

# Implications of Revised Attributions in Netherlandish Painting

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THE REEVALUATION of the attributions of several paintings in the Metropolitan Museum's early Netherlandish painting collection presents an opportunity to consider a particular aspect of the state of research in this field.<sup>1</sup> New information provided by infrared reflectography and dendrochronology poses a challenge to long-held tenets about the oeuvres of even the most eminent painters of the Northern Renaissance. A corpus of technical documents has now been assembled for some of the major Netherlandish artists (Rogier van der Weyden, Robert Campin, Hieronymus Bosch, Gerard David, Petrus Christus, Jan van Scorel, and Lucas van Leyden among them) that provides essential insights into their working methods and may be used to reconsider basic questions of attribution and dating.<sup>2</sup> This informed reassessment of individual works is accompanied by more general queries into the production of paintings in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries in the Netherlands, particularly with regard to the demands of the patron class and to the notion of artistic individuality versus the anonymity of workshop production.

Two recently changed attributions of paintings in the Metropolitan Museum's collection compel us to address these questions. The authorship of both *Christ Appearing to His Mother*, until recently thought to be by Rogier van der Weyden (1399?–1464), and *The Adoration of the Magi*, long considered to be a work by Hieronymus Bosch (active by 1480–died 1516), has been convincingly reevaluated as a result of new technical information.

We now know that *Christ Appearing to His Mother* (Figure 1; originally part of a triptych dedicated to the Virgin, the remaining two panels of which are still in the Spanish Royal Chapel in Granada) is a slightly smaller copy after Rogier's own version of

this work (Figure 2), donated by Juan II of Castile to the Cartuja of Miraflores in 1445 and found today in the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin. As recently as 1979 (in the catalogue of the Brussels exhibition "Rogier van der Weyden," as well as in the 1978 *Catalogue of Paintings* for the Gemäldegalerie), the weight of scholarship was in favor of the attribution of the New York–Granada Altarpiece of the Virgin to Rogier, relegating the Berlin version to Rogier's studio.<sup>3</sup> The traditional priority of the Granada–New York triptych is linked to its distinguished provenance as part of the collection of Queen Isabella of Castile (1451–1504) and the subsequent donation of the panels to the Capilla Real in Granada after her death. In addition, the extraordinary quality and condition of the Berlin triptych was considerably masked until its recent cleaning and restoration by the Gemäldegalerie.

The first significant effort to clarify the relationship between the two versions of *Christ Appearing to His Mother* came in 1981–82, when an article by Rainald Grosshans discussed new information about the Berlin painting. He demonstrated that certain features of that version reveal Rogier's specific handling: clearly evident is his typical brush underdrawing style with its hook-ended strokes. Furthermore, Grosshans identified adjustments to the preliminary design of the painting that are not evident in the New York *Christ Appearing to His Mother*.<sup>4</sup> Figure 3 shows the infrared reflectogram assembly with the changes in the composition made more visible through a tracing of the underdrawing and the final version of the background cut out. Grosshans's arguments, based on the study of the Berlin version with infrared reflectography and the New York painting with infrared photography, can be summarized as follows: while Rogier executed the underdrawing found beneath the paint layers of the Berlin version, making numerous changes in the architecture and figures (their poses and the form of their draperies in Figure 3), a copyist ap-

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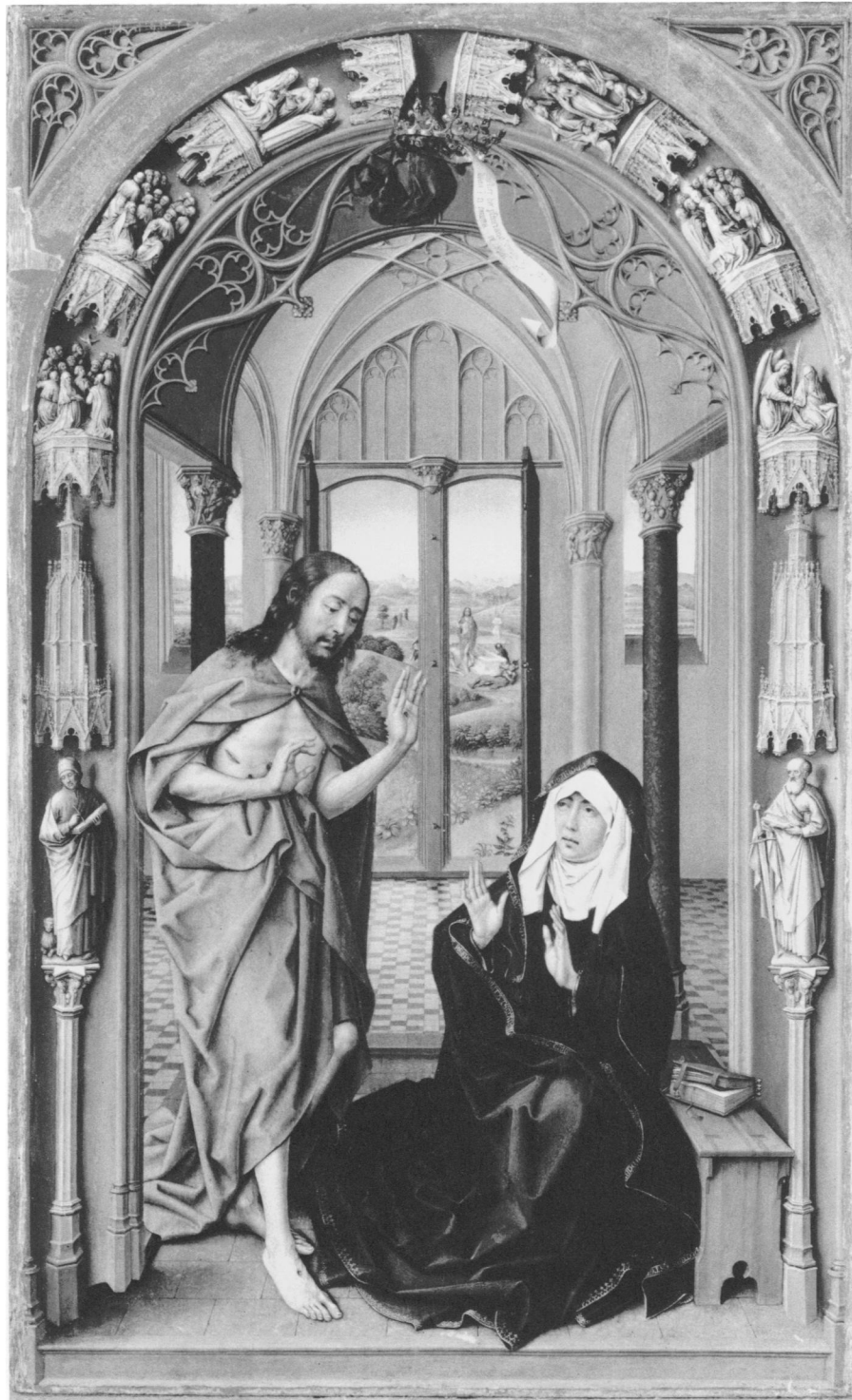


