ Angelum est Gabriel, nuntia laeta ferens/ Te non nosse Virum dicis, sed Sanctus obumbrat Spiritus, hinc fies Virgo Paresque simul.


The ultimate source of the Annunciation of the Death of the Virgin is to be found in the Narrative of the Assumption of the Virgin by the Pseudo-Melito: ‘And lo, an angel shining in a garment of great brightness
stood before her and came forth with words of greeting, saying: Hail thou blessed of the Lord... Behold this palm-branch. I have brought it to thee from the paradise of the Lord, and thou shalt cause it to be carried before thy bier on the third day..." Although never as frequently represented as the Annunciation proper, the subject is not uncommon in Italian art (as, for example, in the representations by Duccio on the Maestà in Siena, by Orcagna on the tabernacle in Or San Michele in Florence, in the predella panel by Filippo Lippi in the Uffizi), and occurs occasionally in fifteenth-century German painting, as well as in Fouquet's well-known miniature in the Hours of Etienne Chevalier. In the seventeenth century, however, it occurs only very rarely, as in the painting by Panfilo Nuvolone the Elder in the Museo Civico in Cremona and in the rather later painting by Samuel van Hoogstraten formerly on the Art Market in London.

Despite the fact that the text on the engraving by Van den Steen—see under Copy (3) above—refers clearly to the first Annunciation, there can be little doubt that the subject is in fact the Annunciation of the Death of the Virgin. Count Seilern rightly pointed out that 'the angel, who in this case would be the Archangel Michael, bears not a lily but a palm. The Virgin's veil is black and her girdle prominently displayed; the colour scheme of her clothes—blue and white—is quite exceptional for an Annunciation by Rubens.' On the other hand, Held has recently insisted again on the identification of the work as the first Annunciation. He referred to the palm-bearing angel in Piero della Francesca's Arezzo Annunciation as at least one precedent, and pointed out that the lily is in any case absent from all Rubens's versions of this subject. A red curtain hangs above the Virgin on the left, the angel wears a shimmering gold mantle over a purple garment, and light pours down across the curtain from the right. The wreath-bearing angel present in the engraving by Van den Steen (Fig.81) and in the painting in Prague is absent from the present work.

The composition and figural types bear a close resemblance to the two paintings of the Annunciation in Vienna and Dublin, although the modelling and brushwork are considerably freer and more sketch-like in the present work. It should probably be dated slightly later than the Dublin and Vienna paintings, say c.1611-1613 (the facial types may also be compared, for example, with those in the Holy Women at the Sepulchre, No.6, Fig.8).

In his book on the oil sketches, Held downgraded the attribution of the Princes Gate picture, preferring to call it 'more a product of the studio than of Rubens himself' (although how significant a downgrading this assessment constitutes is a moot point). He then firmly concluded in favour of Rubens's authorship of the painting in Prague—Copy (1) above—and naturally also called it the first Annunciation, despite the presence of the palm branch (Fig.80). But the latter work is certainly too weak to merit an attribution to Rubens, and there is far too much that is wholly uncharacteristic of him (the unusually thick paint in the upper half of the picture and the surprisingly thin surface below, the fussy treatment of the hair throughout, the illogical folds of the Virgin's dress and other draperies, the weakly drawn hands, and so on). While the Princes Gate picture does not, it is true, convey a wholly favourable impression, it remains the superior version. The doubts it unquestionably raises may well be due to its condition: it is considerably worn in
parts, particularly in the central and lower left areas; there are bad fills in the upper left and lower right quadrants; the Virgin’s face and the red curtain appear to have been substantially repainted; and the rather disturbing profile of the angel is probably attributable to the rectangular loss immediately to the left of its nose, which has thus damaged the original contour. Whatever the case, one may properly remain doubtful of the attribution of the Prague painting to Luyckx, who is, after all, only described as the delineator in van der Steen’s engraving, which in its second state contains the significant addition ‘P.P. Rubens invent’.

1. M.R. James, ed., The Apocryphal New Testament, Oxford, 1972, p.210, III; apart from this account by the Pseudo-Melito—perhaps the most important western source for the Assumption of the Virgin and the events surrounding it—the scene is also described, for example, in the Legenda Aurea, pp.405, 518-519.
3. Photo Netherlands Art Institute, No.47160.
5. This similarity may be adduced as possible evidence for Luyckx’s authorship of the Prague picture, although it is by no means conclusive, as Count Seilern suggested in his important catalogue entry on the present painting (Seilern, Addenda, p.19).
8. Held, Oil Sketches, p.441.
9. Ibid., pp.440-441, sub No.117A. Dr. L. Slawiček of the National Gallery in Prague tells me that the painting is always recorded as being on canvas in the early inventories, contra Held’s suggestion that it was originally painted on panel. He also noted that the earliest reference to it in the Inventory (EC 630) of the Gallery of Patriotic Art Friends is from 1707 and not from 1709, as in Held. The work in fact first appears, as Rubens, in Prague Castle inventories of 8 April, 1718 and 5 October 1737 (K. Köpe, op. cit., Nos.6242 and 6244).
Rubens’s numerous paintings of the Assumption of the Virgin are amongst his best known and most typical compositions, and provide evidence of the renewed emphasis in the Counter Reformation on the glorification of the Virgin. Attacks on her cult and her images had been one of the prime manifestations of the iconoclastic outbursts of the second half of the sixteenth century, especially in Antwerp. But by the beginning of the seventeenth century, with the firm re-establishment of Catholicism in the Southern Netherlands, the subject of the Assumption regained its popularity and was disseminated not only in paintings but also in a wide variety of printed books. Its representation was so widespread, and the pictorial tradition so strong ever since the beginnings of Christian art that it would be superfluous to attempt to isolate the specific sources, whether iconographic or visual, of Rubens’s compositions. He had no need to return to the original sources, so commonplace had the elements in the composition become; but a few of the more important ones may be mentioned here.

Not surprisingly, the Golden Legend contains the main elements to be found in these compositions (the references in the Bible are only very brief), but all the accounts go back to the second century Liber de Transitu Virginis and the Latin text of the Pseudo-Melito. Although the Golden Legend was discredited by many of the Counter Reformation writers on art, it does provide the basis for many aspects of the pictorial representation of the Assumption. While Rubens does not show either the death or the burial of the Virgin, both her rocky sepulchre and the sarcophagus appear in his paintings; the flowers which miraculously appeared in her tomb are recorded in the Golden Legend, and so are the angels who accompany the Virgin and the apostles who surround her tomb and watch her ascent into heaven. The important difference from almost all the accounts (except the Syriac and Coptic texts, which Rubens can hardly have known) is Rubens’s inclusion of the holy women amongst the apostles at the tomb. Their number varies from three to five, although usually only three are present. They had only occasionally been depicted earlier in representations of the scene in late sixteenth century Netherlandish and French art, and in engravings such as those after Marten de Vos (Fig. 83) in the Missals published by Plantin-Moretus in Antwerp in 1606, 1610, and 1613—but the textual evidence for them is not clear. It seems likely, however, that these are the women—usually three—who washed the body of the Virgin, and then placed it in the shroud, as recorded in many of the accounts, including the Golden Legend. Although such texts do not include the women amongst the apostles actually watching the Assumption, it is not surprising that Rubens should have decided to include them in the scene—if only for their pictorial value and interest. The burial in a rocky tomb is very rare, although a precedent may be found in Patinir’s representation of the scene in Philadelphia. The rolling away of the cover of the tomb which is to be found in
several of Rubens's representations of the event has its precedent in the painting of the Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin by Lodovico Carracci in Corpus Domini in Bologna, which will be discussed at greater length below (pp. 140, 191).

It is probable that Rubens consulted Jerome Nadal's popular Adnotationes et Meditationes in Evangelia (with its pictorial supplement entitled Evangelicae Historiae Imagines) published in Antwerp by Martin Nutius in 1595 and by the Plantin-Moretus press in 1607. Here he would have found a textual source for almost all the elements in his Assumptions, including the apostles and the additional figures gathered together from the corners of the earth, and the host of angels omnium ordinarum who accompanied the Virgin to heaven. Furthermore four of the carefully annotated plates in this work are devoted to the death, burial, assumption, and coronation of the Virgin; while Rubens's Assumptions differ in pictorial terms from these, all the elements in them are already indicated in the detailed captions to each print. In the first two of these, three or four women are in attendance; as they were present at her death and burial, Rubens may simply have felt it logical to include them in the Assumption scene as well. The only significant difference from Nadal's discussion and illustration of this event is his insistence on the fact that the tomb remained closed throughout, thus emphasizing the miraculous nature of her assumption. Further evidence that Rubens looked at this book quite carefully will be given in the discussion of the modello in Leningrad of the Assumption and the Coronation of the Virgin (No. 46).

It should perhaps be noted here that in the absence of specific biblical texts about the Assumption of the Virgin, its representation remained controversial; Rubens may have been aware of Molanus's discussion, with its justification of and insistence upon the presence of angels accompanying the Virgin heavenwards, and he was probably also aware of the uncertainty regarding the presence and number of the apostles.

By far the most important pictorial source for all Rubens's representations of the Assumption was Titian's famous painting of the subject in the Frari in Venice. While there are few direct derivations (except in the case of some individual putti and one or two of the apostle figures), Rubens was clearly inspired by both the structure and the mood of Titian's composition. As in that work, the Virgin in Rubens's paintings rises upwards in the very centre of the upper half of the composition, and the group of apostles arranged in a row below have their forms and gestures dramatically silhouetted against the band of sky which separates them more or less clearly from the Virgin; and one or more of them are cut off by the edge of the picture. The single figure seen from behind on the right of this group recurs in one form or another in almost every one of Rubens's compositions: the similarity to the equivalent figure in Titian is particularly close in the case of the Düsseldorf and Schleissheim Assumptions (Nos. 41 and 40; Figs. 105 and 104).

Titian does not include the three or more women amongst the apostles; the reasons for their addition in Rubens's paintings have already been discussed above. He also has the figure of God the Father about to receive the Virgin at the very top of the composition, which is not included in any of Rubens's paintings, except on the early modello in Leningrad (No. 46; Fig. 129). But it should be
noted that the Deity (implicit in all the accounts of the Assumption of the Virgin, which immediately precedes her reception into heaven and her coronation) is present above all Rubens’s Assumptions in the form of a sculpted figure (whether of God the Father, Christ, or the Trinity). And this presence is, in any event, implied by the movement and upward glance of the Madonna in all the paintings. Despite these differences, the chief inspiration of Rubens’s treatment of the Assumption remains, clearly and significantly, the picture by Titian. Nonetheless, there are a number of further Italian sources for specific elements within Rubens’s paintings which should briefly be mentioned here.

For the group of apostles surrounding the Virgin’s sarcophagus, some examining it intently and others casting their eyes upwards, which may be found in all Rubens’s representations of the Assumption, Rubens seems to have recalled Raphael’s design for the grisaille scene of Alexander Placing the Works of Homer in the Sarcophagus of Achilles in the Stanza della Segnatura in the Vatican. Not surprisingly, however, later Italian representations of the Assumption are reflected in one way or another in Rubens’s formulation of the theme. There are parallels, for example, not only with Annibale Carracci’s paintings of this subject in Bologna and Dresden, but also with Barocci’s in Milan, and even with Guido Reni’s early work in the Pieve di Cento, Bologna.

Lodovico Carracci’s 1601 representation of the Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin in Corpus Domini in Bologna was of considerable importance for several of Rubens’s paintings of the Assumption, as will be noted specifically in the relevant entries below. The apostle seen from behind in Lodovico’s painting, for example, recurs in the first figure on the left in Rubens’s works in Leningrad and Vienna (Nos. 46 and 37; Figs. 129 and 87) and then slightly changed in the versions in Buckingham Palace, Brussels and Düsseldorf (Nos. 35, 38 and 41; Figs. 85, 98 and 105); in some of Rubens’s representations there is also a similar setting in an open air burial ground. Rubens is also likely to have known the painting by Tintoretto formerly in Santa Maria dei Crociferi in Venice and now in Santa Maria Assunta there, which shows some similarities in the figures of both the Madonna and the apostles surrounding the tomb below.

All this is not to say that Rubens would not have derived some of his ideas from the works of earlier Northern masters, but the chief pictorial inspiration seems to have been Italian (and other sources besides those singled out here could not doubt be found). It should be remembered, too, that oil sketches of this subject by Tintoretto, Veronese, and Titian are recorded in his collection. In terms of the influence of Rubens’s compositions amongst Northern artists, however, there are works by Jordaens (Ghent), C. Schut (engraving by Meyssens), and T. van Loon (Brussels)—to mention only a few—which all reflect the Rubensian inventions. They include the miracle of the roses, and even the books (presumably alluding to the accounts of the Assumption) which Rubens introduced into almost all his paintings of this subject.

From a formal point of view, Rubens’s paintings of the Assumption may be divided into two main groups, on the basis of the attitude of the Virgin. She is shown either with her arms outstretched (with the right arm higher than the left, or vice-versa), or with her left hand rest-
ing on her breast, while her right arm remains outstretched. Most of Rubens's early compositions fall into the first group, while the second scheme is typical of the years after 1618—although there are a few exceptions to this rule (most notably in the case of the Liechtenstein Assumption, No.44; Fig.122, where the pose of the Madonna is a relatively novel one). But the basic elements in Rubens's compositions remain the same: in almost all of them are the holy women, the books, the tomb, and the sarcophagus; however the number of spectators, angels and putti, varies considerably.

The earliest of Rubens's representations of this subject is the modello for the Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin of 1611 (No.46; Fig.129). The combination of the two scenes in one picture, which is entirely in concordance with the textual sources and with the contract for the altarpiece concerned, does not occur again in any of Rubens's subsequent interpretations of this subject. These are all fairly closely related to each other, especially in the years between 1611 and 1615. Apart from the late work in Liechtenstein (No.44; Fig.122), the only works which diverge a little more than might be expected from the previously evolved schemata are the paintings in Schleissheim and Augsburg (Nos.40 and 42; Figs.104 and 112)—and even the latter may be related to Rubens's ceiling painting in the Jesuit Church in Antwerp. These, perhaps significantly, also show a much higher degree of workshop participation than the other works. For the rest, however, Rubens's hand is extensively visible, even in works where much of the execution was entrusted to the studio. Naturally, however, the modelli are entirely autograph; and in the High Altarpiece for Antwerp Cathedral (No.43; Fig.116) and the Liechtenstein painting (No.44; Fig.122) Rubens seems to have participated in the execution of the work to an even higher degree than usual. In fact, all the works to be discussed here display a greater involvement by Rubens himself in the actual painting than has generally been acknowledged (with the possible exception of the already mentioned altarpieces in Schleissheim and Augsburg). The design may in every case be attributed to Rubens himself.

Two compositions of the subject not included in the following entries should be mentioned here: the design for the engraving in the Breviarium Romanum of 1613–14 and the ceiling painting for the Jesuit Church in Antwerp of a few years later. Both, however, should be considered in the sequence and evolution of Rubens's paintings of the subject. The design for the Breviarium Romanum—both the upper and the lower half—includes many of the features to be found in the paintings, and the group of putti round the Virgin (in turn taken from Pordenone's fresco in the Malchiostro Chapel of S. Nicolo in Treviso, which Rubens had copied on his visit to Italy) is identical with that in the Buckingham Palace modello (No.35; Fig.85) and the painting in Vienna derived from it (No.37; Fig.87). The ceiling painting for the Jesuit Church, which reflected to a greater or lesser extent several of the features in Rubens's compositions of the previous six years, is reproduced almost exactly in the slightly later painting in Augsburg (No.42; Fig.112). It is perhaps worth remarking in passing that the design for the Breviarium was to be re-adopted in only slightly altered fashion by most of the subsequent illustrators of the Breviarium and Missale Romanum.

The number of sales references to paint-
ings, drawings, and oil sketches of the Assumption by Rubens is legion. Where possible, these have been associated with items in the following entries. But in view of the close similarity between Rubens's many compositions of this subject and the confusion which appears in many of the sales catalogues between them, it is impossible to be certain about the exact relationship of many of the sales references to either existing works or their copies. The same applies, to a slightly lesser extent, to references in guidebooks, travellers' accounts and even to an important early source such as the Diary of the dealer Matthijs Musson, which, apart from some putative originals, records many copies of paintings of the Assumption by Rubens. In addition, there are a number of pastiches or apocryphal compilations which need not all be mentioned here. These include engravings such as those by M. Lasne and A. Melan, the centre medallion on the back of the so-called Rubens-Chasuble in the Jesuit Church in Antwerp, and probably a number of works appearing in the early sales catalogues and travel accounts. All such items, as well as the large number of surviving copies, provide further testimony of the extraordinary dissemination of Rubens's compositions of the Assumption of the Virgin.

1. Cf. also the recent discussion in Glen, pp.143-145.
3. J.P. Migne, Dictionnaire des époque de l'Ancien
6. Legenda Aurea, ed. Graesse, Cap.CXIX; the basic work on the representation of the Assumption of the Virgin is Staedel.
8. Cf. Prohaska, p.71, and Staedel, pp.200-203. But see also I. Jost, Studien zu Antonis Blocklandt, University of Cologne Inaugural Dissertation, 1980, pp.80 and 82 for the important earlier examples of Blocklandt (Bingen) and Barendsz. (Gouda).
9. J.R. Judson, Dirk Barentsen 'Die ... des grooten Titiaen's Boezen heeft getroffen' Bulletin Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten, XI, 1962, pp.91-93, discusses the iconography of the Holy Women around the tomb of the Virgin with particular reference to the Barendsz, altar wings in Gouda, as well as the significance of that work for Rubens. Here it should be noted that the engraving said by Mâle, Après le Concile de Trente, p.362, note 5 to be by M. de Vos (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, Cabinet des Estampes, No.Cc.18), and held by him and subsequent writers to be a significant precedent for Rubens's inclusion of the women is in fact inscribed 'Du Bois' and is a later variant of Rubens's design for the engraving of the Assumption of the Virgin in the Breviarium Romana (Judson-Van de Velde, No.27).
10. Mâle, Après le concile de Trente, p.363, suggested that Rubens may have developed the idea from the lesson read on the Feast of the Assumption in which Christ visits the house of Martha and Mary (interpreted by commentators like Alfonso de Villegas, Flos Sanctorum, Saragossa, 1585, I, p.241 recto, as symbols of the active and contemplative life of the Virgin), but this seems unlikely. Villegas, op. cit., II, 1586, pp.66-69 provides much detail about the miracle of the roses.
11. Mâle, Après le concile de Trente, p.363, suggested that Rubens may have developed the idea from the lesson read on the Feast of the Assumption in which Christ visits the house of Martha and Mary (interpreted by commentators like Alfonso de Villegas, Flos Sanctorum, Saragossa, 1585, I, p.241 recto, as symbols of the active and contemplative life of the Virgin), but this seems unlikely. Villegas, op. cit., II, 1586, pp.66-69 provides much detail about the miracle of the roses.
and Early Jesuit Art in Rome. Art Bulletin, L.VIII, 1976, p.425 and notes; see also Fredriberg, A source for Rubens’s Modello, on further aspects of this work.
17. By H. Wierix after B. Passeri.
20. Cf. A. Boschloo, Annibale Carracci in Bologna, Visible Reality in Art after the Council of Trent, the Hague, 1974, II, pp.237-238, on the question about this matter in the circle of Paleotti; the conclusion that the apostles may be depicted, some looking at the Virgin and others at the tomb, is reflected in Rubens’s compositions; the decision that only eleven were present is not, for Rubens seems to have varied their number.
22. In most cases; in this respect, the position and movement of the Virgin is quite different to that in works such as Annibale Carracci’s composition in Dresden (Posner, pl.40); for the similarities with Annibale’s paintings, see notes 20 and 27 below.
23. With the exception of the ceiling painting for the Jesuit Church in Antwerp, Martin, Ceiling Paintings, No.10, plates 80-88.
25. For other possible cases of Rubens’s indebtedness to this scene, see Jaffe, 1977, p.28; for a drawing of three warriors excerpted from it, see J. Müller Hofstede, in Master Drawings, II, 1964, p.14 and pl.5. While this scene was engraved by Marcantonio, it is possible, as Professor John Shearman has suggested to me, that Raphael also combined this motif with that of the Coronation of the Virgin (on which Raphael was working at the same time as the Segnatura frescoes) in a now lost drawing.
26. Posner, pl.69; this work is closest to Rubens’s painting of the Assumption in Augsburg (No.42; Fig.123), but the kneeling figure of Peter seen from behind may have inspired the similar figure in most of Rubens’s compositions (see note 28 for an alternative source, however).
27. Posner, pl.40; there are not many specific resemblances here, apart, perhaps, from the putti sheltering beneath the folds of the Virgin’s drapery.
28. Collection of Principe Cesare di Castelbarco Albani; Olsen, No.66, pl.111 (possibly painted for the Roman Oratorians); compare the kneeling figure seen from behind on the left with the equivalent figure in most of Rubens’s paintings.
29. C. Garboli and E. Baccheschi, L’opera completa di Guido Reni, Milan, 1971, No.118; but the similarities between several of the apostle figures in this work and those by Rubens are possibly only coincidental.
35. The Assumption of the Virgin  
(Fig.85)

Oil on panel; 102 x 66 cm.  
London, Buckingham Palace, Collection of H.M. the Queen

PROVENANCE: A.Bout sale, The Hague, 11 August, 1733, lot 37; Comte d'Orsay sale, Paris, 14 April, 1790, lot 66; John Purling sale, London (White), 16 February, 1801, lot 98; Sir Simon Clarke and George Hibbert sale, London (Christie's), 15 May, 1802, lot 56; Henry Hope sale, London (Christie’s), 29 June, 1816, lot 79; purchased there by Lord Yarmouth for the Prince Regent, later King George IV of England.

COPIES: (1) Painting, whereabouts unknown; canvas, 102 x 65.4 cm. PROV. Sir Edmund King; sold to James Sotheby on 2 December, 1709; Ecton Hall, Northamptonshire Major-General Sir Frederick Edward Sotheby; sale, London (Sotheby’s), 12 October, 1955, lot 61; London, W.Sabin. LIT. The Notebooks of George Vertue, in The Walpole Society, XXVI, 1938, p.42; (2) Painting, whereabouts unknown; canvas, 100 x 71 cm. PROV. sale, Munich (Helbing), 30-31 March, 1928, lot 480; (3) Painting after the upper half of the composition, Wilton House, Wiltshire, the Earls of Pembroke; panel, 34.3 x 23.5 cm. PROV. Thomas, 8th Earl of Pembroke (1656-1733). LIT. Sidney, 16th Earl of Pembroke, Paintings and Drawings at Wilton House, London, 1968, No.90, pl.48 (the painting is also referred to in most of the earlier catalogues and accounts of Wilton House); (4) Painting of the lower half of the composition, whereabouts unknown; panel, PROV. sale, London (Sotheby’s), 7 November, 1951, lot 36; (5) Painting attributed to A. van Diepenbeeck, whereabouts unknown; panel. PROV. Paul Larsen, London, 1964; (6) Engraving by S. A. Bolswert; dedication: R.P. Guardiano FF Minorum Reg; Obs: Antverpiae ceterisque eiusdem conventus alumnus (ex genio ordinis seraphici) fervidis honoris Parthenit gelatoribus: hanc Deiparentis gloriose in caelum ascendentis effigiem in debita observantiae symbolum Martinus van den Enden D.C.Q. (Fig.84; V.S., p.76, No.18); (7) Engraving of the upper half of the composition published by C.Galle (Fig. on p.245; V.S., p.77, No.23); (8) Tapestry, Ancona. LIT. Inventario degli oggetti d’arte d’Ancona, VIII, Ancona, 1936, p.45 (repr.).


The present highly finished modello appears never to have been realized as a full scale painting. The upper half, however, recurs with only minor variations.
in the Assumption of the Virgin in Vienna (No.37; Fig.87), while the lower half clearly represents an early stage in the evolution of the painting of the same subject in Brussels (No.38; Fig.98). That this work antedates both the Vienna and the Brussels pictures is apparent on stylistic grounds alone: the relatively thin and angular folds of the garments, the deep blue sky, and the long and narrow strokes of prominent highlighting all suggest a date of around 1610. To some extent it shares these and other characteristics with the modello of the Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin in Leningrad (No.46; Fig.129) which can be dated on secure grounds to 1611. The Leningrad picture, as will be shown in the relevant entry below, is almost certainly one of the two modelli for the High Altar of Antwerp Cathedral which were presented to the Chapter of the Cathedral when Rubens received the commission on 22 April, 1611. The question which now arises is this: can the Buckingham Palace modello be identified with the other modello presented on that occasion? The fact that the picture in Vienna which Rubens appears to have begun painting for the High Altar upon receiving the commission is composed of the bottom half of the Leningrad modello and the top half of the present work may seem to require an answer in the affirmative.

The difficulty with this hypothesis, however, is that the Buckingham Palace modello appears on stylistic grounds to be slightly later than the one in Leningrad: the handling of the paint is a little freer, the treatment of the folds somewhat more flowing, and the thin lines of white highlighting not quite as jagged. Furthermore, the colours in the present modello are deeper and richer than the relatively pale tonality of the Leningrad work. Admittedly the difference is not a great one, but in this case it is crucial. If, therefore, this is not the second modello presented in April, 1611, one has to postulate the following more complex sequence of events in the evolution of Rubens's early treatment of the subject: of the two modelli mentioned in the document of 1611, only that in Leningrad survives. Shortly after beginning to paint the lower half of the picture now in Vienna according to the Leningrad modello, Rubens received the commission for the High Altar of the Carmelite Nuns in Brussels (No.38; Fig.98) possibly c.1612. At this point he prepared the modello in Buckingham Palace, which would make it an early stage in the design of that altarpiece (although it cannot strictly speaking be regarded as a modello for the Brussels picture, in view of the substantial differences between the two works).

The situation is thus a complicated one, and it may still be possible to accept the first hypothesis (that the work is in fact one of the two modelli presented in 1611). It may not be necessary to postulate exact contemporaneity, or—for that matter—consistency of technique for the two modelli. But while this hypothesis is the simpler and more immediately attractive one, it does not really take into account the clear stylistic differences between the two works. In his discussion of this sketch Held does not even entertain the possibility that it may have been the second of the 1611 modelli.

Scant justice was done to this modello in the earlier literature, which more or less consistently misjudged its date and purpose. Now that it has been cleaned, the high quality of the work is self-evident. Its condition is reasonably good, although there has been a certain amount of damage along the vertical joins in the
panel, due to pressure from the fixed cradling. Some areas (such as those on the right above, in the lower foreground, and in the white mantle of the apostle in the foreground on the right) are very thinly painted. There are several pentimenti: the most noticeable are the alterations in the position of the head of the apostle in the foreground on the right and in the right hand of the male figure in green holding the cover of the tomb, as well as several smaller changes.

Many sale references may be found to drawings said to be for the engraving of this composition by Bolswert, such as that in the Jacob de Wit sale, Amsterdam (de Leth and van Schorrenbergh), 10 March, 1755, lot D1. But in the absence of any such drawings surviving, one cannot be certain that there was no confusion (as was often the case) between the engravings by Bolswert and by Pontius of this subject or that the drawing concerned is not to be related to the engraving for the Missale Romanum, also by Bolswert, instead of to the present composition.

1. Such as the putti on the lower left of the Virgin’s dress and the lower contours of the latter. Although the Virgin’s right palm is turned upwards in the present work, and her veil passes over her left arm—in apparent contrast to the Vienna painting—both these features were originally intended in the latter work as well, as is apparent from the X-rays (Figs.90 and 91) first discussed by Proftassea, pp 69-70.

2. For the proceedings on this occasion as well as the relevant document, see pp.101-102 below, under No.46.

3. As in Jaffé, op. cit., p.624; the possibility is also recognized by Proftassea, p.69, and Burchard favoured a dating c.1611.

4. As noted by Baudouin, Altars, p.68, n.40, and Baudouin, 1972, p.236, n.41.


6. The Pontius engraving (for which the preparatory drawing survives) is after the Assumption in Düsseldorf, No.41; cf. pp.104, 167-168 below.

7. Judson-Van de Velde, No.27.

36. The Assumption of the Virgin: Drawing (Fig.86)

Pen and brush in brown ink with brown and indian wash; 290 × 231 cm. Below on the left the mark of the Albertina, Vienna (L.174); below on the right, 82 inscribed in ink. Fully mounted.

Vienna, Albertina, Inv. No.8212.


This drawing evidently forms an important stage in the evolution of Rubens’s
compositions of the Assumption of the Virgin between c.1611 and c.1615. But to which of these works it is most closely related is open to question. Baudouin and Van de Velde argued that it is a preparatory study for the second of the modelli for the High Altar of Antwerp Cathedral which Rubens submitted to the Chapter on 22 April, 1611. They suggest that the drawing dates from early in 1611, and that it was intended as a variation on the upper half of the modello now in Leningrad (No.46; Fig.129), when the decision was taken to represent only the Assumption of the Virgin (and not the Coronation as well) in the final painting. This hypothesis is supported by the fact that the altarpiece in Vienna (No.37; Fig.87) reproduces the lower half of the Leningrad modello, while the Virgin appears in almost the same way as in the present drawing, albeit in a reverse sense. The argument depends largely on (a) the dating of the drawing to 1611, and (b) the belief that the second modello presented to the Cathedral Chapter in the spring of 1611 is lost (and is not the one now in Buckingham Palace, here No.35).

It is possible, however, that the drawing should be dated a little later than 1611. While it does show similarities with other pen and wash drawings of c.1611, such as those for the Visitation and the Presentation in the Temple, its use of the technique is arguably more sophisticated, complex, and highly evolved. In this respect—and in terms of the large number of pentimenti—it is more like the Princes Gate drawing of the Conversion of St Paul of c.1612 (No.30a; Fig.69). Recently Mielke has demonstrated the close stylistic connection between the present drawing and the drawing for the Stigmatisation of St Francis in Berlin, which is to be dated between 1612 and 1614. Moreover, even if the modello in Buckingham Palace (No.35; Fig.85) is not one of those presented to the Chapter in 1611, it seems likely that the present drawing postdates it, as was convincingly shown by both Held and Burchard-d’Hulst. The latter pointed out that before Rubens altered the positions of many of the angels with the brush, their initial outlines in pen corresponded with those in the Buckingham Palace modello. Both angels with outstretched arms to the right of the Virgin, for example, seem originally to have appeared as they do in the modello, i.e. they looked inwards; Rubens then altered their positions so that they turn outwards, thus representing a development on the group first depicted in the modello. Both Burchard and d’Hulst went further and argued that the drawing was a preliminary sketch for the upper half of the Assumption now in Vienna (No.37; Fig.87).

But while there are undoubted similarities between the two works, especially in the group of angels, a further possibility should be considered—that the present work is a preliminary sketch for the painting of the Assumption now in Brussels (No.38; Fig.98). The arguments in favour of this hypothesis should also be rehearsed here, as they cast further light on the relationship with all the works already mentioned in the present entry. In the first place, there are obvious similarities in the pose and movement of the Virgin. While it is true that she is tilted slightly backwards as in the Vienna painting and turns her head upwards (as if towards the figure of God the Father originally placed above that work), the outline of her dress is closer to that in the Brussels altarpiece. Although, as noted by Held, the dark area to the left of the Virgin in the drawing corresponds with the same area in the Vienna picture, it is
present even more prominently in the work in Brussels. A minor detail such as the putto playing with the train of the Virgin's cloak above his head in the drawing provides yet another element in favour of the sequence under consideration here: this playful figure, absent from the Vienna Assumption, has been introduced—although transferred to the other side of the composition—in the Brussels painting as well. Even a figure such as the putto seen from behind on the left of the drawing, with his hand seemingly cut off by the dark area of wash, seems to represent an intermediate stage between the similar figure in the two paintings: in the work in Vienna he leans forward at an acute angle; in the drawing the angle is less acute; and in the Brussels work—there thrusting his hand straight upwards into an outer fold of the Virgin's train—he stands upright.

The arguments in favour of relating the present drawing most closely to the Brussels painting have here been considered, at some length because until recently they had not received the attention they deserve in the literature. In 1977, however, Prohaska also argued in favour of the relation with the painting in Brussels; so did Held in his book on the Oil Sketches. Held dated the drawing to 1614–15, placing it between the altarpieces in Vienna and Brussels. Nonetheless, it is not impossible that the drawing was made slightly before the Vienna and the Brussels painting, as already noted above. All the similarities between it and the work in Brussels may well be accounted for by suggesting that Rubens returned to elements already worked out in the drawing when he came to design the composition now in Brussels. It may even be the case that Rubens added some of the wash drawing (such as the veil and the dark area on the lower left of the Virgin's dress) at this time.

Three hypotheses have been outlined here: that the drawing is to be related to the lost modello presented to the Cathedral Chapter in 1611, that it is a preliminary design for the Vienna Assumption, and that it is a preliminary design for the altarpiece in Brussels. All these works were commissioned and executed within a very short space of time, between 1611 at the earliest and 1615 at the latest. For all of them, Rubens drew on a closely related set of pictorial ideas. In the light of his constant preoccupation with designs for the Assumption in these years, and their close compositional relationship with each other, it would be wrong to conclude that the position of the drawing in this sequence can be determined with any degree of certainty. To me it seems that a dating before April 1611 is too early, and that the drawing slightly antedates the painting in Vienna—although it should probably not be regarded as a preliminary design for that work in the strictest sense: it is perhaps most satisfactorily described as a working drawing which Rubens had to hand when occupied with ideas for the Assumption in these years and which may consequently be related in one way or another to all the paintings of this subject from the period concerned.8

That the author of the drawing is Rubens and not Van Dyck9 cannot be doubted. Van Dyck never showed such assurance—or care—in the depiction of hands and feet, and it is barely conceivable that he could have produced so complex and at the same time so assured an example of draughtsmanship before 1615, the very latest possible terminus ante quem for the present drawing.

1. Baudouin, 1972, p. 57; Baudouin, Altars, pp. 65, 68, Van de Velde, 1975, p. 258; for the relevant document
see pp.191–192 below. See also Mitsch, Rubens in der Albertina, op. cit., pp.12–17.
2. Here God the Father was represented in sculpture above the painting; cf. p.141 below.
4. Mielke, op. cit., p.200; Vlieghe, Saints, I, No.90a, pl.156.
5. Held, p.100, and Burchard-d’Hulst, 1963, p.121. The dating suggested by these authors, c.1614–15, how­
ever, is slightly later than the one proposed here.
6. A suggestion first hinted at by Rooses, V, p.232; see also Prohaska, p.70.
7. It should be noted, however, that Rubens originally intended to paint a veil behind the Virgin’s head in
the Vienna altarpiece as well, as revealed by the X-rays of that work (cf. p.141 below and fig.93).
8. It may incidentally be noted that a close parallel for the position of the Virgin, her fluttering veil,
and the position of her hands with the palms turned outwards, may also be found in the rather later ceiling painting for the Jesuit Church in Antwerp (Martin, Ceiling Paintings, No.16 and pp.107–108).
9. As suggested by Benesch, op. cit., p.35.

37. The Assumption of the Virgin
(Fig.87)

Oil on panel; 458 x 297 cm. Arched on top.
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum.
Inv. No.518.

PROVENANCE: Jesuit Church, Antwerp; acquired by J. Rosa for the Imperial Collections in Vienna, 1776; removed to Paris, 1809; returned to the Belvedere, Vienna, 1815.

COPY: Painting, Church of St Charles Borromeo, Antwerp; panel, approximately 458 x 297 cm.

EXHIBITED: Vienna, 1977, No.16.

