

‘A matter of character’

Max J. Friedländer and his relations with Emile Renders and Jef Van der Veken

Suzanne Laemers

Translated by Joy Kearney

A member of the same generation, whose path repeatedly crossed with that of Emile Renders (1872-1956) and Jef Van der Veken (1872-1964), was the German art historian Max J. Friedländer (1867-1958) (ill. 1). While he occupied important positions at the Berlin museums, including that of director of the Kupferstichkabinett (from 1908) and later of the Gemäldegalerie (from 1929), Friedländer principally gained a reputation as one of the most important experts on early Netherlandish painting, alongside other pioneers in this field such as the Ghent professor Georges Hulin de Loo (1862-1945). Renders – banker, amateur art historian and collector of Flemish primitives in Bruges – found in the first few decades of the last century a prominent ally in Friedländer in a number of tricky art-historical issues, in which he caused quite a stir. The contact with the restorer Van der Veken, principally active in Antwerp, Brussels and Bruges was considerably less frequent, but his expertise in imitating the old painting techniques did not go unnoticed by Friedländer, or indeed a number of his colleagues.

The restorer Jef Van der Veken

In art historical circles there was a growing awareness of the forgery practices of Jef Van der Veken (ill. 2). In 1911 the *Verband von Museumsbeamten zur Abwehr von Fälschungen und unlauterem Geschäftsgebaren* published a statement in an issue of the *Mitteilungen des Museen-Verbandes* by a former volunteer of the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe in Hamburg about a painting that was suspected of being the work of Van der Veken.¹ In the same year, September 28th, Friedländer gave a presentation on forgeries of paintings on the second day of a conference which took place annually, on this occasion in Brussels, organized by the *Verband von Museumsbeamten* for the benefit of its members.² In this lecture he mentioned Van der Veken by name as a ‘geschickter Fabrikant’ who not only operates as a forger, but also trades in paintings and works as a restorer. Friedländer emphasises in his presentation the existence of a new, ‘raffiniertere Methode’ of forging, since due to the advent of photography, knowledge of paintings had expanded to such a degree that exact imitations can be unmasked considerably quicker than previously.



I. Max J. Friedländer, 1927.
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Museen zu Berlin

The manner in which the buyer of Flemish primitives was misled concerns the addition of elements to the scene that are missing from the original, by means of which the imitation is less easily recognised as such, or by the creation of a new composition, on the basis of several examples. To identify the latter type of forgery, one should not only possess extensive knowledge of original paintings, so claims Friedländer, but should also have a certain feeling for the style of the old masters. An indication, for example, that one is dealing with a portrait composed of various examples, is the combination of costume components and hairstyles that would not originally have been fashionable at the same time. The tremendous urgency of 'naive Leute' wishing to obtain a Flemish primitive in Belgium encouraged the production of imitations on a large scale. After all, the demand greatly exceeded the supply. Not only Van der Veken, but also other studios in Belgium, according to Friedländer, eagerly filled the gap that appeared in the market.

Although Friedländer did not mention Van der Veken explicitly in this connection, it is almost certain that the 'Werkstatt' which 'in den letzten Jahren außerordentlich stark produziert hat', refers to the work of Van der Veken. What was remarkable about the forgeries by this studio, which are technically 'sauber und scharf' is the meticulousness with which craquelures were applied to the paint surface: 'immerhin sind die Sprünge, mit scharfem Instrument in die Farbfläche gerissen, recht täuschend. Eine Eigentümlichkeit der falschen Sprungbildung sind die punkartigen



2. Jef Van der Veken, 1920s.
Photo: The Hague, RKD,
Archive Jef Van der Veken,
image no. 0000379919

Löcher, die dort entstehen, wo das ritzende Instrument stecken bleibt, zu stark aufgedrückt wird, leicht an Stellen, wo sich die Linien kreuzen. Nicht selten ist der Fälscher so schlau, die geritzte Sprungbildung stellenweise aussetzen zu lassen und einige Risse mit dem Pinsel aufzuzeichnen.' Friedländer concluded with the observation that the flesh colour that has been applied can be characterized as 'süßlich und kühl' and that the affectation of the whole is such that it is uniform and one, 'wenn überhaupt, jedenfalls nur einmal getäuscht wird'.³

In *Der Kunstkenner* from 1919, Friedländer's first publication entirely devoted to the various aspects with which the art expert will unavoidably be confronted, he did not disclose his thoughts on forgery practices.⁴ He discussed the phenomenon of copying, which in fact also includes forgeries, only in general terms: how to distinguish an original from a copy.