Figure 1. Copy after Rogier van der Weyden (1399?–1464), *Christ Appearing to His Mother*, ca. 1484. Oil on panel, 63.5 × 38.1 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Bequest of Michael Dreicer, 1921, 1922, 22.60.58



Figure 2. Rogier van de Weyden, *Christ Appearing to His Mother*, ca. 1435. Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Gemäldegalerie (photo: J. Anders)



Figure 3. Infrared reflectogram assembly of Figure 2, Berlin version, with tracing of underdrawing (infrared reflectography by J. R. J. van Asperen de Boer; assembly by G. Schultz)

parently produced the formulaic and rather weak underdrawing of the Metropolitan Museum version, which presents no major compositional adjustments and instead simply reproduces the surface design of the Berlin painting. In addition, Grosshans observed that the Berlin composition's construction was based on an empirical system of perspective typical of fifteenth-century paintings; the artist of the Metropolitan Museum version made explicit corrections, particularly in the architecture, in order to bring the original design in step with the one-point perspective system that became standard usage by the end of the fifteenth century.<sup>5</sup>

My subsequent study of the Metropolitan painting with infrared reflectography, which revealed more of the painting's underdrawing than was apparent in the infrared photograph, confirmed Grosshans's hypothesis (Figures 4, 5).<sup>6</sup> The underdrawing is apparent in the architecture and figure of Christ, as well as in the hands and face of the Virgin. The draperies of the Virgin were not penetrated by infrared reflectography, indicating that the artist used a different, more opaque blue pigment than was employed in the Berlin version. The underdrawing in the Christ figure appears to have been executed in two mediums, one a dry, crumbly one (probably black chalk) in a rather free sketch, and the other in brush or pen that made minor adjustments over it. Neither underdrawing shows Rogier's characteristic hook-ended strokes. There are no significant changes in the composition or figures—only slight shifts from the underdrawing to the painted layers in contours and in Christ's right hand and feet. Based on all of this evidence, it can thus be established definitively that the Berlin composition is the primary version and the one in New York the replica.<sup>7</sup>

But the evidence of the underdrawing alone was not sufficient to take the attribution of the painting away from Rogier van der Weyden, particularly in view of the fact that the two paintings appear so similar. Commenting on the two versions of *Christ Appearing to His Mother* when they were last studied side by side in 1947, the Museum's painting conservator at the time, Murray Pease, remarked that "the most important consideration about these paintings is that they resemble each other to a degree approaching bank notes."<sup>8</sup> (Compare Figures 6 with 7 and 8 with 9.)

Close comparison of the two paintings today through color-slide details and macro photographs does reveal some significant differences in technique and execution.<sup>9</sup> At once most striking are the varied mixtures of the red and blue paints used for the draperies of Christ and the Virgin. Christ's cloak in the Metropolitan version shows an abbreviated layering structure with a more thorough mixture of red and white pigments to create a rich rose color, while in the Berlin painting a deeper, more saturated red is produced by red glazes built up in multiple thin layers. As previously mentioned, the blues of the Virgin's drapery also vary in their composition, that in the Berlin painting being transparent to infrared light and that in the Metropolitan version appearing opaque with infrared reflectography. Like the reds, the blues also differ in the com-





Figure 4. Infrared reflectogram assembly of Figure 1, MMA version, showing detail of Christ figure (photo: M. Ainsworth)

Figure 5. Infrared reflectogram assembly of MMA version showing detail of the Virgin (photo: M. Ainsworth)



plexity of their layering structure; the Metropolitan painting shows a simpler structure typical of developments in painting technique at the end of the fifteenth century.

As often happens with the production of copies, the lighting system of the Museum's replica exaggerates that of the Berlin painting (compare Figures 6 and 7). The extremely subtle transitions between light and dark areas in Christ's draperies in the Berlin painting become more sharply defined and strongly lit in the drapery folds in the Metropolitan version. The copyist modeled the ridges of the folds in a manner different from Rogier's, defining them

with parallel hatching in dark red glazes, a method characteristic of painters such as Dieric Bouts in the decades after Rogier van der Weyden.<sup>10</sup> Similar observations may also be made about the execution of the flesh tones in Christ's right hand (compare Figures 10 and 11). Here the illusionistic three-dimensional quality of the hand in the Berlin painting (Figure 10) is achieved by a complicated structure of opaque and transparent glaze layers. The illusion is lost in the Metropolitan version (Figure 11) where the artist's simplified technique of thinner paint layers, as well as his less able execution, particularly in the rigid drawing of the fingers, flattened the form.



Figure 6. Detail of Figure 2 showing the figure of Christ (photo: G. Schultz)

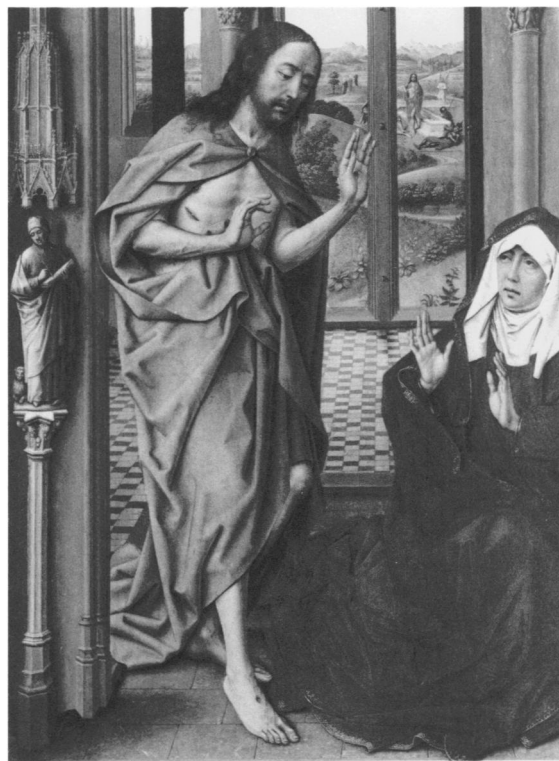


Figure 7. Detail of Figure 1 showing the figure of Christ

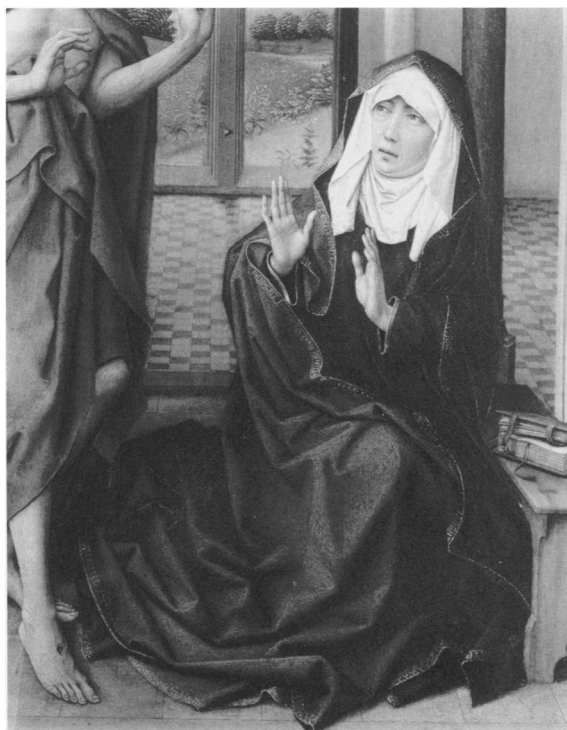


Figure 8. Detail of Figure 2 showing the figure of the Virgin (photo: G. Schultz)