LITERATURE: Bellori, p.224; Tessin, p.82; Papebrochius, IV, pp.406–409; De Wit, p.62; Berbie, p.65; Descamps, Vie, pp.322–323; Mensaert, I, p.219; Descamps, Voyage, p.184; Michel, 1771, p.101; Diercxens, VII, p.146; C. von Meichel, Verzeichnis der kaiserlichen königlichen Bildergalerie in Wien, Vienna, 1783, p.111, No.3; Smith, Catalogue Raisonné, II, p.88, No.284; Parthey, p.419, No.72; Visschers, pp.98–99; Génard, Ver­
gameling, V, pp.201–203; C. Piot, Les ta­
sciences, des lettres et des beaux-arts. XLVI,
1878, pp.146–147, No.3; E. R. von Engerth,
Kunsthistorische Sammlungen des allerbö­
sten Kaiserhauses. Gemälde. Beschreibendes
Verzeichnis, II, Vienna, 1884, pp.41–51, LXXV, and No.1156; Rooses, II, pp.168–169,
No.356; Rooses, V, p.329; Michel, p.239;
K.d.K., ed. Rosenberg, p.193; Dillon, pp.134
to 136, pl. CLXXX; K.d.K., p.206; Madsen,
p.304 and notes 2 and 3; C. Gould, Trophy of
Conquest. The Musée Napoleon and the Cre­
wachskatalog der Gemäldegalerie des kunst­
historischen Museums in Wien, 1966, p.47,
No.100, plates 55–56; Baudouin, Altars,
pp.68–69 (repr.); Baudouin, 1972, pp.58–59
(repr.); Van de Velde, 1975, pp.253–259;
Prohaska, pp.66–72, No.16; Glen, pp.154–
155; 245–246; Dittmann, pp.51, 52.

The Virgin ascends to heaven with both arms outstretched, surrounded by a cloud of winged putti. Three figures struggle to roll away the stone from her rocky sepul­
chre on the left. The holy women are oc­
cupied with her winding cloth and the ro­
ses miraculously discovered therein. On
the right the remaining apostles either
look upwards or at the tomb in various
expressions of amazement. The sarcoph­
gus itself is not visible.

The upper half of this work derives very closely from the modello of the Assump­
tion in Buckingham Palace (No.35; Fig.85, the only significant differences being the addition of two extra putti on the left of the Virgin, and the alteration in the position of her right hand), while the lower half largely repeats that of the Assump-
tion and Coronation of the Virgin in Lenin­grad (No.46; Fig.129). The latter modello was painted in 1611, while the former must date from very shortly after. As the Virgin's dress in the present work and that of the foremost woman in the centre show the same rather spiky highlighting as in both the modelli, and as figures such as the head of the old woman and the young apostle looking forward in the group on the right may be found in several works from around 1612, a dating of c. 1613 may be proposed for the present work (and not c. 1620 as it was usually dated in the earlier literature). This dating is to some extent corroborated by the fact that the group of angels below the Virgin (reflecting Rubens's own copy of Por­done's fresco of God the Father in Tre­viso) was re-used in the engraving by T.Galle (after Rubens's design) for the Breviarium Romanum of 1614.

In view of the derivation from the two modelli mentioned above, it may be that this work was originally intended as the High Altarpiece for Antwerp Cathedral (at the very least it seems likely that Rubens began painting the bottom half with this purpose in mind). This possibility receives further support from the fact that on 26 April, 1613, the Gardeners' Guild submitted a request to the Cathedral Chapter for the return to their own cha­pel of Frans Floris's Adoration of the Shep­herds which had stood on the High Altar since 1585 as a replacement for the original High Altarpiece of the Assumption by Frans Floris.

'It is likely, therefore, that at this time there was some expectation that the Gardeners' painting would be replaced over the High Altar by a new one. That this did not in the event take place until much later may be due to two reasons suggested by Van de Velde: in the first place because of the continuing financial difficulties of the chapter, or because the new altarpiece would have been over­shadowed by the 'arquebusiers' monu­mental new altarpiece of the Descent from the Cross, of which the centre panel was completed in September, 1612 and the wings in March, 1614.

What, then, became of the painting now in Vienna? According to the records of the paintings taken to Vienna in 1776 it came from the Jesuit Church in Ant­werp, along with the St Ignatius Loyola and St Francis Xavier from the High Altar. That it hung in the Mary Chapel there, where a copy (Fig.110) still hangs, is recorded by Papebrochius in his description of the Houtappel family's munificence in completing the marble decoration of the chapel in time for the Jubilee celebra­tions of 1640:

'Apud Patres Societatis interea (anno 1640) fiebat ingens apparatus, pro cele­brando primo a sua institutione jubileo collaborantibus imprimis piis illis vir­ginibus, quae sub illorum directione devotione devotam Deo castitatem vi­tamque profltebantur. Praecelluerunt autem hoc in genere sorores Houtappe­liae quae providi a multis retro mensi­
bus constituerant, fundatum a sepiisque suis sacellum, communemque omnibus sub illius altari sepulturam quam specciosissime exornare marmoribus, quibus iam ipsum altare circumcirca fulgebat complexum eximiam penicelli Rubenii tabulam assumptae in coelum Virginis... Deiparae imago apud Iesuitas in eius sacellum marmoribus convestitum refertur et monumenta fundatorum insigni ornatu decorata, panduntur." 16

The Houtappel sisters here referred to were the daughters of Godefridus Houtappel (d. 13 January, 1626), the founder of the chapel, who built it with the assistance of his niece Anna 's Grevens, as confirmed by his epitaph in the crypt below the chapel:

'Hic situs est D. Godefridi Houtappel/ D. in Ranst,/F. Iacobi iurisconsulti/Urbs eius, ob sua in eam merita/adversus Martinish Rossemium/decimum septicum Senatoris quod munus ipse suscipere quam suscipere maluit/sua se virtute negotiisque involvens/vir antiquae sinceritas et fidei/qua Pupillorum Domus mor tas septenas/Religiosissime administravit./pietas affectu sacellum hoc/Deiparae, cum filiabus et nepte Anna 's Grevens/iacto primo lapide, aedificavit/quod hae dein, omni sacra suppellectile instructum marmoreum fecere.'17

The arms of Anna 's Grevens (d. 1638) are carved above the entrance of the chapel, and Houtappel and his family are recorded on a tablet in front of the altar:

'Monumentum/D. Godefridi Houtappel/Domini in Ranst Fundatoris huius Sacelli/et piis conjug. D. Corneliae Boot/Filiarumque Virginum/Mariae Annae Christinae Lucretiae/et cognatae Annae 's Grevens/a quibus confundatum et ornatum/hoc deiparae sacellum//et fun-
datum in hac Urbe/Collegium Societatis Iesu./Retribuere dignare Domini'.18

Although none of these documents make the exact date of the foundation of the chapel clear, it was certainly built before 12 January, 1626, the date of Godefridus Houtappel's death; it may have been built at the time of the death of his wife, Cornelia Boot, on 17 September, 1620, or possibly even before then.19 In any event, the painting must have remained in Rubens's studio for some years before the decision was taken to place it in the Houtappel Chapel. There the Virgin looked upward to a sculpted figure of God the Father surrounded by angels holding a crown above her head:

'Altari vero ipsi Superne incumbit, inter marmoreos Angelos, marmoreus ipse Deus Pater, quasi coronam aeris inaurati tendens ascendentis, in iam dicta tabula, e tumulo coelorum Reginae impendonam'20 (cf. Fig. 110).

This and the remaining sculpture in the chapel—completed, as recorded by the above documents, at the expense of Anna 's Grevens and the daughters of Godefridus Houtappel—was the work of Andries de Noie the Younger.21 Although Rubens designed the ceiling of this chapel,22 it does not seem likely that he was responsible for the design of the altarpiece frame and surrounds here—especially if one compares them with his own designs for the High Altar of the Jesuit Church,23 and for the other altarpieces of this and the next decade.24

X-ray examination of the upper half of the altarpiece has revealed that a first version of the work showed several similarities with the modello in Buckingham Palace (No.35; Fig.85): as in that work, a veil passed behind the head of the Virgin and then over her left forearm (Figs.90 and 91), and her right palm originally appears
to have been turned upwards (Figs. 88 and 89). The work may have been repainted in its present form by Rubens at the time of its installation in the Houtappel Chapel. In any event, it was presumably at this time that a strip of approximately 16 cm. wide was added to the right of the altarpiece (on which the apostle on the extreme right resting his hand on the shoulder of the figure in front of him is painted), presumably in order to accommodate the work to the position destined for it in the Chapel. If, as Burchard suggested, one compares the work in its present state with the modello in Buckingham Palace, as well as with other paintings of the Assumption by Rubens such as those in Antwerp and Liechtenstein (Nos. 43 and 44; Figs. 116 and 122), it seems likely that it was trimmed by a few centimetres at the top—one again, it may be supposed, in order to fit it into its intended frame. These alterations may have been made, as proposed by Burchard, Prohaska and others, around 1620, but there is no definite evidence in this regard.

The painting must have been damaged in the fire which swept the Jesuit Church in 1718, as appears from the document recording its removal to Vienna in 1776 which also records that it had by then been repainted in several areas. When moved to Paris in 1809 under the instructions of the French commissioner Denon, it was sawn into three in order to facilitate its removal. Despite such damage, the restoration of the picture in 1952–55 revealed the work to be in relatively good condition. The construction of the panel as a whole was repaired and a considerable amount of overpaint removed. This brought to light a substantial number of pentimenti as well as several figures which had not previously been visible. The latter included the heads of the putti immediately above the opening of the tomb, the head and arm of the third man rolling back the stone on the left, and the foot of a figure immediately between the woman on the right and the apostle bending forward at the head of the group of apostles on the right hand side of the picture. All these elements are already present in the modello in Leningrad (No. 46; Fig. 129), and the relationship with that work is further confirmed by the fact that a group of cypresses may be detected beneath the paint surface in the background of the composition. Rubens may thus well have begun painting the lower half of the work very shortly after 1611, as has already been proposed in the preceding discussion.

It may perhaps be recorded here—before proceeding to the surviving drawings for this work—that a drawing of the 'Assumption of the Jesuits' appeared in the Jonathan Richardson sale, London, 22 January, 1747, lot 20. Further references to a drawing for or after the Jesuit Assumption occur in the Babault sale, Paris (Picard and Glony), 24 January, 1763 et seq., lot 362; and in the Conseiller Nourri sale, Paris (Folliot and Regnault), 24 February, 1785, lot 874 (black chalk and bistre wash).

2. See above p.145.
3. Such as the Supper at Emmaus in St Eustache in Paris (No.8, Fig.14).
5. Judson-Van de Velde, No.27.
8. This had been lost in the troubles of the immediately preceding years in Antwerp. For the history of the Gardeners' altarpiece and its temporary placing on the High Altar of the Cathedral, see C. Van de Velde, De Aanbidding der Herders van Frans Floris, Jaarboek Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerpen, 1961, pp.59–71.

10. As suggested by Baudouin, Altars, p.70.

11. See below pp.172–175 under No.43.

12. K.d.K., p.82.


15. Vlieghe, Saints, II, Nos.115 and 104 respectively.


17. Paperbrochus, IV, p.400; Génard, Verzameling, V, p.203.

18. Visschers, p.99; Génard, Verzameling, V, p.202. The portraits of Houtappel and his wife Cornelia Boot by Gortzius Geldorp now in the Hermitage in Leningrad (Nos.1717 and 1788) and dated 1607 may well have come from this chapel. The Houtappel's spiritual adviser appears to have been the Antwerp Jesuit writer Carolus Scibanti (1561–1629), as recorded by his epitaph also in the chapel (Paperbrochus, IV, p.408; Génard, Verzameling, V, p.202).

19. For further details of the Houtappel family's substantial benefactions to the church, see the important note by A. Pontecet, Histoire de la Compagnie de Jésus dans les anciens Pays-Bas, Brussels, 1920, i, p.547, n.3.

20. Paperbrochus, V, p.408. It should be noted, however, that this figure was probably sculpted several years after the installation of the painting in the chapel, at the time of the execution of the rest of the scupltural work (cf. the following note).


22. See most recently Baudouin, 1972, pp.102–103, pls.64–65, and Mitsch, pp.84–85, No.34.


24. Cf. for example, Figs.40, 109, and 111 in the present volume. It may however be noted, as Jaffé perceptively observed, that Rubens must have been at least in part responsible for the device whereby sunlight is admitted from a concealed window on the right of the altar and is allowed to play across the figure of the Madonna (thus enhancing the light effects already present in the painting) and the figure of God the Father above her—thereby anticipating by almost twenty years Bernini's use of a similar device in the Raimondi Chapel in San Pietro in Montorio and the Cornaro chapel in Santa Maria della Vittoria in Rome (Jaffé, 1977, p.103).

25. Cf. Prohaska, pp.69–70. There seems to be no basis for Rooses’s suggestion that the Virgin and angels were painted by C. Schut and only retouched by Rubens (Rooses, V, p.168).

26. Corroborated by the evidence of the X-rays of the upper half of the work.

27. See Martin, Ceiling Paintings, p.44.


29. Engerth, op. cit., p.LXXV.


CATALOGUE NO. 373

37a. Study of an Old Man bending forward: Drawing (Fig.92)

Black and red chalk, heightened with white; 40.2 x 24.6 cm. Cut at an angle corresponding approximately to the upper contour of the figure but several centimetres above it. On the verso a drawing of a young man leaning forward (No.37b), Vienna, Albertina. Inv. No.8.300.

PROVENANCE: Duke Albert of Sachsen-Teschen (Moritzburg near Dresden, 1738—Vienna, 1822).


This is a study, probably from life, for the upper half of the figure bending forward.
in the left foreground of the final version of the Assumption of the Virgin in Vienna (No.37; Fig.87). In the pose of the figure and the angle of his head it is perhaps slightly closer to the equivalent figure in the modello in Leningrad (No.46; Fig.129), but the detailed treatment of the musculature is reflected with greater precision in the final version. In the latter the figure has been given a beard and moustache, and the angle of his head slightly modified. On the lower right of the present sheet the forearm has been redrawn with greater care, although it was not used in the painting. It would appear that both the figure and the arm have been cut from a larger sheet possibly containing further studies for this Assumption. The drawing must therefore date from a little earlier than the altarpiece, i.e. around 1611-12.

Mitsch correctly noted Rubens’s indebtedness to Michelangelo in the treatment of the musculature of the present figure (it is particularly close to one of the figures on a sheet of studies for the Battle of Cascina which Rubens owned1), and compared it in this respect to the St Christopher on the outer panels of the triptych of the Raising of the Cross2, of the same period as the present drawing.

1. Vienna, Albertina, Inv. No.123.
2. Cf. in particular the study in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich, K.d.K.K., p.53. Mitsch, p.28, also pointed to other parallels within Rubens’s œuvre, beginning with the preparatory drawing for the Mantuan Baptism of Christ of 1604-05 (Glück-Haberditçl, No.30).

CATALOGUE NO. 37b

37b. Study of a Young Man leaning forward: Drawing (Fig.93)

Black and red chalk heightened with white; 40.2 x 24.6 cm. Cut at approxi-
final composition in Vienna (No. 37; Fig. 87), and a dating of c. 1611–12 may therefore be regarded as sufficiently accurate.

37c. Study of Arms and Hands: Drawing (Fig. 97)

Black chalk, heightened with white; 36.7 x 23.5 cm. Inscribed in ink by another hand in the lower right corner: Rubens. Dresden, Kupferstichkabinett. Inv. No.C1966-64.

PROVENANCE: Augustus III, King of Poland and Elector of Saxony; acquired for the Dresden collections before 1756.


LITERATURE: L. Burchard, Drei Zeichnungen in Dresdner Sammlungen, Mitteilungen aus den sächsischen Kunstsammlungen, IV, 1913, pp. 57–58, fig. 1; Glück-Haberditzl, p. 45, No. 126 (repr.); C. Dittrich in Graphische Sammlung Albertina, Das Dresdner Kupferstich-Kabinett und die Albertina, Vienna, 1978, p. 98, No. 86.

The hand and arm on the left of this sheet were used with almost no alteration for the apostle kneeling in the foreground on the right of the painting in Vienna (No. 37, Fig. 87); those on the right were used for the bearded apostle leaning forward at the head of the group of apostles on the right of the composition. In both cases the connection is closer to the painting than to the modello in Leningrad, and a dating of c. 1611–12 is therefore indicated.

37d. Study of Two Young Men looking upwards: Drawing (Fig. 95)

Black chalk on grey paper, 35.3 x 25.8 cm. Partially damaged on the left and restored. Below on the left the marks of T. Hudson (L. 2432) and Sir Joshua Reynolds (L. 2364); below on the right the marks of P. H. Lankrink (L. 2906) and J. Richardson Senior (L. 2184) and inscribed in ink in a later hand: P. P. Rubens. Watermark: a hunter's horn.

Cambridge, Massachusetts, Fogg Art Museum, Inv. No. 1936.123.

PROVENANCE: P. H. Lankrink (London, 1628–1692); J. Richardson, Senior (London, 1665–1745); T. Hudson (London, 1701–1779); Sir Joshua Reynolds (London, 1723 to 1792); Sir Thomas Lawrence (London, 1769–1830); Charles S. Bale (London, 1791 to 1880); H. Oppenheimer (London); sale, London (Christie’s), 14 July, 1936, lot 303; gift of the Hon. and Mrs Robert Woods Bliss to the Fogg Art Museum, 1936.

COPY: Drawing (partial copy of the two upper heads), whereabouts unknown.


CATALOGUE NO. 37c


This study of two young men was used, again with some variation in their attitudes, for the two bearded apostles on the extreme right of the composition (No.37; Fig.87). But in one important respect the drawing is significantly closer to the modello in Leningrad (No.46; Fig.129): in the painting in Vienna the left arm of the apostle on the right has been transposed from the left to the right shoulder of the figure standing in front of the drawing. This suggests a date of c.1611 for the present sheet, but whether it was appreciably earlier than the other drawings for this composition is difficult to determine. In any case, as has already been suggested above, it is not unlikely that Rubens used it again in the preparation of the final version of the composition in Vienna—even if it was made before the modello in Leningrad.

The young man on the right of the sheet appears to be drawn from the same model as the study in the Albertina for the figure at the head of the group of apostles (No.37b; Fig.93). In both cases the young model has been changed into a considerably older figure in the final composition. The same may also apply to the head looking upwards on the lower left of this drawing, which appears to have served as the basis for the head of the kneeling apostle seen from behind in the right foreground of the painting. On the other hand one cannot exclude the possibility that this head represented an early stage in the evolution of the young apostle looking upwards at the Madonna in the centre of the group.

37e. Study of Drapery: Drawing, verso of 37d (Fig.96)

Black chalk on grey paper; 35.3 x 25.8 cm. Partially damaged on the right and restored. Below on the right the marks of P.H.Lankrink (L.2090) and C.S.Bale (L.640). Cambridge, Massachusetts, Fogg Art Museum. Inv. No.1936.123.

PROVENANCE: As under 37d.


Verso of the preceding drawing. Burchard thought that this drapery study might have been used for the dress of the woman on the right in the final composition, but the differences are too great to permit such a conclusion. If anything, however, the study is closer to the painting in Vienna (No.37; Fig.87) than to the modello in Leningrad (No.46; Fig.129).

It may be noted that Rubens made similar careful drapery studies much later in his career, in connection with the Garden of Love.¹ The present drawing, however, is palpably earlier than these, and like the recto should be dated towards the beginning of the second decade.

37f. Study of a Young Woman with raised left Arm: Drawing (Fig.94)

Black chalk heightened with white; 37.4 x 25 cm. Below on the right the mark of Jonathan Richardson, Senior (L.2183); another collector's mark on the lower left. Washington, National Gallery of Art. No. B30.458.

PROVENANCE: Jonathan Richardson, Senior (London, 1665-1745); François Flameng (Paris, 1856-1923); sale, Paris (Galerie Petit), 26-27 May, 1919, lot 87, pl.53; Slatkin Galleries, New York; bought by the National Gallery of Art in 1977.

EXHIBITED: Master Drawings from the Collection of the National Gallery of Art and Promised Gifts, Washington, National Gallery of Art, 1978, p.64 (repr.).


A study from the life for the woman on the right of the group of holy women in the painting in Vienna (No.37). It is considerably closer to the figure in the final composition than any of the preceding drawings, and is further from the equivalent figure in the Leningrad modello (No.46; Fig.129). It may thus be dated to c.1611-12, or possibly even a little later. The same model was later used for a study for the young woman on the left of the Miracles of Francis Xavier.1

On the verso are swift sketches in black chalk, partially gone over in pen and brown ink, probably for a Hunting Scene.2 A bearded man, in pen only, may also be discerned in the top right corner.

38. The Assumption of the Virgin (Fig.98)

Oil on canvas; 500 x 338.5 cm. Brussels, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts. No.378.

PROVENANCE: Church of the Discalced Carmelites, Brussels; removed by the French Commissioners in 1794 and sent to the Musée Central, Paris; returned to Brussels in 1815 and deposited in the Museum there in 1816.

COPIES: (1) Painting, c. 1850, by Eugène Delacroix, whereabouts unknown. EXH. Deuxième exposition des maîtres … du 19ème siècle, Galerie Siot-Decauville, Paris, 1926. LIT. B. Ehrlich White, Delacroix’s Painted Copies after Rubens, Art Bulletin, XLIX, pp.43, 47, fig.16; (2) Oil sketch of lower half of composition, Brussels, private collection; panel, c. 50 x 70 cm. LIT. [Cat. Exh.], Brussels, 1965, p.181.


LITERATURE: Mensaert, I, p.7; Descamps, Voyage, p.97; Michel, 1771, pp.67-68; Description de la Ville de Bruxelles, Brussels, 1789, pp.7-8; Reynolds, p.146; Piot, p.164; Notice, 1801, No.25; Notice, 1814, No.537; Smith, Catalogue Raisonné. II, pp.20-21, 70; IX, p.247, No.20; Journal d’ Eugène Delacroix, ed. A. Joubin, Paris, 1832,1[Entry for 13 August, 1850], p.412; Fromentin, pp.42-43; Rooses, II, pp.164-167, No.355; Dillon, p.135, pl. CLXXVIII; K.d.K., ed. Rosenberg, p.175; K.d.K., p.120; Evers, 1942, pp.316-317; Evers, 1943, p.218; Madsen, p.304 n.3; De Maeyer, pp.109-130; Burchard-d’Hulst, 1963, p.120; F. Baudouin, Rubens'

In the present work, the upward movement of the Virgin is more strongly emphasized than in the preceding compositions; and the effect is largely achieved by the brilliant rays of light passing diagonally from the left edge of the work to the golden glow surrounding the Virgin. Below her, the lid of the sarcophagus is removed by the figures around it, to reveal the winding cloth and the roses discovered therein. The lower zone reverts fairly closely to the scheme worked out in the modello in Buckingham Palace (No.35; Fig.85): the two women discovering the flowers in the sarcophagus and the actions of a number of the apostles are especially close to that work. Apart from a general similarity in the upper half of both works, there are more specific parallels in some of the putti—particularly in those on the right of the Virgin’s dress.

Perhaps the most striking aspect of the upper half of the painting is the range of blues, from the deep blue of the sky to the variety of blues and greys in the Virgin’s garments, and the contrast these colours provide with the brilliant glow in the sky around her. The full and relatively undifferentiated colours of the garments of the apostles serve to enhance the relief-like effect of this group as a whole (a use of colour which may be found in a number of works around the middle of the second decade, including the epitaph paintings discussed in the present volume). The contrast between relatively pale hues in the upper half of a composition and full colours in the lower zone is also to be found, for example, in the St Stephen altarpiece in Valenciennes, which Vlieghe broadly dated to 1615-20. On stylistic grounds, then, the present altarpiece may be dated to around the beginning of this period, c.1615-16.

The painting is recorded as having come from the high altar of the church of the Discalced Carmelites in Brussels, where it was seen by Mensaert, Descamps, Michel, and Reynolds, and whence it was taken by the French in 1794. The consecration of the church took place on 15 October, 1614, the day of the Feast of St Teresa, in the presence of the Archdukes Albert and Isabella. They (and a number of members of the highest nobility) provided a substantial endowment for the building and decoration of the church, but there is no evidence to support the frequently repeated assertion that they commissioned the high altarpiece by Rubens. His altarpiece of the Transverberation of St Teresa and ten copies of his cartoons for the Eucharist series also hung in the church, prior to its demolition in 1811. This church should not be confused with that of the convent of Discalced Carmelite nuns (Carmelites Déchaussées) which had been founded and endowed by the Archdukes a few years earlier, and was designed by Wenzel Cobergher, who also painted the high altar there, probably with the aid of his assistant, J. Francart.

The date of the consecration of the church, 1614, provides an approximate dating for the high altarpiece by Rubens. But the suggestion made above that it was only painted c. 1615-16 (or only completed then) is to some extent corroborated by Michel’s account of the commission. He states that the Archdukes attended the first mass on 15 October 1614; and ‘voyant
que ce nouveau Temple & son autel étoient sans décoration, demandèrent à Rubens un grand tableau pour y placer: l'ordonnance & sujet représentent l'Assomption de la Vierge....'9 Here it should be noted, contra Burchard, that Michel's reference to an 'autel postiche' (with a cut-out Resurrection and soldiers above it), whose remains he saw in the collection of M. Pèry in Brussels, almost certainly concerns the altar of St Teresa in this church.10 Michel, however, is the only writer to record these details and his account should therefore be treated with caution.

Indeed, one cannot even be sure that the work stood on the high altar of the church of the Discalced Carmelites from the beginning. If it did, it is surprising that so important a painting does not appear to have been recorded there by any source before Mensaert.11 Although, for example, the French traveller Balthasar de Monconys recorded that he saw Rubens's St Teresa altarpiece in the church on his visit in 1633, he made no mention either of the high altar or of an Assumption by Rubens.12 Thus no primary evidence survives to suggest that the present work was painted for the high altar of this church, let alone that it was commissioned by the Archdukes. But the circumstantial evidence is strong, in favour of the former at least; and it could be argued that the fact that the painting is of an appreciably lower quality than Rubens's other Assumptions and was evidently painted with a substantial amount of studio participation accounts for its neglect in the earlier sources.13 The relative poverty of the Carmelite fathers is on record.14 and this may explain why they were obliged to commission not only a work on canvas but also one which to a large extent was painted by Rubens's assistants. In the absence of further documentary evidence, however, it is not possible to reach a more substantive conclusion.

The relationship between this work and the modello in Buckingham Palace (No.35; Fig.85) and the drawing in the Albertina (No.36; Fig.86) is also problematic. As Rubens may well have received the commission for the altarpiece in 1612 (the date of the foundation of the church), it could perhaps be argued that his first design for it is represented by the modello, which may also date from around that time.15 But this is not likely, in view of the fairly substantial differences between the two works and the closer relation of the modello to the sequence of works intended for the High Altar of Antwerp Cathedral (No.43; Fig.116).16 In any event, in view of the difficulty of establishing exact dates for the various realizations of the Assumption by Rubens in the years between 1611 and 1615, a period when he was clearly preoccupied with this subject, no more definite relationship can, or perhaps need be established. The same applies to the (admittedly more likely) possibility that the drawing in the Albertina represents an early stage in the evolution of this particular composition, a hypothesis which has already been discussed in the relevant entry above.17

Unlike all the other paintings of this subject by Rubens, no engravings were made after the present composition. As noted by Burchard, the engravings cited by Rooses in his entry for the painting are not in fact after this work, but are to be related to the modello in Buckingham Palace (No.35; Fig.85).18 The execution of the painting appears to be largely the work of assistants, with some retouching by Rubens. There is no evidence, however, to support Rooses's assertion (also made in connection with the Assumption in Vienna) that Rubens's main
collaborator on this occasion was Corne­lis Schut.19 Certainly, there are weak pas­sages, such as the face of the Madonna (criticized by most of the early commen­tators on the work),20 but these may be due to later repainting. It is known that the painting suffered severely at an early date. Between its return from Paris to Brussels at the end of 1815 and its installa­tion in the newly founded museum there a few months later, it seems to have been left exposed to the elements, although still in its packing. But the dampness which penetrated the latter and the consequ­ent contraction of the canvas put an ex­cessive strain on the stretcher.21 Fromen­tin commented that it had been repainted in several areas.22 Prior to the 1965 ex­hibition in Brussels, however, the canvas was relined23 and the work now appears to be in relatively good condition, although some areas remain either dark or abraded. The work must have been placed in its present frame at a fairly early date, pos­sibly on its return to Brussels in 1815–16. In any event, the curved upper edge of the painting has been cut, presumably in order to fit it into the rectangular frame. There are no major pentimenti, apart from the attenuation of the right shin of the bare-soled apostle lifting the cover of the sarcophagus.

The comments of three of the painters who wrote about this work are perhaps worth recording here. While acknowl­edging the importance of the painting, they all made adverse remarks about it. Reynolds averred that ‘the principal fig­ure, the Virgin, is the worst in the composi­tion, both in regard to the character of the countenance, the drawing of the figure, and even its colour ... and this gives a deadness to that part of the picture ... the masses of light and shade are conducted with the greatest judgement, and except­ing the upper part where the Virgin is, it is one of Rubens’s rich pictures’;24 and Delacroix, although it impressed him suf­ficiently for him to have made a copy of it,25 remarked briefly that ‘l’Assomption est très sèche’.26 Works of the same period roused similarly unfavourable comments from Fromentin; in dealing with the pre­sent Assumption he maintained that ‘elle sest, comme les tableaux de cette date, polie, propre de surface, un peu vitrifié. Les types médiocres manquent de natu­rel’.27

1. Especially Nos.18, 23 and 24; cf. pp.84–85, 93.
2. Vlieghe, Saints, II, No.146.
9. Michel, 1771, p.68.
11. Sanderus, II, p.346 simply records that ‘Visuntur in hac Ecclesia imagines aliquae ab elegante Rubenii penicillo’.
13. Unless one postulates that the work was only placed in the church in the second half of the 18th century, at a time when various repair works were effected to the building, such as the reconstruction of the portal in 1756 (Henne-Wauters, III, p.391).
18. Rooses, II, p.167, referring to the engravings by S. A. Bolswert, (V.S.,p.76, No.18) and those published by C.Galle (V.S., p.76, Nos.23 and 25)—as well as those by several later hands.
20. Cf., for example, note 24 below and the corre­sponding quotation in the text.
39. Apostles surrounding the Virgin’s Tomb: Drawing (Fig.102)

Pen and ink over black chalk, 22.8 x 30 cm. On the reverse a boy lying on his back in red chalk heightened with white, with fighting figures drawn over it in black ink at an angle of 90°.

Oslo, Nasjonalgalleriet.

PROVENANCE: Bequeathed by Sophus Larpent to the Nasjonalgalleriet, Oslo, in 1911.


This vigorously executed drawing clearly represents the swift realization of a first idea for the bottom half of an Assumption of the Virgin: while most of the apostles have already turned their gaze upwards to the heavenly ascent, some are still intently engaged in the examination of the sarcophagus. The scene may be found in all Rubens’s paintings of the Assumption (with the exception of the ceiling painting for the Jesuit Church in Antwerp), but none of them show any clear connection with the present drawing—although it is perhaps closest to the studio work in Schleissheim (No.40; Fig.104).

In his thorough discussion of the drawing, Held correctly noted that it must come later than the design for the Breviarium Romanum of 1612–13, where the two figures on the left are fairly close to those in the present drawing. On the other hand, the figure with the upraised arms on the extreme left may be found in a similar pose in the Mauritshuis oil sketch for the Assumption of the Virgin in Antwerp (No.43a; Fig.120), which is to be dated after 1620. In addition, however, the drawing shows several similarities to two of the compositions for the Conversion of St Paul in the Princes Gate Collection: the figure on the right may be compared to the analogous figure on the right of the double sheet there (No.30a; Fig.69), while the figure shielding his eyes and turning his head back and upwards is comparable to the soldier just to the right of the centre of the final painting (No.30; Fig.67). It seems likely that the present drawing slightly postdates these works of c.1612–15: in terms of the very swift and vigorous penwork it comes closest to the drawing with studies for the Fall of the Damned, a Lion Hunt, and the Assumption of the Blessed in the British Museum of c.1615–16 (Nos.52a and 53a; Figs.169 and 172). A dating of c.1615 or possibly a little later may therefore be proposed for the present work. Such a dating would be corroborated by the parallel, noted by both Madsen and Held, between the fighting youth on the verso of the drawing and the Battle of the Amazons of c.1615.

As has already been observed, the combination of figures looking into a sarcophagus with others looking upwards may have been derived from Raphael’s design, engraved by Marcantonio, for the grisaille scene of Alexander Placing the Works of
Homer in the Sarcophagus of Achilles in the Stanza della Segnatura. But apart from the figure throwing both his arms upwards on the left of the drawing, and one of the figures looking directly into the sarcophagus, there are no other particularly close similarities here.

1. Martin, Ceiling Paintings, No. 16.
2. Judson-Van de Velde, No. 27.
5. P. 140 above, and notes.
6. Duessler, pl. 130.

40. The Assumption of the Virgin
(Fig. 104)

Oil on canvas; 156 x 109 cm.
Schleissheim, Neues Schloss.

Provenance: Johann Maximilian Joseph Fugger (1661–1731); Maximilian Emanuel, Prince Elector of the Palatinate (1662–1726); Alte Pinakothek, Munich, until 1882; Schleissheim, Schloss, until 1922; Augsburg, Gemäldegalerie, until 1964; Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Depot, until 1976.

Copy: Etching (with considerable variations) by W. Panneels (Fig. 103; V. S., p. 78, No. 33).

Exhibited: Kurfürst Max Emanuel, Bayern und Europa um 1700, Schleissheim (Munich), 1976, No. 813.


While differing from all the other versions of this subject by Rubens, the composition of this work is closest, in general terms, to the Assumption of the Virgin in Düsseldorf (No. 41; Fig. 105). Some of the figure types show similarities with that work as well, especially the heads of the apostles on the right. The face of the young apostle in the foreground on the right (most probably John the Evangelist), occurs both in the Düsseldorf picture and in the Munich Descent of the Holy Spirit (No. 27; Fig. 60), where further physiognomic similarities may be found. A general dating of c. 1616–20 is thus provided for the present work.

It will be observed, however, that certain elements within the composition recall earlier works by Rubens, and that the handling is in many respects similar to his technique of c. 1615. This may be explained by the fact that, despite the attractive colouring and lighting of the work, it is evidently a shop production, probably of the period suggested above (although it may be hazardous to suggest a precise dating for a work with so high a degree of studio participation). Amongst the parts of the painting which are clearly not by Rubens’s own hand are the face of the Virgin, the weak drawing and relatively insensitive modelling of all the figures on the left edge, and the dress of the Magdalen, with its uncharacteristic manner of painting the highlight and
the pedantic execution of the embroidery on her shawl. The sarcophagus on the left also appears to be painted in too pedestrian a fashion for Rubens. The work as a whole, however, is of high quality (especially the heads of the bearded apostles)—despite the fact that there is even less than the usual amount of retouching by Rubens, if there is any at all.

Although nothing is known of the earliest provenance of the painting, the will of Count Johann Maximilian Fugger (1661 to 1731), the son of Count Ottheinrich Fugger (cf. No. 42 below), bequeathing it to the Electors Palatine is preserved in the Fugger family archives. As the existing altar surround and niche in the small Kammerkapelle in Schleissheim was clearly designed to hold the work from Rubens’s studio, it may be assumed that the present arrangement (with the altarpiece in the niche), goes back to the original design for these elements in 1726–28. Indeed, the figure of the Virgin loses the apparent imbalance displayed in reproductions of the work when seen in the original context in the chapel, where her upward movement seems both more convincing and more effective.

As is clear after the recent cleaning for the 1976 Max Emanuel exhibition, the painting is in good condition, with only a small amount of damage round the edges. It may have been cut by a few centimetres at the top in order to fit it into its present framing, but this is no longer verifiable. There are no major pentimenti.

A drawing with the same composition as the etching by Panneels (but appreciably larger than it) is recorded in the Mariette sale, Paris, 15 November, 1775—30 January, 1776, lot 1001 (pen and ink heightened with white, c. 49 x 35 cm.), in the Le Brun sale, Paris, 11 April, 1791, lot 267, and again in the Charles Sanders and another sale. London (Sotheby’s), 3 December, 1870, lot 984.

1. The Virgin is shown much closer to the entrance of the sepulchre than in the other paintings, the figures here appearing over the entrance of the sepulchre are not present elsewhere, and the younger women are brought to the foreground.
2. The faces of the women, for example, recall the same types in the Raising of the Cross and the Descent from the Cross in Antwerp (K.d.K., pp. 36 and 52 respectively).

41. The Assumption of the Virgin
(Fig. 105)

Oil on panel: 423 x 281 cm.
Düsseldorf, Kunstmuseum. Inv. No. 2309.

PROVENANCE: Kapellekerk (Notre Dame de la Chapelle), Brussels; purchased for the Düsseldorf collection of the Bavarian Elector Johann Wilhelm von der Pfalz Neuburg in 1711; transferred to the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf c. 1828.

COPIES: (1) Painting, Hamburg, Kunsthalle, Inv. No. 763 (Fig. 106); panel, 106.1 x 74.5 cm. PROV. Sedelmeyer, Paris, 1900, No. 35; Edmond Huylbrechts sale, Antwerp, 12 May, 1902, No. 37, Hamburg; Wedells collection; bequeathed by Siegfried Wedells to the city of Hamburg in 1919. LIT. M. Rooses, Rubens Leven en Werken, Amsterdam—Antwerp—Ghent, 1903, p. 232; M. Rooses, in Rubens-Bulletijn V, 1910, p. 295, No. 358; H. Hymans, Correspondance de Belgique, Chronique des Arts, 1902, No. 24, p. 191 (reprinted in Œuvres, III, Brussels, 1920–21, p. 732); G. Pauli, Die Sammlung Wedells in Hamburg, Pantheon, XIX, 1937, p. 138 (repr.); Katalog der alten
Meister der Hamburger Kunsthalle, Hamburg, 1966, p.133; Glen, pp.155-156, 261; Held, Oil Sketches, pp.512, 513. No.376 (as Rubens); (2) Painting probably after (1), whereabouts unknown, oval. prov. London, T.Agnew and Sons, before 1939; photograph in Witt Library, Courtauld Institute, London; (3) Painting by P. van der Borch II (?), Sint-Joost-ten-Node (Brussels), Church of St Joost, approximately 423 x 281 cm. prov. Kapellekerk (Notre Dame de la Chapelle), Brussels, until 1870. LIT. Description de la ville de Bruxelles, publ. G. Frick, Brussels, 1743, p.121; Mensaert, I, pp.43-44; Descamps, Voyage, p.45; Description de la ville de Bruxelles, ed. by J.C. de Bouchers. Brussels, 1782, p.24; Rooses, II, p.172; Baudouin, Altars, pp.80,81; D. Coekelberghs and W. Janssens, Provincie Brabant, Kanton Sint-Joost-ten-Node (Fotoreperatorium van het Meubilaire van de Belgische Bedehuizen), Brussels, 1979, p.17; (4) Painting after (12) lost; panel, 75.3 x 57.5 cm. prov. Potsdam, Sanssouci, Inv. No. GKI 7597. LIT. Smith, Catalogue Raisonné, II, p.108, No.359; IX, p.288, No.164; E. Henschel Simon, Die Gemäldegalerie und Skulpturen in der Bildergalerie von Sanssouci, Berlin, 1930, p.33, No.108 (repr.); Bernhard, Verlorene Werke, p.56; G. Eckardt, Die Bildergalerie in Sanssouci, 1975, p.284, No.253; (5) Painting probably after (12), Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum, No.408; panel, 57.4 x 43.8 cm. prov. William Euing Bequest, 1874. EXH. Glasgow Dilettanti Society, Glasgow 1843, No.45 (as Biscaino); LIT. H. Miles, Dutch, Flemish, German and Netherlandish Paintings in the Glasgow Art Gallery, Glasgow, 1961, p.122, No.408; (6) Painting after (12), whereabouts unknown; copper. 40 x 31.5 cm. prov. Cologne, Schmittman collection; Cologne, Kunsthau am Museum, Carola von Ham, 1971, No.1504; (7) Painting after (12), whereabouts unknown; panel. prov. Paris, Guyot de la Pommeraye; Marseilles, A. Ollive, 1900; Marseilles, G. Abeille, 1912; photograph in Rooses documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp; (8) Painting after (12), whereabouts unknown; panel, 68.5 x 45.8 cm. prov. Bristol, W. Strachan, 1930. LIT. W. Strachan, in The Connoisseur, June, 1930, p.384; (9) Painting after (12), except that the Virgin has both arms outstretched, whereabouts unknown. prov. Berlin, Gustav Rochlitz, 1928; photograph in Burchard documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp; (10) Drawing after (12), Vienna, Albertina, Inv. No. 15994; pen and bistre wash, with sepia wash added above by a later hand and heightened with white, 62 x 40.4 cm. EXH. Vienna, Albertina, 1977, No.84; (11) Drawing by P. Pontius (?) with the addition of Christ in the clouds above in an arched top, England, private collection; black chalk, pen and brown wash heightened with white, approximately 65 x 43 cm. prov. P. Crozat (Paris, 1665-1740); Crozat sale, Paris, 10 April, 1741 et seqq., lot 831 (as Rubens); bought by Heckuet; J. Tonemann sale, Amsterdam, 21 October, 1754 (as Rubens); M. Oudaan sale, Rotterdam, 3 November, 1766, et seqq., lot 18 (as Rubens); Cornelis Ploos van Amstel (Amsterdam, 1726-1798); Ploos van Amstel sale, Amsterdam (Schley, Jeronz., Yver, and Roos), 3 March, 1800 et seq. Drawings, No.1 (as Rubens); H. van Ey Sluiter sale, Amsterdam (Schley and de Vries), 26 September, 1814 (as Rubens); in 1821 in the possession of Heneage Finch, 5th Earl of Aylesford (London, 1786 to 1859); R.S. Holford (London, 1808-1892). LIT. Waagen, Treasures, II, p.200, No.2; Blanc, Trésor, I, 1857, pp.28, 133; Mariette, V, p.93; Rooses, V, p.159; (12) Engraving after (11) by P. Pontius, 1624 (Fig.108; V.S., pp.77-78, No.28); (13) Woodcut by C. J. Jegher (V.S., p.78, No.31).
Surrounded by angelic putti and one angel older and larger than the rest, the Virgin ascends to heaven, with one hand touching her breast. Below her is the usual excited group of apostles and holy women around her tomb. The lid of her sarcophagus has already been removed, and her rocky sepulchre is depicted on the left.

The correspondence between the Bavarian Elector Johann Wilhelm and his Brussels agent F. Columbanus de Berenhave makes it clear that the painting came from the Kapellekerk in Brussels in 1711. On 26 February of that year, Columbanus wrote to Johann Wilhelm regarding the purchase of the painting by a certain Vervoort on behalf of the Elector:

'J'avay receu en toute humilité la lettre du 13. de ce mois, dont Vtre Alt. Elect. a este servie de m'honneror, au sujet de la peinture representant l'Assencion de S,c Vierge, servant au grand Autel de la paroisse de la chapelle en cette ville, achaptée par le nommé Vervoort, lequel apres un long detail des circonstances a l'egard de la conduite de cet achapt. Je trouve (: a ce que Je comprens —Monseigneur:) y avoir de l'embras, le dit Vervoort ayant agy en ce regard de tres bonne foy, mais s'il m'en eut adverty dez le commencement J'aurai taché de me servir des precautions requises en pareil rencontre, dont Je l'auroi pu instruire: maintenant la chose estant devenue a la connoissancedu publicq, et que les conditions de l'achapt sont sujettes a des interpretentions differentes. Je suis de sentiment Monseigneur, sous correction tres humble, après que J'auré discourra avecq les personnes interressés, à l'intervention dudit Vervoort, de tenter la voye aimable, pour moyennar l'effect de cet achapt, et si non, de consulter la voye la plus efficace qu'il y aura a prendre en ce regard.'

The church authorities had sold this painting, along with the Martyrdom of St Lawrence, for the large sum of 4000 florins, in order to cover some of the expenses of restoring the damage sustained by the church in the French bombardment of 1695. The resentment referred to in the letter quoted above may have arisen from the fact that the Elector failed to fulfill his promise to replace the work with...
a copy (subsequently painted by P. van der Borcht at the commission of the church authorities). In any event, the work was soon shipped to Düsseldorf, as appears from Columbanus’s report of 21 April, 1712 outlining his arrangements for the transport of the work.

‘a l’effet de l’ordonnance et libre permission pour la sortie de cette Jurisdiction, tant par l’Escaut qu’autrement, du grand tableau de Rubens. P.S. A cet instant je recoy l’ordre, de libre exemption mentionnee en cette lettre laquelle j’envoyeray demain en mains du Sr Vervoort qui a soing de la direction de cette importante Peinture, et, par la, l’intention de V.A.E. aura son entier effect’,6 as well as from the subsequent handing over of the necessary passport to Vervoort.7

The sale of the painting is also recorded by Mensaert, J.F.M. Michel, and the two guidebooks of 1743 and 1782, all of whom mention that a copy replaced it above the High Altar of the church. Along with its frame and surround, this copy—reputedly by P.II (? van der Borcht—was moved to the church of the Brussels suburb Sint-Joost-ten-Node in 1870, where it still stands.8

Fortunately, the date of the construction of the High Altar of the Kapellekerk is preserved. The archives of the church record that the contract for the altar could be found in the accounts for 1616–17: ‘Het contract over het stichten van den hooghen autaer in marbel is te vinden in den rekeningen van 1616–17’.9 While the contract itself is now unfortunately lost, the date of the completion of the altar is established by another document in the church archives: ‘Anno 1618 Erigitur in choro, altare marmorum juxta prototypam Rubeniam, in quo exponitur Assumpta Virgo depicta a praefato famoso pictore.’10 Confirmation is thus provided not only of the fact that the altarpiece was painted by Rubens, but also that he was responsible for the design of the marble surround as well, executed, as suggested by Leyssens, by Hans van Mildert.11 Whether or not it is this same structure which has been preserved in Sint-Joost-ten Node (Fig.109) need not be discussed here. At the very least it must be a close reflection of Rubens’s original design.12

Karsch records the presence of the painting in the Elector’s Gallery by 1719. It was one of the two paintings by Rubens not to be transferred to the Hofgartengalerie at Munich in 1806.13 Around 1828 it was placed in the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf,14 where it remained until the construction of the present gallery. Restorations are recorded in 1852–53 and in 1869–70, the latter after overheating had caused extensive splitting in the panel,16 and again in 1920.17 The rich colours of the painting remain fairly well preserved, although parts are rather worn (such as the cloak of the apostle kneeling on the right) or overpainted (such as the dress of the woman leaning on the sarcophagus). The panel has split rather badly in parts, and the paint surface is damaged along the vertical cracks (a number of which run the whole height of the work). Most of the edges have suffered as well, but the worst cracks, along the top, have been repaired. The shape of the original frame is reflected by the rectangular areas on either side of the top of the painting—whether these were filled in at the time of its insertion into a regularly shaped frame in Düsseldorf, or whether they should simply be regarded as the areas which were originally hidden beneath the indentations of the original frame, cannot be determined. A horizontal strip of approximately 10 cm., still visible across the top of the work,
may also have been added at the time of the insertion into the new frame.

While the work was presumably executed with a considerable amount of studio assistance, Rubens clearly participated in and retouched a large part of the painting himself, and his hand can be discerned throughout.

Here it may be appropriate to add some observations on the status of the copy in Hamburg (Fig. 106). This sketch-like work has been regarded as an original by Rubens, but the execution, both in terms of drawing and handling of paint, is too weak to justify such an attribution. The possibility that it is a copy of a now lost modello for the final composition should also be considered, in the light of several divergences from the painting in Düsseldorf, the most significant of which are the relatively more elongated figure of the Virgin, the upraised hands of the apostle on the left, and the position of the open book below the sarcophagus. But apart from these differences, the work follows the Düsseldorf painting almost exactly, even to the extent of accurately reflecting the colours there. It is therefore more likely to be a copy of the final composition; the sketch-like quality of the work may be explicable simply on the grounds that the copyist failed to finish it fully.

Finally, mention should be made of a number of head studies which have been connected with the two youngest apostles looking upwards on the left of the painting. It may be noted at this point that while Rubens often made careful preliminary studies for individual heads in his large-scale compositions, usually in black chalk, he does not appear to have made similar fully worked studies in oils for this purpose, with only a few possible exceptions. Thus, a study in black chalk (20.5 x 32.1 cm.) for the head of the young apostle looking upwards on the extreme left of the painting recorded at the Loan Exhibition of Sketches and Studies by Peter Paul Rubens at the Dowdeswell Galleries, London, 1912, No. 80, bearing the collectors mark of J.W. Nahl (Kassel, 1803-80, L. 1954) may conceivably have been by Rubens himself, or a copy of an authentic study. On the other hand, a study for the same figure on canvas laid on panel (42.3 x 30.4 cm.) at the Exhibition of 16th, 17th and 18th Century Old Masters at the Gallery Lasson, London, No. 14 is more likely to have been a copy of the head in the painting; in fact, as the head and neck in this study is turned more towards the spectator, and both the neck and upper chest revealed, it may at best be only a variation on the head in the Düsseldorf work. A study on canvas (85.5 x 67 cm.) in 1928 with H. Koetsier in London related to the young apostle shielding his eyes as he looks upwards was held by Burghard to be by the same hand as that of the pupil who executed the final composition. Even if this could be shown to be the case, the study is more likely to have been a copy of the equivalent figure in the painting than a preparatory sketch for it. Burghard tentatively suggested that the pupil concerned may have been Van Dyck; while this must remain a possibility, no definite conclusion can be reached before the emergence of more specific stylistic or documentary evidence about the precise role of Van Dyck in Rubens's workshop at this time.

1. This drawing is unknown to me, although it was illustrated in a lecture given by Professor M. Jaffé at the Courtauld Institute of Art, London, on 1 November, 1977. Like the engraving by Pontius (Fig. 108), it has an arched top and the figure of Christ above the Virgin (features absent in the painting). As the work appears to have been retouched to some extent, a fact also noted in the early sales catalogues—it may be that it should be regarded as a preparatory drawing by Pontius for

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the engraving, retouched by Rubens (cf. the similar drawing for Pontius's engraving of the Descent of the Holy Spirit, No.27a above). But as I have not had the opportunity of examining the drawing at first hand, its precise status must remain uncertain.

When this drawing appeared in the Crozat sale, it was said to be for an engraving by S. A. Bolswert, but Mariette noted that it was in fact a study for the Pontius engraving. It is not impossible that the same confusion also appeared in the later sale catalogues. One cannot, for example, be certain that the drawing in the Jacob de Wit sale, Amsterdam (de Leth and van Schorrenbergh), 10 March, 1755—like the drawing in the Oudaan sale said to be in black chalk and 'slightly coloured'—is not to be identified with the present work. On the other hand, it seems more likely that this reference is in fact to one of the engravings of this subject by S. A. Bolswert—either the engraving after the Buckingham Palace modello (No.35) or for the Missale Romanum (Judson—Van de Velde, No.27). The drawing, also slightly coloured, which appeared in the Schorel sale, Antwerp, 1 June, 1772, was somewhat larger than the present work, and is therefore probably not to be identified with it (apart from the fact that it was specifically stated in the catalogue to be for the Antwerp Assumption, No.43). It is possible that the drawing in the James Hazard sale, Brussels, 15 April, 1780, lot 79 ('â la pierre noire, lavée d'encre de la chine et plusieurs couleurs, rehaussée de blanc, sur papier bleu') is to be identified with the present work, although Burchard thought it more likely to be the same as the above-mentioned drawing from the Schorel sale. Another drawing in black chalk on blue paper, said to be 'from Richardson's and Barnard's collections' (cf. p.152) appeared in a sale in London (Philippe), 19 April, 1803, lot 550, and again in the Philippe sale, London (King), 21 May, 1817, lot 174.

2. Published by Levin, 1011, pp.30-31.
3. Ibid., p.31.
5. De Bruyn, pp.232-254 and Levin, 1011, p.32; the same fact is also recorded by the 18th century writers and guidebooks listed above, and there is no need to doubt the tradition.

2. Photograph in the Burchard Documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp.

41a. The Assumption of the Virgin: Retouched Counterproof of Engraving (Fig.107)

Engraving retouched in pen and ink, brown wash and white body colour: 63.7 x 43.7 cm.

Ghent, University Library.
provenance: P. Crozat (Paris, 1665 to 1740).


Counterproof of Pontius's 1624 engraving of Rubens's altarpiece now in Düsseldorf. It has been retouched with white body colour, (mainly in the Virgin's dress and in the garments and faces of the apostles below), brown wash (as in the garment of the apostle on the right) and by strengthening in ink (as in the bodies and hair of the putti on the left, in the figure of Christ, and in the contours of most of the faces). Almost all of these additions have been followed in the final engraving, but whether they were made by Rubens himself or by Pontius cannot be established with certainty. But as the engraver would have submitted his proof to Rubens for approval, it is possible that the latter quickly indicated the improvements he wished.

There are a number of differences between the painting and the engraving of 1624. The engraving has an arched top, and into this extra space a foreshortened Christ has been added. While this figure can be related to other similar figures by Rubens (as in the Conversion of St Paul, Nos. 30 and 31; Figs. 67, 74), he may also have prepared a preliminary sketch for it prior to its inclusion in the engraving. In addition, there are a number of smaller differences: the engraving omits the head of the second apostle looking upwards on the left of the painting, as well as two of the angels' heads on the left of the Virgin, but adds an extra apostle throwing up his hands in the group on the right of the painting and the left of the engraving. It is possible that Pontius was himself responsible for all these variations from the painting, but the likelihood should also be considered that Rubens instigated these changes in the design. In this case the Crozat drawing listed under No. 41, Copy (11) may have been by Pontius and then retouched by Rubens, correcting and elaborating the various changes planned for the engraving.²


42. The Assumption of the Virgin
(Fig. 112)

Oil on canvas; 367 x 230 cm.

Augsburg, Heilig-Kreuz-Kirche.

copies: (1) Drawing of the apostle seen from behind looking into the sarcophagus. Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, Kongelige Kobberstiksamling, 'Rubens Cantoor', No. IV, 25; black chalk and grey wash, 32.6 x 21.2 cm.; (2) Drawing of the furthermost bearded apostle looking upwards on the right, whereabouts unknown; red and black chalk on blue paper, heightened with white, 21.5 x 18.5 cm. prov. sale, Lucerne (Gilhofer and Ranschburg), 28 June, 1934, lot 323; (3) Drawing of the young apostle looking into the tomb in the foreground, England, private collection; black chalk, measurements unknown.

literature: Sandrart, ed. Peltzer, pp. 159, 399 n. 703; Parthey, p. 439. No. 7; Rooses, V, pp. 329-330. No. 361a; Vermischte Nachrichten...
This Assumption of the Virgin shows a number of similarities with the other altar-pieces of the subject by Rubens; here alone, however, only four angels surround the Virgin, and not the usual cloud of winged putti. The concept—rather than specific details—of a number of apostles intently examining the sarcophagus reverts most closely to the Assumption in Brussels (No. 38; Fig. 98), but the overall compositional scheme is closer to the Düsseldorf Assumption (No. 41; Fig. 105). Features such as the larger angel in yellow on the right, the cluster of upraised hands on the right, and the slab resting against the sarcophagus are allied to similar elements in the painting in Düsseldorf. Even closer similarities, however, may be found in the painting on the High Altar of Antwerp Cathedral (No. 43; Fig. 116): the pose of the apostle seen from behind and bending forward to look into the sarcophagus is almost identical, the step on which he stands is present in both works, and there is an obvious kinship between the young apostle in the foreground on the left (even to the extent of the same combination of a red mantle over grey clothing in both figures). There is also some similarity in the disposition of the three male heads in the background on the left. The upper half of the painting, however, is closest to and must be based upon Rubens’s design of 1620–21 for the Assumption of the Virgin on the ceiling of the Jesuit Church in Antwerp. The only significant difference from that work is the addition of a fourth angel on the right and the alteration in the shape of the wings of the lower-most angel.

The work still hangs above the altar at the end of the north aisle in the church for which it was in all probability commissioned. In 1626–27 Count Ottheinrich Fugger ordered a frame from the cabinet-maker Paul Jacob Dietrich for the painting which he had commissioned from Rubens: ‘Als der hochwolgeborn mein Gnediger Graf und herr, herr Ottheinrich Fugger, Obrister, in die kirchen zum heiligen Kreuz alhie einen Altar in den Niederlanden, von Peter Rubens, mahlen lassen, ist hierauf aus bevelch hochwoltermet Ir. Gn. mit M. Jacob Dietrichen Kistler, selbigen in sauber unnd guet Nussbaumen zufassen p. fl. 300 samt seiner frawen zwen Taler Letkhauff abgehandlet und verglichen worden, demselben hab ich den 16 Augusti Ao 27 seines Rests und also der f 303 für Ine und sein weib völlig entricht und pas bezalt...’

While there is some possibility that the commission was given to Rubens through the mediation of the sculptor Georg Petel, there is no evidence to support this. Indeed, it should be noted that Petel’s work for Count Ottheinrich Fugger only dates from later years, and that the sculptor responsible for the adornment of the altar with the painting by Rubens was Christoph Murmann the Younger. As the construction of the new altar appears to have taken place in the context of a general restoration and redecoration of the Heilig-Kreuz-Kirche under its prelate Johann
it may well be the case that the painting by Rubens had already been ordered a few years earlier. Burchard dated the work c.1619-20, but in view not only of the derivation from the design for the Jesuit ceiling of 1620-21 but also of the similarities with the Antwerp Assumption—the modello for which (No.43a) may be dated to around 1622-25—a dating of c.1622-26 is more acceptable, particularly in the light of the documents quoted above. But these were exceptionally busy years for Rubens, most of which he spent outside Antwerp, and the work may conceivably have lain in the studio for a while before the order from Ottheinrich Fugger was actually received—especially as it appears to have been executed largely with the aid of studio assistance.5

The work has been consistently underestimated in the literature, to a large extent because of its dirty and poor condition prior to its cleaning and restoration in 1972. The restoration removed much of the nineteenth century overpainting and showed that the canvas had been cut horizontally in two at some stage in its history, a fact corroborated by the way in which the lappet of the lowermost angel’s drapery covers the top of the head of the apostle in the centre—a later addition which the restorer was unwilling to remove.6 It seems likely, therefore, that before being placed in its present frame a narrow band originally separated the upper and the lower zones of the painting. The absence of this band, together with the many repainted areas may account for the relatively poor impression it has made on many modern observers.7

Although the cleaning has restored the colours to something like their former freshness, the paint is thin and worn in a number of areas, and in some places there has been a fair amount of paint loss which has had to be restored. There are only a few pentimenti, such as the upper left forearm of the angel on the left and—possibly—the outline of the cloak of the apostle on the right. I have been unable to find any further evidence to support Oblinger’s claim that the work was carried off to Stockholm in 1632-35 because of Gustavus Adolphus’s admiration for it.

1. Martin, Ceiling Paintings, pp.105-108, No.16.
2. Dillingen, Fritzd. u. Griff. Fuggersches Familien- und Stiftungsarchiv, i, 2, 78a. Cassa Rechnung für Ottheinrich Fugger 1 Marz 1627 bis Februar 1628, 692; published by Feuchtmayr and Schäddler, op. cit., p.117, Doc.17, and more fully in Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst, XIX, Künstlerchronik, 12, 27 December, 1888-89, cols.180-196, where the payments to the gilder, sculptor and the schoolmaster responsible for the inscription are also transcribed.
5. Rubens cannot, for example, have been responsible for the rather pedestrian execution of the sky and clouds, nor for the awkward treatment of important areas of drapery such as the Virgin’s dress and the cloak of the apostle seen from behind looking into the tomb. Yet despite these elements—as well as the fact that the Virgin’s arms seem too long and her dress flows out perhaps too extravagently on either side—the conception at least of the work must go back to Rubens. He may have retouched the female faces and some of the drapery, and was probably responsible for the more successful colouristic effects, especially the subtle modulations of grey in the angels’ wings and the draperies of the apostles below.

42a. Study of the Heads of Two Bearded Apostles: Oil Sketch (Fig.114)

Oil on panel: 35.2 x 42 cm. Capesthorne Hall, Macclesfield, Cheshire, Collection of Lt. Col. Sir Walter Bromley Davenport.
43. The Assumption of the Virgin
(Fig. 116)

Oil on panel; 490 x 325 cm.
Antwerp, Cathedral.

_Burchard regarded the present work as a study for the two bearded apostles looking upwards in the right background of the painting in Augsburg. If the latter work is indeed largely the work of a pupil, then it is perhaps not surprising that Rubens should have prepared a preliminary head study such as this. But it should be noted that this does not appear to have been his usual practice: while there are a number of similar studies in chalk or pen, very few fully finished head studies in oils can definitely be attributed to Rubens. The possibility should therefore be entertained that the present work is simply an excellent copy of the corresponding heads in the altarpiece. It is undoubtedly of high quality (as appeared after its cleaning and restoration by Horace Buttery in 1953-54), and it may perhaps have served as a kind of demonstration piece in the studio. Burchard dated the sketch to c.1619-20, but if it is by Rubens it should probably be dated a few years later, to accord more closely with the dating established above for the painting in Augsburg, c.1622-26._

1. Cf. Nos. 37b and 37d above, and Vlieghe, Saints, II, No. 104g, to mention only a few possible examples.

***CATALOGUE NO. 43***

PROVENANCE: [Rev. Walter Davenport Bromley of Wooton and Baginton (d.1862).]

COPY: Painting, c.1700?, Mrs Brière Collins, Crawley, Sussex; canvas mounted on panel.


**CATALOGUE NO. 43**

**43.** The Assumption of the Virgin (Fig. 116)

Oil on panel; 490 x 325 cm.
Antwerp, Cathedral.

COPIES: (1) Painting by P. van Lint, whereabouts unknown, presumably lost; approximately 307 x 258 cm. PROV. bought by M. Musson from the artist (P. van Lint) in 1667. LIT. Denucé, _Na Peter Paulw Rubens_, p.359, No.413.7; (2) Part of an _Interior of Antwerp Cathedral_, painting by Joseph Christian Nicolié, showing the altar in its present frame, signed and dated 1826; panel, 61 x 52 cm. PROV. Baron de Pret van Erthborn, Antwerp, 1826; sale, Copenhagen (Arne Bruun Rasmussen), 7-17 February, 1978, No.5; (3) Drawing by P. van Lint after the apostles looking into the sarcophagus on the right, Paris, Institut Néerlandais, Fondation Custodia, Inv. No.433 [P. van Lint sketchbook], f.94; black chalk, 98 x 75 mm. LIT. H. Vlieghe, _De leerpraktijk van een jonge schilder: het notitieboekje van Pieter van Lint in het Institut néerlandais te Parijs_, Jaarboek Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerpen, 1979, pp.272 (fig.70), 274; (4) Drawing after the apostle seen from behind on the right, Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, Kongelige Kobberstiksamling, 'RubensCantoor', No.IV, 24; black chalk and oil, 32.3 x 18.2 cm.; (5) Drawing after an apostle seen in profile on the right. Vienna, Albertina, Inv. No.8279. EXH. Vienna, Albertina, 1977, No.123 (repr.). LIT. Rooses, V, p.288, No.1554; Mitsch, p.224, No.123 (repr.); (6) Engraving by A. Lommelin, showing the altar and frame as well (Fig.111; V.S., p.78, No.34); (7) Engraving by C. Woumans of the upper half of the composition (V.S., p.76, No.13).
Although he was to represent the subject at least once again (No.44; Fig.122), the high altarpiece for Antwerp Cathedral marks the culmination of Rubens's treatment of the Assumption of the Virgin. It comes at the end of a sequence of works which begins with the modello in Lenin­grad of 1611 (No.46; Fig.129) and it is inevi­tably—and closely—related to almost all the compositions of the intervening years.

Four angels and a cluster of winged putti accompany the Virgin in her ascent, while in the lower zone the apostles gather round her sarcophagus, either intently examining it or casting their gaze heavenward. The three younger women busy themselves with the winding cloth, and an older woman looks on behind them. On the left the upraised arms of the young apostle serve both to emphasize the dia­gonal ascent of the Virgin and to link the upper and lower halves of the composition. The background on the left is open to the sky and is all light; on the right the rocky outcrop of her sepulchre forms a darker
mass which continues upwards to the top of the picture.

The work is the most tightly composed of all the Assumptions by Rubens, although most of the individual elements have their origins in the earlier works. The cluster of putti below and at the side of the Virgin may be found in the early modelli (Nos. 35 and 46; Figs. 85 and 129) and in the paintings in Vienna and Brussels (Nos. 37 and 38; Figs. 87 and 98); the angels are adapted from the works of later years, such as the painting in Düsseldorf (No. 41; Fig. 105). The apostle throwing his hands upwards may be traced from the work in Vienna through the Augsburg altarpiece (No. 42; Fig. 112), while the older figure seen from behind in the right foreground represents the final formulation of a pictorial idea which was developed in almost all the preceding works.

These are purely figurative or compositional derivations; the colours, on the other hand, are both more resonant and more delicate than before. The main colouristic accents are provided by the sonorous ultramarine of the Virgin's blouse and the shirt of the apostle seen from behind on the right, by the gold cloak of the latter and by the reds of the woman in the centre background and the apostle on the left. But apart from these—and possibly the red and green of the angels on the right—the overall tonality of the work is of an unparalleled delicacy, particularly in the upper half. There the Virgin floats heavenward in a dress of shimmering white and gold brocade crossed by a band of pale crimson drapery, while her gauzy veil swirls above her hair. Pink-fleshed putti surround her; she is seen against a sky painted in variations of the lightest blue. The colours of the lower half are fuller and deeper, with the exception of the pale crimson of the woman kneeling in the foreground. The winding cloth is a brilliant white.

The complex history of the various stages in the commission and genesis of this work have often been recorded, most recently and most accurately by Van de Velde. Some of the earlier history of the high altar of Antwerp Cathedral is relevant here. An Assumption of the Virgin by Frans Floris stood there from 1564 until its removal by the Calvinist Town Council in 1581. When Catholic services were resumed in 1585, an Adoration of the Shepherds, also by Floris, was transferred from the altar of the Gardeners to take the place of the lost Assumption above the high altar. Although this was intended as a temporary replacement, it was only in 1611 that the Cathedral Chapter decided to commission a new high altarpiece. Modelli of the Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin were presented both by Otto van Veen and by Rubens; the commission went to the latter, who had submitted two modelli. One of these was almost certainly the Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin now in Leningrad (No. 46 below); the other now appears to be lost, although it has occasionally been identified with the Buckingham Palace Assumption (No. 35 above), while Held has most recently suggested that it may be reflected in Rubens's design of the subject for the Breviarium and Missale Romanum. Either because of financial difficulties or because the work Rubens began painting (No. 37; Fig. 87) was regarded as too small in comparison with the Harquebusiers' new altarpiece, nothing more is heard of the commission until 1618. On 16 February of that year, two modelli were again presented to the Cathedral Chapter, both of which were found acceptable, with the final choice being left to the bishop: 'Comparuerunt D. Editui huius Ecclesiae cum pictore Ru-
In any event, one is probably justified in assuming that the same subjects were represented, namely a Coronation and an Assumption of the Virgin.

A few months later, on 29 May, 1618, a model of the altar itself was presented to the chapter, once again to be referred to the bishop: ‘Exhibita fuit in capitulo modellum Summi Altaris ex lapide factum per Sculptores Hollandes, et missum ad Reverendum Dominum, ut et ipse interponat’. The painting was to be paid for by the Dean of the Cathedral, Johannes Del Rio (1555–1624), as is made clear in the agreement between him and Rubens dated 12 November, 1619:

‘Ick deze onderteeckent hebbende bekennende midts dezen veraccordeert te syne met den E. Heer Johannes Del Rio deken vande Cathédrale kercke van onse LievenVrouwe binnen Antwerpen, dat ick sal schilderen loffelyck ende tot mynen alderbesten mogelyck synde, een paneel daerop daerop de historie van on se Lieve Frouwen hemelvaert, of coronatie, tot contentement vanden heeren vande Capittele, dwelck paneel sal hooch wesen ontrent sestien voeten ende breet advenant onbegrepen der maten als naerden eyssche vanden nyeuw aultaer die gestelt sal worden in den hooghen Choor vande voorseyde kercke, waer voore den voorseyden Eerw. heere deken my belooft heeft te betalen, hebbende tselve tot contente-

ment gestelt, met allen de binnen lysten, verciert naer behoiren, ende soo veel my werck aengaet, de somme van vyftien hundert guldens eens. In tecken der waerheyt soo hebben wy dese tsamen onderteeckent den 12 Novembirs anno 1619. In Antwerpen, (signed) J. Del Rio’. Rubens was thus to receive 1500 guilders for the painting of the new altarpiece of an ‘Assumption or Coronation of the Virgin’; only its approximate size was stipulated, with the width to be determined by that of the new altar. Del Rio had undertaken to pay for the painting in return for being granted a tomb in the church at the north entrance of the choir, with an epitaph recording his benefaction: ‘Proposuit D. Thesaurarius nomine decani absentis, quatenus ipse desideret sepulturam suam eligere a septentrionale ingressu chori, iuxta presbyterium et chorum, ad modis ximeniorum, et curaret fieri parvam ullam subterraneam ad suae personae tantum capacitatem, una cum inscriptione intus et foris apponenda, et quod in clemosynorum fabricae oflert solvere tabulae picturae in summo choro per d. Rubenium pingendae; cuius etiam mentio possit fieri in eius Epitaphio, et domini consensu erunt in hanc petitionem, deputatrumque dominos archidiaconum et Thesaurarium ut ei hoc significent et ei fidem faciant de bona voluntate dominorum’. The arrangement was confirmed by a notarial document drawn up on 22 November, 1619:

‘D. decanus gratias egit dominis pro sepulturae suae secundum formam cum huius in acta relatam, et advocato Not Cap passavit instrumentum suae pro- missionis de tabula in summo altari per d. Rubenium depingi facienda’. Nothing more is heard of the painting
of the altarpiece for a number of years, but the details of the construction of the altar itself are fully documented. On 26 May, 1621 the contract between the sculptors Robert and Jan de Noie and the church authorities was signed, in which it was stipulated that all the work had to be completed by Easter, 1624. On 1 July, 1621 the bishop granted permission for the transferring of services from the existing high altar, and approved of arrangements for holding the services at the altar of the Holy Sacrament before the end of the year a temporary workshop had been erected in the churchyard for the construction of the new altar. Its foundation stone was laid on 2 May, 1624, but work was not yet complete. Jan de Noie died on 14 September of that year, and work was continued by his son Andries. Only on 16 August, 1625 is confirmation provided of the removal of the existing high altarpiece, when the Gardeners were granted the restitution of their painting of the Adoration of the Shepherds 'recently taken down from the high altar'. At about this time a red cloth—to take the place of the expected painting by Rubens—was hung over the high altar by a certain Peter Vermeulen, for which he was paid ten months later in 1626. By the end of July 1626 the altar was still lacking the architrave, frieze, two large alabaster columns and a number of other pieces. The last payment to the sculptors was made only in 1632.

But what of the new altarpiece by Rubens? It will be remembered that these were exceptionally busy years for Rubens, much of which were spent engaged in diplomatic activity outside Antwerp. It is not known exactly when Rubens began painting the new Assumption, but he may well have waited at least until the laying of the foundation stone of the new altar on 2 May, 1624. In any event, he must have begun some time before August 1625, when he left Antwerp, not to return there until 24 February, 1626. On 27 February the chapter agreed to Rubens's request that the choir be vacated—in order that he should not be disturbed while painting—and that services be transferred to the Chapel of the Circumcision for the time being: 'Ad petitionem dî Rubenij pictoris, dicentis se commode non posse pinger etiam pametum summi altaris nisi habeat chorum vacuum, placuit dî ut fiat pro tempore officium in choro Circumcisionis'. The fact that Rubens lost no time in submitting this request (immediately after his return to Antwerp), together with the unlikelihood that the painting was entirely executed in situ corroborates Van de Velde's suggestion that work had already begun on it at least as early as 1625. In April 1626 it was discovered that the panel was too narrow for the new altar, and on the 24th of that month the chapter authorized the addition of extra panels to make up the necessary width; at the same time they authorized the replacement of some old glass in the choir windows, in order to improve the illumination of the painting:

'Placuit ad relationem edituorum ut tabula depingenda in summo altari ob defectum latitudinis ad implendum dilatetur, adglutinatur aliis tabulis, idque quamprimum ne differatur occasio pingendi. Et quod renovandum fenestram citream, quae est quondam familiae de Berchem, deputati sunt ad required consensum d. Rocox, cum consule fratre, ut agant cum ijs de familia, et Marckgravio, ut consentiant in renovationem ad opus maioris luminis, pro usu picturae summni altaris.'