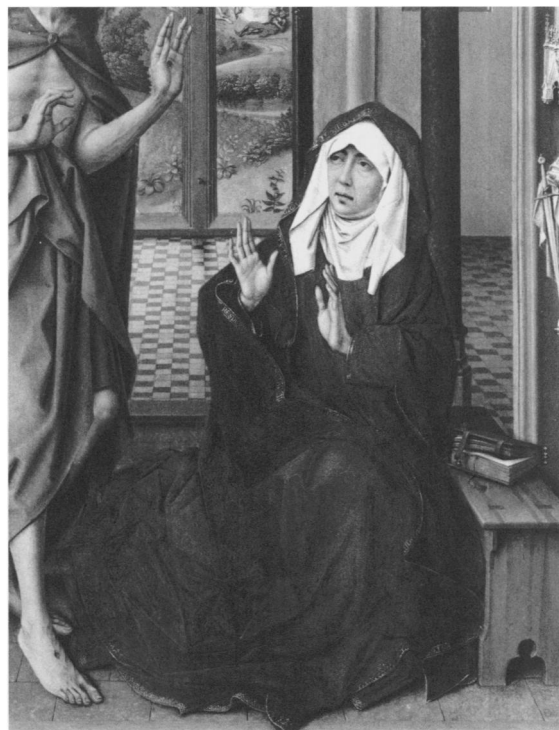


Figure 9. Detail of Figure 1 showing the figure of the Virgin



Figure 10. Detail of Figure 2 showing Christ's right hand (photo: G. Schultz)

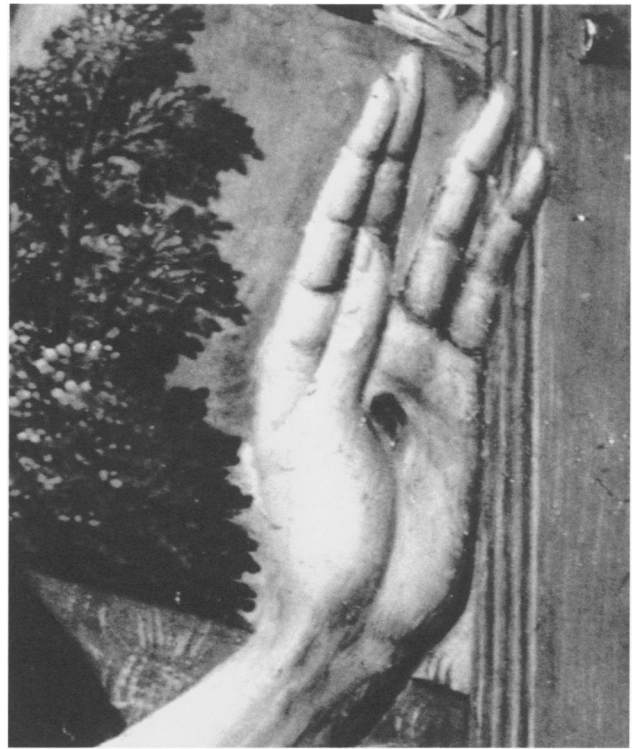


Figure 11. Detail of Figure 1 showing Christ's right hand (photo: K. Lubner)

Small details in each painting reveal further disparities between the two in the specific nature of the rendering of subsidiary forms. A striking difference in approach is found in the depiction of landscape details. Rogier executed his background bushes (Figure 10) using regular arclike strokes and a schematic dotting of each branch tip with white highlights. The copyist (in Figure 11) took natural observation into account, discriminating between branches that ought to appear fully lit and those that should be in shadow as a gentle breeze passed through them. The increased interest in landscape *per se* developing at the end of the fifteenth century must have been a determining factor in regard to the execution of the copyist. In addition, Rogier painted a metal hook on the doorjamb to receive the corresponding sliding bolt on the adjacent door; the copyist misunderstood the function of the hardware, instead painting a square-headed nail on the doorjamb of his painting. Though generally very close to each other in form, each painting reveals its author in the handling of such comparatively insignificant details.

A final piece of evidence regarding the relationship between the two paintings was provided by the dating of each oak panel by Peter Klein, the acknowledged expert in dendrochronology.<sup>11</sup> Klein's research had already shown that the Berlin triptych fell well within the dating, as proposed by some scholars, to Rogier's early period, about 1435.<sup>12</sup> Klein's subsequent investigation of the Metropolitan Museum version indicated that it could not have been made much before about 1484, some twenty years after Rogier's death.<sup>13</sup> The unsettling conclusion, therefore, must be that the New York–Granada triptych was produced by a very talented copyist, who remains anonymous.<sup>14</sup> Though the names of two northerners who worked in Spain for Queen Isabella—Juan de Flandes and Michel Sittow—have been suggested, positive proof is lacking. The artist in question most likely produced the Metropolitan Museum painting in Spain in the presence of the original, for its ground preparation is calcium sulfate, which is commonly used in southern Europe (northern ground preparations are made of calcium carbonate).<sup>15</sup>



Figure 12. Style of Hieronymus Bosch (act. by 1480–d. 1516), *The Adoration of the Magi*, first half of 16th century. Oil on panel, 71.1 × 56.5 cm. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, John Stewart Kennedy Fund, 1912, 13.26





Figure 13. Hieronymus Bosch, *The Adoration of the Magi*. Madrid, Museo del Prado (photo: Museo del Prado)

It is worth pointing out that these results do not represent an isolated example, for in the case of the two triptychs of the *Life of St. John*, also attributed to Rogier van der Weyden, dendrochronology pointed to the same discrepancy.<sup>16</sup> Again, the Berlin Gemäldegalerie version of Rogier's *St. John* triptych is the one that can be dated within the artist's lifetime, while the version in Frankfurt (Städtisches Kunstinstitut und Städtische Galerie) turns out to be an extremely faithful copy from the first decade of the sixteenth century.

It is rather disconcerting to discover that artists of this period could so faithfully reproduce not just the composition but also the details of the style of another artist's work. This realization certainly confounds any effort to attach a name to the Metropolitan Museum's *Christ Appearing to His Mother*. Perhaps we can turn this to our advantage by considering not the artist's identity but instead the very anonymity and the consummate skill of artists whose craft superseded any specific artistic identity. We have yet to understand fully how these copies were made and for what purposes.<sup>17</sup> To ignore these questions is to thwart further discoveries about artistic production in the Netherlands in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries.