One may assume that the altarpiece was returned to Rubens's studio for the neces-
sary widening, for less than a month later, four workmen were paid for the transport of the painting back to the church. The same document records payments to Adriaen Schut for the priming of the panel and the painting of the frame in black, and to Michiel Vriendt for enlarging the panel as required:

‘Item betaelt den 11 Mai 1626 aen vier mans die het paneel van Rubbens gedragen hebben tot in de kercke ende helpe stellen benefiens de wercklieden vande kercke die mede geholpen hebben voor drinckgelt gegeven fl. 5 st. 12/ Item betaelt Adriaen Schut over het voorschreven paneel te prumueren ende de lyst te swerten fl. 8/ Item betaalt Machiel Vrindt van het voorschreven paneel te vermederen dwelck te klein was’.23

The work was thus set above the altar by this date and—one may assume—the red cloth supplied by Peter Vermeulen removed. Rubens continued to work on the painting in the church. On 30 September, 1626 the chapter declared their satisfaction with the work and authorized the payment of 1000 guilders to Rubens: ‘Con­ sensuerunt Domini ut solvantur Domino Rubenio pictori per heredem Dl Decani mille floreni ad computum tabulae in summa altari postae, declarantes sibi placere picturam’.24 The final and remaining sum of 500 guilders was paid to Rubens on 10 March, 1627, thus providing a definite terminus ante quem for the altar-piece.25

The engraving by Lommelin (Fig. 111)26 shows how the whole altar must have appeared when completed. Above the entablature in a niche a standing figure of Christ held out a crown over the head of the Virgin; this figure was in turn surmounted by a dove and God the Father with outstretched hands in the pediment.

Full details of the construction and materials of the altar—which was made of alabaster and white and coloured Italian marble and stood just over fourteen metreshigh—may be found in the contract between the chapter and the De Nole brothers of 26 May, 1621,27 although some changes were made—such as the addition of a third pair of columns—before its completion.28 In 1634 a Death of the Virgin was placed on the rear face.29 The altar itself must have been broken down after the removal of the painting by the French commissioners in 1794.30 When the picture was returned to Antwerp in 1815 it was cleaned by Van Regemorter,31 having returned from Paris in a considerably damaged state.32 Only on 11 November, 1823 was the decision taken to rebuild the high altar: the commission went to the architect Jan Blom, who carried out the work in the following year.33

Since its return to Antwerp the work has been cleaned and restored on a number of occasions, most recently in 1946. On the whole, it remains in good condition, although some of the paint surface has worn (as in the dress of the woman in the foreground) and there is some damage along the vertical joins in the panel. The addition of approximately 20 cm. down the right hand side was made at the time of the extension of the panel at the end of April 1626, as noted above.

1. Cf. the payment for this colour recorded in 1626: ‘Item betaelt voor een once oltranrarien tot be­ hoefte van de schilderye vanden hoogen autaer, fl.45’ (Cathedral Archives, Antwerp, Rekeningen, 1626, f.62).

2. Van de Velde, 1975, pp.245-276, which provides the basis for all the documentation in this entry.


4. For a full account of these events, see C. Van de Velde, De Aanbidding der Herders van Frans Floris, Jaarboek, Koninklijk Museum voor Schone Kunsten, Antwerpen, 1961, pp.59-73.

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5. Held, Oil Sketches, p.511.
9. Rubens House, Antwerp, Inv.No.D.23, transcribed by Van de Velde, 1975, p.246, n.2, with references to earlier publications of this document. It was, of course, only signed by Rubens when he received full payment for the completed work, in 1626 and 1627 (see note 25 below for the remainder of the document as signed by Rubens in these years).
15. Van de Velde, 1975, p.264, with full documentation. For the inscription on the foundation stone, laid by Charles, Duc de Croy and the Chancellor Pecquius, see A.Miraeus, Serenissimae Principis Isabellae ... Laudatia Funeris ... die XXIX Ianuarii MDCXXXIV, Antwerp, 1634.
16. 'Placuit dominis ut tabula, que est de Nativitate Domini, Franciscis Floris, et nuper deposita est ex summio altari, restituziatur ad altare hortulanorum, ubi et olim a Domino Thesaurario du Terne beati, restituatur ad altare hortulanorum, toekennen ende onderteken. Tot Antwerpen den 10 Martij 1627 (signed) Pietro Pauolo Rubens'— 'Hier op ontfangen de somme van duessent gulden op rekeninghe den 30 September 1626 (signed) Pietro Paolo Rubens'— 'Hier op ontfangen de somme van duessent gulden op rekeninghe den 30 September 1626 (signed) Pietro Paolo Rubens'— 'Hier op ontfangen de somme van ducensent gulden op rekeninghe den 30 September 1626 (signed) Pietro Paolo Rubens'.
17. 'Item betaelt Peeter Vermeulen over het behaghen van den hoogen autaar met royen baey in plaetse ende by fault van het tafereel voor den hoogen autaer met royen baey in plaetse ende by fault van het tafereel voor den hoogen autaer met royen baey in plaetse ende by fault van het tafereel voor den hoogen autaer met royen baey in plaetse ende by fault van het tafereel voor den hoogen autaer met royen baey in plaetse ende by fault van het tafereel voor den hoogen autaer met royen baey in plaetse ende by fault van het tafereel voor den hoogen autaer met royen baey in plaetse ende by fault van het tafereel voor den hoogen autaer met royen baey in plaetse ende by fault van het tafereel voor den hoogen autaer met royen baey in plaetse ende by fault van het tafereel voor den hoogen autaer met royen baey.
22. Cathedral Archives, Antwerp, Acta Capituli, V, p.112; Van de Velde, 1975, p.271, n.63, emphasizing that the previous references to this document had given the incorrect date of 1624.
25. This payment, as well as the preceding one, is recorded at the base of the original contract of 1619 between Rubens and Johannes Del Río (p.175 and note 9 above): 'Hier op ontfangen de somme van ducensent gulden op rekeninghe den 30 September 1626 (signed) Pietro Paolo Rubens— Noch ont­fagen wi handen van Se Guilliam Cath. de somme van vyfhondert gulden waarmede ik onder­schreven kenne ghieheelyck betaelt ende voldaan te wesen van het tegoevenwoordich contrackt ende tot kennis ende bevestinge der waerheyt hebbe ick deze quitaniecet met myn eyghen handt gheschreven ende ondereecckent. Tot Antwerpen den 10 Marthij 1627 (signed) Pietro Paolo Rubens'.
26. Published in Théâtre des plans de toutes les villes des Pays-Bas, Amsterdam, n.d.; the engraving by Bols­wert (V.S., p.76, No.12) recorded by Rooses, II, p.179 is not after this painting, but after the oil-sketch in The Hague (No.43a; Fig.120).
28. On the relationship between painting and sculpture in this work, see Fremantle, op. cit., pp.127-128.
29. Payments recorded in Visschers, p.63.
30. Piot, p.18; for the sale of the altar in 1798, see Visschers, pp.64-65.
32. For details, see the Procès-Verbal de la Commission pour le Déballage et la Réception des Tableaux recupérés sur la France appartenants à la ville d'Anvers, published by Vliegh, Verslag, p.278.
33. J. van Brabant, Rampspoed en Restauratie, op. cit., p.154, with further details of the components of the present high altar.

43a. The Assumption of the Virgin: Oil Sketch (Fig.120)

Oil on panel; 90 x 61 cm. 

The Hague, Mauritshuis. No.926.


Copies: (1) Painting (Fig. 121), Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art, Inv. No. 1393; panel, 125.4 x 94.2 cm.; for references, see under No. 43b; (2) Painting, Caen, Musée des Beaux-Arts; copper, 86.3 x 61.7 cm. prov. Marquis d’Haurincourt; Musée central, Paris, 1802, exh. Exposition mariale, Douvres-la-Delivrande, 1959; Idées et réalisations, Recklinghausen, 1962, No. 54c; Quelques œuvres des écoles flamande et hollandaise du Musée des Beaux-Arts, Caen, Hotel d’Escoville, Caen, 1966, No. 14; (3) Painting, Alfred S. Karlsen collection, U.S.A.; panel, 73.6 x 50.8 cm.; photograph in Witt Library, Courtauld Institute of Art, London; (4) Painting, whereabouts unknown; panel. prov. Basle, Nestel, 1898; photograph in Rooses documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp; (5) Engraving by S. A. Bolswert, with dedication to Lucas Lancelotti: Magnifico et clarissimo Domino Lucae Lancelotto j.n.q. doctori musarum amico, picturae atque statuariae cultori in amici obsequii symbolum. D.C.Q. Martinus van den Enden. (V.S., p. 76, No. 12).


The modello for the Assumption of the Virgin on the High Altar of Antwerp Cathedral differs from the final composition in the following respects: the topmost angel is tilted more steeply forward, the Virgin’s head bent a little further backwards, an extra putto added at the left of the Virgin’s dress, and the bodies of the two lowermost putti turned through different angles; the young apostle on the left throws his hands more steeply upwards, the apostle casting up his hands on the extreme right is omitted, two apostles are added to the group in the centre; the old woman is changed to a younger one, the position of the woman holding the shroud in the foreground altered, the apostle on the extreme left becomes an older figure with extra space added on the left; the tomb opening is more clearly visible, there are some differences in the representation of the sarcophagus and there is more space below it. Several other not inconsiderable differences may be found, especially in the lower half of the composition. Most of these occur as well in the engraving by Bolswert, which is therefore based on the present work, and not—as Rooses and earlier writers such as Desconjips maintained—after the final composition in Antwerp. There are also a number of colouristic variations: the Virgin has a greenish grey blouse (rather than a blue one), the woman seen from behind is in orange-gold (rather than pale crimson) and so on.

The dating of the sketch is open to question. One could argue that it was one of
the two modelli which Rubens presented to the Cathedral chapter on 16 February, 1618, in which case Gudlaugsson's suggestion that it should be dated c.1617-18 on the basis of its similarities with the sketches for the altarpieces for the Jesuit Church in Antwerp would find further support. On the other hand, the present sketch shows still closer similarities with the sketches for the Medici series of c.1622 and should therefore probably be dated between then and the summer of 1625 at the latest (by that time, as shown under No.43 above, Rubens had certainly begun work on the final painting). And despite the differences enumerated at the beginning of this entry, the sketch is sufficiently close to the final composition to warrant a dating which does not separate the two works by an interval of seven years (as one would have to assume if one accepted the first of the hypotheses outlined here).

The sketch is in good condition, although the sky appears to have been fairly considerably repainted. There is a pentimento around the head of the young apostle on the left, and at least two of the faces just to the left of the grotto above the two women have been painted over by the grey cloud in that area.

Several drawings of this subject said to be for the Antwerp picture may be found in early sales catalogues, as in the van Schorl sale, Antwerp, 7 June, 1774, lot 1, in the Jeremiah Harman sale, London (Christie's), 17 May, 1844, lot 52, and in the Charles Sanders and another sale, London (Sotheby's), 12 December, 1870, lot 983 (30.5 x 21.5 cm.). But as the first and last of these were specifically stated to be engraved by Bolswert they are more likely to have been copies after the present composition (or studies for the engraving). On the other hand—in the light of the frequent confusion one encounters in such references between the different compositions of this subject by Rubens—the references may be to the composition in Buckingham Palace, which was also engraved by Bolswert, or even to another composition altogether.

1. Cf. p.174 above, under No.43.
2. Vlieghe, S a i n t s , II, Nos.104a, 115a.
3. Cf. especially the series in Munich, Alte Pinakothek, Nos.92-108.
4. V.S., p.76, No.18; and cf. p.140 above.

43b. The Assumption of the Virgin: Oil Sketch (Fig.121)

Oil on panel; 125.4 x 94.2 cm.


Although Burchard accepted the present sketch as authentic, it is of an appreciably lower quality than the sketch in the Mauritshuis (No.43a; Fig.120). There would appear to be no reason for Rubens to have painted two identical modelli for the Antwerp altarpiece. As Fisler convincingly demonstrated, the Kress sketch must have been copied from Bolswert’s engraving after the Mauritshuis modello (V.S., p.76, No.12), while the empty upper corners should simply be regarded as a poor attempt to reproduce the engraving in a slightly different square format.

1. Professor Ellis Waterhouse has kindly provided the following information on the references to ‘Langton Castle’ in the earlier literature on this work: the reference is presumably to Langton, near Duns in Scotland. This house contained what was left of the Breadalbane collection and descended to the Hon. Mrs Baillie-Hamilton. Although the list of contents drawn up at the time of her death in 1910 makes no reference to the present work, it may have been sold at an earlier sale (owner T.G.B. Morgan-Granville-Gavin).

44. The Assumption of the Virgin
(Fig.122)

Oil on canvas; 504 x 352 cm.

Provenance: Carthusian Church, Brussels; probably bought by Prince Karl-Eusebius of Liechtenstein (1611-84) and placed in the parish church at Feldsberg, Moravia, in 1671; transferred to the Liechtenstein collection in Vienna by Prince Josef-Wenzel between 1756 and 1764.

Copies:


Literature: Sanderus, 1727, II, pp.349-359; Description de la ville de Bruxelles, ed. by G. Frich, Brussels, 1743, pp.135-136; V. Fanti, Descrizione completa di tutto cio che ritrovasi nella Galleria di Pittura e Scultura di sua altezza Giuseppe Wenceslao del S.R.I. Principe Regnante della Casa di Lichtenstein, Vienna, 1767, No.329; F.W. Weis-
This painting, the last of Rubens's representations of the Assumption of the Virgin, shows a number of formal similarities with his early representations of the subject (rather than his more recent ones). The Virgin ascends to heaven with both arms outstretched, her right arm directed straight upwards. Apart from the angel on the left, she is surrounded by a number of winged putti, some of which show close similarities to those in the early modello in Buckingham Palace (No. 35; Fig. 85). The group of apostles on the right is most closely related—in its general disposition—to the equivalent group in that work as well, although the figure lifting up the cover of the sarcophagus is here placed on the extreme left of the painting. The rocky sepulchre present in the other works is omitted altogether. Despite the reminiscences of pictures from the first half of the second decade, stylistic considerations—the more fluid handling of the paint and the occurrence of female types already used in works such as the London Rape of the Sabines and the Garden of Love—suggest a dating in the mid-1630s.

The evidence relating to the commission for this work is as follows. That it stood above the high altar of the Carthusian church in Brussels may be deduced from the presence there of the copy by J. Dansaert (later transferred to St Catherine’s Church in Brussels). The painting was commissioned by the brothers Charles and Johannes Angelus Schotte in memory of their father Theodorus Schotte and their mother Elisabeth van den Brandt, as recorded in the epitaph of the former:

aerario a consiliis et assessor hanc aram posuit in hoc asceterio, ubi ex Joanne Angelum ex Duce Religiosum, ex fratre Deodevotum nunquam perituro affectu prosequitur. Posteri horum in sacrificiis memoriam conservant. As Theodore Schotte died in 1629, Burchard dated the work to around 1630; but this does not seem an adequate basis for dating. Rooses dated the work to c.1638, and Held to 1637, which seems more probable, though conceivably a year or two too late.

The subsequent history of the altarpiece is not altogether clear. The earliest catalogue of the Liechtenstein collection in Vienna already records its presence there in 1767, but the painting is traditionally believed to have come from the Neue Pfarrkirche in Feldsberg. This tradition is supported by the fact that a copy of the painting by V. Fanti still hangs over the high altar in that church, surmounted by a Trinity and Angels attributed to Rubens, which may well originally have been intended to surmount the Assumption by Rubens. The question which arises is this: when was the painting by Rubens bought and when was it placed in the church at Feldsberg? There is no record of the precise date on which it entered the Liechtenstein collections, but it should be noted that already in 1643 the court painter Johann Hostitz wrote of a copy which he had made of an Assumption by Rubens, in a letter to Prince Gundacker of Liechtenstein:

'Euer fruistlichen Gnaden überschickhe ich die zwey angefrimbte Bildl wie auch die copia der Himmelfahrt Mariea nach des Peter Paul Rubens, so ich aufs pest als sein hatt konnen, verfertiget und übersehen hab. Wann ich zu dem Original hette konnen kmommen wurde es besser sein worden, ist aber ungemacht und aufgerolt, das man nich darzue khan'.

It seems likely—although it cannot be regarded as certain—that the rolled-up picture mentioned here refers to the present Assumption. In this case it may have been bought by Prince Karl-Eusebius of Liechtenstein (1611–1684), as Höss and Kronacker maintained (he was the real founder of the Liechtenstein collections), or possibly by his uncle, Prince Gundacker. On the other hand, it is perhaps surprising that the painting should have left the Carthusian Church so soon after its commission. Whether it was intended to adorn the Alte Pfarrkirche in Feldsberg, or whether it was only placed in the Neue Pfarrkirche after the consecration of the latter in 1671 must also remain an open question. In any event, by 1769 Weiskern recorded that it had stood on the high altar of the Neue Pfarrkirche in Feldsberg.

A further uncertainty surrounds the date of the painting's putative removal from Feldsberg to the Stadt palais in Vienna. The catalogue of the 1948 exhibition in Lucerne maintained that it was replaced by the copy by Gaetano (recte Vincenzo) Fanti ordered by Prince Wenzel in 1764, but Schweikhardt gave the date of 1756 for the transferral of the original to Vienna. Conclusive evidence may be provided by the fact that a note on a plan of the Liechtenstein Gallery of 1815 states that 'Anno 1764 liesse Fürst Wenzel dieses Bild aus der Pfarr Kirche zu Feldsperg hierher in die Galerie versetzen'. And here another complication arises. It may be a coincidence, but it will be noted that the copies by Dansaert listed above appear to have been ordered for the Carthusian Church in Brussels c.1755. Either one has to discredit the reasonably strong evidence that the original had long before been bought by the Liechtenstein
family and placed in the church at Feldsberg, or one has to assume that a now lost copy adorned the altar of the Brussels church between the date of the purchase of the Rubens and 1755; the fact that it entered the Liechtenstein Palace in Vienna either in 1756 or 1764 would only be a coincidence of dates. Whatever the case may be—and the evidence for the Feldsberg tradition must remain relatively strong—it seems certain, as Rooses pointed out, that the painting recorded by Mensaert, Descamps and Michel was only a copy of the original by Rubens. This is further supported by the fact that the 1780 guide to Brussels states quite clearly that the Rubens had been sold and that a copy hung over the high altar of the Carthusian church.  

The work is in excellent condition and appears to have been substantially painted by Rubens himself. For the differences between it and the engraving after it by H. Witdoeck, see No. 44d below.

3. The painting from St Catherine's church was burnt in 1973. For the early history of this copy by Dansaert, see Pinchart, op. cit., pp. 288-289 and Rooses, II, pp. 182-183.
5. Rooses presumably based his suggestion on the fact that H. Witdoeck's engraving after this composition (V.S., p. 77, No. 20) is dated 1639.
7. See Zdeněk Lázněk et al., Valtice, Feldsberg, 1970, pl. 34, for a reproduction of both the Trinity and the copy of the Assumption. Even more than the painting, perhaps, the engraving by Witdoeck cited in note 5, with its angled top corners, suggests that some such figure or group was originally intended to be placed above the work; cf. below p. 188 under No. 44d.
9. This note on the 1815 plan was kindly communicated to me by Dr R. Baumstark, Curator of the Liechtenstein collection.

44a. The Assumption of the Virgin: Oil Sketch (Fig. 123)  

Oil on panel; 49 × 36.5 cm.  
London, Courtauld Institute of Art, Princes Gate Collection. Inv. No. 38.

PROVENANCE: Braamcamp sale, Amsterdam (van der Schley, de Bosch and Ploos van Amstel), 31 July, 1771, No. 1 of the five paintings not owned by Braamcamp; the Marquess of Headfort, Headfort House, County Heath.


11. The copy in the church in Lštibor (Czechoslovakia) listed under Copy (g) was made in 1780 by order of Prince Franz I of Liechtenstein after the work in the Vienna Gallery (personal communication by Dr R. Baumstark).
There are a number of differences between the present modello and the painting in Liechtenstein. The Virgin, instead of being seen frontally, is here shown in near profile, her head turned upwards and to the right (a radical departure, as noted by Haverkamp Begemann, from all previous representations of the Assunta by Rubens). She is also shown closer to the group surrounding the tomb below. In this group further differences may be observed. The circular arrangement of the figures around the tomb has been flattened out in the final composition; the lid of the sarcophagus is supported from the right by a figure omitted in the painting (which makes the adaptation from the Buckingham Palace modello—already noted in the preceding entry—much clearer); the woman in the foreground on the left looks across the composition and not upwards; and there are several divergences in the group of apostles on the right: figures such as the apostle lifting up his hand on the extreme right and the young apostle shielding his eyes in the background make the relationship with the early compositions of this subject more evident still.

It will be noticed that the format of the painting with its curved top is already adumbrated in the modello: a curve passes through the heads of the putti in the top right hand corner, and the spandrel-shaped areas beyond this curve are more thinly painted and less fully worked up than the rest of the sketch.

The work is in good condition, despite slight rubbing in some areas. The handling of the paint is fairly free, with the result that several pentimenti may be seen, as in the passage above on the right; in the area where the edge of Peter’s cloak passes over the knee of the apostle next to him; and in the heel of the latter, which is covered by the garment falling over it. The Virgin is in white, the woman in the foreground in red, the woman leaning over the tomb in black. The spandrel area on the right, originally conceived as part of the whole, has the first ideas for several putti sketched in with the point of a brush. The thickest areas of paint are in the Virgin’s dress and in the putti surrounding her.

This modello must have been painted only shortly before the final composition (but before the Yale modello, No.44b), and should thus be dated c.1635. The catalogue of the Joseph Senseau sale, Brussels, 20 July, 1739 et seq., lot 101 refers to an oil sketch of the Assumption which bears similar (but not identical) measurements to the present work, but there is no further evidence in favour of the identity of the two.

1. Cf. both the modello in Leningrad, No.45, Fig.115, and the painting in Düsseldorf, No.41, Fig.104.

44b. The Assumption of the Virgin: Oil Sketch (Fig.124)

Oil on panel; 56 x 40.6 cm.
New Haven, Connecticut, Yale University Art Gallery.

Provenance: Sale, Ghent, 23 September, 1777, No.1; Jacques Clemens sale, Ghent, 21 June, 1779 et seqq., lot 234; A. Goesin sale, Ghent, 3 November, 1800; ?Ph. Panné sale, London (Christie’s), 27 March, 1819, lot 109; P. Ranier, 1830; acquired at the beginning of this century by Walter Lippincott Goodwin, Hartford, Connecticut; given by his son, Henry Sage Goodwin, to Yale University, in 1965.


Although less fully worked up than the preceding modello, the present work is closer to the final composition in Vaduz. The Virgin has now been turned to a frontal pose, and the group surrounding the sarcophagus, while not identical to that in the painting, shows closer similarities to it than does the modello in the Princes Gate Collection. Further differences from the latter are the absence of the figures supporting the lid of the sarcophagus and the man raising his arm on the right edge, as well as the poses of several of the figures in the background to the left of the latter. In comparison with the painting, there are some differences in the group of putti surrounding the Virgin; she does not appear to be kneeling; the apostles on the extreme left and right have been omitted; and further differences of even less importance occur in the lower group. But the woman in the foreground on the left has now been turned to a position closer to that in the final version, the bearded figure looking into the tomb on the left has been added, the hands of the apostle in the centre background are shown in a way that anticipates the more strenuous gesture in the final version, and the upraised hand of the young apostle to his right is very close to the similar feature in the painting. Only the two figures on the extreme right have been omitted. In comparison with the Princes Gate modello, the space between the Virgin and the group below was increased to approximate more closely to the painting in Liechtenstein. It is clear, then, that the present modello represents an intermediate stage between the Princes Gate modello and the final composition. Rubens painted it in a swifter technique to indicate the series of changes described above. Reminiscences of the earlier project may be detected in the slightly projecting knee of the Virgin in the painting, and in the figure of the apostle holding up the lid of the sarcophagus (as this figure was only slightly altered, Rubens presumably did not feel it necessary to include it in the second sketch).

The present work is more monochromatic than the earlier modello; the overall tonality is a pale grey, while the strongest colours are the crimson-purple dress of the woman leaning forward and the black of the woman beside her. The rest is thinly painted in tones of grey, brown and yellow, with the highlighted areas indicated in a slightly thicker white. The black chalk underdrawing is clearly visible throughout. Above on the left the remains of a curve can still be detected, and there is an unexplained line of black chalk down the right hand side, about 2.5 cm from the edge.

Haverkamp Begemann rightly described this work as 'a corrective modello in which Rubens did not need to repeat all the details and colours of the earlier version' (cf. the comments above), and he pointed to another such case in Rubens's work, the sketch for the Carrying of the Cross in Copenhagen of c. 1634–37,1 painted as a result of the patron's request for changes to the first more highly finished modello in Amsterdam.2 Indeed, the present
modello is presumably to be dated to the same period.


44c. Head of a Woman looking upwards: Drawing (Fig.125)

Black and red chalk; 215 x 180 mm. The mark of Paul I in the lower right hand corner.

_Leningrad, Hermitage, Inv. No.5425._

**PROVENANCE:** Count Cobenzl (Ljubljana, 1712—Brussels, 1770); purchased from him by the Empress Catherine II in 1768.

**LITERATURE:** M.Rooses, in _Rubens-Bulletijn_, V, 1900, p.201; Glück-Haberditzl, p.58, No.208 (repr.); M.D.Dobroklosky, _Catalogue of the Flemish Drawings of the 17th and 18th Centuries in the Hermitage_ (in Russian), Moscow, 1955, No.655; J.Kusnetsov, _Rubens Drawings in Russian Museums_ (in Russian), Leningrad—Moscow, 1965, No.33, pl.16; J.Kusnetsov, _Rubens Drawings_ (in Russian), Moscow, 1974, No.128 (repr.).

A study for the head of the woman in the foreground on the left of the final version of the _Assumption_ in Liechtenstein (No.44; Fig.122). As it is more closely related to this work than to the two modelli, it may be assumed to postdate them. It was probably also used for the similar heads in the London_Brazen Serpent_ and the Martyrdom of St Andrew in Madrid. Both in technique and function it should be compared with the similar studies of heads (usually made when the execution of the final composition was largely entrusted to assistants) for the _Assumption_ in Vienna (cf. No.37e) and for the altarpiece of the _Miracles of St Francis Xavier._

44d. The Assumption of the Virgin: Retouched Drawing (Fig.126)

Black and red chalk, brown ink, heightened with grey-white and some body colour; 636 x 473 mm. Two sheets pasted together. Gone over with a stylus for engraving.

_Florence, Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe. Inv. No.1072E._

**PROVENANCE:** Bought in Antwerp in 1659 for the collection of Cardinal Leopoldo de' Medici (1617—1675).

**COPY:** Engraving by H.Witdoeck, 1639 (Fig.127; _V.S._, p.77, No.26).

**EXHIBITED:** _Mostra di Disegni Fiamminghi e Olandesi_, Uffizi, Florence, 1964, No.71 (as Witdoeck and Rubens); _Omaggio a Leopoldo de' Medici_, Uffizi, Florence, 1976, No.119.

This drawing appears to have been made by Hans Witdoeck as a preparatory study for his 1639 engraving after Rubens’s painting in Liechtenstein. It has, however, been retouched in several places, probably by Rubens himself. Although there are several retouchings in the lower half (such as the garment of the apostle on the right, the faces and hair of the apostles in the foreground, the head of the woman on the left, and the dress of the woman beside her), the bulk of the changes, and the most important ones, occur in the upper half of the composition. Here the artist has considerably enhanced the light effects around the Virgin and on her dress (by heightening in white), and he has added the veil swirling round her head, thus reverting to a feature present in the two modelli but omitted in the painting. Just as in the preparatory stages for the painting, a special concern is displayed with the upper half of the composition.

The top of the drawing has been changed from a curve—as in the painting—to the angled corners seen in the engraving. The putto heads in the upper left hand corner of the painting are thus omitted both in the drawing and the engraving. The veil swirling round the head of the Virgin, lacking in the painting, has naturally been included on the engraving. The indentations made by the stylus while transferring the design are still visible on the present sheet.

This drawing, along with the similar drawing of Christ at Emmaus, also in the Uffizi, was one of the first acquisitions of Cardinal Leopoldo de’ Medici, through the agency of Giovanni Battista Bolognetti, in Antwerp. The purchase is recorded by a note in the carteggio artistico of the Cardinal in the Archivio di Stato in Florence: ‘Il cav. Bolognetti compra in Anversa diversi disegni di Rubens, e fa questi evvi ‘Assunzione della Madonna’ e ‘Christo co’ discepoli in Emmaus’ . The same document says that the drawing was bought along with seven other Rubens drawings and a Dürer drawing from ‘un gentiluomo di questa città cannonico della cattedrale che si chiama il Cannonico’ who was also the source of the Emmaus drawing. Leopoldo, in his letter of receipt to Bolognetti, expressed his pleasure with all these purchases: ‘ricevei i disegni e, quanto all’ Assunzione del Rubens e il Cristo in Emmaus, li tengo per fatti sotto i suoi occhi e grandemente ritocchi da lui, che possono dirsi come da sua mano.’

The drawing probably dates from a time closer to the engraving (1639) than to the painting. Whether or not its shape reflects the shape of the frame of the altarpiece at the time must remain an open question. In any event, the movement and gaze of the Virgin, on the engraving perhaps even more than in the drawing, seems to suggest that a sculpted or painted group of Christ or the Trinity was originally placed above her, as already noted above.

1. Florence, Uffizi, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe, Inv. No.23731: No.9, Copy (5) above, Fig.17. Despite the apparent coincidence that both these drawings for engravings by H. Witdoeck come from the same source, the retouchings appear to be by different hands—and that on the present Assumption of the Virgin appears more likely to be by Rubens himself. But I am aware of the possible inconsistency in regarding the Emmaus as a copy by Witdoeck alone and the Assumption as a drawing retouched by Rubens.

2. Archivio di Stato, Firenze, Carteggio artistico, XVIII, 1, c.40, quoted in Reznicek, op. cit., p.60. The purchase was made on 23 April, 1659.

3. Published in full by P. Barocchi, in F. Baldinucci,
45. Christ Descending with a Crown:
Oil Sketch (Fig.115)

Oil on Panel: 57.6 x 45 cm.
Whereabouts unknown.

Provenance: H. Löhr, Leipzig; M. von Boxberg, Dresden; Martin Schubart, Munich, before 1894 to 1899; Schubart sale, Munich (Helbing), 23 October, 1899, lot 58; Charles-Léon Cardon, Brussels, c.1910-1921; Cardon sale, Brussels (Fiévez); 27-30 June, 1921, lot 99; Kleinberger Gallerie, New York; Albert Keller, New York; E. Schwarz, New York; sale, London, (Christie’s), 1 April, 1960, lot 98; Dr. Tibor de Budai, New York, sale, New York (Parke Bernet), 18 April, 1962, lot 38; sale, New York (Sotheby-Parke Bernet), 16 November, 1979, lot 177, (repr. as School of Rubens).

Exhibited: Munich, 1895, No.51; Brussels, 1910, No.396; Detroit, 1936, No.39; Brussels, 1937, No.19; Masterpieces of Art, World’s Fair, New York, 1939, No.328; Rubens Exhibition, Schaeffer and Brandt Galleries, New York, 1942, No.15; Los Angeles, 1946, No.19.


Although the present sketch cannot have been painted by Rubens himself (the drawing in particular is too weak: see, for example, the awkward depiction of Christ’s left foot and the articulation of his left wrist and the fingers there), it may be based on a design by Rubens—presumably, as Burchard suggested, for the figure of Christ above an Assunta. There is some similarity, for example, to the figure of Christ in the Leningrad Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin (No.46; Fig.125), but an even closer one to the sculpted figure in the gable of the altar enclosing the Assumption in Antwerp Cathedral (Fig.111). Indeed, it may well be that the original of the present sketch was intended as a model for the sculptor who carved this figure, or a similar one above another such altarpiece.

A possible but not conclusive argument against this hypothesis is the presence of the partially visible orb of the world beneath Christ’s feet: even so, Rooses’s suggestion that the subject is Christ’s Descent to Limbo cannot be substantiated. An alternative hypothesis to the one proposed by Burchard above is that the design is to be related to a scene with a saint or saints below. Indeed, the figure may be no more than a reworking, with a crown replacing a thunderbolt as his attribute, of the similar figure in the 1618-20 painting of St Dominic and St Francis Protecting the World from the Wrath of Christ in Lyons.1

If the present design is to be attributed to Rubens, then a dating between c. 1616 and 1620 would seem likely; and it should be noted that the definitive contracts for
the High Altar in Antwerp were signed in 1618–19—although, as indicated above, one cannot be certain of the connection between the present sketch and that project.

1. Vlieghe, Saints, I, No.88 and Fig.151.
2. See p.175 above.

46. The Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin: Oil Sketch (Fig.129)

Oil on panel, transferred to canvas; 106 x 78 cm.

Leningrad, Hermitage. Inv. No.1703.

Provenance: François Ignace de Du­fresne sale, Amsterdam (De Winter, Cok and Yver), 22 August, 1770 et seq., lot 134; bought by the Empress Catherine II of Russia for the Hermitage.

Copies: (1) Painting, whereabouts unknown, panel, 97 x 66 cm. Prov. Berlin, J. Hirsch, c.1933; Muralto–Locarno, Galleria Antonio Fasciani-Escher, 1956; private collection, Austria, c.1958; letters concerning these owners and photograph in the Burchard Documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp; (2) Painting, whereabouts unknown, panel, 109 x 79,5 cm. Prov. Munich, private collection, c.1928–35.


In the lower zone of this modello, Rubens has painted the rolling away of the stone from the mouth of the Virgin’s tomb, the miracle of the roses (which were found in the Virgin’s shroud immediately after her Assumption into heaven),1 and the group of apostles and holy women clustering round the mouth of the tomb. There are four female figures, in addition to the apostles, two gazing intently at the miracle before them and two looking upwards in astonishment. Several cypresses are painted in the background—a feature which does not appear in Rubens’s later representations of the Assumption.1 In the upper half of the composition, the Virgin is re­ceived into heaven by Christ alone; he holds a crown above her head, while putti and angels cluster below her and to her side. Music-making angels are supported on banks of clouds which extend diagon­ally to the topmost corners of the work.

The standard Netherlandish way of re­presenting the Coronation of the Virgin was
by the Trinity, and not by Christ alone. Here Rubens diverges from this tradition. On what could he have based his relatively unusual way of depicting the scene? While he clearly intended to combine the scenes of the Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin, he appears to have derived this particular form of representing it from the illustrated supplement to Jerome Nadal’s *Adnotationes et Meditationes in Evangelia*, published in Antwerp in 1595 and 1607 (as well as several later editions). The third of the four plates by H. Wierix devoted to the Death, Burial, Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin is entitled ‘Suscitatur Virgo Mater a Filio’ (Fig. 128), and there can be no doubt of Rubens’s indebtedness to it. Apart from the fact that the elements in Rubens’s composition conform to the annotations to the plate, the latter was also the pictorial source for Rubens’s design. The Virgin is placed on a lower level on Christ’s right (as required by the text), they are in almost identical poses and in the same relationship to each other, and the arrangement of the clouds and angels is strikingly similar. On the lower bank of clouds are the younger putto-like angels (represented by heads alone on the print), while the older ones are arranged on clouds which extend diagonally to the topmost corners of the print, exactly as in the Rubens. Admittedly, they do not play musical instruments in the engraving, but their music-making activity is insisted upon—a number of times—in both the annotations to the print and in the explanatory text. It will also be observed that Wierix’s print presents the Virgin’s sepulchre as securely closed (in contrast to Rubens, who shows the rolling away of the stone cover inscribed MARIUS), and that she stands there on the crescent. But for the rest the similarities are very close indeed.

There may of course have been other sources for Rubens’s representation of the theme. He must have known Lodovico Carracci’s 1601 painting of the same subject in Corpus Domini in Bologna, where—apart from the similarity of setting and the rolling away of the cover of the tomb—the relationship of Christ and the Virgin, as well as the excited group of apostles below provide one of the few recent precedents for this particular treatment of the subject. But in addition it should be mentioned that the combination of the apostles at the Virgin’s tomb with the *Coronation* was not uncommon: Dürer’s woodcut of the subject and Raphael’s painting in the Vatican (which also shows the *Coronation* by Christ alone) are only two of the most well-known. He may also have drawn on a variety of textual sources, but in view of their abundance and the well-established nature of the tradition, it is not necessary to seek specific texts which Rubens might have used. Works such as those by Nadal would in any case have provided useful compendia of the main sources for the *Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin*—if such were necessary at all.

The present work appears to be one of the two modelli which Rubens presented to the chapter of Antwerp Cathedral on 22 April, 1611, when he was awarded the commission for the High Altar of that church. This may be deduced from the records of the proceedings of the two meetings of the chapter leading up to the commission. On 24 March, 1611, Otto van Veen submitted his sketch, which showed ‘Our Lord inviting his Bride from Lebanon to her Coronation’. On 24 Martii 1611 Comparuit D. Octavio, pictor istius civitatis, et exhibuit dominis projectum sive modellum certae picturae et historiae (quae Dominum
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nostrum sponsam suam de Libano provocantem ad coronam continet) in summo altari chori nostri ponendae, et placuit dominis idem projectum et historia, et deputatus est cum Domino Decano Dominus Thesaurarius ad agentum desuper cum aedituis istius ecclesiae, acturi insuper super electionem pictoris dictam tabulam picturam.17

In the light of this document, with its specific reference to the Coronation of the Virgin, it seems likely that at least one of the two modelli which Rubens presented to the chapter one month later also represented this subject, even though they are both referred to as the Assumption of the Virgin (the conflation of the two subjects has already been indicated above):

'22 Aprilis 1611. Exhibita sunt a N. Vriendts Aedituo ecclesiae nostrae Petri Rubenii pictoris (qui etiam postea in capitulo comparuit) duo modella continentia historiam Assumptionis B.Mariae Virginis, diverso modo depicta, quae tanquam nihil in honestatis aut ecclesiae traditionibus continentia, placuerunt dominis, mansuris nihilominus in optione eligendi praestantisimum pictorum.18

The painter they chose was, of course, Rubens, as appears from the subsequent history of the commission discussed under No.43 above.

Although the identification of the second modello presented on this occasion is not certain,19 the identity of the present work with one of those referred to in the document of 22 April, 1611 can be further corroborated. In the first place, it should be noted that the painting in Vienna of the Assumption of the Virgin (No.37; Fig.87) which Rubens appears to have begun painting as the High Altarpiece for the Cathedral,20 reproduces almost exactly the lower half of the Leningrad modello (the two leftmost angels recur there as well). Secondly, the style and technique of this modello suggest a dating of around 1611. Here may be found the rather jagged highlighting on the garments and the thin and almost nervous white highlighting on the hair that one finds, for example, in the sketches for the Raising of the Cross,21 which must date from the same period.22

The modelling of the figure of Christ may be compared with that in the slightly later Moretus epitaph (No.1; Fig.3), while the music-making angels are similar to those in the Louvre drawings of King David and Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.23 Many of the angels' heads are to be found in the somewhat earlier sketch for the Adoration of the Shepherds in Leningrad,24 as well as in the drawing of God the Father and Angels after Pordenone's fresco in Treviso.25 The head of the old woman is drawn in almost the same way as the equivalent head in the sketch of the Adoration of the Shepherds and in that of the Raising of the Cross.26 The Hercules-like figure on the extreme left may be paralleled in slightly altered or reversed poses in the similar muscular figures in the Raising of the Cross as well. Two additional and significant visual parallels with related works should also be mentioned here: the kneeling woman on the left is almost identical with that in the Buckingham Palace modello (No.35; Fig.85); and when Rubens came to paint the modello in The Hague for the High Altarpiece of the Cathedral (No.43a; Fig.120), he appears to have recalled the pose of the kneeling man seen from behind on the right in the pose of the woman kneeling in the centre there.

The lower half of the modello displays a considerably darker overall tonality than the upper half (mainly as a result of the dark brown of the rocky sepulchre on the left—in the mouth of which one should
note the reddish-yellow flames of the torch held there). The body of Christ, who is dressed in pale lake, is painted in a thin, almost blonde tonality, while the Virgin is almost entirely clothed in white (with blue-grey in the folds of her dress and a slightly ochre tint in her veil), whereas in most—but not all—of the subsequent Assumptions she wears predominantly blue garments. A strong golden glow suffuses the greyish sky above the Virgin. Striking changeants like the rose-pink on green of the young apostle leaning forward on the right enliven the overall colouristic effect.

The condition of the work (which was transferred from panel to canvas in 1868) is good, notwithstanding the relatively thin surfaces of some passages, as is to be expected in a work of this nature. There are several pentimenti in the area round the arms and hands of the women on the lower left.17

In 1933 Burchard saw a painting, also transferred to canvas, at Josef Hirsch in Berlin, which he thought was the picture from the Hermitage. This cannot, however, have been the case, as the measurements he recorded were 97 x 66 cm., and he noted that the painting was worn to the bone, which cannot by any means be said of the present work.

It should perhaps be noted here that Burchard considered the possibility that the present sketch was used as a modello for a now partially lost triptych of the Coronation of the Virgin. He thought that the wings might be represented by the two panels with music-making angels in Liechtenstein28 which reproduce the same angels as those on the modello; the central panel would presumably have reflected the Virgin and Christ as depicted here. But despite the presence of 'A large altarpiece with two doors, the Coronation of the Virgin and various angels' by Rubens in the J.Cromhout and J.Loskart sale, Amsterdam, 7-8 May, 1709,29 there is no further evidence to suggest that such a triptych ever existed. It seems more likely that Rubens simply reworked the music-making angels (on the Liechtenstein panels) for another purpose. The fact that the panels in Liechtenstein were bought in 1710 as works of Adrian Hanneman30 is a further argument against their identity with the wings in the Cromhout-Loskart sale; it seems unlikely that the attribution to Rubens would have been lost or changed within a year of their purchase. The fact that Joachim and Anna are represented in grisaille on the reverse of these panels31 also argues against their inclusion on a Coronation triptych: they would be more appropriate as the wings of a triptych of the Immaculate Conception or another subject from the earlier life of the Virgin, and will therefore be discussed in Volume IV of the Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard.

A close variation of the music-making angels may be found on the painting of the Vision of St Lidwina of Schiedam by Matthijs van den Berghe (c. 1618—after 1672), dated 1649, in the church of the Discalced Carmelites in Sint-Gillis, near Brussels.32

2. Although they were originally painted in the background of the Vienna Assumption, but were later painted out by Rubens himself (cf. p.152 above). For the use of cypresses in this context to indicate a burial ground (the Valley of Jehosaphat), cf. Prohaska, pp.67, 70.
3. Cf. the full discussion by F.Baudouin, De Kroning van Maria door de Heilige Drievéenheid in de 13de eeuwse schilderkunst der Nederlanden, Bulletin, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, VIII, 1959, pp.179-230, with both literary and pictorial examples.
4. Entitled Evangelicae Historiae Imagines, and first published separately in Antwerp in 1593.
5. Hieronymus Natalis (recte J.Nadal), Adnotationes
et meditaciones in Evangelia quae in sacrosancto missae sacrificio tota anno leguntur ... Antwerp (M. Nutius), 1595; Antwerp (Plantin), 1607. On this work, see now T. Buser, Jerome Nadal and Early Jesuit Art in Rome, Art Bulletin, LVIII, 1976, pp.424-425. Ruben's possible use of this work in connection with the present composition was also noted by Glen, p.151.

6. For the various editions (and on Nadal himself), see M. Nicolau, Jeronimo Nadal (1507-80), sus obras y doctrinas espirituales, Madrid, 1949, pp.141-151.


8. This is plate 152 of Natalis' publication, while it is plate 153 which combines the scenes of the actual Assumption and Coronation of the Virgin. The textual discussion of the plate, Natalis, 1607, p.586 refers in fact to the reception of the Virgin into heaven by her Son.

9. For a full discussion of this conformity, see Freedberg, A Source for Rubens' Modello, pp.434-436.

10. Eg. Natalis, op. cit., 1607, p.597, 'angelicae omnium ordinum cohortes cum sanctis aliis spiritibus psallentes ac jubilantes'.

11. H. Bodmer, Lodovico Carracci, Burg bei Magdeburg, 1939, pl.46.

12. Bartsch, 94.


14. This was in fact the more usual way of representing the Coronation in Italy, until it too was supplanted in the course of the 16th century by the Coronation by the Trinity (cf. Baudouin, op. cit., pp.224-227).

15. For a discussion of the Early Christian sources, see A. Katzenellenbogen, The Sculptural Programs of Chartres Cathedral, New York, 1964, pp.58, and especially pp.126-127, n.9, as well as Staeckel, and M. Juge, La Mort et l'Assomption de la Vierge (Studia e Testi, LXIV), Città del Vaticano, pp.277ff. Rubens would of course have been well acquainted with the obvious liturgical sources, such as the Office for the Feast of the Assumption, with its repeated use of the Forty-fourth Psalm's reference to the fact that the Virgin stood on Christ's right ('Astitit regina a dextris tuis'), and so on.

16. The reference is to Song of Songs, IV, 8, a passage which was always taken to refer to the Coronation of the Virgin and features in almost all the textual sources for the Assumption; see Katzenellenbogen, op. cit., pp.126-127, n.9; Cornelis a Lapide, to cite only one important Netherlandish exegete, makes it quite clear that this text refers to the Coronation of the Virgin, in his commentary on the text (Commentarium, IV, Lyons-Paris, 1864, p.555).


19. For a discussion of whether this second modello is the sketch in Buckingham Palace (No.35) see pp.145, 174 above, or in fact reflected by the drawing of the Assunta in the Albertina (No.36), see pp.147-148. Baudouin, Altars, p.65, suggests that the second modello may simply have contained a variation on the upper half of the present one, as represented in the Albertina drawing (No.36; fig.86), whereas Held, Oil Sketches, p.511 thinks that the 1613-14 Assumption of the Virgin for the Missale Romanum (Judson-Van de Velde, No.27) 'utilized the compositional pattern of the second modello of 1611'.

20. See above, p.150.


25. Burchard d'Hulst, 1963, No.24; see also p.141 above for further comments on Rubens' use of this important drawing.


27. Cf. the X-ray photograph published by Varshavskaya, op. cit., p.66, as well as the one or two pertinent of lesser significance noted by her, p.67.

28. K.A.K., p.66. For a discussion of Rubens' treatment of the iconography of music-making angels, see De Poorter, pp.266-268, discussing his handling of the theme in connection with a design for the Eucharist series.


30. The date of their acquisition given on p.10 of the catalogue cited in the following note and confirmed by Dr R. Baumstark.


32. Photo ACL No.174,617B.

Note on other references to 'Assumptions of the Virgin'

Listed below are works of particular interest found amongst the references to Assumptions of the Virgin by Rubens which I am unable to associate with any of the surviving works. The list is not intended
to be exhaustive, and it could certainly be expanded at length (cf. p. 142 notes 42, 43). But in the light of the unusual number of copies after them (both surviving and lost), it would be difficult—if not actually impossible—to associate such references with existing works. In any case, the possibility should remain open that at least some of the works listed below are to be identified with items in the preceding entries:

(1) ‘Een Hemelvaert Maria origineel geschildert by Petrus Rubens ... gulden 150’ (Inventory of Melchior Wijntgis of Brussels, 5 March, 1618, reproduced in H. Hymans, Œuvres, Brussels, 1921, p. 743);

(2) A. Bonnaffé, Recherches sur les collections de Richelieu, Paris, 1883, p. 142, records an Assumption of the Virgin by Rubens in the Chateau de Richelieu (Indre et Loire);

(3) A painting of the Assumption from the collection of J.J. Angerstein (panel, 104 x 73.6 cm.) was sold in London (Christie’s), 4 December, 1897, lot 31;

(4) ‘Smith, Catalogue Raisonné, II, p. 169, No. 586 refers to an ‘Ascension of the Virgin’ sold at the Count de Fraula sale, 21 July, 1738 et seq., lot 379 (measurements given by Rooses, II, p. 182, as 267 x 183 cm.).

In addition to these paintings, it is uncertain to which compositions the drawings which appeared in the following sales refer:

(1) S. van Huls sale, The Hague (Swart), 14 May, 1736, lot 501;

(2) G. M. Jabach (Livorno) sale, Amsterdam (de Leth), 16 October, 1753, lot 840;

(3) Jacob de Wit sale, Amsterdam (de Leth and van Schorrenbergh), 10 March, 1755, Tekienboek E, No. 1 (‘gewaschen’);

(4) Simon Fokke sale, Amsterdam (van der Schley, Ploos van Amstel, de Winter and Yver), 6 December, 1784, et seq., lot 1176;

(5) Prince Charles de Ligne sale, 4 November, 1794, lot 19 (‘la main gauche sur sa poitrine ... cintré du haut ... pierre noire sur papier huile’);

(6) Richard Cosway sale, London (Stanley), 14-21 February, 1822, lot 680.

For the resonance in Spain of Rubens’s compositions of the Assumption of the Virgin, see for example the paintings mentioned and reproduced by Alfonso E. Perez Sanchez, Rubens y la Pintura Barroca Española, Goya, CLXX-CLXXI, 1977, pp. 101 to 104 (including the painting by an anonymous Sevillan in a private collection in Bilbao, reproducing the Virgin in Pontius’s engraving after Rubens’s painting in Düsseldorf; and the painting by Carreño reproducing the Virgin in Bolswert’s engraving after Rubens’s altarpiece in Antwerp).

47. The Coronation of the Virgin (Fig. 130)

Oil on canvas; 411 x 255 cm.


Provenance: Church of the Recollects, Antwerp; taken to Paris in 1794; returned to the Museum in Brussels in 1802.

Copies: (1) Engraving (without the rounded top) by P. Pontius (V.S., p. 79, No. 41); (2) Engraving (without the rounded top) by M. van den Enden (V.S., p. 79, No. 43).
The representation of the Coronation of the Virgin by the Holy Trinity gained currency in the Netherlands from about the beginning of the fifteenth century. The reasons for the emergence of this form are not clear, but it is possibly to be related to an intense concern with and devotion to the Holy Trinity in the fourteenth century, exemplified by the establishment of the Feast of the Holy Trinity in 1334. Writers such as Uberto di Casale (1259-1329), St Bridget of Sweden (whose writings were especially well-known in the Netherlands), and—above all—Dionysius the Carthusian (1402-71) all describe the Coronation of the Virgin by the Trinity. In the latter's treatise De Dignitate et Laudibus B.V. Mariae, the ninth article of the fourth book is devoted to 'Qualiter supergloriosissima Trinitas venienti ad coelos electissimae Virginis obviavit et ipsam incomparabiliter gloriose eam suscepit et glorificavit'.

Rubens need not, however, have consulted any such specific text, in view of the well-established pictorial tradition. It is, in fact, not beyond the bounds of possibility that his representation of the Coronation of the Virgin by the Trinity with the Virgin seen frontally was inspired by an Early Netherlandish example, such as the Coronation of the Virgin attributed to Dieric Bouts in the Akademie in Vienna or any one of a number of works probably derived from a lost Flémallese prototype, such as the grisaille scene on the right wing (now in New York) of Roger van der Weyden's triptych of the Virgin. In his representation of the scene, Rubens has chosen to dispense with the crowns above the heads of both God the Father (although he retains the usual attributes of sceptre and globe) and Christ; angels attend the Virgin, who is seen with hands almost crossed over her breast, on bended knee, and with the crescent beneath her feet. This last feature, not present in the types of Coronation cited above, is a reference to the Woman of the Apocalypse, which Rubens would have seen in representations such as the plate with the Coronation in Jerome Nadal's Adnotationes et Meditationes in Evangelia. The event takes place in the clouds, and the comparatively informal mode of the scene, exemplified by the absence of the crowns, is further implied by the absence of a throne. These particular characteristics became popular in the seventeenth century, and are most frequently found outside the Netherlands, especially in the works of Spanish painters, including Velázquez (whose representation of the scene may well in turn be indebted to the present by Rubens).

The painting came from the church of...
the Recollects (Friars Minor) in Antwerp, where it was seen by Tessin in the summer of 1687 and by all the eighteenth century writers listed above. Where exactly it was placed is not certain. All the writers agree that it was located in the south transept of the church; but De Wit recorded that it hung in the chapel of the Virgin over the altar of the Holy Sacrament, whereas Schoutens claimed that it hung in the chapel of the Holy Sacrament. The former possibility seems the most likely one.

The painting was removed by the French commissioners in 1794 and given to the Museum in Brussels in 1802. Despite the order of 24 April, 1817 to restore all paintings to their original locations, this particular work appears to have been allowed to remain in the Museum.

A dating of c. 1620 may be suggested for the work. The facial features of the Madonna are still those of the left wing of the Michielsen triptych of 1618, those of Christ of the Raising of Lazarus formerly in Berlin, and the putti are of the same family as those in the Infant Jesus with St John in Vienna. Although the latter two works should themselves probably be dated in the second half of the second decade, the slightly looser treatment of drapery and hair (in the putti and in the beard of God the Father) suggests a somewhat later date, possibly in the first years of the 1620s.

This dating is corroborated by the fact that the work evidently postdates Rubens's design for the Coronation of the Virgin in the ceiling of the Jesuit Church in Antwerp; the relationship is especially close, in compositional terms at any rate, with the fairly fully finished modello in the Princes Gate Collection, which Held now believes—contra Burchard and Martin—to have been an independent study for a separate commission.

The painting appears to have been largely executed by the studio, with only a little retouching by Rubens, as in the purple-grey dress of the Virgin and in some of the putto heads (although the latter are on the whole rather feebly executed). Similarly, the execution of Christ's red cloak is dull and flat, and his right arm rather awkwardly painted. At present the work has a fair amount of ingrained dirt, and there are several damaged areas. Where the paint is missing it has been retouched, especially across the lower half of the picture, but in several other areas as well.

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1. Whereas earlier the usual form had been the Coronation by Christ alone; cf. the full discussion in F. Baudouin, De Kroning van Maria door de Heilige Driëenheid in de 15de Eeuwse Schilderkunst der Nederlanden, Bulletin, Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique, VIII, 1959, pp.179-210.
3. Opera Omnia, XXXVI, Tournai, 1901, pp.160A-162C.
5. Friedländer, II, No.1, pl.2; cf. also the stained glass panel in the church of St Gummarus in Lier, which has the inscription 'Veni de Libano sponsa mea, veni Coronaberis' from Cant. 3, 8. Both illustrated in Baudouin, op. cit., figs.11 and 12; cf. Ibid., pp.188-200 for a discussion of the derivations from the proposed Flemish prototype.
6. H. Natalis, Adnotationes et Meditationes in Evangelia, Antwerp, 1595 and 1607, pl.152; cf. pp.139, 140 above for a discussion of this work and its significance for Rubens.
7. Madrid, Prado, Inv. No.1108; cf. also, for an early 17th century example, the Coronation of the Virgin by El Greco in the Hospital de la Caridad in Illescas.
8. De Wit, plan VI, No.45.
12. K.d.K., p.103.
13. Martin, Ceiling Paintings, Nos.18a-c.
15. Held, Oil Sketches, pp.510-517, No.380. To some extent this view is corroborated by the presence of an easel painting clearly based on this sketch in David Teniers's Interior of an Artist's Studio, formerly in the collection of the Earl of Normanton;
47a. The Coronation of the Virgin: Oil Sketch (Fig.131)

Oil on panel; 65 x 51 cm. 
Brussels, Private Collection.

Provenance: Marchese Guerini, Florence, c.1775; ?Héris, Brussels, 1835; Desiré van den Schriek, Louvain, 1835-61; Van den Schriek sale, Louvain, 8-10 April, 1861, lot 90; François Schollaert, Louvain, 1861-99; G.Helleputte Schollaert, Louvain, 1899-1925; Charles Kreglinger, 1925 -1936; Kreglinger sale, Brussels (Le Roy), 4 March, 1936, lot 18.

Copy: (1) Engraving by Carlo Fauci (1729-c.1784) after the painting in the Guerini collection, drawn by Lorenzo Lorenzi (Fig.134; V.S., p.79, No.44).


The present oil sketch shows a number of small differences from the painting in Brussels. Apart from the square format, the putti on the lower right are not present and the Dove is closer to the head of the Virgin. A pentiment indicates that the crescent on which she rests has been changed from an upturned to an inverted shape, as in the final painting.

The style and technique of this sketch—as far as can be judged from a photograph—may be compared with those for the Jesuit Church in Antwerp, rather than for the Marie de' Medici series, thus suggesting a date in the last years of the second decade or at the very beginning of the 1620s. This accords with the dating proposed in the preceding entry for the final composition.

Although the sketch which appeared in the Burtin sale, Brussels, 23 July, 1819, lot 152, was specifically stated to be for the Coronation earlier with the Antwerp Recollects, it was (unlike the present sketch) on canvas, and its measurements were given as the equivalent of 48 x 44 cm. The Burtin sketch, which is probably the same as that which had earlier appeared in the Maximilian de Hase sale, Brussels, 10 June, 1782, lot 2 (where the same support and dimensions were noted) is therefore probably not to be identified with the present work, and may in fact be another sketch, either for this composition or for the later one formerly in Berlin (No.48). The compositional elements in the sketches for both these works are very similar indeed (cf. No.48a; Fig.133).

1. Cf. especially No.48b, p.201 below.

48. The Coronation of the Virgin
(Fig.132)

Oil on canvas; 264 x 182 cm. 

Provenance: By 1764 in the Gallery
CATALOGUE NO. 48

of Frederick the Great at Sanssouci; transferred to the Museum in Berlin in 1830.

COPIES: (1) Painting after the head of the Virgin (possibly fragment of a larger copy), whereabouts unknown; canvas, 80 x 76 cm. PROV. Christoph Lauch (1618 to 1702); Paris, René Boucherot, 1947; photograph in Burchard documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp. (2) Painting, with alterations in the position of Christ, the putti, and the direction of the Virgin’s gaze, by Jan van Balen (1611–54), whereabouts unknown; panel, 31 x 21 cm. PROV. Julius Unger sale, Berlin (Cassirer and Helbing), 21 March, 1917; photograph in Burchard documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp.


For observations on the iconography of the Coronation of the Virgin, see under the preceding entry (No.47) for the painting of this subject in Brussels. Unlike that work, however, a jewelled crown (showing six of the twelve stars referred to in Apoc.12, 1) is placed over the Virgin’s head, her gaze is directed upwards, and the crescent beneath her is not depicted.

As the work was destroyed by fire in 1945, the detailed colour notes given in Posse’s 1911 Berlin catalogue may be summarized here. The Virgin, in a blue cloak over a blue-violet dress with gold and carmine highlights, rises upwards to the brilliant gold glory around the dove; Christ is in red, God the Father in a blue-white garment with gold highlights. The golden glory streams downwards over the grey clouds to the blonde-haired cherubs below (the mantle of the cherub on the right a brownish-red). As is often the case in Rubens, the lower area of cloud is thinly painted, so that the brown of the ground shows through. The condition of the work—to judge from the good photograph available from the Staatliche Museen in Berlin—appears to have been reasonably good, despite some wear (especially round the edges and in the mantle of God the Father) and much scattered paint loss.

Nothing is known of the original location of the work, nor how it entered the Prussian royal collections. In 1764 it was recorded in the Gallery at Sanssouci. Burchard tentatively suggested that this work may either have been the Coronation of the Virgin which Descamps recorded as by Van Dyck in the church of the Recollects in Lille, or that it came from the Abbey of the Urbanist Fathers at Petegem near Oudenaarde, before being sold in Brussels in September, 1785. But there is no further evidence in favour of either suggestion.

A dating of 1631–34 may be proposed on the basis of the painting’s stylistic and
technical similarities with other works produced in the period, including the sketches Rubens made for the Whitehall Ceiling in 1632–33 and the Madonna and Child with Female Saints in Toledo, Ohio.4

1. Österreich, op. cit., p.71, No.65.
3. Although this work was appreciably larger (c.342 \times 241 \text{ cm}) and was specifically stated to be a school piece (Catalogue d'une collection de tableaux de plusieurs grands maîtres provenant des maisons religieuses supprimées aux Pays-Bas, dont la vente se fera au couvent des évêques Riches Claires à Bruxelles, Brussels, 1785, lot 5139).
4. K.d.K., p.343. The rather more crumby handling of the paint suggests to me a slightly later dating than the Ildefonso triptych of 1630–32 (Vlieghe, Saints, II, No.117).

48a. The Coronation of the Virgin: Oil Sketch (Fig.133)

Oil on panel; 49.85 \times 40.96 \text{ cm.}

PROVENANCE: Mautner von Markhof, Vienna; K.Moser, Vienna; Thayer, New York; R.Wittig; Dial collection on loan to the Worcester Art Museum.

COPY: Oil sketch, whereabouts unknown, canvas, 51 \times 44 \text{ cm.}; see No.48b below.


This sketch for the painting of the Coronation formerly in Berlin (No.48; Fig.132) has been rather badly worn, most noticeably along the bottom edge (although the paint surface, as in all sketches of this kind by Rubens, is intentionally thin). It may have been strengthened in parts, as around the eyes and possibly the legs of God the Father. The Museum's technical report1 notes some degree of flaking throughout the painting, with the main damage to the lower edge on the left, the Virgin, the leg of Christ, and the drapery of God the Father.

The poses of the cherubs are slightly different from the final version, but the significant difference between the painting and the sketch is that the latter contains the crescent moon omitted in the final composition. In the painting two cherubs' heads were introduced in each upper corner, while God the Father was moved closer to the Virgin, and the Dove made considerably more prominent. The composition as a whole is adjusted to take account of the change from an almost square to a rectangular composition. A dating in the early 1630s would be consistent with the style and technique of the sketch, which in terms of the handling of the brush and treatment of faces and other features would appear to fall between the sketch for the Ildefonso altarpiece2 and the sketches for the Torre de la Parada.

2. Vlieghe, Saints, II, No.117b.
48b. The Coronation of the Virgin: Oil Sketch (Fig. 135)

Oil on canvas, 51 x 44 cm.
Whereabouts unknown.

PROVENANCE: Bought in 1907 from an English dealer by F. W. Lippman, Berlin; Baron Walther von Schnitzler after 1910; Arthur von Schnitzler, Berlin; Galerie Dr Griebert, Constance, 1956; Julius Böhler, Munich, 1958.

Although Burchard authenticated this sketch in 1956, he had earlier (c. 1950) decided that it was simply a copy, with additions on either side (e.g. the completion of the orb on which God the Father rests his hand) of the panel in Worcester. There can be no doubt that the latter is the case.

In view of the similarity of measurements and support, this may well be the sketch of the Coronation of the Virgin which appeared first in the Maximilian de Hase sale, Brussels, 10 June, 1782, lot 2, and then in the Burtin sale, Brussels, 23 July, 1819, lot 152 (although there it was specifically stated to be for the painting formerly belonging to the Antwerp Re collects, No. 47 above). 1

1. Notes in Burchard Documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp.
2. Cf. above, p. 198.

49. The Last Judgement (Fig. 137)

Oil on canvas; 610 x 460 cm.
Munich, Alte Pinakothek. No. 890.

PROVENANCE: Jesuit Church, Neuburg; transported to the Electoral Gallery in Düsseldorf, 1691; provisionally placed in the Capuchin Church, Düsseldorf, c. 1705; taken to Schleissheim in 1806; transported to the Alte Pinakothek in 1836, the year of its foundation.

COPIES: (1) Painting (incomplete copy), whereabouts unknown, panel, 80 x 73 cm. PROV. Ulm, private collection, 1929; Leipzig, Franke, 1933; photograph in Burchard documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp; (2) Painting of the two men and the skull on the lower left of the composition, whereabouts unknown, panel, 28 x 39 cm. PROV. Marczell von Nemes; Munich, J. Böhler, 1926; Tel Aviv, Ephraim Kertes collection, 1964; sale, Vienna (Dorotheum), 7 November, 1967; sale, Vienna (Dorotheum), 14-17 October, 1975, lot 107; (3) Drawing after the group of six figures of the blessed, with a seventh just visible, above the tombstone on the left of the painting, Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, Kongelige Kobberstiksamling, Rubens Cantoor, No. 1, 11, black chalk, slightly heightened with white, 34.5 x 26.4 cm.; (4) Drawing after the devil dragging away two figures on the lower right of the painting, ibid., Rubens Cantoor, No. 1, 10, black chalk heightened with white, 32.4 x 26.5 cm.; (5) Drawing after the three damned figures on the lower right of the painting, ibid., Rubens Cantoor, No. 1, 12, red chalk, 19.9 x 17 cm. (6) Drawing of the right foot of the male figure seated by the tomb on the lower left of the painting, ibid., Rubens Cantoor, No. VI, 27, red chalk and ink, 11 x 20.8 cm.

LITERATURE: Sandrart, ed. Peltzer, pp. 36, 159; Kartsch, No. 207; Van Goold, p. 456; De Blainville, pp. 55, 59-60; Catalogue, Düsseldorf, 1770, p. 16; Michel, 1771, p. 296; Forster, I, pp. 130, 132-162; Pigage, No. 288; Reynolds, pp. 220-221; F. X. de Burtin, Traité théorique et pratique des connaissances qui sont nécessaires à tout amateur de
The most important biblical sources for the Last Judgement are Matthew XXIV, 30–31 and XXV, 31–46; but by the time Rubens painted the present work—the largest he ever painted—the pictorial tradition had become so well established that it would be supererogatory to outline the additional biblical and patristic sources. Here Rubens shows Christ seated in judgement, with the Virgin on his right, interceding and leading the apostles and saints (amongst whom Saints John the Baptist, Peter, John the Evangelist, George, Laurence and Sebastian may be securely identified) and Old Testament figures such as Moses, Adam and Eve, and David on his left. Below him to the right the archangel Michael casts down the damned, while to the left an angel with a wreath leads the blessed souls heavenward. The Holy Spirit in the form of a dove hovers above Christ, while at the very top of the composition God the Father with the orb looks downwards. Two angels sound the trumpets beneath Christ’s feet, in a manner that recalls the angels in Michelangelo’s Last Judgement. The weighing of the souls is omitted, as had become customary in the course of the sixteenth century, especially since Michelangelo. Assisted by angels, the blessed rise upward on the left from their tombs below; on the right devils carry off the damned to hell. Several skeletal figures peer outwards on both sides, which may be a reference—as in Michelangelo and others—to the dry bones mentioned in Ezekiel XXXVII, 3–6.

Although Michelangelo’s Last Judgement provides the most obvious precedent for the present work, Rubens’s indebtedness to the Netherlandish Last Judgement tradition should not be overlooked. Michelangelo’s arrangement of the Ascent of the Blessed on one side and the Fall of the Damned on the other was important for all subsequent renderings of the subject, but even these elements, it has been observed, probably derive from earlier Netherlandish representations, such as those by Dieric Bouts in Lille and Memling in Danzig. In the present work, Rubens recalls earlier
sixteenth-century *Last Judgement* compositions, such as those by P.Pourbus of 1551 and, especially, C. van den Broeck of 1560 and 1571. In this connection, it is worth recording Sanderus's account of Rubens's response to the painting of this subject by Jacob de Backer formerly in the Carmelite Church in Antwerp:

'Ne aliorum pictorum operas sileam, S.Caroli Borromaei, protectoris Belgii, quem ornandum ubique Carmelitae sumpserunt, eque adverso, extremo judicii quam circumstitae picturae! Certe pervegeta corporaturae perfomatio authore Backerio, mentitusque adeo coeuntium ad judicem horum pavor, istorum fiducia, vel Rubenii saepe detinuit pavitque oculos'.

The subject of the *Last Judgement* is in fact relatively unusual in seventeenth century painting, and Rubens's work is one of the very few which are not directly derived from Michelangelo.

It may perhaps be noted here that Rubens owned both a painting and an oil sketch of the *Last Judgement* by Tintoretto, and there may, as suggested by Jaffé, be some recollection of that artist's painting of the subject in the church of the Madonna dell' Orro in Venice, 'not so much in detail as in the general movement in and out of a fitful illumination pierced by a more celestial light from beyond'. But the 'influence' in this case cannot be regarded as more than a very generalized one.

That the work was completed by 28 April, 1618 can be deduced from Rubens's famous letter of that date to Sir Dudley Carleton, in which he offers the latter a copy of the painting which he had made for Wolfgang-Wilhelm Duke of Neuburg:

'Un Giudizio estremo. Cominciato di un discepolo appresso uno chio feci in molto maggior forma per il Ser Mo Prin­cipe de Neuburg che me lo pago tre mille cinquecento fiorini contanti ma questo non essendo finito si ritoccarebbe tutto de mia mano et a quel modo passaria per originaile'.

More precise details about the date of the Neuburg work and its price were published by Braun and Kreitmaier: the former showed that Rubens in fact received 3000 florins and a golden chain from Count Wolfgang-Wilhelm (who had commissioned the work); Kreitmaier published an excerpt from the Chronicle of the Neuburg Jesuit College for the year 1617 which showed that the work was already in situ on the High Altar of the Jesuit Church:

'Adest jam nobilissima pictura arae summate praefigenda exquisitissimo penicillo a Petro Paulo Rubenio aevi nostri celeberrimi pictore mira arte elaborata aliquot flororum millibus ab artis huius perito aestimata'.

For the *Nativity* and the *Pentecost* (No. 27; Fig. 60) which Rubens was shortly to paint for the side altars of the same church, see pp. 104-106 above.

Burchard suggested that Rubens may well have received the commission at the time of—or certainly as a result of—Wolfgang Wilhelm's visit to Antwerp in January, 1615. In any event, a secure *terminus ante quem* is provided by the document of 1617 cited above. There are in fact several similarities to the paintings which Rubens executed just slightly later for the High Altar of the Jesuit Church in Antwerp. The actual handling of the paint is remarkably akin to that in the *Miracles of St Francis Xavier* and *St Ignatius Loyola* which have been securely dated to 1617-18, and there are a number of individual figures in the present *Last Judgement* which are used again in one or
other of these works: the male figure on the lower left is almost identical with the similar figure in the same position in the *Francis Xavier*, while the figure crouching in the centre below recurs—though reversed—on the left of the *Ignatius Loyola*. The latter figure and the crouching figure below on the right may ultimately be derived from the antique *Wrestlers* group, but there may also be some influence, particularly in the crouching figure, from Michelangelo’s relief of the *Battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs*, which Rubens is likely to have known.

Such derivations and internal ‘borrowings’ are so common in Rubens’s work that not all of them need be discussed here, but a few of the more significant ones may be mentioned. The angel pushing down a grimacing figure which bites his hand on the right of the composition is a reprise of a motif which had earlier appeared in almost identical fashion in a drawing of the Italian period of *St Michael Striking Down the Rebellious Angels* (Fig.152), a drawing which Rubens may also have used for several of the figures in the ‘Small’ *Last Judgement* (No.51; Fig.146). The attitude of St Michael himself recurs, only slightly modified, in the latter work, as well as in the *Fall of the Rebellious Angels* for the Jesuit Church in Antwerp and for *St Peter’s* in Neuburg of 1622, and again in the sketch for the *Woman of the Apocalypse* of c.1623–24. The seated female figure with hands placed across her breasts looking modestly downwards on the lower left is also derived from an antique prototype, the *Kneeling Venus* from the Giustiniani collection, which Rubens would have seen in the Farnese collection and which he adapted in several works dating from c.1614, such as the *Venus Frigida* in Antwerp and the *Sine Cerere et Baccho Friget Venus* in Kassel.