In another recently reevaluated work, the *Adoration of the Magi* (Figure 12), long attributed to Bosch, certain features of the painting have been in question for some time.<sup>18</sup> The pastiche nature of the composition can be recognized in the combination of a landscape reminiscent of Bosch's *Adoration of the Magi* (ca. 1510) in the Prado, the two standing kings from the Philadelphia *Adoration of the Magi* (according to Peter Klein, datable ca. 1526, after Bosch's death),<sup>19</sup> and the Eve type from the Prado's *Garden of Earthly Delights* (ca. 1503–4), who is here cast in the role of the Virgin.<sup>20</sup> In addition, these elements are placed in a perspectival space unlike any found elsewhere in Bosch. The incompatibility of the naive figure types and the advanced spatial construction have caused scholars to vacillate between an early and a late date.<sup>21</sup>

The recent investigation, in July 1990, of the underdrawing in the Metropolitan *Adoration* has cast further doubt on an attribution to Bosch. The preliminary drawing on the ground preparation of the painting does not show the hand of Bosch but that of an unknown imitator. The style and idiosyncrasies of Bosch's underdrawings have been characterized in studies by Garrido, Van Schoute, and Filedt Kok.<sup>22</sup> From this body of comparative material, it is possible to investigate further and identify specific

deviations of the underdrawing in the Metropolitan painting from the characteristic style found in securely attributed Bosch paintings. Whereas Bosch normally used the underdrawing in his paintings as a working drawing, sketching the landscape and figures and changing the placement of objects and the description of forms from the drawing to the painted layers, as seen in the underdrawing of the Prado *Adoration* (Figures 13–16),<sup>23</sup> the painted layers of the Metropolitan Museum *Adoration* (Figure 12) follow the drawing closely. When Bosch made adjustments, he most often painted the figures and forms smaller than the underdrawing suggests.<sup>24</sup> By contrast, the changes in the sleeves of the two kings and the profile of the kneeling king in the Metropolitan painting show an enlargement of these forms in the painting from the underdrawing (Figures 17, 18). Bosch's typical underdrawing describes the composition fully,<sup>25</sup> but the Metropolitan painting indicates underdrawing only in the figures. A characteristic of Bosch's drawing style is its use of short, broken strokes for contours (see Figures 15, 16); the Metropolitan painting reveals long, unbroken contour lines, as in the figure of the Virgin (Figure 19).<sup>26</sup> These observations support an attribution not to Bosch himself but to an artist in his orbit.

The determination of the date, however, is dependent upon factors in addition to those outlined above. The spatial construction of the Metropolitan painting suggests a date of about 1520 or later. Exactly how much later might be indicated by comparison with information about another version of the same composition in the Museum Boymans-van Beuningen in Rotterdam (Figure 20).<sup>27</sup> Very little of the underdrawing of this painting is visible—only minimal drawing in the faces of the kings. Also, there are no apparent changes in the Rotterdam version as there are in the Metropolitan painting (such as the angel painted out in the larger of the two turret windows or the slight adjustments to the contours of forms).<sup>28</sup> It might thus be concluded from this evidence that the Metropolitan painting precedes the Rotterdam version, as it shows to some extent an evolving, not totally fixed design. A startling revelation about these panels, however, concerns their dendrochronological dates. Peter Klein has shown that the Rotterdam painting was made in about 1550, more than thirty years after Bosch's death.<sup>29</sup> The felling date of the tree for the Metropolitan panel, however, is about 1472, well within Bosch's lifetime.<sup>30</sup>

The possible conclusions one might draw from the dendrochronological evidence alone is that the

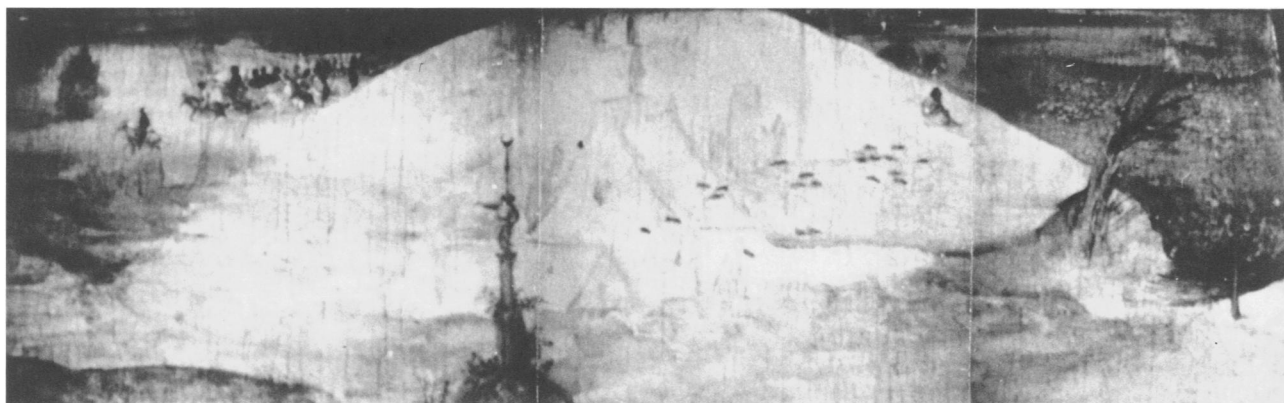


Figure 14. Infrared reflectogram assembly of Figure 13, Prado version, showing a detail of the landscape (photo: C. Garrido)

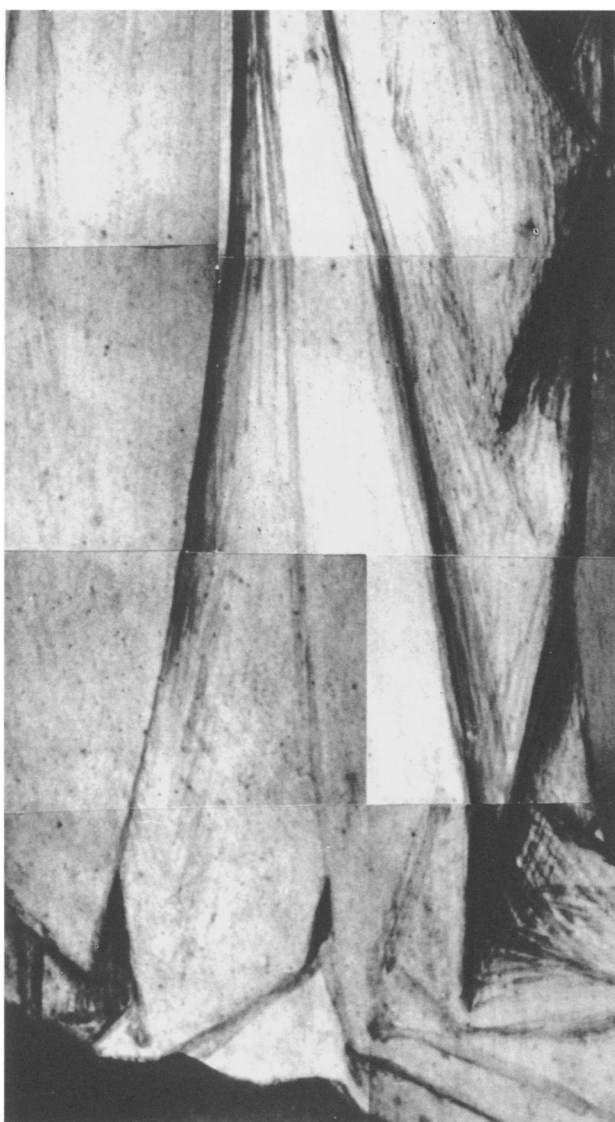


Figure 15. Infrared reflectogram assembly of Prado version showing a detail of the draperies (photo: C. Garrido)



Figure 16. Infrared reflectogram assembly of Prado version showing a detail of the shed, including an unpainted head (photo: C. Garrido)

Rotterdam painting is either a later version of the Metropolitan painting or, by contrast, that the Metropolitan version is contemporary with the later Rotterdam copy, but simply painted on wood that was stored for a longer period of time. In this case, dendrochronology seems to give a more definitive answer for the Rotterdam painting than for the

Metropolitan painting. Although we can be certain that the Metropolitan painting is not by Bosch, the date it was painted is as yet unclear. Further examination of the two works together, a study we hope to carry out in the near future, will provide additional information and help answer the unresolved questions.

What broader implications can be drawn from the changed attributions discussed here? Although some doubts concerning the authorship of both the Rogierian and Boschian paintings had persisted over the years, the relatively late datings for the Metropolitan's *Christ Appearing to His Mother* and the Rotterdam *Adoration of the Magi* were not anticipated. Part of the difficulty in considering these questions of chronology is due to modern concepts of originality. Our emphasis on unique artistic identity has led us to shun copies, automatically eliminating them from the first rank of prized works of art. But now that some of our most prized works



Figure 17. Infrared reflectogram assembly of Figure 12, MMA version, showing a detail of the kneeling king (photo: M. Ainsworth)



Figure 18. Infrared reflectogram assembly of MMA version, showing a detail of two standing kings (photo: M. Ainsworth)

have been irrefutably identified as later copies, produced in some cases even after the purported artist's death, our attention shifts to questions of the method of production and the possible meaning of these copies in their own time.

A more positive outlook on what may initially seem a dilemma encompasses further discoveries in the field of Netherlandish painting. Recent research into period contracts and new information about the contemporary art market has helped to explain



the apparently widespread production of exact copies in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. Jeltje Dijkstra has shown that this period in Flanders was characterized by the production of copies after the paintings of earlier masters.<sup>31</sup> This is clear not only from the extant pictures, but also from the period contracts compiled by Dijkstra. In eleven of the thirty-one contracts consulted from the fifteenth century and twenty-five of forty-eight from the first half of the sixteenth century, the commissioned work was to be made following the model of an already existing one.<sup>32</sup> In other words, the patrons themselves were a powerful determining influence on the practice of copying. Perhaps as a result of deeply conservative religious and societal preferences, it was not original (and thus unfamiliar) works that were desired but ones that had already established their value, either from a material or a spiritual point of view.<sup>33</sup> These notions are a continuation of prevailing concerns expressed in medieval writings. As Jonathan Alexander notes, of greatest importance was the value of the actual materials used and the technical virtuosity evident in the production of artworks. Little mention is made of any premium placed on novel representations.<sup>34</sup> The example of the *Notre-Dame de Grace*, thought to be a portrait of the Virgin and Child made by St. Luke himself, comes readily to mind. In 1454/55 Hayne of Bruxelles was commissioned to make twelve copies of this Italo-Byzantine icon housed in the cathedral of Cambrai; Petrus Christus was asked to make an additional three in 1454.<sup>35</sup> Rogier van der Weyden and Dieric Bouts, among others, also fostered the widespread diffusion of adaptations of this particular image.

The Metropolitan Museum's exact copy of Rogier's *Christ Appearing to His Mother* represents a perpetuation of these medieval and early Renaissance ideals. It was not a new representation of the theme, but a facsimile that was explicitly desired. Queen Isabella of Castile may have commissioned the copy in the late fifteenth century to be made after the triptych given by her father, Juan II, to the Cartuja of Miraflores, for her personal devotional use at any of her numerous residences. Other, later adaptations of *Christ Appearing to His Mother* attest to the broader popularity of this particular composition.<sup>36</sup>

The Bosch copy of *The Adoration of the Magi* represents a different phenomenon, one probably more dependent on the requirements of the open market. Its conflation of motifs from Bosch paintings of slightly different periods shows a deliberate selection of some of the artist's most characteristic

features. What confuses the modern observer, disposed toward seeing a clear and logical progression in Bosch's works, is the eclectically composed nature of a painting that deviates from the established chronological developments of Bosch's oeuvre. The awkward conflation of an early figure style with a later spatial construction undermines any notion of continuity. That artists intentionally chose certain popular motifs from different periods and joined them in a single work is a late-fifteenth- and early-sixteenth-century phenomenon in need of further investigation. It is still uncertain whether or not this was done simply in response to the collecting patterns of foreign patrons (as has been suggested in the case of Gerard David's *Sedano Triptych*, a conflation of features of some of the most notable Netherlandish art from the previous sixty years),<sup>37</sup> or whether the question of deception or forgery had already come into play at this early date.



Figure 19. Infrared reflectogram assembly of MMA version, showing a detail of the Virgin and Child (photo: M. Ainsworth)

Specifically in regard to the works of Hieronymus Bosch, there is the perplexing account of Felipe de Guevara, who in his *Comentarios de la pintura* (ca. 1560) called attention to countless forgeries of Bosch, “pictures to which he [Bosch] would never have thought of putting his hand but which are in reality the work of smoke and the short-sighted fools who smoked them in fireplaces in order to lend them credibility.”<sup>38</sup> He continues: “That which Hieronymus Bosch did with wisdom and decorum others did, and still do, without any discretion and good judgment.”<sup>39</sup> Unlike medieval commentators who stressed the value of materials and virtuosity in execution, de Guevara instead considered the superior intellect manifest in the work’s novelty and invention as the indicator of authenticity.<sup>40</sup> It is interesting to note that de Guevara’s comments are contemporary with the likely production of the Rotterdam *Adoration of the Magi* (ca. 1550), a factor that ought to be taken into account in the reassessment of this painting.

Numerous questions regarding the duplicative nature of works of art in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries await study.<sup>41</sup> The level of technical expertise that artists acquired through training in a rigorous craft tradition has not been fully acknowledged. Our modern preoccupation with the concept of originality has perhaps forced us to assign paintings to rigid categories, such as “prototype” or “replica,” where they do not properly belong. We have not been sufficiently cognizant of images that were conceived as multiples from the outset, that is, with no primary version intended or consciously produced. Furthermore, we too readily assume that similar compositions date from the same time, ignoring the continued appeal of certain representations over several decades.<sup>42</sup>

Before one can begin to answer these questions, however, the various types of copies and diverse methods of producing them need to be more precisely established. This phenomenon of copying seen from the point of view of physical production has been studied with renewed interest since Taubert’s ground-breaking thesis of 1956 (the portions concerning copying techniques were published later, in 1975).<sup>43</sup> Methods of transferring motifs or entire compositions exactly from one drawing or painting to another are best revealed by infrared reflectography—be they by pouncing, tracing, stencils, or other techniques. From the evidence of the underdrawing, it becomes clear which portions of the composition were fixed and which were variable. For example, in certain works by Isenbrandt, one

finds that the figures are transferred from a pounced design, while the setting is freely sketched directly on the panel (see the *Virgin and Child* in the Alte Pinakothek, Munich, and a *Virgin and Child* exhibited at Colnaghi’s, New York, in 1983).<sup>44</sup> In other cases, as with Gerard David’s *Milk-Soup Madonna* paintings, one finds that multiple versions of the same composition have a common origin in the same cartoon—that is to say, they were apparently conceived from the outset as identical objects for sale on the open market.<sup>45</sup>