On the basis of the *Annuae* of the Jesuit Church in Neuburg, Braun maintained that the work was replaced by a painting of the *Assumption of the Virgin* by Paul Bock as early as 1653 (the year of accession of Wolfgang Wilhelm’s son, Philipp Ludwig): ‘arae summae vetus tabula artificio celebrator quam pietatis incen- tivis submota est’. But it seems more likely that the work was simply concealed by the new painting: this is suggested not only by the use of the word *submota* in the document, but also by the fact that in 1691–92 the new Duke, the Elector Johann Wilhelm (who had succeeded to the Electorship in 1690) made a renewed request to have the painting removed, with yet another sidelong reference to its lack of decorum. As in the case of the *Pentecost* (No.27; Fig.60) and *Nativity* a few years later, he promised to replace Rubens’s painting with another work. A letter from the General of the Jesuit order to the Provincial dated 14 April 1691 records that

‘...P. Rector Neoburgensis ad me scribit Ser[mum] Electorem istic pro aula sua petyssse imaginem altaris summi templi nostri Neoburgensis, eiusque spopondisse aliam, quae devotioni populi magis apta foret. Scio et eandem et quidem non semel petyssse iam ante Ser[mum] Electorem nuper defunctum (i.e. Philipp Ludwig): sed responsum ei fuisse in nostra haud esse potestate mobilia pretiosa ex templis alienare, nisi accedente voluntate Congregationis Episcoporum vel Concilij...’. This letter makes it clear that Philipp Ludwig had repeatedly sought to remove the painting during the course of his reign, but that no definite action was taken. Despite the apparent concern over the decorum of the work, however, it might well be asked whether in the case
of Johann Wilhelm's request the motive was not simply that he wished to make an impressive addition to the private collection he was now beginning to form (cf. 'pro aula sua' in the document quoted here)—especially in the light of his subsequent removal of the paintings above the side altars as well.

A letter from the General of 28 July, 1691 refers to further negotiations regarding the picture, and the intervention of Cardinal Francesco Maria de' Medici on the Elector's behalf.39 That a decision was reached by the end of the year appears from a letter of 19 January, 1692 from the General to the Neuburg Rector:

'Accepi datas 25 Decembr., quibus R.V. refert, Ser™™Electorem curasse quidem auferri imaginem Rubenianam quando vero aliam, quam pulchram; pollicitus est, ei substitutus sit, se neque per coniecturam assequi voluisse...'.

It appears from De Blainville's account of his visit to Düsseldorf in 1705 that the work was temporarily displayed above the High Altar of the Capuchin Church there, pending its installation in the Electoral Gallery, for which it was then too high.41 The painting which replaced Rubens's picture in the Neuburg Church was an Assumption of the Virgin by Cignani, which was itself later replaced by another Assumption by Domenico Zanetti.42 This may be a further indication of the unsuitability of a painting of the Last Judgement for the High Altar during this period, let alone one which, like Michelangelo's, gave rise to objections on the ground of its nudes. It is interesting to note that the work gave rise to questions of decorum until well into the nineteenth century; Eastlake exclaimed: 'that such a work as this could ever have been executed with a religious purpose, or accepted as a pictorial embodiment of religious truth, is almost incredible'.43

The work is in fair condition, but is very worn and rubbed in parts (as, for example, in the cloak of the Virgin and the figure emerging from a tomb in the centre below). In certain areas—notably along the left edge and in the centre below—the paint loss is quite marked. These and other losses must have resulted at least partially from the periodic need to roll up the enormous canvas for purposes of transportation, beginning with its c.500 kilometre journey from Antwerp to Neuburg, and then again from Neuburg to Düsseldorf in 1692, and finally to Munich. The canvas consists basically of two strips of over two metres wide each, with additions on the left and at the bottom. The most visible seams are those approximately 5 cm. from the left-hand side, 2.5 cm. from the right and 20 cm. from the bottom. The painting was evidently largely executed by the studio, although Rubens clearly worked on many of the main nude figures and in several other areas.44

A painting of a Last Judgement said to be a 'gleichzeitige Werkstattreplik des Bildes in der Münchner Alte Pinakothek' in the catalogue of the sale, Berlin (Lepke), 5 February, 1929, may equally well have been after either of the paintings of this subject in Munich, but in the absence of a photograph of this work the matter cannot be determined here.

1. For these, see B. Brenk, Weltgericht, in Lexikon christl. Ikon., IV, col. 513; and add Ezekiel XXXVII, 1ff. and 1 Thessalonians IV, 16-17.
2. Glen, p. 117 suggested that the female saints to the left and behind St Peter are Mary Magdalen and 'the other Marias', and that the saint beside St Laurence is St Ignatius Loyola (unlikely) and that the two mitred bishops above him are perhaps Saints Ambrose and Augustine (Glen, p. 118).
3. Glen, pp. 119 and 121 rightly noted that the emphasis here is more on salvation and redemption than
on damnation; cf. John VI, 54 'Whoso taketh my flesh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life; and I will raise him up on the last day' as an additional source to the ones already listed above.

4. It should perhaps be noted here that this representation of the whole of the Trinity is most unusual at the top of Last Judgement compositions.

5. '...Behold I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: And I will lay sinews upon you, and will bring up flesh upon you, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord....'.


9. Friedländer, Ill, Nos.30-31, plates 46, 47.


18. Rosset-Ruelens, II, p.137; on the copy referred to in this letter, see below No.52.

19. Braun, op. cit., p.188.

20. Kreitmaier, op. cit., p.46 (Munich, Bayerisches Staatsarchiv, Jesuitica in Genero, fasc.98, o.1951, ff.23* and 24).


22. On the visit, see P.Génard, Rederoveringen en Verwelkomeningen der Stadsbeursen en Huisjes van de Hertogen, Graven, Landvoogden, Bishoopen en anderen, eng., eng., van het jaar 1562 tot het jaar 1618, Antwerpsch Archiefblad, VI, pp.337-358, Nos.CV and CVI.


24. Vlieghe, Saints, II, Nos.104 and 115 respectively.

25. See Boudinou, 1972, pp.109-118 for the evidence for this terminus ante quem for the Jesuit altarpieces.

26. Compare too the preparatory drawing for this figure in the Victoria and Albert Museum, Inv. No. D.904 and 905-1000, Vlieghe, Saints II, No.1042.

27. Also used in the Princes Gate Collection Conversion of St Paul (No.30; Fig.67).

28. The group entered the collection of Cardinal Ferdinando de' Medici in Rome in 1583; see E.Löwy, Die Griechische Plastik, Leipzig, 1920, p.119, pl.244B; Uffizi, Catalogue of Sculpture, I, 1958, No.61, pl.62.

It should be noted that the arms of the Wrestlers are a modern restoration.


30. Vlieghe, Saints, II, No.133.

31. See pp.216-217 below.

32. Martin, Ceiling Paintings, No.1; and Vlieghe, Saints, II, No.135.

33. Private collection, Zurich; exhibited Rotterdam, 1973-74, No.47.

34. K.d.K., p.70.

35. K.d.K., p.63. On these adaptations and on the variants of the antique prototype, see now F.-A. Dreier, Anmerkungen zur Frierenden Venus von Paul Rubens, Niederdeutsche Beiträge zur Kunstgeschichte, XVI, 1977, pp.45-52; for an adaptation of this figure in the sketchbook attributed to the young Van Dyck, see Jaffé, Van Dyck's Antwerp Sketchbook, op. cit., II, p.239, f.56.


38. Cited in Kreitmaier, op. cit., p.249 (Munich, Bayerisches Staatsarchiv, Familienarchiven, XV, 122).

39. Kreitmaier, op. cit., p.249 (Munich, Bayerisches Staatsarchiv, ibid.).


44. There does not seem to be any substantial evidence in favour of the early assertion by Burchard that the work was partially executed by Van Dyck (L.Burchard, Anmerkungen zu den Rubens-Bildern der Alten Pinakothek in München, Kunsthronik, N.F. XXIII, 1912, p.735.

49a. The Last Judgement: Oil Sketch (Fig.138)

Oil on panel; 121.5 x 96 cm.

Dresden, Gemäldegalerie. No.958A.

PROVENANCE: ?Sir Peter Lely (Soest,
CATALOGUE NO. 490

1618–London, 1680); Lely sale, London, 18 April, 1682, lot 569; J. van Horebeke, Ghent; bought by the Elector of Saxony in Ghent, 5 May, 1688.

toor, No. VII, 1, pen and ink, the shading in black chalk possibly by a later hand, 42 x 32.6 cm.


Burchard concluded that the present work was the modello for the painting in Munich largely on the grounds of its differences from the finished work. The most obvious of these differences are as follows: St Peter holds one key in his lowered hand, the other in his upraised hand; Adam holds up his right forearm (thus rather closer to the antique statue of Homer on which this figure is based); David is represented as standing immediately behind Moses; a female figure is added to the group of male elect on the right; a faintly depicted host of the elect stretch towards the upper right and upper left; the angels above carry the instruments of the Passion; the angel below Christ to the left holds the wreath in his left rather than his right hand and carries...
a palm in his right hand; four angels, rather than two, sound the trumpets; the black figure and the upward looking head of a youth above him in the Munich picture are not present; the skulls are clothed with a certain amount of flesh (although this may be later overpaint); the figure in the centre below looks out of the work rather than inwards; and the bottom right hand corner has been somewhat changed, to include the tail of the monster and the figure of a condemned female soul tearing her hair. In the additions to the sides of the painting (see below) several figures with outstretched arms have been added on the left, and an extra tumbling figure on the right.

The fact that the work is fairly highly finished need not argue against its status as a modello, as the modelli for the paintings for the High Altar of the Jesuit Church in Antwerp, which Rubens probably completed slightly later than the 'Great' Last Judgement, attain an almost equal degree of finish.

The work is in reasonably good condition, but serious questions about its authenticity may be raised. The faces throughout are comparatively poorly delineated, with sometimes coarsely drawn and occasionally rather coy features; in many parts the drapery is made up of uncharacteristically thin folds.

In view of these and other weaknesses, several further possibilities about the status of this work cannot be altogether excluded. In the first place, it could simply be a copy after a now lost modello; secondly, it is possible that it should be identified with the work mentioned in Rubens's letter of 1618 to Sir Dudley Carleton (quoted in the preceding entry) as being a student's copy after the work he had just sent to Neuburg, and which he was proposing to retouch himself (but this would be complicated by the substantial difference in size between the present work and the dimensions given in the letter to Carleton); thirdly, it could be a copy after the engraving by Visscher, with the introduction of a few changes—but in the light of the differences between it and the engraving? this seems less likely; and fourthly it may have been made by an artist who had some knowledge of both the Neuburg picture and the engraving by Visscher (or another work like it). In the additions to the sides of the painting the faces throughout are comparatively poorly delineated, with sometimes coarsely drawn and occasionally rather coy features; in many parts the drapery is made up of uncharacteristically thin folds.

The original panel appears to have been widened by 10.2 cm. on the left and 10 cm. on the right, thus making it almost the same size as the paintings of the Fall of the Damned in Aachen, No. 52, Copy (1) below, and the Assumption of the Blessed in Munich (No. 53). There does not seem to be sufficient evidence for a secure attribution of these additions to Jan Boeckhorst, nor to support Oldenbourg's contention that the work was extended and overpainted by him, although neither possibility should be entirely discarded. It does, however, appear to have been overpainted in several areas, especially in those areas adjacent to the additions on the left and right (as, for example, in the torso of the figure below the angel on the lower left).

It may be that the additions were made when the work entered the collection of J. Horebeke in Ghent, in order to conform to the dimensions of the Assumption of the Blessed (No. 53) which he appears to have owned and to the Fall of the Damned which he may conceivably have bought along with it from the Ghent collection of J. Stoop. One of the difficulties with this hypothesis is that the Munich drawing attributed to Jan de Bisschop, which shows the painting after the extensions had been made, bears the date of 29 April, 1669 on its verso—thus several years before it is recorded as having been bought.
by Horebeke at the Lely sale in 1682. On the other hand, it should be noted that the dimensions given in the Lely sale catalogue (4' 4" x 3' 2") accord reasonably well, if one makes allowances for a frame, with those of the present work before the additions were made.

It was probably this work which the Elector of Saxony bought in Ghent in May, 1688, as reported by the Nordischer (Mercurius) of 1 May, 1688, No.69:


While the provenance of the present work can admittedly not be established with certainty, it does not seem likely that it is to be identified with the Last Judgment recorded in the Arundel collection; that picture is described as a small grisaille in the catalogue of the Arundel sale of 26 September, 1684. It could also be that the de Bisschop copies were done after the Arundel picture, while it was in Holland; but despite the attractiveness of this hypothesis, it seems more likely that the Arundel work differed slightly from the work described here and which was so accurately copied by de Bisschop.

The modello was first mentioned in the 1754 inventory of the Dresden Gallery, II, No.10. In 1870 the warping of the panels was rectified and the varnish freshened; it was recorded then that no further restoration was necessary.

2. Another difficulty with this hypothesis may be presented by the considerable differences between the Dresden and Munich pictures outlined above.
4. See p.201.
5. See below, p.212; and it will be noted that where there are differences between the Dresden modello and the engraving, it is the engraving which is closer to the composition in Munich.
6. See below, p.212.
7. As No.50 below.
8. Oldenbourg, 1922, p.179.
10. No.62, copy (i), pp.219 and 220.
11. Ogden, op. cit., p.154 and note 5.
12. For these dimensions, see Sir Peter Lely's Collection, [Editorial], Burlington Magazine, LXXXIII, 1943, p.187.
13. Reference kindly communicated to the writer by A.Mayer-Meinschel.
15. For these differences, see p.212.
16. Dresden, Gemäldegalerie, Acten, 1876-79, Abth.II, 12, Nr.8, Bd.4, fol.3.

**49b. Angels escorting the Blessed to Paradise, with an Adoration of the Magi: Drawing (Fig.141)**

Pen and brown ink; 20 x 28.3 cm. Below on the left the mark of Sir Thomas Lawrence (L.2445); above on the right, 69 inscribed in an unknown hand.

**Provenance:** William Young Ottley (London, 1771-1836); sale, London (Philippe), 6-23 June, 1814, No.1169; Sir Thomas Lawrence (London, 1769-1830); S.Woodburn (London, 1786-1853); Sir Thomas
CATALOGUE NO. 49c

Phillips (Cheltenham, 1792—London, 1872); T. Fitzroy Fenwick (Cheltenham, 1856-1938), grandson of the preceding; acquired by Count Seilern from the Fenwick heirs.


The group of the Virgin and Child with three male figures on the present drawing recalls the similar group in the Adoration of the Magi in the Prado of 1609-10,1 but it may well have been done as a preliminary sketch for the Adoration of the Magi in the St John's Church in Mechlin1 which was in place by 1617 and which it most closely resembles.2

The two other groups on this sheet consist of first thoughts for several figures in the 'Great' Last Judgement, but as the drawing once formed part of the same sheet as No. 49c, see the discussion there.

On the verso are several studies of a nymph reclining and a satyr.4

3. Despite the suggestion made by Müller Hofstede that the present group may in fact be a Holy Family (Müller Hofstede, Review, p. 449).

49c. Angels escorting the Blessed to Paradise: Drawing (Fig. 142)

Pen and brown ink; 20.4 x 28.1 cm. Above on the right, the mark of J. P. Heseltine (L. 1507); below on the right, the mark of R. P. Roupell (L. 2234).

New York, The Frick Collection.

Inv. No. 414-2.

PROVENANCE: W. Y. Ottley (London, 1771 to 1836); sale, London (Phillipe), 6-23 June, 1814, lot 1170; Sir Thomas Lawrence (London, 1769-1830); S. Woodburn (London, 1786-1853); R. P. Roupell (London, 1798-1886); Sir J. C. Robinson (London, 1824-1913); J. P. Heseltine (London, 1859-1932); sale, London (Christie's), 10-14 July, 1936, lot 307, where purchased for the Frick collection.


Held demonstrated convincingly that this and the preceding drawing originally formed a single sheet: the structure of the paper is the same, there is complete stylistic agreement between both halves, they are almost identical in size, the drawings on the versos both show recumbent nymphs, one of the nymphs' feet on the Frick drawing belongs to the body of a figure on the Princes Gate drawing1 and both drawings show a vertical crease about 10 mm. from the left edge.

Burchard-d'Hulst first showed that the figures on the rectos (apart from the group of the Adoration of the Magi on No. 49b; Fig. 141) are to be connected with the 'Great' Last Judgement—except that the pair of figures at the top of the Frick drawing was used slightly later for the same motif high on the left of the centre of the 'Small' Last Judgement (No. 51; Fig. 146). The other studies for an angel lifting two
entwined female figures upwards must clearly be regarded as preliminary trials for the related group that features prominently on the left of the 'Great' Last Judgement. Burchard-d'Hulst also pointed out that the same motif of 'ravishing' occurs in other works of this period, such as the Boreas Abducting Oreithyia in the Akademie in Vienna and the Rape of Proserpine formerly in the collection of the Duke of Wellington at Blenheim. The two figures lightly sketched on the lower left of the Frick drawing, one with arms crossed upon the breast and the other with hands together in prayer, appear to be the first ideas for the female figures, in slightly different poses, on the lower left of the final composition.

Two further drawings said to be studies for the Last Judgement were sold at earlier Ottley sales: the first, 'A study for the Last Judgement, black chalk, a masterly design' was sold in London (Philippe), 18 April, 1803, lot 563; the second 'a capital study for the Last Judgement, black and red chalk, heightened' was sold in London (Philippe), 10 July, 1807, lot 513, and again in London (Sotheby's), 27 March, 1946, lot 98. The present whereabouts of these drawings is unknown; and whether they were copies after the 'Great' Last Judgement, the 'Small' Last Judgement (No.51) or possibly even after the Fall of the Damned (No.52) cannot be determined.

From the early eighteenth century onwards, many sales references may be found to drawings said to be for parts of the Last Judgement by Rubens. Almost all of them are impossible to relate to the extant drawings, largely because of the frequent confusion not only between Rubens's two versions of this subject, but also between them and the Fall of the Damned. In any event, most of such references are to the condemned figures in these compositions.
50. The Last Judgement

Oil on canvas, approximately 365 x 235 cm. Whereabouts unknown, presumably lost.

Provenance: Sir Dudley Carleton (1573 to 1632); ?Ignace van Brée sale, Antwerp, 30 May, 1741, lot 2; M. Robyns sale, Brussels, 12 May 1758 et seqq., lot 3.

Copies: (1) Painting, grisaille (Fig. 145), Sigmaringen, Schloss; paper mounted on canvas, 64.5 x 50 cm. Prov. Munich, Josef Brindl, until 1873. Lit. D. Lehner, Ankäufe für das Museum in Sigmaringen, Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst, X, 1875, Beiblatt, 5 February, 1875, cols. 263–266; Rooses, I, p. 101; (2) Engraving by C. Visscher, 64.5 x 50 cm (Fig. 144; V.S., p. 61, No. 453).


Rubens appended to his letter of 28 April, 1618 to Dudley Carleton a list of pictures which were in his house and which he offered in exchange for Carleton’s collection of antiquities. Amongst these were ‘Un Giuditio estremo, cominciato di un mio discepolo appresso uno chio feci in molto maggior forma per il Sermo Principe de Neuburg che me lo pago tre mille Cinquecento fiorini contanti, ma questo non essendo finito si ritoccarebbe tutto de mia mano et a quel modo passaria per originale’. The marginal annotations give the size, 13’ x 9’, and Rubens’s valuation—1200 florins—of the picture.

Nothing certain is known about the subsequent history of this copy of the ‘Great’ Last Judgement by one of Rubens’s pupils which he promised would be retouched by his own hand. But it may well be identical with the picture sold at the Robyns sale in Brussels in 1758, in view of the identity of measurements.

Burchard thought it likely that the engraving by C. Visscher (Fig. 144) was a copy of this work, on the grounds that it differs both from the final composition in Munich and, to some extent, from the putative modello in Dresden. It is in fact almost identical with the latter work, before the later additions at the sides. But although it appears to differ from the Munich painting in the same respects as the Dresden ‘modello’, the male figure in the centre below is turned inwards rather than outwards, an angel raising his right arm is present in the clouds to the right of St Michael (as in the Munich picture), and the lower right hand corner of the engraving is closer to—though not altogether identical with—the painting in Munich (the woman tearing her hair in the Dresden work is absent, and the open demon’s mouth sinking its fangs into a screaming head is closer to the final version).

If the engraving was indeed made after the lost painting mentioned in the letter to Carleton, then one might postulate the following sequence of events: the copy for Carleton would only have been completed after the despatch of the Neuburg painting, in which case both it and the engraving might have been made along lines closer to the modello, which would naturally still have been in hand. This is a plausible hypothesis, based on the evidence of the surviving works. But the possibility must remain that the Dresden work was either itself identical with the work mentioned in the letter to Carleton (in which case one would have to suppose that the measurements given there were substantially wrong) or that it was a copy after it—rather than being a preliminary modello as suggested by Burchard.

A small grisaille sketch of the Last Judgement was sold for 80 florins at the
Arundel sale in Amsterdam on 26 September, 1684. It was probably the same work which was sold at the Wolters sale Amsterdam (Croese), 4 May, 1757, lot 5, where it was stated to have been engraved by Visscher. It is tempting to connect the Sigmaringen sketch with these references, but as that work appears to be a nineteenth-century production, this does not seem likely—unless it has been considerably overpainted. Both Lehner and Rooses regarded the Sigmaringen sketch as a preparatory sketch for the engraving by Visscher, and attributed it to Pieter Soutman (on the rather dubious grounds that Visscher was a pupil of his and that he was working with Rubens at the time of the execution of the Last Judgement). It will be noted that the Sigmaringen sketch is in the reverse sense to the engraving.

1 See the last paragraph of this entry.
2 Rooses-Ruelens. II, p.137.
3 See pp.207-208 above, under No.490, for these differences.
4 'Een laest Oordeel zijnde een grauwte', Het I, p.2, No.23.
5 'Een schets in't graauw, zijnde het laatste Oordeel, is in kooper gebracht door C. Visscher'. The measurements given at this sale were c.04.35 x 48.9, thus very close to the measurements of the Visscher engraving and the sketch in Sigmaringen.

51. The Last Judgement (Fig.146)

Oil on panel; 183.3 x 119 cm.
Munich, Alte Pinakothek. No.611.

PROVENANCE: In the Electoral Gallery, Düsseldorf, by 1705; transferred to the Electoral Gallery in Mannheim, c.1756; transported to the Hofgartengalerie, Munich, in 1806; transferred to the Alte Pinakothek in 1836, the year of its foundation.

COPIES: (1) Fragment of the so-called 'Rubens-Salon', painting attributed to Cornelis de Vos (Fig.136), Stockholm, Nationalmuseum, Inv. No.407, panel, 75 x 115 cm. LIT. Rooses, V, p.309; Oldenbourg, 1922, p.180; S.Speth-Holterhoff, Les peintres flamands de Cabinets d'Amateurs au XVIIe siècle, Brussels, 1957, pl.26; Nationalmuseum, Stockholm. Åldre Utrandska Malningar och Skulpturer, Stockholm, 1958, p.74. No.407; Müller Hofstede, Beiträge. p.319, n.148 (figures by Cornelis de Vos); (2) Painting, whereabouts unknown, canvas, 196 x 119.4 cm. PROV. Sir Thomas Lawrence (London, 1769-1830); sale, London (Christie's), 15 May, 1830, lot 8; Northwick Park, Captain E.G. Spencer Churchill; sale, London (Christie's), 5 November, 1966, lot 140; LIT. Catalogue of the Paintings at Northwick Park, London, 1864. No.463; T.Borenius, Catalogue of the Collection of Pictures at Northwick Park, London, 1921, No.156; (3) Painting, whereabouts unknown, canvas. PROV. C.1920-1930 in the collection of Albert Reimann, Berlin. Photograph in the Burchard Documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp; (4) Painting, whereabouts unknown, canvas, 200 x 120 cm. PROV. Copenhagen, Art Market, 1953; notes in Burchard Documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp; (5) Painting after the group of struggling figures in the foreground on the lower left, whereabouts unknown, canvas, 40 x 51 cm. PROV. Paris, Henri Berlewi, in 1955; photograph in Burchard Documentation, Rubenianum, Antwerp; (6) Drawing (Fig.147), Madrid, Real Academia de San Fernando, Inv. No.335; eight sheets of reddish brown paper mounted on canvas; black and red chalk, pen and brown wash, heightened with white, 143.2 x 96 cm. PROV. Italy, Bourbon collections; Valparaiso, Monastery, in the nineteenth century. EXH. Brussels, 1965, No.344; Pedro Pablo Rubens (1577-1640). Exposición Homenaje, Palacio de Velazquez, Madrid, 1977-78. No.120. LIT. E. Torno.

EXHIBITED: De Meesterwerken van de Pinakotheek van München, Paleis voor Schone Kunsten, Brussels, 1948, No.86; Kunstwerke der Münchner Museen, Berne, 1949-50, No.76.

LITERATURE: A. Golnitz, Ulysses Belgico-Gallicus, Leiden, 1631, pp.71-72; De Blainville, pp.59-60; Karsch, No.186; Van Gool, p.545; Descamps, Vie, p.318; Catalogue des peintures qui sont dans les quatre cabinets de S.A.S.E Palatine, Mannheim, 1756, No.156; Michel, 1771, p.301; Pigage, No.287; Reynolds, p.221; Forster, I, p.132; Smith, Catalogue Raisonné, IX, pp.270, 271, No.97; Dillis, No.2971; Parthey, p.423, No.146; Marggraaff, pp.190-191, No.297; Rooses, I, pp.103-105, No.91; Reber, No.738; K.d.K., ed. Rosenberg, p.96; Michel, p.194; Dillon, pp.126, 200, pl. Cf; K. Voll, Zum kleinen jüngsten Gericht von Rubens in der Alten Pinakaethek, Münchner Jahrbuch der bilden­den Kunst, 1907, II, pp.34-38 (repr.); id in Rubens-Bulletijn, V, 1910, pp.234-246; K.d.K., p.195; Oldenbourg, 1922, pp.169-176; Evers, 1942, pp.494-495, n.216; A. M. Cetto, in [Cat. Exh.]. Kunstwerke der Münchner Museen, Berne, 1949, pp.73-74, No.76; Burchard-d’Hulst, 1956, p.75, and

A scene of the *Fall of the Damned* has here been turned into a *Last Judgement*: Christ and the Virgin have been added at the top, with attendant saints on the right and left; while an *Ascent of the Blessed* has been painted (in a paler tonality and sketchier technique) from the lower left hand side of the arched top to the upper right. Whether or not the whole of this arched area was painted by Rubens himself will be discussed below; here it is sufficient to observe that the work appears to have been initially conceived as a *Fall of the Damned*, and that it is still dominated by the great pyramidal group of tumbling figures, with St Michael and his assisting angels at the apex, and figures of the damned being dragged by devils and demons across the base of the composition to the fiery pit of hell in the lower right corner.

The figure of St Michael is almost identical to the St Michael in the now lost painting of *St Michael Striking Down the Rebellious Angels* recorded by Vorsterman's engraving of 1621, but it also occurs in a more headlong position in the *Fall of the Damned* (No. 52; Fig. 158) as well as in the ceiling painting for the Jesuit Church in Antwerp. There are in fact many other figural parallels with the *Fall of the Damned* (No. 52; Fig. 158). These include the figure of the woman tumbling backwards with her hands outstretched—here on the right but there on the left—which was earlier used in the *Boreas and Oreithya* in the Akademie in Vienna (derived from the relief of the *Rape of Proserpine* on a sarcophagus in the Palazzo Barberini) and the central Prometheus figure—here tilted slightly to the left—which relates to the considerably earlier painting of *Prometheus* in Philadelphia and the drawing of this subject in the Louvre. Other examples of the use of motifs from earlier works include the figure sprawled out at the very base of the composition, which had earlier occurred in the *Death of Argus* in Cologne and more closely in the *Hippolytus* drawing in Bayonne, as well as the praying figure in the lower right corner, a reworking of the Daniel in the Washington painting of *Daniel in the Lions' Den* of c. 1614–15. Burchard noted several derivations from Giulio Romano's *Fall of the Titans* (the man tumbling with his head bent forward, protected by both his hands, on the lower left of the main group) and Michelangelo's relief of the *Battle of the Centaurs* (the woman bending forward just to the left of centre at the base of the composition) which was also an important source of inspiration for the *Great Last Judgement* (No. 49; Fig. 137).

It has been suggested, most notably by Oldenbourg, that only the scene of the *Fall of the Damned* was executed by Rubens, and that the arched top of the work is a later addition, probably by Jan Boeckhorst. There are several arguments which weaken this hypothesis: 1) although X-ray photographs confirm that the arched top is indeed an addition, it cannot postdate the original panel by any significant interval, as the X-rays also make clear the complete uniformity of both parts of the painted surface; 2) on the reverse of the panel is a sketchy landscape which, even if it is not by Rubens himself, clearly forms a unified whole (i.e. it is unlikely to have been painted in two separate phases) and must date from Rubens's lifetime, if not actually the same period as the scene on
the front of the panel; 14 3) the work appears in its present form in the so-called ‘Rubens Salon’ in Stockholm15 (Fig.136), which by Oldenbourg’s own reckoning can hardly date later than 1630 and may well be even earlier; 16 4) the style and handling of the upper group is by no means inconsistent with Rubens’s own hand. It may be noted here that the group of a woman stretching her arms upwards and a man holding her round the shoulders on the left above is based on the upper group in the drawing in the Frick Collection (No.49c; Fig.142), which was used as a preliminary study for the ‘Great’ Last Judgement. While this can of course not be regarded as conclusive proof of Rubens’s authorship of the group concerned, it further weakens the ascription to Jan Boeckhorst of the upper section of the composition. The fact that Suyderhoef’s engraving (Fig.151) of 1642 only reproduces the rectangular part of the work cannot be regarded as sufficient evidence of the appearance of the painting at that date; there are several other instances of engravings which reproduce only a part of such compositions, most notably Soutman’s engraving after a portion of the Fall of the Damned itself (No.52). The following would therefore seem to be the most likely hypothesis: while the work may originally have been conceived as a Fall of the Damned, the arched top and the figures appearing within it are in all likelihood to be attributed to Rubens himself, perhaps painted very shortly after the execution of the rest of the composition.

The picture is considerably freer in handling than the ‘Great’ Last Judgement (No.49; Fig.137), which can firmly be dated to 1615–16, and several of the figures in the present composition are based on it, including that of Christ himself. 17 On the other hand, the technique suggests a slightly earlier date than the St Michael Striking Down the Rebellious Angels of 1621–23, 18 so a dating of c.1618–20 may be proposed for the present work. Technically it is rather similar to the more or less contemporary Fall of the Damned (No.52; Fig.158): The treatment of the fiery hell scene on the lower right, for example, may be compared with the sketchy figures in the distance on the left below and at the sides. Whether the present work preceded the Fall of the Damned by a short while cannot be determined with certainty (for they are clearly to be dated within a few years, if not months, of each other), but on balance this would appear to be the case.

It should here be noted that the work may well have appeared to its viewers to be a Fall of the Damned (especially if the hypothesis discarded above should prove to be correct); in this case it is possible that some of the references connected in the following entry with the Fall of the Damned (No.52)—which also came from the Electoral collections in Düsseldorf—may have been to the present work. 19

The work is in relatively good condition, with the paint surfaces, colours and colouristic accents and modulations fairly well preserved.

It was probably the present work which Abraham Golnitzius saw when he visited Rubens’s studio c.1624 and which he recorded as having a value of over 5000 florins. 20 The reference is unlikely to have been to the ‘Great’ Last Judgement, as that work was already in Neuburg by 1618. 21

Before passing on to the surviving drawings for this work, it should be mentioned that the two groups of single angels pushing down male figures to the right of St Michael are close reworkings of similar groups in a drawing of the Italian period
which Vlieghe was probably justified in calling a St Michael Striking Down the Rumbellion Angels (Fig.152). The left hand group also appears, seen from a slightly different viewpoint, on the verso of this drawing (Fig.153). In the two angels to the right of St Michael, Rubens may also have recalled the more recent drawing of a tormenting angel which he had made in connection with the Torments of Job.

Despite the arguments brought forward in favour of the cartoon (Fig.147) in the Real Academia de San Fernando in Madrid, most notably by Müller Hofstede and Díaz Padrón, there does not seem sufficient evidence in favour of an attribution to Rubens. It would in any case be most unusual for Rubens, at this stage in his career, to have produced a fully worked up cartoon of this kind for a large scale composition. Nothing else like it is known within his oeuvre.

A drawing in Rotterdam in pen and brown ink (Fig.154) from Rubens's Italian period was classified by Burchard as an early study for a Fall of the Damned and Assumption of the Blessed. Despite the apparent similarities with a composition of this kind, Müller Hofstede and Jaffé have convincingly shown that the drawing was in fact to be related to Rubens's early compositions of the Martyrdom of St Ursula and, when turned on its side, of the Hero and Leander. In the Chatsworth sketchbook attributed by Jaffé to the young Van Dyck, there are several adaptations of figures within the present composition.²⁸

2. Martin, Ceiling Paintings, No.1.
4. See Kieser, pp.114, 115 (repr.).
7. K.d.K., p.33. This and the preceding four derivations are also to be found in the Fall of the Damned in Munich (No.62; Fig.150); cf. p.225.
10. See the drawing after this work in the Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, Inv.No.20,177 (l'ugt, Louvre, École lamande, II, 1949, No.1070.
11. Cf. p.204 above.
12. Oldenburg, 1922, p.173; see also Reber, No.7-8, who was the first to suggest that the later addition consisted not only of the lunette above, but also of a narrow strip down the left hand side.
13. Sonnenburg, Bildaufbau, p.8, with much further pertinent information on the technique and structure of this panel.
17. Although it may be noted that the figure of God the Father at the very top of the work is omitted in the present composition.
19. The reference in Raparini's manuscript of 1709, cited on p.226 below, to the inspiration of Gruppero's Pyramid in Mannheim, for example, is quite probably to the present painting, rather than to the Fall of the Damned (No.52).
20. '1644 ... unius tabulae sit mentio aestimii supra quinque mill. flor. ororum ... repraesentans judiciunm dic in Domini magnun. Superius, coeli amoen, corporumque ad ea volutta: alias in coelo gaudio diffuere; alias apud inferos torqueri, hic corporum raptus, inferorum gurges, mixtae infeliciter interius maribus foemineae, juvenes senibus. Ita ut spectator suum tormenta terreant & alliciant gaudia' (Golnitzius, op. cit., pp.71-72, cited by M.Rooses, in Rubens-Bulletijn, V, 1807, p.223).
21. See p.203 above.
22. Collection Mr. C.P. van Beuningen, The Hague; Vlieghe, Saints, II, No.133.
23. Not noted by Vlieghe, ibid.
28. 217
51a. A Nude Figure falling backwards: Drawing (Fig.155)

Black chalk, heightened with white on buff paper; 45.4 × 27.5 cm. Lower left and upper right hand corners filled in to give the drawing its present shape. An unknown mark, now faded (L.1343) in the lower right hand corner. Formerly inscribed 'Cab.: Lepempeur' in ink, top right; on the back, in ink 'P.O. No.19. Reuben's', in pencil 'at Woodburn's sale, 1854'.

Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum.

Inv. No.2179.

PROVENANCE: J.D. Lepempeur sale, Paris (Joullain et Boileau), 24 May–26 June, 1773, lot 298; S. Woodburn (London, 1756 to 1853); Charles Ricketts (London, 1866–1931) and Charles H. Shannon (London, 1865–1937); bequeathed by the latter to the Fitzwilliam Museum in 1937.


A careful study for the figure tumbling backwards slightly to the right of the centre of the main group of damned figures (directly below the angel to the right of St Michael). The motif and to some extent the technique are similar to the drawing for a Prometheus figure in the Louvre and to that of a Psyche figure in Windsor. But the handling of the chalk is both firmer and broader in the present drawing, and it should probably be dated a little later than the Windsor and Louvre drawings, probably after 1615.

A strong pentiment is clearly visible at the outline of the projecting knee. In view of the similarity in technique between this and the following drawing (No.51b; Fig.156), as well as the apparent identity of the paper, both may originally have formed part of the same sheet.1

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51b. A Nude Figure with One Hand on his Head tumbling downwards: Drawing (Fig.156)

Black chalk, heightened with white; 46 × 27.5 cm. Pasted down on another sheet with traces of black chalk on it; the foot and the elbow torn.