A thorough study of versions of the same composition through both infrared reflectography and dendrochronology will clarify not only the method of duplication but also the period of time over which there was a sustained interest in the same composition. The Metropolitan Museum copy after Dieric Bouts’s *Mater Dolorosa*, for example, is notable for two reasons. With only minor adjustments, its pounced underdrawing precisely follows the brush underdrawing in a *Mater Dolorosa* (now in the Art Institute of Chicago) probably produced in the workshop of Dieric Bouts after a design made by the master himself.<sup>46</sup> Peter Klein’s dendrochronological date for the Metropolitan Museum copy is about 1525, attesting to the long-standing popularity of this particular image.<sup>47</sup>

With further research we may be able to gather specific evidence supporting a hypothesis that certain artists basically cornered the market on particular compositions—that their workshops were known as the distribution centers of particular thematic representations.<sup>48</sup> One thinks of the many extant versions of Joos van Cleve’s *Holy Family*, for example, or of Gerard David’s *Milk-Soup Madonna* and *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* compositions. If this is the case, we might wonder whether the personal identity of the artist is superseded by the image known to have come from his shop. How then might we reconsider long-standing evaluative criteria such as “originality,” “quality,” and “genius”? How uniformly would these notions have been embraced by either the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century patrons or the artists themselves?

We are only just beginning to ask questions about the influence of the art market on fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Flemish painting.<sup>49</sup> It is through continued joint study of both archival material and the actual physical methods of producing the paintings that we will arrive at a clearer picture of artistic production of the Northern Renaissance.

If we come back to our original problem of the Rogierian painting *Christ Appearing to His Mother*, we



Figure 20. Style of Hieronymus Bosch, *The Adoration of the Magi*. Flemish, ca. 1550. Oil on panel, 70 × 56.7 cm. Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen (photo: Museum Boymans-van Beuningen)

might well ask, "If it was good enough for Queen Isabella of Castile, shouldn't it be good enough for us?" Momentarily postponing the obvious answer could be most instructive, especially keeping in mind the object as it presents itself to us now: a nearly exact copy of a masterpiece by Rogier van der Weyden, with a superior provenance and an extraordinarily compelling presence, but no secure attribution.

This essay perhaps raises as many questions as it answers. It is meant as a statement of where we now stand in our efforts to reconstruct the complex and unfamiliar ways in which fifteenth- and early-sixteenth-century artists and patrons understood the art they made and used. It is hoped that the issues raised here will stimulate further research into these intriguing problems.

## NOTES

1. It is fitting to continue here discussions begun with Guy Bauman over various attributions of early Netherlandish paintings in the Metropolitan Museum. I hope that he would have enjoyed the route further research has taken and the results of those initial inquiries.

2. See J. R. J. van Asperen de Boer, J. Dijkstra, and R. van Schoute, *Underdrawing in Paintings of The Rogier van der Weyden and Master of Flémalle Groups*, *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 41, 1990 (Zwolle, 1992); on Bosch, see R. van Schoute, "Le portement de croix de Jérôme Bosch au Musée de Gand: considérations sur l'exécution picturale," *Bulletin de l'Institut Royal du Patrimoine Artistique* 2 (1959) pp. 47–58; R. van Schoute, "Over de techniek van Jeroen Bosch," *Jheronimus Bosch: bijdragen bij gelegenheid van de herdenkingstentoonstelling te's Hertogenbosch* (1967) pp. 71–79; J. P. Filedt Kok, "Underdrawing and drawing in the work of Hieronymus Bosch: a provisional survey in connection with the paintings by him in Rotterdam," *Simiolus* 6, no. 3/4 (1972/73) pp. 133–162; P. Vandenbroeck, "Problèmes concernant l'oeuvre de Jheronimus Bosch: Le dessin sous-jacent en relation avec l'authenticité et la chronologie," *Le dessin sous-jacent dans la peinture*, Colloque IV, 1981 (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1982) pp. 107–120; R. van Schoute, M. C. Garrido, J. María Cabrera, "L'Adoration des Mages du Musée du Prado à Madrid," *Le dessin sous-jacent dans la peinture*, Colloque V, 1983 (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1985) pp. 211–215; R. van Schoute and M. C. Garrido, "Les péchés capitaux de Jérôme Bosch au Musée du Prado à Madrid. Étude technologique. Premières considérations," *Le dessin sous-jacent dans la peinture*, Colloque VI, 1985 (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1987) pp. 103–106; R. van Schoute and M. C. Garrido, "El tríptico de la Adoración de los Magos de Hieronymus van Aken Bosch: estudio técnico," *Boletín del Museo del Prado* 6 (1985) pp. 39–77; R. van Schoute and M. C. Garrido, "Brèves observations sur les Petits Bosch du Prado," *Le dessin sous-jacent dans la peinture*, Colloque VII, 1987 (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1989) pp. 159–162; for Gerard David, see M. Ainsworth, "Gerard David's Drawings for

the Justice of Cambyses Once Again," *The Burlington Magazine* 130 (July 1988) pp. 528–530; M. Ainsworth, "Reassessing the Form and Function of Gerard David's Drawings and Underdrawings," *Le dessin sous-jacent dans la peinture* (1987) pp. 123–130, and book in preparation; for Gerard David and Petrus Christus, see the archive of underdrawings at The Metropolitan Museum of Art; for Jan van Scorel, see M. Faries, "Underdrawings in the workshop production of Jan van Scorel: a study with infrared reflectography," *Scientific Examination of early Netherlandish Painting*, *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 26 (1975) pp. 89–228, and book in preparation; for Lucas van Leyden, see J. P. Filedt Kok, "Underdrawing and Other Technical Aspects in the Paintings of Lucas van Leyden," *Nederlands Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek* 29 (1978) pp. 1–184; bibliographies including other artists are found in H. Verougstraete-Marcq and R. van Schoute, eds., *Le dessin sous-jacent dans la peinture*, Colloques VI (1985) and VII (1987) (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1987, 1989).

3. Berlin, Picture Gallery, *Catalogue of Painting, 13th–18th Centuries* (1978) pp. 484ff., and C. Périer-d'Ieteren, in *Rogier van der Weyden*, exh. cat., Musée Communal (Brussels, 1979) pp. 144ff., no. 8y.

4. R. Grosshans, "Rogier van der Weyden: Der Marienaltar aus Kartause Miraflores," in *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 23 (1981) pp. 49–112, and "Infrarotuntersuchungen zum Studium der Unterzeichnung auf den Berliner Altären von Rogier van der Weyden," in *Jahrbuch Preuss. Kulturbesitz* 19 (1982) pp. 137–177, esp. pp. 137–144.

5. Grosshans, "Rogier van der Weyden," p. 93, figs. 13, 14.

6. The Metropolitan Museum painting was first studied by the author and Chiyo Ishikawa with infrared reflectography in 1981 and more recently, in 1991, with the assistance of Jeffrey Jennings. The results of van Asperen de Boer's study appears in van Asperen de Boer, Dijkstra, and van Schoute, *Rogier van der Weyden*, pp. 236–245.

7. See my memo to Mary Sprinson de Jesús of Jan. 4, 1984, suggesting the reconsideration of the attribution of the Metropolitan Museum painting based on the new information (in archive files of the Department of European Paintings).

8. Murray Pease, "Report of Comparative Examination of Two Paintings Attributed to Rogier van der Weyden, *Christ Appearing to His Mother*," Nov. 18, 1947 (in Paintings Conservation department files).

9. The recent comparison of the two paintings has been made possible through the kind cooperation of Rainald Grosshans (Berlin, Gemäldegalerie), who has exchanged with me color slides of many details of the two paintings. I have also benefited greatly from discussions with Hubert von Sonnenburg concerning the technique of the two paintings.

10. For an illustration of this type of parallel hatching with a glaze for the modeling of drapery, see C. Périer-d'Ieteren, *Colyn de Coter et la Technique Picturale des Peintures Flamandes du XVe Siècle* (Brussels, 1985) fig. 2c–d.

11. Peter Klein, "Dendrochronological Untersuchungen an Eichenholztäfelchen von Rogier van der Weyden," *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 23 (1981) pp. 113–123; "Dendrochronological Untersuchungen an Bildtafeln des 15. Jahrhunderts," *Le dessin sous-jacent dans la peinture* (1987) pp. 29–40; and "Dendrochronological Studies on Oak Panels of Rogier van der Weyden and His



Circle," *Le dessin sous-jacent dans la peinture* (1989) pp. 25–36. The last of these articles explains the method and variables associated with dendrochronology as Peter Klein has practiced it in more than 1,500 Northern Renaissance and Baroque panels so far.

12. Klein, "Dendrochronological Studies," pp. 25–36.

13. At my request Peter Klein came to study the panel, submitting a report on May 13, 1987; see also my memo concerning the results to Everett Fahy and Guy Bauman of Jan. 25, 1988 (archive files, Department of European Paintings); and Klein, "Dendrochronological Studies," pp. 25–36.

14. Michel Sittow is the painter suggested by Jeltje Dijkstra in her published dissertation, *Origineel en Kopie, Een onderzoek naar de navolging van de Meester van Flémalle en Rogier van der Weyden* (Amsterdam, 1990) chap. 4, esp. pp. 95–97.

15. Murray Pease first identified and commented upon the ground preparation type in his 1947 report (see note 8 above). I thank Marycolette Hruskocy of the Paintings Conservation department for rechecking the ground type in June 1991. On the matter of defining the northern or southern origin of panel paintings based on the analysis of their ground preparation, see Dijkstra, *Origineel en Kopie*, pp. 91–97 and n. 364; also R. M. Merrill, "A Technical Study: Birth and Naming of St. John the Baptist," *The Bulletin of the Cleveland Museum of Art* 63, no. 5 (1976) pp. 136–145, esp. p. 138.

16. Klein, "Dendrochronological Untersuchung an Eichenholztafeln," p. 122, suggests a date of about 1453 for the *Altarpiece of St. John* in Berlin and about 1508 for the Frankfurt version; see also idem, "Dendrochronological Untersuchung an Bildtafeln" and "Dendrochronological Studies."

17. See Dijkstra, *Origineel en Kopie*, for a discussion of these issues and a complete bibliography on the topic. She has suggested an ingenious solution to the method of copying in the Rogierian altarpieces of Mary and St. John based on a reduction system related to the geometrical proportions of an equilateral triangle. Dijkstra discusses her theory in detail in chap. 4 of her dissertation. In the case of the Berlin and New York versions of *Christ Appearing to His Mother*, though the proportional reduction suggested by Dijkstra is borne out for the figures, the architecture has been altered outside of the geometrical proportion, and there are no indications in the underdrawing of the New York painting that prove the proposed method was employed. Instead, the underdrawing is of two types—a free sketch in a crumbly medium (black chalk?) which is gone over with brush or pen, here and there making minor adjustments. Given the consummate skill of the artist in copying Rogier's style, it is perhaps not inconceivable that his technical virtuosity encompassed the ability to copy directly by eye from the model.

18. See C. De Tolnay, *Hieronymus Bosch* (Basel, 1937) pp. 103, 128, and in reprint ed. (1965) p. 382, no. 47, fig. 36; L. von Baldass, *Hieronymus Bosch* (Vienna, 1943) p. 38ff.; D. Bax, *Ontcijfering van Jeroen Bosch* (The Hague, 1949) pp. 248–250, 264, 272; C. Eisler, book review of Erik Larsen, *Les primitifs flamands au Musée Metropolitan de New York (Utrecht and Antwerp, 1960)* in *The Art Bulletin* 46 (1964) p. 104; G. Lemmens and E. Taverne, *Hieronymus Bosch* (Uppsala, 1970) pp. 166ff., 185, 258, pl. 1; and G. Unverfehrt, *Hieronymus Bosch. Die Rezeption seiner Kunst im frühen 16. Jahrhundert* (Berlin, 1980) p. 123ff., cat. no. 23.

19. Personal communication from Peter Klein, July 8, 1990.

20. Some of these observations and others have been summarized by Unverfehrt, *Hieronymus Bosch*.

21. Earlier literature tends to date the painting to Bosch's formative years, while subsequent discussions favor a late date because of the comparison of the background with the Prado *Epiphany* (see, for example, P. Reuterswärd, *Hieronymus Bosch* [Uppsala, 1970] pp. 166ff., 185, 258).

22. See note 2.

23. See Filedt Kok, "Underdrawing and drawing," p. 154; R. van Schoute, M. C. Garrido, and J. María Cabrera, "L'Adoration des Mages," and M. C. Garrido and R. van Schoute, "El tríptico de la Adoración."

24. Filedt Kok, "Underdrawing and drawing," p. 150, fig. 14.

25. Ibid., pp. 154ff.

26. For examples, the reader may consult the articles of Garrido and van Schoute, as well as Filedt Kok (see note 2).

27. I am indebted to Jeroen Giltaij and J. R. J. van Asperen de Boer for information about this painting (personal communications of Aug. 31, 1990, and Oct. 1, 1990, respectively). Dr. van Asperen de Boer studied the Rotterdam painting twice with infrared reflectography, most recently on Sept. 24, 1990.

28. The Rotterdam painting is in relatively better state than the MMA version, which is badly damaged. As a result, great care should be taken in the comparison of the two works for visible differences, since most of these are caused by paint losses in the Metropolitan painting (e.g., in the Metropolitan painting, the curtailed drapery of the kneeling king, the absence of a herding crop held by the shepherd in the window at the left, various differences in the folds of Joseph's drapery, and the absence of the guiding star at the painting's upper right corner). The stripped-state photo of the MMA painting clearly shows these losses, which are not fully detectable in the partial X-radiograph.