Vienna, Albertina. Inv. No.8303.

PROVENANCE: Duke Albert of Sachsen-Teschen (Moritzburg near Dresden, 1738–Vienna, 1822).


Although this study has usually been related to the ‘Great’ Last Judgement (No.49;
Fig. 137; the tumbling figure on the left of the group of the damned, it is in fact closest to the figure on the lower left of the group of the damned in the ‘Small’ Last Judgement. Only in this work can one see the right leg of the present figure (in a similar position to the drawing) and a portion of the left. Both are hidden in the ‘Great’ Last Judgement and in the now lost St Michael Striking Down the Rebellious Angels. It is nonetheless clear that figures such as this one were first adumbrated in—or possibly even prepared for—the earlier ‘Great’ Last Judgement of 1615-16 (No.49; Fig.137).

1. Cf. the similar figure in the version in Dresden (No.49a; Fig.138), and in the engraving by L. Vosterman after a now lost St Michael Striking Down the Rebellious Angels cited in the following note.

2. Vlieghe, Saints, II, No.134, Fig.87.

52. The Fall of the Damned (Fig.158)

Oil on panel; 286 × 224 cm.
Munich, Alte Pinakothek. No.320.

PROVENANCE: Marius Ambrosius Capello (1590-1676), Bishop of Antwerp (1654-76); bequeathed by him to the Dominican Abbey in Ghent but bought by the Duc de Richelieu (1629-1715) in 1677; bought by the Prince Elector of the Palatinate Johann Wilhelm for his Gallery in Düsseldorf before his death in 1716; transferred to the Hofgartengalerie in Munich in 1806; transferred to the Alte Pinakothek in 1836, the year of its foundation.

COPIES:
(1) Painting, Fig.159, Aachen, Suermondt Museum, Inv. No.193; panel, 118 × 92 cm.1

(2) Drawing after group of damned souls and demons above and to the right of the many-headed dragon (Fig.160); London, British Museum, Inv. No. N.G.853-A; initial drawing in black chalk with light 219

(3) Drawing after group on centre left of painting, but with the inclusion of the many-headed dragon on the lower right (Fig.161), London, British Museum, Inv. No. N.G.853-B; black and red chalk with various shades of brown wash, 74.8 x 47.6 cm. PROV. as (2) above. EXH. London, 1977, No.91. LIT. Richardson, op. cit., p.351; Rooses, V, p.219, No.1414; Popham, op. cit., pp.10–12; Müller Hofstede, Beiträge, p.325, pl.227;

(4) Drawing after group on upper right of painting, London, British Museum, Inv. No.853-C (Fig.162); initial drawing in black chalk with brown wash, worked up with brush and oil colour, 75 x 47.8 cm. PROV. as (2) above. EXH. London, 1977, No.92. LIT. Richardson, op. cit., p.351; Rooses, V, pp.218–9, No.1412; Popham, op. cit., pp.10–12; Müller Hofstede, Beiträge, p.325, pl.228;

(5) Drawing after group on upper centre of painting immediately below St Michael (Fig.163), London, British Museum, Inv. No.853-D; black and red chalk with watercolour washes and body colour, 72.3 x 47 cm. PROV. as (2) above. EXH. London, 1977, No.93. LIT. Richardson, op. cit., p.351; Rooses, V, p.219, No.1414; Popham, op. cit., pp.10–12; Müller Hofstede, Beiträge, pp.325–326, pl.229;

(6) Drawing after the group of fat figures and the group tumbling downwards immediately to their right just below the centre of the painting, but the latter group here placed above rather than alongside the former (Fig.164), London, British Museum, Inv. No. 00.3–9; initial drawing in black and red chalk, with grey wash, worked up in brush and oil colour, 71 x 47.5 cm. PROV. E. Jabach (Cologne, 1610–Paris, 1695); P. Crozat (Paris, 1665–1749); Crozat sale, Paris, 10 April–13 May, 1741, lot 829; P. J. Mariette (Paris, 1694–1774); Mariette sale, Paris, 15 November, 1775–30 January, 1776, lot 993; Le Brunsale, Paris, 11–13 March, 1791, lot 266; R. Payne Knight (London, 1750–1824); bequeathed by the latter to the British Museum. EXH. Le Cabinet d’un grand amateur Mariette (1694–1774), Louvre, Paris, 1967, No.197; London, 1977, No.94. LIT. Rooses, V, p.219, No.1416; Hind, II, p.6, No.2;

(7) Drawing after (4) above, Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada; black and red chalk, point of the brush and brown ink and brown wash, 71.2 x 47.6 cm.; inscribed on the right above by an unknown hand: 335. PROV. London, Agnew’s, 1967. EXH. Old Master Drawings, Agnew’s, London, 1967, No.31; Jacob Jordaens 1593–1678, Ottawa, National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa, 1968–69, No.229 (as Jordaens; repr.). LIT. R. A. d’Hulst,
Jordaens Drawings, London–New York, 1974, p.485, No.B8 (as doubtful);

(8) Drawing after (2) above, whereabouts unknown, black and red chalk, point of the brush and brown ink and wash, 71.2 \(\times\) 47.6 cm. inscribed \(\)336\(\) in an unknown hand. **Prov.** London, Agnew’s 1967. **Exh.** Old Master Drawings, Agnew’s, London, 1967, No.25. **Lit.** as in preceding entry;

(9) Drawing after (3) above, whereabouts unknown; black and red chalk, point of the brush and brown ink and wash, 74.3 \(\times\) 49.9 cm. inscribed \(\)333\(\) in an unknown hand. **Prov.** Frankfurt, Art Market, 1935; London, V.Koch, sale, London (Christie’s), 18 April, 1967, lot 165; sale, London (Sotheby’s), 7 December, 1967, lot 80; bought by Colnaghi’s, London. **Lit.** as in (7) above;

(10) Drawing after (5) above; whereabouts unknown; black and red chalk, point of the brush and brown ink and wash, 72.7 \(\times\) 48.9 cm. inscribed \(\)334\(\) in an unknown hand. **Prov.** as in the preceding. **Lit.** as in (7) above;

(11) Drawing after five souls in hell tormented by beasts in the lower right hand corner of the painting, New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, black and red chalk, reinforced with pen and ink, 39.4 \(\times\) 52.7 cm. **Prov.** C.Fairfax Murray (London, 1849–1915). **Lit.** The J. Pierpont Morgan Collection of Drawings formed by C.Fairfax Murray, III, London, 1912, No.163; Geris-Held, p.55, No.A.92;

(12) Drawing after the group of lions and demons tormenting souls in hell in the lower centre of the painting, whereabouts unknown; black chalk and wash heightened with white, 50 \(\times\) 76 cm. **Prov.** Paris, L.Hureau, 1938; photo in Burchard documentation, Rubenianum. Antwerp;

(13) Drawing after the devil astride a man seen from behind on the lower left of the painting, whereabouts unknown; black chalk, 32.2 \(\times\) 26.3 cm.; below, two unidentified marks, L.2786 and L.2691. **Prov.** ?R.Peltzer (1825–1910); sale, Stuttgart (H.G.Gutekunst), 13–14 May, 1914, lot 350; Kasteel Heyen, Limburg, The Netherlands; sale, Amsterdam (Sotheby Mak van Waay), 26–28 October, 1979, lot 151. **Lit.** Müller Hofstede, Beiträge, pp.329–331, No.160, pl.232;

(14) Drawing of the four figures tumbling head downwards in the centre of the painting, London, British Museum, Inv. No.1895-9-15-1052, black and red chalk slightly heightened with white, 29.1 \(\times\) 24.1 cm. **Prov.** A.Dyce (1798–1869); J.C.Robinson (1824–1913); J.Malcolm (1805–1893); purchased for the British Museum in 1895. **Lit.** Hind, II, p.6, No.3; Popham, op. cit.—see under (2) above—pp.11–12;

(15) Drawing of a nude man tormented by demons in the lower right hand corner of the painting, Oxford, Ashmolean Museum; black chalk, heightened with white and reinforced with indian ink and bistre, 37.9 \(\times\) 24 cm. **Prov.** Presented by John Ruskin (1819–1900) to the Drawing School, Oxford, in 1870. **Lit.** K.T.Parker, Catalogue of the Collection of Drawings in the Ashmolean Museum, I, Oxford, 1938, p.89, No.205;

(16) Drawing of the dragon’s head on the lower right of the painting, Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland. Inv. No.2606; black chalk, 17.5 \(\times\) 20.6 cm. **Prov.** Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769–1830). **Exh.** Drawings from the National Gallery of Ireland, Wildenstein, London, 1967, No.20;

(17) Drawing of the devil with bat’s wings and the man falling backwards about
halfway up on the left side of the painting, whereabouts unknown; black chalk, 30 x 20.5 cm. PROV. sale, London (Christie’s), 10 December, 1974, lot 67;

(18) Drawing after the main elements in the composition, Paris, Institut Néerlandais, Fondation Custodia, Inv. No. I 2250; pen and brown ink, 42.5 x 30.5 cm. PROV. P.H. Lankrink (1628–1692); J. Richardson Senior (1665–1745); Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723–92); Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769–1830); bought by F. Lugt in London in 1925. EXH. Loan Exhibition of Flemish and Dutch Art, Royal Academy, London, 1927, No. 572;

(19) Drawing of the woman being pulled straight downwards by her hair in the upper right quadrant of the painting and of the woman pulled diagonally towards the left on the left of her; verso of the preceding;

(20) Drawing of the main elements in the composition, Munich, Staatliche Graphische Sammlung, Inv. No. 4672; black chalk heightened with white, 59 x 53.2 cm.; below on the right an unidentified mark, L. 2723; Watermark: Heawood, 2820, English, c. 1700. LIT. W. Wegner, Die niderländischen Handzeichnungen des 15–18 Jahrhunderts (Kataloge der Staatlichen Graphischen Sammlung München, I), Munich, 1973, No. 869;


(22) Drawing after the group of lion and demons tormenting souls in hell in the lower centre of the painting (cf. 12 above), Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, Kongelige Kobberstiksamling, Inv. No. 7347; black chalk, 25 x 22.1 cm. PROV. Liphart collection;

(23) Drawing of the woman pulled downwards by a demon in the centre of the composition, Copenhagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, Kongelige Kobberstiksamling, "Rubens Cantoor", No. V, 55; red chalk, 20 x 27.6 cm.;

(24) Drawing of the two demons who appear to attack each other at the base of the composition, Copenhagen, 'Rubens Cantoor', No. VI, 97; pencil and red chalk, 23.9 x 18.7 cm.;

(25) Drawing of the group of very fat figures at the top of the lower left quadrant of the composition, Copenhagen, 'Rubens Cantoor', No. I, 44; black and red chalk heightened with white, 44.5 x 30.5 cm.;

(26) Drawing of the figure seen from the back with his left arm bent over his head on the left of the central group of tumbling figures, Copenhagen, 'Rubens Cantoor', No. I, 45, red chalk, 18.4 x 11.8 cm;

(27) Drawing of the very fat man in the lower left quadrant of the composition, Copenhagen, 'Rubens Cantoor', No. I, 46; red chalk, 18.7 x 17.5 cm.
(28) Drawing of the group of figures tormented by demons above the very fat man, Copenhagen, 'Rubens Cantoor', No.1, 47; black chalk and grey wash, 46.5 x 24.5 cm.;

(29) Drawing of the two figures attacked by demons halfway down the right hand edge of the composition, Copenhagen, 'Rubens Cantoor', No.1, 48; black chalk, pen and brown wash heightened with white and oil colours, 30.5 x 39.5 cm.;

(30) Drawing of the group of figures tormented by demons in the centre of the composition, Copenhagen, 'Rubens Cantoor', No.1, 49; black and red chalk, pen and brown ink with brown wash, 40.7 x 31.5 cm.; by the same hand as the preceding;

(31) Drawing of the two figures falling headlong in the upper right of the composition, Copenhagen, 'Rubens Cantoor', No.1, 50; black chalk with some pen and ink, 29 x 19.1 cm.;

(32) Drawing of the two falling women pulled downwards by a demon on the left of the composition, Copenhagen, 'Rubens Cantoor', No.1, 51; black chalk with some pen, ink, and grey wash; 29.2 x 19.1 cm.;

(33) Engraving by P. Soutman after the many-headed dragon and the figures surrounding it in the lower right half of the composition. 1642; 57 x 41.5 cm. (V.S., p.62, No.458);

(34) Etching by R. van Orley after J. van Orley; 82 x 62 cm. (V.S., p.62, No.457);

(35) Engraving of the group of animals and demons tormenting souls to the right of the rearing lion at the bottom of the composition; probably after (12) above, but cf. also (22) above; (V.S., p.230, No.49).

The scene is a remarkable conflation of a traditional aspect of the Last Judgement—the Fall of the Damned—with the apocalyptic role of St Michael as the exorcist of demons. The most important biblical sources, therefore, are two passages from St Matthew, 'And cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth' (Matt.25,32) and 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels' (Matt.25,41), and one from Revelation: 'And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels; And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world...'. (Revelation 12,7-9).

Michelangelo's famous fresco of the Last Judgement in the Sistine Chapel—itself probably influenced by earlier Northern representations of the subject—had placed a particular emphasis on the fall of the damned, and in this respect (as well as in others) was followed by subsequent Netherlandish paintings of the subject, such as those by P. Pourbus, C. van den Broeck, and J. de Backer. These are all works which Rubens must have known, but the present work is not, strictly speaking, a Last Judgement. In the decision to represent only the Fall of the Damned, Rubens had important precedents not only in the many medieval representations of hell-mouths, both sculpted and painted, but also in earlier Netherlandish panels showing the Fall of the Damned exclusively, such as those by Roger van der Weyden, Bosch, and Bouts. Goltzius's engraving after Stradanus of the Fall of the Damned (one of a series of four roundels devoted to the Last Judgement) may also have been a significant influence. Unlike these artists, however, Rubens has here introduced the Archangel Michael referred to in the passage from Revelation cited above. Nonetheless, it is clear that the scene is not a Fall of the Rebel Angels as suggested by this passage, but rather the casting down of the damned souls into Hell. In his exclusive emphasis on this aspect of the traditional Last Judgement and the conflation with St Michael, Rubens's representation of the present subject is yet another instance of his iconographic inventiveness.

The compositional and pictorial qualities of the work are equally remarkable. At the very top of the painting slightly to the left of centre St Michael appears in a blaze of light; to the left of him four angels assist him in casting down the damned. The naked figures of the condemned plummet downwards to Hell, the majority in a powerful diagonal movement from upper right to lower left, but others, painted with less finish, may be seen on the sides. Some of these apparently innumerable figures simply tumble downwards, but many more are dragged down, by their hair and limbs, by winged and tailed demons. An appreciable number are bitten by beasts and demons in their faces, throats, and other vulnerable parts of their bodies. An enormous many-headed dragon appears on the lower right; the flames of hell leap upwards across the lower zone, while at the very base of the work are depicted the torments of hell, a melée of suffering figures and beasts and demons of various kinds. Rubens had thus created for himself the opportunity to display his extraordinary ability as a painter of nude figures, seen from every possible angle and in every possible position; and his
inventiveness is shown in the great variety of hideous demons and beasts to be seen everywhere in the work.

In the enthusiastic and extensive description of this painting printed in the second and subsequent editions of the Dissertation sur les ouvrages des plus fameux peintres, de Piles suggested that personifications of the seven deadly sins may be detected amongst the damned. This is not likely to be the case, but it will perhaps be noted that the main body of tumbling figures appears to be divided into seven slightly separated groups. The idea may have been suggested in the first instance by the group of three extraordinarily gross figures at the top of the lower left quadrant of the painting; the identification of these figures is dubious indeed, but it is worth quoting de Piles's description of the group (if only as an example of his mode of ekphrasis): "Dans le milieu du Tableau paroissent la pesante lâche Paresse, & l'insatiable Gourmandise, dont les caractères sont marquez par des corps gros & pesant; qui souffrent les cuisantes morsures & les piqures cruelles des bêtes infernales, sans se pouvoir remuer (quoique penetrees de douleurs) tant elles sont ensevelies dans leur profonde létragie".13

The motif of the fat woman being carried on the back of a devil is derived, as first observed by Kaufmann, from Mantegna's engraving of a Bacchanal with a Silenus13 and so is the fat Silenus-like figure, which so often recurs in Rubens's paintings of the Drunken Silenus and related compositions of the latter half of the second decade.14 Naturally, many of the figural motifs besides this one may be paralleled in other works by Rubens: the figure bitten in the neck in the very centre of the painting, for example, is another adaptation of the Prometheus-motif already used in the Philadelphia Prometheus15 and the Cologne Death of Argus,16 as well as in the 'Small' Last Judgement (No.51: Fig.146). Müller Hofstede pointed out the parallel between the woman tumbling backwards with her hands stretched upwards on the left of the picture and the Boreas and Oreithya in the Akademie in Vienna,17 a motif which ultimately derives from the relief of the Rape of Proserpine on a sarcophagus in the Palazzo Barberini.18 The St Michael occurs again at a slightly different angle in the ceiling painting of St Michael Striking down the Rebellious Angels for the Jesuit Church in Antwerp, while the angel just to the left of him is represented in identical fashion there19 as well as in the earlier Defeat of Sennacherib.20

The overall tonality of the work is a scintillating reddish brown, with a golden glow surrounding St Michael at the top of the picture, and the serpents below in a rather lurid blue-green colour. Yellowish-red fires blaze in the centre of the main group and above the hellish region at the bottom (most striking above the very dark area on the lower left); to enhance the fiery effect, dots of yellow and red may be seen in many places, but especially in the area round the heads of the dragon on the lower right. There is the usual variation in flesh tonalities (with the devils often luridly painted in darkish brown or pallid grey), as well as a considerable variation, as often in Rubens, between areas of high and careful finish (as in the nude figures towards the left) and swiftly painted, sketchily indicated passages (as in the sword of St Michael, the jaws of the wide-mouthed serpent on the lower right, the figures of the crowd in the background there, and the hair and limbs of many other figures).

The work remains in reasonably good
condition, despite the extensive areas of repainting (especially in the centre and lower regions) necessitated after it had been attacked with acid in 1957. There are several pentimenti, most notably in the alteration in the position of the left foot (previously seen from above) of the fat 'Silenus' figure. Apart from a number of horizontal cracks in the panel, a vertical crack has appeared down the centre of the work. There is no evidence to support Roh's assertion (followed by Oldenburg and Burchard) that the strip of approximately 50 cm. in width at the bottom of the work containing the actual hell scene is a later addition; even if it were, the painting there is clearly by Rubens's own hand.

The work evidently postdates the 'Great' Last Judgement of 1615-16 (No.49; Fig.137) by several years, and the stylistic characteristics discussed below all point to a date at the very end of the second decade. Indeed, in his reply to a letter from Roger de Piles of 5 March, 1676, Philip Rubens assigned the date of 1621 to a 'Chute des Anges' which may be identical with the present work. On the other hand, it is conceivable that the reference is to the St Michael Striking down the Rebellious Angels, as the engraving after it by Vorsterman also bears the date of 1621. Be that as it may, there are several further references to a work with this subject in the writings of de Piles which may cast light on the complex history and provenance of the painting now in Munich.

In the first edition of the Dissertation (1677), the sole reference to a Fall of the Damned is the fact that it was made for 'l'Evesque d'Anvers, son intime amy'. Now this receives confirmation from the will of Ambrosius Capello (1590-1676), seventh Bishop of Antwerp, bequeathing ‘de groote schilderij vanden Engelenval geschildert van Petro Paolo Rubbens' to the Dominican Fathers in Ghent, with the stipulation that if they sold it, they should fix a price of no less than five or six thousand guilders. Further confirmation is provided by the correspondence recording Matthijs Musson's protracted attempts to buy the painting in 1675-76, culminating in a bid of 10,000 guilders for 'den Val die den biskop toe kwam' just eight months before the bishop died.

On 26 February 1677 de Piles wrote to Philip Rubens that 'M. le Duc de Richelieu a fait venir un tableau de la Chute des Damnez de la main de nostre brave Rubens, qui estonne tout Paris et qui donne tout une autre idee encore de son merite'. In the margin of the letter he wrote 'venoit de Gand'. And in all the subsequent editions of the Dissertation, De Piles included in the Cabinet du M. le Duc de Richelieu a long and enthusiastic and self-consciously ekphrastic description of the work, which accords perfectly with the painting in Munich.

But whether in fact it was the Richelieu painting which entered the Electoral Gallery in Düsseldorf (and subsequently the Munich Gallery) is problematic. Richelieu died in 1716, the year in which it is first definitely recorded in Düsseldorf, but in a manuscript of 1709 it is claimed that the inspiration for Grupello's Bronze Pyramid in Mannheim showing the Fall of the Damned was the painting by Rubens 'das sich im Moment in der kurfürstlichen Galerie befindet'. This cannot, however, be regarded as conclusive evidence against the identity of the work from the Richelieu collection and the work in Düsseldorf: it could have left Richelieu's possession before his death, and it is equally likely that Grupello's work was inspired by the 'Small' Last Judgement (No.51;
Fig. 146), which was almost certainly in the Elector's collection by that time. A more considerable objection, on the other hand, is the fact that de Piles (followed by Félibien) gives the measurements of the work in the Richelieu Cabinet as eleven by six feet, thus considerably larger than the work now in Munich. But, as already pointed out by Rooses, we know that the measurements given by De Piles are frequently incorrect, and one cannot therefore be certain that the size of the Richelieu picture was accurately noted.

There is nothing to support the suggestion made by Levin that the painting was one of the two executed before 1622 for the Hofkapelle of Count Wolfgang Wilhelm, referred to in the latter's correspondence of 1622–23.32 The evidence for this suggestion is particularly slender in the light of the fact that the subjects of these paintings are not recorded in the extant documentation on the decoration of the Hofkapelle. Nor can it be supported on the basis of Désallier d'Argenville's 1745 reference to a work of this subject,33 as we know with certainty that by this time all the works mentioned by him were already at Düsseldorf.34

Nonetheless the possibility must remain that the Richelieu work has been lost and is therefore not to be identified with the painting now in Munich. It may conceivably be the same as the 'Val der Engelen, vol van Gewoel, en nooit Grootser van Ordonnantie met meer dan hon­dert Beelden, door P. P. Rubbens' measuring 314 x 251 cm. and sold for 1110 guil­ders at the sale of Adriaan Bout, The Hague, 11 August, 1733, lot 36.

Of all the paintings by Rubens which Sir Joshua Reynolds saw on his journey to Flanders and Holland in 1781, this work inspired perhaps the greatest enthusiasm: 'It is impossible to form an adequate idea of the powers of Rubens without having seen this picture... If we consider the fruitfulness of invention which is discovered in this work, or the skill which is shown in composing such an infinite number of figures, or the art of the distribution of the light and shadow, the freedom of hand, the facility with which it seems to be performed, and what is still more extraordinary, the correctness and admirable taste of drawing of figures foreshortened, in attitudes the most difficult to execute, we must pronounce this picture to be one of the greatest efforts of genius that ever the art has produced',35

1. For a discussion of the status and provenance of this work, see below, pp. 228–230.
2. Further discussion of the status of this and the following four coloured drawings in the British Museum will be found on pp. 230–232.
3. Although the passage from Revelation refers, strictly speaking, to the subject of St Michael Striking Down the Rebel Angels (cf. Vlieghie, Saints, II, No. 135, Fig. 8a), one may assume that it also provided an important source for the present subject, particularly in the light of the presence of the great many-headed dragon in the lower right hand corner of the painting. In any event, the pictorial and figural similarities between Rubens's treatment of St Michael Striking Down the Rebelious Angels and the present composition may be noted here.
4. See p. 224 above.
8. Friedländer, II, No. 14, pl. 28 (right wing).
9. Ibid., V, No. 84, pl. 75.
10. Ibid., Ill, No. 31, pl. 47.
11. Published by P. Galle; Hollstein, VIII, p. 112.
14. E.g. K.d.k., pp. 82, 177.
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17. K.d.K., p.223, a work which dates from around the middle of the second decade—thus a few years before the present composition.

19. Martin, Ceiling Paintings, No.1, Figs.8-16.
20. K.d.K., p.156.
22. Cf. the similar views expressed by Rosand, op. cit., p.12, n.18.
24. Vlieghel, Saints, II, No.134. Held, Oil Sketches, p.409 states categorically that the picture referred to by Philip Rubens was in fact this one.
28. Letter of Picart to Musson of 6 January 1670, Denied, Na Pieter Paauel Rubens, p.439. See also pp.414-415 for the earlier discussions about buying the work, including the exasperated Picart's prescient warning: 'le adviseure UI. soo den biskop dese okasie verlist van syn stuck nau tegenwondich te verkoopen, dat hy dat sal lank bewaren!' (ibid., p.415). This work is not to be confused with another painting of this subject also mentioned in these pages as having belonged to a Canon of Antwerp and which, following a sale, was believed to be in Ghent (ibid., pp.412-413,415). This work is clearly stated to have had an arched top in Picart's letter of 16 August, 1675 (ibid., p.412).
32. Levin, 1905, p.132.
33. On voit a Neubourg le jugement dernier, une nativité, & une pente-côte; la chute des mauvais anges & saint Michel, Désallier d'Argenville, op. cit., p.145.
34. Désallier presumably knew that many of the Düsseldorf pictures came from Neuburg, which may account for his reference to this work as being in Neuburg (see preceding note). On p.146 of the Abrégé, Désallier referred to a work of the same subject ('chute des damnés') at Ghent, which is possibly to be identified with the painting now in Aachen, Copy (1) above, also pp.228-230, or even with another copy, perhaps made at the time of the sale of the Richelieu picture (see under PROVENANCE above).
35. Reynolds, pp.221-222.

Additional Remarks on the Painting in Aachen, Copy 1 above (Fig.159)

Despite a few differences in the tumbling figures down the left hand side and on the upper right of the composition, there is no question of this work being a modello for the painting in Munich. Close examination reveals that it cannot possibly be by Rubens's own hand. It is entirely lacking in the colouristic nuances characteristic of the Munich painting and of all Rubens's works of this period, including modelli; the execution throughout is pedestrian; the drawing often unclear; the colours themselves unlike Rubens, especially the reddish-pink flesh tonalities of the nude figures. There are awkward and unattractive passages such as the murky black cloud on the left and the unsubtle yellow glow around it. The work is clearly a copy, despite the slight variations from the painting in Munich. This is supported by the fact, unremarked in the literature, that all the figures have first been outlined either with black chalk or the point of a brush, and then rather staidly painted in. These outlines are still clearly visible in many of the figures in the main group in the centre.

The history of the Aachen painting before the latter half of the eighteenth century has not hitherto been recorded, but in the light of the many references to a painting of this subject in Ghent, it may be possible to establish an earlier provenance. In fact, the subject is recorded in the estate of Jan and Jeremias Wildens as early as 1653, painted by Jan Boeckhorst after Rubens. This reference is of some interest in the light of Oldenbourg's suggestion that the present painting is by Jan Boeckhorst. The painting in the Wildens collection immediately preceded the Assumption of the Blessed in the listing of
the paintings in the 'Const-camer op de Galerye', \(^4\) which is here identified with the painting of this subject in Munich (No.53, Fig.170). As it and the present work are the same size, it seems likely that they were the pendents referred to in the Wildens collection. In 1668 a painting of the *Fall of the Damned* was sold in Ghent in the estate of Jacques Stoop for 51 florins, along with an *Assumption of the Blessed*, sold for the considerably larger sum of 116—13—4 florins, \(^5\) but whether these are the pendants just referred to or another pair of paintings of the same subjects is not certain. The present picture may also have belonged to Van Horebeke in Ghent along with the *Assumption of the Blessed* he appears to have owned in 1681 and probably before, \(^7\) but this too must remain uncertain. In any event, by 1687 a painting of the *Fall* seems to have entered the hands of Gelaude Habert in Brussels, where it was seen by Nicodemus Tessin in the summer of that year. \(^8\) The possibility that this reference is to be connected with the present work is strong, as we know that Habert had failed to acquire the large painting in Munich which had belonged to Bishop Ambrosius Capello, despite an apparent interest in doing so. On 6 January, 1676 Picart wrote to Musson describing Habert's irritation at the latter's attempts to buy it: 'Abert die is wat ghepikert dat ic Ul. ghaenployert om het Vonnis te koopen ende dat Ul. het gheboden heeft 10,000 gl. voer den Val die den biskop toukwam'. \(^9\)

By 1677 the Capello picture had passed to Richelieu; in 1683–84 Habert is proposing to buy an *Assumption of the Blessed* (as recorded under No.53), \(^10\) and in 1687 a *Fall of the Damned* is seen in his collection by Tessin. Under the circumstances it is not unlikely that that picture was the present copy after the painting previously owned by Capello. This possibility is again strengthened by the identity in size of the pictures in Aachen and Munich (No.53). The present *Fall of the Damned* must have been submitted to the judgement of the Antwerp Guild in 1733, as attested by the presence of the guild's seal on the reverse, and yet again in 1754, as recorded in the *Resolutieboeck* for that year. \(^11\)

A difficulty with the above suggestions is presented by the fact that ever since de Piles's reference in the *Abrégé* of 1699, a painting of this subject is recorded as being in Ghent. \(^12\) Whether this means that the present painting returned to Ghent after being in the possession of Habert, or whether the references simply recall the fact that it had once been in Ghent (and that the writers were not apprised of its subsequent history), or even whether one is here dealing with another version altogether of this subject (possibly made in Ghent to replace the ex-Capello picture which briefly passed through there in 1676–77) \(^13\) is impossible to tell in the light of the data available at present.

It may perhaps be noted here that the Aachen painting appears to the present writer to date from after Rubens's death, and that it does not seem to be by the same hand as the surviving *Assumption of the Blessed* (No.53; Fig.170). But this need not affect the provenance suggested above.

A painting of the 'Torments of Hell' by Rubens is listed in the 1635 inventory of the Duke of Buckingham's collection in York House. \(^14\) In the light of the fact that Rubens is known to have promised an *Assumption of the Righteous* to Buckingham before the latter's death in 1628, \(^15\) one may ask whether it was not intended to form a pendant to a *Fall of the Damned* which Buckingham already owned. We know that two paintings of these subjects

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formed pendants in the collection of J. Stoop in Ghent as well as in the collection of the Duc de Richelieu at the end of the seventeenth century. Is it possible that the Aachen painting originally came from Buckingham's collection? The possibility must be considered, despite the fact that the work preserved in Aachen seems to date from a somewhat later period in the seventeenth century; a further difficulty lies in the fact that the Buckingham picture is not one of those which are recorded as having returned to Antwerp along with the other Buckingham pictures in 1649.\textsuperscript{16} The likelihood exists, therefore, that this was yet another copy or version of the \textit{Fall of the Damned}. But, as in the case of all the provenance problems raised above, one cannot come to a definite conclusion with the aid of the available evidence. Indeed, in view of the very large number of copies of the Munich work, and the fact that both the \textit{Fall of the Rebel Angels}\textsuperscript{17} and the 'Small' \textit{Last Judgement} (No.51; Fig.146) may also have been referred to by the same title, the whole question of the exact provenance of the extant works must remain problematic: the frequent confusion between this subject and that of \textit{St Michael Striking down the Rebel Angels} in particular often makes the identification of old sales references (of which there are a good number) difficult to establish without further corroboration.

1. See the helpful diagram in \textit{Beschreibendes Verzeichnis der Gemälde des Sermont Museums}, Aachen, 1883, pp.61-62 clearly outlining the differences between the two works.

2. A suggestion made by several of the early writers and sales catalogues, and most recently by Grimme, op. cit., p.284.


8. Tessin's description of the picture he saw 'dass sujett wahr Lucifers fall, mit eine grauliche mengde figuren, die sehr frembd undt artig Wahren vorgestelt, zu oberst wahr der ertz Engel vorgestelt' (Tessin, p.86) seems to accord with the present composition, although the connection is not, of course, certain.


10. See below p.238 for the relevant references.


12. De Piles, \textit{Abrégé}, op. cit., p.404; cf. \textit{Désallier d'Argenville}, op. cit., pp.146-147 (where the reference to the presence of this work in the Cathedral is probably an error).

13. Cf. the two preceding paragraphs.


15. Cf. below, p.236.


\textbf{Additional Remarks on the Coloured Copies in the British Museum, Copies 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 above, and Related Copies (Figs.160-164)}

A few remarks on the five drawings in the British Museum, Inv. Nos.NG853A—NG853D and Oo.3-9 (Copies [2–6] above; Figs.160–164) may be in order here. It has been suggested, most notably by Müller Hofstede, that they are preparatory designs by Rubens himself; that at least some of them were retouched in oil by Rubens;\textsuperscript{1} and that they are copies. Close examination of the recently cleaned drawings, however, makes it clear that they cannot be entirely by Rubens himself, as argued by Müller Hofstede.\textsuperscript{2} The initial drawing in black chalk is in each case too pedestrian and generally of too weak a quality to be by Rubens' own hand. The
question of the brush and oil work, however, is more problematic. It will here be argued that none of it can convincingly be attributed to Rubens either.

In the first place, it should be noted that the degree of finish in each drawing differs considerably: NG853B (Fig.161) shows the least colour, NG853A (Fig.160) slightly more; the colour in NG853C (Fig.162) is applied with slightly more vigour than in the others; NG853D (Fig.163) appears to be coloured in a somewhat different technique to the rest, presenting a 'flatter' appearance due to the use of water colours and the apparent absence of oil; while Oo.3-9 (Fig.164) is the most fully worked up of all. It seems likely, therefore, that the finish in these drawings is by different hands (probably assistants or pupils working under Rubens's supervision). In no case, however, does one see anything like the flair of Rubens's own brushwork, not even in NG853C or Oo.3-9 (Figs.162 and 164), the two drawings which provide the clearest basis for the assessment of the brush technique. In any case, the finish of these two drawings must clearly be attributed to different hands.

Rowlands quite rightly observed that in NG853A (Fig.160) the lowest figure on the left was changed from the desperately clinging damned figure of the painting to a winged devil, and that this new figure was freely sketched in with the brush, without any initial drawing underneath. But not even here can the style of the brushwork be attributed to Rubens. There are, it is true, several pentimenti, both in this drawing and elsewhere, as observed by Müller Hofstede and Rowlands. But neither these, nor the other differences from the painting, nor the fact that some of the drawings combine groups either from disparate parts of the painting (notably in NG853B, Fig.161) or in a different alignment to it (in Oo.3-9, Fig.164) provide sufficiently strong evidence in favour of Rubens's participation in the execution of these works. It does seem possible, however, not only in view of the above factors, but also in the light of the very careful execution and finish of these works, that they were all done in the studio under the close supervision of the master. They may have been made either as workshop exercises (which seems to me a reasonable hypothesis) or, as Burchard suggested, as preparatory designs for engravings after certain sections of the painting, rather like that actually executed by Soutman—Copy (33) above.

At least two drawings similar in technique to the five discussed here (although certainly of lower quality) are to be related to the lower zone of the painting, an area not copied in the British Museum sheets. These are the drawings in the Pierpont Morgan Library after the lower right hand corner of the painting—Copy (11) above and the one formerly with Lucien Huteau in Paris, after the group of animals and demons in the bottom centre. Copy (12) above. Finally—to complete the coverage of the main figural groups in the work—one may mention the carefully finished black chalk study of the devil straddling a naked figure seen from behind on the lower left of the picture—Copy (13) above.

Four coloured drawings of portions of the Fall of the Damned were recorded in the Van der Mark sale in Amsterdam in 1773, two of which had earlier been bought at the Hoet sale of 1760. These may well be identical with the copies of the British Museum drawings, Copies (7-10) above, but as the measurements recorded at the Van der Mark sale differ somewhat, the reference may be to yet
further coloured copies, now lost. The
drawing in colours and wash referred to
in the catalogue of the Sir Thomas Law­
rence sale, London (Christie's), 15 May,
1830, lot 52, measuring 27.3 x 20.7 cm.
(from the Brunet collection), cannot be
identified with any of the extant drawings
listed above. Whether the black chalk
drawing recorded in the King William II
sale, The Hague, 1850, lot 301 (sold to
Roos) is to be identified with any of the
copies listed above, possibly Copy (18) or
(20), cannot be determined.