29. Personal communication from Peter Klein, July 8, 1990.

30. Personal communication from Peter Klein, April 30, 1991.

31. Jeltje Dijkstra, "On the Role of Underdrawings and Model-drawings in the Workshop of the Master of Flémalle and Rogier van der Weyden," *Le dessin sous-jacent dans la peinture* (1989) pp. 37–52, and idem, *Origineel en Kopie*, chap. 1, pp. 7–28.

32. Ibid.

33. On the spiritual power of certain images, see Nicholas of Cusa, *The Vision of God*, Emma Gurney Salter, trans. (London, 1928) p. 15, and Joseph Leo Koerner's discussion in "Albrecht Dürer and the Moment of Self-Portraiture," *Daphnis: Zeitschrift für Mittlere Deutsche Literatur* 15, no. 2/3 (1986) pp. 409–439.

34. J. J. G. Alexander, "Facsimiles, Copies, and Variations: The Relationship to the Model in Medieval and Renaissance European Illuminated Manuscripts," *Studies in the History of Art* 20 (1989) p. 63.

35. On this issue and the interpretation of the documents, see Dijkstra, "On the Role of Underdrawings," pp. 39–41, and notes on pp. 48–49; see also C. Périer-d'Ieteren, "Une copie de Notre-Dame de Grâce de Cambrai aux Musées royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique à Bruxelles," in *Bulletin Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten* 3/4 (1968) pp. 111–114.

36. For a discussion of a copy in the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., as well as other versions, see John Hand's entry

in J. O. Hand and M. Wolff, *Early Netherlandish Painting: The Collections of the National Gallery of Art Systematic Catalogue* (Washington, D.C., 1986) pp. 254–257.

37. As I suggested in my review of *Gerard David* by Hans van Miegroet, in *The Art Bulletin* 72, 4 (Dec. 1990) p. 650.

38. Felipe de Guevara, "Comentarios de la pintura que excribió Don Felipe de Guevara," in F. J. Sánchez Cantón, ed., *Fuentes literarias para la historia del arte español*, 5 vols. (Madrid, 1923–41) I, pp. 159–60, or as translated in Wolfgang Stechow, ed. and trans., *Northern Renaissance Art, 1400–1600: Sources and Documents* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1966) p. 19.

39. Ibid.

40. See the discussion of J. Muller, "Measures of Authenticity: The Detection of Copies in Early Literature on Connoisseurship," *Studies in the History of Art* 20 (1989) pp. 141–149.

41. As noted in L. Silver, "The State of Research of Northern European Art of the Renaissance Era," *The Art Bulletin* 68, no. 4 (Dec. 1986) pp. 518–535, esp. p. 520. Significant recent contributions have been made concerning copies. In addition to Dijkstra, *Origineel en Kopie*, see especially J. Wilson, "Workshop patterns and the production of paintings in 16th-century Bruges," *The Burlington Magazine* 132 (Aug. 1990) pp. 523–527 and bibliography in notes, and J. Wilson, "Connoisseurship and Copies: The Case of the Rouen Grouping," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* (May–June 1991) pp. 191–206. A framework for the discussion of these issues in different periods of the history of art is provided by the published papers of the 1985 CASVA symposium, "Retaining the Original: Multiple Originals, Copies and Reproductions," *Studies in the History of Art* 20 (1989).

42. As suggested for David's *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* compositions, see Ainsworth, review of *Gerard David*, p. 653, and idem, "Gerard David's Workshop Practice—an Overview," *Le dessin sous-jacent dans la peinture*, Colloque IX (in press).

43. Ibid.; and Dijkstra, *Origineel en Kopie*, and Wilson, "Workshop Patterns" (esp. n. 34); also M. Ainsworth, "...paternes for phiosioneaymes...", Holbein's Portraiture Reconsidered," *The Burlington Magazine* 132 (Mar. 1990) pp. 173–186.; J. Taubert, *Zur Kunstwissenschaftlichen Auswertung von Naturwissenschaftlichen Gemäldeuntersuchungen* (Marburg, 1956), and idem, "Pauspunkte in Tafelbildern des 15. und 16. Jahrhunderts," *Bulletin de l'Institut royal du patrimoine artistique* 15 (1975) pp. 387–401. The practices of copying and transfer of design which were in use in Italy during the same period under discussion are being studied by Car-

men Bambach Cappell. See her dissertation, "The Tradition of Pouncing Drawings in the Italian Renaissance Workshop: Innovation and Derivation," 2 vols., Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1988, from which a book is forthcoming.

44. These were studied in 1986 and 1983, respectively. I am indebted to Dr. Hubert von Sonnenburg, then director of the Doerner Institute, for permission to study the Munich painting with infrared reflectography, and to the directors of Colnaghi, New York.

45. M. Comblen-Sonkes, "A propos de la Vierge et Enfant à la soupe au lait, Contribution à l'étude des copies," *Bull. Koninklijke Musea voor Schone Kunsten te Brussel* I–III (1974–80) pp. 29–42; and as suggested in Ainsworth, review of *Gerard David*, p. 653, and idem, "Gerard David's Workshop Practice."

46. Discussed in M. Ainsworth, "Northern Renaissance Drawings and Underdrawings: A Proposed Method of Study," *Master Drawings* 27, no. 1 (1989) pp. 5–38, esp. p. 11. On the Chicago *Mater Dolorosa*, see M. Wolff, "An Image of Compassion: Dieric Bouts's *Sorrowing Madonna*," *The Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies* 15, no. 2 (1989) pp. 112–125. See also Peter Klein, "The Differentiation of Originals and Copies of Netherlandish Panel Paintings by Dendrochronology," *Le dessin sous-jacent dans la peinture*, Colloque VIII (1989) (Louvain-la-Neuve, 1991) pp. 29–42.

47. Personal communication from Peter Klein, report of Mar. 20, 1989.

48. For a discussion of specialization and the art market, see Lorne Campbell's excellent article, "The Art Market in the Netherlands in the Fifteenth Century," *The Burlington Magazine* 118 (1976) pp. 188–198.

49. Recent important inroads in this area have been made by J. Wilson, "The Participation of painters in the Bruges 'Pandt' market, 1512–1550," *The Burlington Magazine* 125 (1983) pp. 476–479, and idem, "Marketing Painting in Late Medieval Flanders and Brabant," in *Artistes, artisans et production artistique au Moyen Age: Colloque international* 3, X. Barral Altet, ed. (Paris, 1990) pp. 621–627; J. M. Montias, "Socio-Economic Aspects of Netherlandish Art from the Fifteenth to the Seventeenth Century: A Survey," *The Art Bulletin* 72, no. 3 (Sept. 1990) pp. 358–373, with helpful bibliography; D. Ewing, "Marketing Art in Antwerp, 1460–1560: Our Lady's Pandt," *The Art Bulletin* 72, no. 4 (Dec. 1990) pp. 558–584; and L. Jacobs, "The Marketing and the Standardization of South Netherlandish Carved Altarpieces: Limits on the Role of the Patron," *The Art Bulletin* 71 (1989) pp. 203–229.