It may also be noted here that although
the fifth drawing in the British Museum,
No.Oo.3-9, appears to have come from
the collection of Mariette, it does not bear
his mark; but the evidence that it did
pass through his hands is fairly circum­
stantial. Whether it was this drawing or
yet another like it which was sold at the
Lempereur sale, Paris, 24 May, 1773 et
seqq., lot 297 ('La chute des reprouvés
dans les enfers, et une feuille de six têtes
au crayon') can also not be determined
with certainty; but if it was, it would then
only have been in Mariette’s possession
for a year before his death—which may
conceivably account for the absence of his
mark referred to above.

Six further drawings supposed to be for
the Fall of the Damned were recorded in
the Lempereur sale, Paris, 19 October,
1775 et seqq., lot 49, but no details of their
technique were given. Subsequent refer­
cestochalk and/or coloured drawings
for parts of the Fall of the Damned or the
Last Judgement are too frequent to be
usefully listed here.

1. A.E.Popham, in British Museum Quarterly, X,
1935-36, pp.10-12, and J.Rowlands, in [Cat. Exh.],
4. Such as the dragon’s tail curling upwards added to
the right of NG 853A (Fig.160), the variant group
of tumbling figures on the lower right of NG 853C
(Fig.162), as well as several further differences in
this drawing, and the group of a woman carried off
by an old man on the right of Oo.3-9 (Fig.164), not
present in the painting at all.
5. Here, however, one should note that there is a
horizontal cut between the two groups of damned
figures.
6. A further copy of this drawing exists in Copen­
hagen, Statens Museum for Kunst, Kongelige
Kobberstiksamling. Inv. No.7347, black chalk,
25 x 22.1 cm., ex collection Liphart Sen. and Jun.
Although the copies mentioned here do seem to
cover most of the composition, it is not suggested
that they are all by the same hand.
8. Cf. [Cat. Exh.], Le Cabinet d’un grand amateur,

52a. Studies for a Lion Hunt and of a
large Dragon and Struggling Animals
and Figures: Drawing (Fig.169)

Pen and brown ink, on a double sheet
with a horizontal fold in the middle;
57.4 x 48.5 cm. Torn and repaired in the
centre on the upper left, as well as on the
upper and lower left. Mark of Sir Joshua
Reynolds on the upper right (L. 2364).
London, British Museum. Inv.No.1885-5-9-51
PROVENANCE: P.H.Lankrink (London,
1628-92); Sir Joshua Reynolds (London,
1723-92); Sir Thomas Lawrence (Lon­
don, 1769-1830); S.Woodburn (London,
1786-1853); Sale, London (Christie’s),
4 June, 1860, lot 798; bought by R. P. Rou­
pell (London, 1798-1880); P.L.Huart;
EXHIBITED: London, 1977, No.82.
LITERATURE: Hind, II, pp.5-6, No.1;
D.Rosand, Rubens’s Munich Lion Hunt:

The upper half of this sheet contains stu­
dies which are clearly related to the now
lost Lion Hunt painted for the Elector
Maximilian of Bavaria in 1615-16. While the lower half may initially have been intended for a similar composition as well (note the hind legs, possibly of a horse, on the lower right, and the demons—not unlike horses at this stage—being tormented by the lion-like beasts on left and right), Rubens has adapted it to serve as studies for the lowest zone of the *Fall of the Damned* in Munich. Apart from the great rearing lion (which also appears in the *Lion Hunt*), Rubens has now drawn—with a firmer line than the studies in the upper half—the dragon with the sinuous tail (the central feature of the lower zone of the painting) as well as several other motifs there, including the demon sinking its claws into the back of a prostrate beast on the lower left, and another attacking a rearing animal on the right of the dragon.

As the *Lion Hunt* can be dated securely to c.1615-16, and the drawing appears, as Rosand observed, to be a reworking of the main motifs in it (rather than a preparatory study), these studies for the *Fall of the Damned* should be dated certainly no earlier than 1616, and probably several years later.

The verso of the present drawing contains equally swift sketches for the *Assumption of the Righteous* (No.53; Fig.170) and is therefore discussed as No.53a below.

This drawing appears to be a careful study for the figure bent backwards and bitten in the neck by a demon about halfway down on the right hand side of the painting, but as it has suffered from rubbing, its authenticity cannot be regarded as certain. Although there are several extant drawings, also fairly carefully finished, of damned figures being tormented by demons, this is the only one which may reasonably be regarded as a preliminary study by Rubens himself, rather than a later or studio copy. Only the drawing in the British Museum of Four Tumbling Figures, one of which is attacked by a demon, is possibly by Rubens as well; but despite the similarity of technique, it appears to be by another, probably contemporary hand.

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52b. Study of a Nude Male Figure tormented by a Demon: Drawing
(Fig.157)

Black chalk, with some white and yellow chalk; 26.5 × 33 cm. Inscribed with the initials P.R. and P.P.R. by a later hand, with the mark of R.Cosway on the lower right (L. 628/9). A strip of approximately 18/19 mm. in width added along the bottom.

**Provenance:** Richard Cosway (London, 1740-1821); Cosway sale, London (Stanley), 14-21 February, 1822, probably lot 677; Alexander Dyce (London, 1798-1869).


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53. The Assumption of the Blessed
(Fig.170)

Oil on panel; 119 × 93 cm.

**Provenance:** Richard Cosway (London, 1740-1821); Cosway sale, London (Stanley), 14-21 February, 1822, probably lot 677; Alexander Dyce (London, 1798-1869).

PROVINCANCE: Jan Wildens (1586-1653); Jeremias Wildens (1621-1653); sold with the estate of J. Stoop, Ghent, in 1668; J. Horebeke, Ghent, in 1681; Gelaude Habert, Brussels, in 1684; sold by the Ghent dealers F.-J. Vanden Berghe and Gilles Van der Vennet van Biesum, Rotterdam, after 1705; bought by the Elector Palatine Johann-Wilhelm for the Electoral Gallery in Düsseldorf before 1719; transferred to the Hofgartengalerie, Munich, in 1806; transferred to the Alte Pinakothek in 1836, the year of its foundation, but displayed in Erlangen, Filialgalerie from 1910 to 1934, in Augsburg in 1936, in Bayreuth in 1952, in Ansbach, Filialgalerie, in 1957.


Just as in his painting of the Fall of the Damned (No.52; Fig.158). Rubens chose to separate that scene from the more usual form of the Last Judgement, so, in the present work, the decision was made to isolate the Assumption of the Blessed—although here the figure of Christ seated on a rainbow at the top of the scene is retained. As in the case of the Fall of the Damned Rubens may have had some fifteenth-century Netherlandish precedents for the separa-
tion of this scene from the main judgement, but the concentration on a great multitude of figures rising to the heavens with their arms outstretched is extraordinarily innovative—from the iconographic point of view at least; and the introduction of Christ seated on a rainbow with the Virgin below him, while explicable by analogy with the Last judgement, is entirely without precedent.

The main group of the blessed rise from their graves at the base of the composition in a great and rather elongated pyramid; they are surrounded, as Rooses aptly put it, by a garland of more sketchily painted figures, predominantly on the left of the painting. Naturally, there are several figurative derivations from earlier works: the figure of a man reclining backwards supported by his hands on the lower right and the woman crossing her arms over her breast on the left of the group of three women at the base of the composition had earlier been used, for example, on the lower left of the 'Great' Last judgement (though seen from slightly different angles). A particular derivation which may perhaps also be mentioned here is the figure seen at full length from the side stretching his arms upwards at the right of the main group of the blessed: this is an adaptation of the similar figure in Raphael’s Fire in the Borgo, copied earlier by Rubens in a drawing now in the British Museum.3

The black clouds on the left of the central group, which emphasize the pyramidal ascension of the blessed, and the dark cloud in the upper right hand corner are not unlike the equally murky clouds in the Aachen version of the Fall of the Damned (Fig.159), both in terms of their general effect and in the way that, by contrast, they emphasize the brilliance of the rest of the picture.

The overall colouristic effect is of a pale yellow glow in the sky, broken by the great curving black cloud on the left; the angels on the right are in red, seen against a pale blue sky tinged with pink.

Apart from a few figures in the central group, where the modelling of the faces and bodies could be by Rubens (the best being the group of three women immediately above the pair of wrestling men), the execution of the work is clearly not by Rubens’s own hand. The thinly painted figures surrounding the central group are poorly drawn, and the modelling both weak and summary in execution. Even the figures of Christ and the Virgin are poorly painted, while the sketchiest elements—such as the devil chasing a group of figures on the lower right—are painted in a manner that is quite different to Rubens’s technique of sketching background figures (the figures in the background of the ‘Small’ Last judgement, for example, may be compared with the Fall of the Damned). Other uncharacteristic features are the patches of cream paint indicating a crowd on the lower right and on the left of the curving cloud, and the rather deliberate junctions everywhere between the more thickly painted central figures and the thinly painted clouds. The weak drawing, the poor articulation of the limbs, the prosaic modelling of the musculature of most of the figures outside the central group, and—especially—the thin and attenuated arms and legs combined with the rather elongated proportions of many of the figures—all these characteristics suggest the hand of Jan Boeckhorst.

The history of the present work supports this hypothesis, and casts further light on its genesis. To begin with, we know that a painting of the Assumption of the Blessed was promised by Rubens to the Duke of Buckingham and never delivered.
This may be deduced from the inventory drawn up at the time of Isabella Brant's death in June 1626: From the one hundred thousand guilders accruing from the sale of paintings, antique sculptures and jewels to the Duke, Rubens had to deduct sixteen thousand guilders, of which six thousand in turn represented the value of an Assumption of the Righteous which Rubens had promised but not yet begun: 'Item is te wetene dat deser kinderen vaeder naer de doodt hender moeder vuijter hand ten meeste profijte vercocht heeft aenden heer Hertoghe van Buckingham in Engeland eenige schilderijen, antiqueschijven van marber, agaten ende andere juwelen ter somme toe van eenhondert duysent gulden eens daer aene geccort seesthien duijtsent gulden eens, over een stuck schilderijen vande oprijsinghe van de saelighe sielen d'welck den vaeder in desen gehouden was onder voorschreven heer Hertoghe, ende d'welck metter dood der afflijvighe in desen niet en was begenost...'.

The size of the valuation makes it clear that the painting was to be a large one. Rooses suggested that Rubens had already begun a sketch for it, which Buckingham may have seen on his visit to Rubens's studio in 1625, but this suggestion must remain uncertain. What is clear, however, that an 'Opgang vande salige sielen van Rubens' is recorded in the inventory of the estate of Jeremias Wildens (d. 30 December 1653), where it is listed immediately following a Fall of the Damned 'van Ioannes Brouckhorst naer Rubbens'.

Rooses's suggestion was no doubt prompted by his somewhat cavalier interpretation of a document he found quoted in Van den Branden but for which no reference was given. As this document has now been rediscovered, and as it is of prime significance for the provenance of the painting under discussion, it is worth examining at some length. On 2 August, 1684 the painter Jan Boots appeared before the notary in Antwerp at the request of the Brussels merchant Gelaude Habert. The said Boots—who must by now have been quite old—declared that at the public sale of Rubens's estate, he had seen a painting, sold for a small sum, representing the blessed souls. This work was 'incomplete and like a sketch or the beginning of a painting', with only the central figures almost complete and the rest around it indicated in chalk and underpaint (?) . Boots then specifically declared that it was the same piece which 'Lange Jan' (sc. Boeckhorst) had completed and fully painted at the home of Jan Wildens, who had bought the work at the sale of Rubens's pictures. Boots had also been present at the Wildens sale, where the work was bought by a certain Horemans.

This remarkable document is the last in a sequence of three attempts—all probably by Gelaude Habert—to verify the exact status of the painting of the Assumption of the Blessed. On 2 August, 1683, nine selected authorities in Ghent testified that the work which had belonged to Jacques Horebeke—presumably the 'Horemans' of the preceding document—two years earlier, was authentic; while on 27 April, 1694, Habert submitted the painting 'called the Blessed Souls' to the Antwerp Guild of St Luke, who declared—in full session—that it had been begun by Rubens and completed by Jan Boeckhorst 'alias Langhe Jan', and that it could thus not be sold as a Rubens.

What all these documents reveal beyond doubt is that an unfinished painting of the Assumption of the Blessed by Rubens was completed by Jan Boeckhorst when it entered the collection of Jan Wildens. The description of its state in the
first of the documents cited above accords well with the stylistic characteristics of the painting in Munich outlined at the beginning of this entry. We know that Jan Wildens also owned a *Fall of the Damned* by Jan Boeckhorst after Rubens, possibly to be identified with the painting in Aachen (No. 52, Copy (i), Fig. 159). Recent examination of the present work has revealed that it began its life in a rather smaller format (104 x 72.5 cm.), but that a complicated series of additions, made shortly afterwards, brought it up to its existing size of 119 x 93.3 cm., almost exactly the same size as the painting in Aachen. The hypothesis thus suggested is that Jan Wildens had the 'schets ofte beginsel van schilderije' which he bought at the Rubens sale, extended and completed by Jan Boeckhorst, in order to form a pendant to the painting of the *Fall of the Damned*, by Boeckhorst after Rubens, which he already owned. These paintings would then have remained together for some time, probably until 1684-87 at least, and they are to be identified with the paintings in Munich and Aachen. The only difficulty with this hypothesis—and it is a serious one—is that on examining the recently taken X-rays of the Munich Assumption of the Blessed, Hubert von Sonnenburg declared categorically that the whole painting was undoubtedly by one hand only, and that there could be no question of its having been begun by one painter and completed by another.13 If von Sonnenburg is correct, then the present painting would have to be regarded as a copy—according to von Sonnenburg by Jan Boeckhorst—of another work, now lost, referred to in the documents discussed above.

While the above appears to be the most likely provenance for the present work before it entered the Electoral Gallery in Düsseldorf, it should be noted that a painting of the Assumption of the Blessed entered the Duc de Richelieu's collection in 1682.14 If one accepts von Sonnenburg's reading and interpretation of the X-rays, then it could be that the present work is simply a copy after the original owned by Richelieu; but then one would also have to make the less likely assumption that the work purchased by Habert—who appears to have failed to buy the original of Rubens's *Fall of the Damned* acquired by Richelieu15—was a hastily made substitute for the work sold to Richelieu. It could be argued, finally, that the entire work in Munich is simply a copy after a now lost modello or sketch by Rubens which Richelieu may once have owned. But this does not accord with the surviving documentary evidence in anything like as adequate a way as the hypothesis about the Munich painting outlined above.

The whole issue is complicated by the repeated references, particularly around c.1682-84, to a painting of this subject, along with a *Fall of the Damned*, in collections in Ghent. We have thus to assume that the references are to at least one set of copies of the paintings from the Wildens collection. Thus it seems unlikely that the present Assumption of the Blessed was one of the paintings—another was a *Fall of the Damned*—that featured in the estate of Jacques Stoop in 1668.16 particularly as the work here identified with the Munich picture appears to have been in the collection of Horemans/Horebeke from the death of the younger Wildens in 1653 until c.1681.

Thus issues of provenance are more than usually bound up with the determination of the original status of a work. Beside the issues just raised, that of whether the Munich painting is to be identified with the 'zalighe Zielen' sold for 1715 florins by Van den Berghen and Van der
VENNE OF GHENT TO VAN BIESUM OF ROTTERDAM seems less crucial; but it would be tempting thus to complete its provenance.

1. It is not certain that the Witt photograph marked 'Comtesse Bontourlein' is to be identified with the painting recorded in the Genoise collections, but as it is identical with the engraving by Rosaspina, Copy (4) above, after the Grimaldi-Durazzo picture, this seems possible. For further details of the whereabouts of the Grimaldi-Durazzo picture in the 16th century, see now C. Biavati, in [Cat. Exh.], Rubens e Genova, Palazzo Ducale, Genoa, 1977-78, pp.162-163.

2. See the paintings by D. Bouts in Lille (Friedländer, III, No.10), Memling in Danzig (Ibid., Vla, No.8) and even Bosch in the Palazzo Ducale in Venice (Ibid., V, No.89, pl.72); cf. pp.202, 224.


4. Published by M. Rooses, Staat van den sterffhuys van fouchfrouwe Isabella Brant, Rubens-Bulletijn, IV, 1896, pp.159-161.

5. Ibid., p.160, n.1.


7. Ibid., p.166, No.553.

8. F.J. van den Branden, Geschiedenis der Antwerpse Schilderschool, Antwerp, 1883, p.581 and note 1. For the appropriate reference see the following note.


11. 'Ten versoecche van Sr. Gelaude Habert, soo is opden 27 april 1684 de Camer van St. Lucusgulde vergadert sijnde om te jusceren een stuk schilderij genoemt de Salighe sielen om te weten waervoor het selve stuk soude moeten gehouden worden soo is het stuc gheoordeelt met de volle camert dat het voorschreven stukken is van Menn' Rubbens begonst ende van Menn' Joan Bouchkhorst alias Langhe Jan voort ghescildert alsoo dat het stuc voor Rubbens niet en mag verkocht worden...' Antwerp, Archives of the Koninklijke Academie voor Schone Kunsten, St. Luciás, No.81 (13). The rediscovery of this document is due to Carl Van de Velde. It was excerpted both by Van der Sonnenburg and Rooses in the locations cited in notes 8 and 5 above, but with no references given by either of them.

12. See Sonnenburg, Bildaufbau, p 23, n.12, noting the most important additions of 6 cm. at the top, 9.5 cm. at the bottom, 10 cm. on the left and 11.2 cm. on the right; the panel as a whole remains in very good condition.

13. Cf. Sonnenburg, Bildaufbau, p.23, n.12: 'Die Ver­ mutung Rooses, daß dem Kern der Komposition eine unvollende Olskizze von Rubens zugrunde liegt, trifft nicht zu, wie aus dem Röntgenbefund einwandfrei hervorgeht'. Von Sonnenburg confirmed subsequently (oral communication) his belief that the panel was wholly painted by one hand—that of Jan van Boeckhorst—and that the additions noted above were made very shortly after its initial manufacture.

14. The work is described in the 1682 edition of de Piles's Dissertation, pp.133-135 (Le Tableau de la Gloire), but not in that of 1681.

15. See above, p.229.

16. Tableaux de Rubens évalués à Gand en 1668, Messager des Sciences historiques, 1890, p.481. The 'verrayse­ nisse van de salighe' was valued at 150 florins but sold for 116-13-4 florins; while the 'val van on­ zaelighe sielen' only went for 51 florins, following a valuation of 50 florins—a discrepancy in the price of the two pictures which suggests that they are unlikely to have been pads. Cf. above p.229.

17. See Commerce de tableaux de maitres anciens, à Gand, au commencement du XVIIIe siècle, Messager des Sci­ ences historiques, 1890, p.477. A painting of this subject with identical measurements to the present work, said to be in the style of Rubens, was sold at the Chevalier de Jougues sale, Paris (Monnier and Joullain), 23 September, 1784, Lot 21.
53a. Figures of the Blessed being carried upwards by Angels: Drawing (Fig. 172)

Pen and brown ink; 485 x 574 mm. A vertical and slightly damaged fold down the centre; torn and repaired in the lower left and right corners. Inscribed ...72 in the centre above.

London, British Museum.
Inv. No.1885-5-9-51.


Literature: Hind, pp.5-6, No.1; Müller Hofstede, Review, pp.438-439 under No.15; J. Rowlands, in [Cat. Exh.], London, 1977, p.84, under No.89.

The verso of No.52a. This sheet of swift and delicate sketches—many of which have become rather faint—may be regarded as the first or very early thoughts for several of the elements within the the painting of the Assumption of the Blessed in Munich. Amongst the groups in the drawing which recur in the painting, sometimes in modified form, are: 1) the pair of figures on the upper left (compare the angel carrying a woman upwards at the very top of the main figural pyramid in the painting), 2) the woman with both arms stretched upwards and two women on either side of her in the lower centre of the left half of the sheet (compare the pair of women on the left of the pyramid), 3) the group of three figures in the centre of the right half of the sheet (compare the trio at the base of the pyramid, although the group on the drawing may have been used for the three figures moving upwards at an angle to the right near the apex of the pyramid, or for any one of a number of similar groups in which an angel seen from behind carries off one or more figures), 4) the angel seen from below lifting up a male figure sketched very lightly and hastily on the lower right (compare the very similar pair on the right of the painting), and 5) the two figures climbing out from under the lids of their tombs on the bottom right (compare the same group in the painting).

If the sheet is examined closely, other groups which can be related to particular motifs in the painting may be discerned; but it is unnecessary to deal with all of them here. If one turns the sheet on its side one may clearly make out a further group of ascending figures which are too summarily drawn—the most swiftly executed passage on the sheet—to be identified with any particular group in the painting.1

A number of the groups and motifs on the present drawing appear to be reworkings of related elements in the two drawings, in the Princes Gate Collection and in the Frick Collection, for the 'Great' Last Judgement (Nos.49b and 49c; Figs.141 and 142). As that work dates from 1615-16, and as the present drawing not only appears to develop certain motifs in it but also displays an even swifter and surer pen technique than the drawings just mentioned, it should perhaps be dated c.1616-20, possibly slightly later than the recto. In terms of the abbreviated economy of the pen technique it perhaps forms an intermediate stage between the drawings for the 'Great' Last Judgement and the drawing in Antwerp for the Last Commu-
Catalogue No. 53b

In the Munich picture. Furthermore, the fact that the recto of the present sheet contains a study for the *Fall of the Damned* (No. 52a; Fig. 169) and was executed at almost the same time provides further support for the suggestion that the painting of this subject and that of the *Assumption of the Blessed* may have been conceived as pendants from the outset.

1. Müller Hofstede, *Review*, pp. 438-439 noted the resemblance of the central figure here to the Laocoon, but whether it is to be related to the bottom part of the *Fall of the Damned* (No. 52; Fig. 158), as he suggested, is not certain.


53b. Studies for Groups of the Blessed: Drawing (Fig. 174)

Point of the brush and brown ink over red chalk; 30.6 x 41.5 cm. On the verso an inscription in a later hand *Ant van Dyck.*

Provenance: The Rev. Sir James Erasmus Philipps, 12th Baronet of Picton Castle, Wales; his son, Laurence Philipps, 1st Baron Milford (of the 3rd creation) (1874-1962); his son, the Hon. Wogan Philipps (afterwards 2nd Baron Milford); H. Calmann, London; Capt. N. Colville, Launceston, Cornwall.


When he published this little-remarked drawing in 1965, Müller Hofstede identified its subject as a *Lament for Deianira* and dated it to around 1631-32. In support of this identification he added two drawings of Hercules subjects, one in the Louvre and one in the British Museum.

On the verso of the Louvre drawing he pointed to what is undoubtedly the figure of Deianira, and compared it to the similar figure with upstretched arms in the upper right hand corner of the present drawing. The remaining figures he suggested as the attendant maidservants of Deianira, while the group of three intertwined women he saw as anticipating the grisaille sketch of the *Three Graces* in Dulwich.

The difficulties with these hypotheses are as follows: 1) the drawings in the Louvre and in the British Museum show no technical similarities with the present drawing, and appear to be somewhat later; 2) there is only a single figurative analogy between the present drawing and the one in the Louvre—the rest are unexplained (except in terms of their being participants in a putative *lamento* for Deianira); 3) it is by no means clear that all the figures in the present drawing are women; and 4) the connection between the group on the lower right and the grisaille sketch in Dulwich is rather too tenuous to be particularly significant.

It was Julius Held who, in an aside in his book on the oil sketches, correctly associated the present drawing with the composition of the *Assumption of the Blessed*. The group on the left of the drawing occurs somewhat modified on the lower left of the painting in Munich, with the woman with upstretched arms there changed to a man (although possibly adapted as well for the kneeling female figure just below him); the group in the
upper right of the drawing served as the basis for that immediately below and to the right of the central angel in the final composition; while the group on the lower right may conceivably be related to the cluster of women in the bottom centre of the composition—a connection that is certainly no more remote than that with the Dulwich Three Graces. At least one of these groups—the second—was adumbrated in the other surviving drawing for the composition (No.53a).

It is true that there are also analogies with the 'Small' Last Judgement in Munich (No.51; Fig.146): the figures in the group on the left of the drawing may be related to several in the upper right of the painting (notably the figure of the old (?) woman with arms crossed over her breast), while the upstretched arms of the group on the upper right of the drawing recall the similarly gesturing figures in the painting. But none of these analogies are as close as those with the Assumption of the Blessed.

If we turn to the question of the dating of this drawing, a tentative hypothesis seems to emerge. Müller Hofstede’s proposal of 1631–32 seems slightly too late—indeed the combination of point of the brush and wash over red chalk seems more characteristic of the third decade. Precisely the same technique occurs in the group of drawings associated with the Glorification of the Eucharist (Nos.17b–e above), here dated to c.1625–28. Furthermore, the peculiarly sharp rendering of physiognomic features, particularly striking in the case of the second figure from the right in the left hand group, is exactly paralleled in these drawings. Despite the fact, then, that a dating of around 1620 would not be inconsistent with Rubens’s known concern with compositions of this nature at about this time (cf. Nos.49–53 above), it seems necessary to place the present drawing in the second half of the 1620s, and possibly quite late in these few years. Could it be that Rubens is here reworking certain motifs already formulated in the great eschatological compositions of the second half of the second decade? That, indeed, would accord well with the documentary evidence suggesting that between 1625 and 1628 Rubens may have envisaged returning to a composition of the Assumption of the Blessed which had by then only been begun (cf. p.235–236 under No.53 above). The present drawing—at the very least—testifies to his concern with figurial types relating to such a composition in precisely these years.

1. The drawing is in good condition, apart from a brown stain in the lower left hand corner (visible in reproduction) and a hole about an inch long halfway down the left edge.
2. Burchard-d’Hulst, 1903, Nos.189 and 190 (Louvre, Cabinet des Dessins, Inv. No.20.217 and British Museum, Department of Prints and Drawings, Inv. No.1897-6-15-12).
3. P. Murray, Dulwich Picture Gallery, A Catalogue, London, 1980, p.114, No.204. Mr J. Byam Shaw has also suggested (in a letter to me) a similarity with the drawing of Three Graces in Christ Church, Oxford, which he in turn associated with the painting in Dulwich (J. Byam Shaw, Drawings by Old Masters at Christ Church, Oxford, I–III, Oxford, 1976, No.1373 and pl.800).
4. Held, Oil Sketches, p.327.

54. The Ascent of Souls from Purgatory (Fig.173)

Oil on canvas; 350 x 258 cm. Tournai, Cathedral.

**Exhibited:** Trésors sacrés. Exposition organisée à l’occasion du VIIIe centenaire de la Cathédrale, Tournai, 1971, not numbered.

**Literature:** Descamps, Vie, p.325; Mensaert, II, p.75; Descamps, Voyage, p.24; Michel, 1771, p.195; Calendrier de la ville et cité...
The doctrine of Purgatory, attacked by the Reformed creeds, was reaffirmed by the Council of Trent\(^1\) and widely defended by Counter-Reformation writers.\(^2\) The notion of purification by fire had been developed by the early Church Fathers on the basis of Matthew XII, 31–2 (implying that expiation is still possible beyond the grave) and I Corinthians III, 11–15, interpreted as stating that salvation would take place through fire.\(^3\) The prayers of Judas Maccabeus for the dead (2 Maccabees XII, 39–45), made in the conviction that they would rise again, provided the basis for the constant assertion of the value of such prayers as a means of the liberation and consolation of souls. Amongst the many works written or published in the Netherlands justifying the doctrine of Purgatory (and consequently the use of indulgences and the possibility of penance in the face of Protestant criticism) were Cornelius Columbanus Vrancx, De Troost der Sielen int Vaghevier, dat is maniere om haer wt te helpen. Bruges, 1607, Jacobus Hoogstratius, De Purgatorio, Antwerp, 1525, and Jodocus Andries, Het Vaghevier, Antwerp, 1643.\(^4\) Confraternities were set up to pray for the souls of the dead, first in Rome in 1592, and later in the Low Countries (such as those in Arras, 1631, Bruges, 1637, Antwerp, 1653, and so on);\(^5\) these were usually associated with saints such as Gregory, Bernard, and Teresa, whose prayers were known to have assisted in the salvation of specific souls.\(^6\) The intercessory role of the Virgin was frequently insisted upon, and so was the action of the guardian angels, who helped the souls from the flames of Purgatory.

Thus, at the very base of the present work one may just discern the figures of those souls who are still being purified by fire. Two angels help several more male and female figures heavenward, while at the very top of the work, the Virgin intercedes on their behalf before the Trinity. At the left a number of putto-like angels reach down to the upraised arms of those about to be saved, while beyond on the right at an altar a priest celebrates mass for the souls of the departed.

Amongst the figures which recall earlier, iconographically related works by Rubens are the crouching woman with her...
arms crossed over her breast on the left (compare the similar but not identical figure in the 'Great Last Judgement'), and the central angel lifting up a woman (compare the central angel in the Assumption of the Blessed, a work which naturally has important iconographic affinities with the present one).

The subject was a fairly common one in the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as in the painting by F. Zuccaro in the Gesù in Rome, in the Tintorettesque work by Il Passignano in Parma (where a similar group to that of the woman being helped up by an angel on the right may be found), and—later—in the compositionally rather similar painting by Guercino in San Paolo in Bologna, although there St Gregory is present as well.

The present work was commissioned in 1635–36 by Maximilian Vilain of Ghent, Bishop of Tournai from 1615–44, for the altar of the departed, known as 'de la férie', behind the High Altar of Tournai Cathedral. The commission is recorded in the Charte de Donation of 12 September, 1636, and confirmed by the testament of Vilain: 'Quant à mon corps ... je choisis le lieu de son repos derrière le grand autel en la cave que j'ai faict faire, avec la table de l'autel des Trépassés, ou j'ai faict faire deux peintures par le fameux peintre Rubens'. The other painting referred to here was the Judas Maccabeus Praying for the Souls of his Dead Soldiers, beneath which Vilain was buried; the present work was hung facing the chapel of the Virgin, with the Judas Maccabeus placed back to back with it.

The work is recorded as having been cleaned and restored on a large number of occasions: in 1686, 1727, 1740 (by Gilles des Fontaines) and 1762 (by Frédéric Dumesnil) before the end of the eighteenth century. All the early writers, Descamps and Michel in particular, make it clear that the work was already in deplorable condition. When the French occupied Tournai in 1794, it was sent to Paris, along with its pendant. Upon its return to Brussels in 1818, the work was exposed to the vagaries of the elements in the court of the new Brussels museum, as were the other paintings returned in that year. In a letter of 11 May of the following year to the mayor of Tournai, the Director of the Academy and Conservator of the Museum at Ghent, Peter van Huffel, commented on the poor condition of the work and on the number of repainted areas: 'La peinture dans plusieurs endroits est plus ou moins écaillée et menace une destruction totale. Le mal est tel que je crains que c'est une des causes pour lesquelles on l'a toujours gardé en dépôt à Paris'. The painting was finally returned to the Cathedral on 27 July, 1818, but its companion piece, the Judas Maccabeus Praying for the Souls of his Slain Soldiers, was destined to remain in France. A further restoration of the present work is recorded in 1930.

The present condition of the work reflects these vicissitudes. It is covered by a thick layer of varnish, the canvas is severely wrinkled, and is especially creased round the edges. A horizontal and a vertical band, each approximately 15 cm. in width, forming a cross shape, appear to be in better condition than the rest of the work. Why this should be so cannot at present be determined. The paint surface has so worn and darkened in parts that it is difficult to discern the two suppliant figures at the top right of the work (their action too is difficult to determine) and the suffering figures in the flames on the lower right. Hardly a trace of the original modelling of the flesh tones and drapery remains. The whole work has been exten-
sively repainted, to such a degree that its original appearance can scarcely be judged. In particular, the putti on the right seem quite unRubensian; if they were originally present, they have been completely repainted by an eighteenth century hand.

Despite these factors, however, it is just possible to discern that the work must originally have been painted by Rubens himself (almost certainly with a considerable amount of studio participation). The angel’s head in the centre is perhaps the best preserved aspect of a work whose present disturbing appearance is misleading. As a result of the darkening of the surrounding areas, the central diagonal of ascending figures now appears with disproportionate emphasis; it would once have been better balanced, in visual terms, by the views on either side (even now, small areas of blue sky are just visible). The heavily repainted figure of a woman in the centre below does not stand out with the excessive prominence she would seem to have from a photographic reproduction; and the scene of a priest at an altar beyond on the right (unusual as this sort of ‘vignette’ is for Rubens) cannot originally have appeared to be so divorced from the rest of the composition, separated as it is from the main figures by particularly grimy and darkened bands of paint. In short, the work must originally have possessed a more satisfactory pictorial unity than it does now; and as far as can be judged from the little that remains, it would seem to reflect the style of the mid 1630s, a dating which accords well with the documentary evidence regarding the commission of the work.

The painting now hangs opposite the main altar in the chapel of the Holy Sacrament in the south deambulatory of the Cathedral, having for a long while previously been hung in the chapel of St Louis and Eleutherius.

A sketch representing Purgatory said to be in the manner of Rubens was sold at the Hôtel of the Prince de Rubempré in Brussels, 11 April, 1705, and again at the Conseiller del Marmol sale in Brussels, 24 March, 1791; but the reference may equally well be to a related subject, such as that of St Teresa Interceding on Behalf of Bernardino de Mendoza.

1. Sessio XXIV, 3 December, 1564, Decretum de Purgatorio.
2. See Mâle, Après le Concile de Trente, pp.58-65.
4. Further works, critics, and influential Spanish and Italian writers such as Bellarmina, Laynez and St Teresa are cited in Knipping, II, pp.127–133, cf. also Mâle, Après le Concile de Trente, pp.58–65 for more continental writers.
5. On the Roman confraternity in Santa Maria del Suffragio, see Mâle, Après le Concile de Trente, p.63; on the ones in the Netherlands, see Knipping, II, p.130.
6. Cf. Rubens’s St Teresa Interceding for the Soul of Bernardino de Mendoza (Vlieghe, Saints, II, No.155.
7. No.49, Fig.137; but see also the use of this figure in related compositions, as noted on p.204 above.
10. Illustrated in Mâle, Après le Concile de Trente, p.63, fig.20.
11. Cf. also—to take only one other example—the painting by G.B.Crespi, Il Cerano, of the Mass of St Gregory and the Redemption of Souls from Purgatory in San Vittore in Varese, of c.1617. For further representations of the Redemption of Souls from Purgatory, see the lists in Pigler, I, pp.530-534.
12. I have been unable to ascertain whether this was a time when the Catholic doctrine of Purgatory came under especial fire in Tournai, but the possibility should be considered.
15. See Milet, op. cit., p.125 for a summary of these
details, but also Voisin, op. cit., 1856, pp.266-271 and 1866, pp.199-202.
17. Quoted in Piot, p.68, n.1.
21. The first reference gives its measurements as c.43.3 X 35.2 cm.; the second as c.40.1 X 32.6 cm.

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B. Circumvolant celestes spiritus, psalentes celestae melos, gloriae.
C. Collocat tandem Matrem Filius ante Divinitatem, ad sanctissimam Trinitatem statuat.
D. Ab ea coronatur ineffabili gloria, donis, dotibus, praelegnis ornatur excellentissime.
E. Aperto sepulcro credunt assumptam Apostoli a Filio, exultant in tribulam, laudes eius celestes.
F. Ad sua quaeque loca vnde fuerant de duci Patres, ab Angelis reducuntur.

Regnat Maria Mater Dei cum Filio in omnem aeternitatem gloriosissime.
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SUSCITATVR VIRGO MATER A FILIO.

A. Ad finem tridei adeò Christus cum mis: squereceles exercitus innumerabili.
B. De sepulcro suscitat Matrem, animam eius 
C. Egressa illa fulgentissima, immortalis
D. Exspect etiam Christus gratulatione summa.
E. Eum adoravit, cigne obedientiam et veh:  
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