In 1923 Friedländer disclosed for the first time to the general public in *Belvedere*, an illustrated magazine for art collectors, the forgery practices of Van der Veken.⁵ Although he did not mention Van der Veken by name, in his remark that 'die in den letzten Jahren erfolgreichsten Fälskate, die Nachahmungen altniederländischer Tafeln, die eine überaus fruchtbare belgische Firma verbreitet, fast stets stückweise nach diesem, stückweise nach jenem Urbilde kopiert [sind]', there is no doubt he had Van der Veken in mind. His contribution entitled *Grundsätzliches über Fälschungen* was intended as a manual for the collector who wishes to purchase a painting: 'Die Aufgabe des Kenners besteht also darin, den Widerspruch zwischen Sein und Schein zu spüren und aufzudecken.' Friedländer challenged the reader to explain the difference between original and imitation and to specify the characteristics by which a forgery can be

detected. Since it is often a matter of subtle differences, certainly since the direct copying of one example has been exchanged for the copying of several examples, it is important to keep the focus in this direction: 'Das feiner organisierte Auge aber wird durch krasse Unstimmigkeiten zwischen den dreist und willkürlich aneinander gefügten Teilen gewarnt.' An anachronism by which forgeries from 'dieser tüchtigen Werkstätte' in particular can be recognised is by the depiction of elements in a typical fifteenth-century style, such as items of clothing, that undeniably originate from the sixteenth century.

Apart from the fact that the forger has to adopt a manner of painting that is not originally his own, according to Friedländer, he should also bridge the natural ageing process that an original painting undergoes in the centuries after its completion. The forger is therefore forced to add traces of age artificially. It is up to the investigations of the expert using style criticism and scientific methods to discover such artifice. Finally, Friedländer stated that it is generally more difficult to recognise a forgery by the hand of a contemporary than by a forger that belongs to an earlier generation. After all, the contemporary forger has access to the same knowledge, taste and manner of observing, and is guilty of the same misconceptions about the past, by means of which his deception is less easy to see through.

In the second volume of *Die altniederländische Malerei*, that appeared in 1924 and is devoted to the work of Rogier van der Weyden and the Master of Flémalle, Friedländer again alluded to the various studios based in Belgium, including that of Van der Veken, who committed themselves to placing forgeries in the style of the Flemish primitives on the market. In catalogue C, in which the followers and copies after Rogier van der Weyden are summarised, he mentions in relation to a composition depicting *The Virgin nursing the Christ Child* (ill. 3): 'Auch die Brüsseler Fälscher haben sich dieser Komposition bemächtigt.'⁶



3. Pastiche after Rogier van der Weyden, *Virgin and Child*. Sale Berlin (Rudolph Lepke), 22 February 1910, no. 77. RKD image no. 0000170347

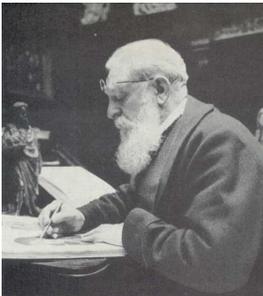
The exhibition in London in 1927

In 1927 the craftsmanship of Van der Veken was brought to light in what was for some a painful manner. At the Royal Academy of Arts, based at Burlington House in London, on the initiative of the Anglo-Belgian Union, a major exhibition was organised with the title: *Flemish and Belgian Art, 1300-1900*.⁷ The exhibition was apparently an unparalleled success; a record number of more than 150,000 visitors crossed the threshold to view the hundreds of works of art. A few days after the closure Robert Witt, a member of the British committee partially responsible for the organisation wrote, in a letter to *The Times*: 'only one complaint has been heard – that it was impossible to see the pictures!'⁸ Witts cheerful remark nonetheless gives a somewhat too idealistic impression of things. Already during the exhibition there was some commotion over the authenticity of a number of the exhibited works. The instigator of this was Friedrich Winkler (1888-1965), head of the Zentralbibliothek, and as well as Friedländer, associated with the Berlin museums. In a review of the exhibition in the February edition of *Der Kunstwanderer*, Winkler ended with a disconcerting conclusion: 'Sehr interessant war es, nahezu ein Dutzend Fälschungen zu studieren, die die Ausstellungsleitung passiert hatten, obgleich ein angesehenener und bewährter belgischer Kunsthistoriker darin vertreten war. Meist nach bekannten primitiven Bildern, in unerfreulich blinkenden Farben, ohne jede Provenienz, kamen die erst im letzten Jahrzehnt bekannt gewordenen Werke aus zwei bis drei belgischen Sammlungen. [...] Es handelt sich offenkundig um eine einzige Werkstatt, die sowohl restauriert wie alte Bilder fälscht.'⁹ Winkler furthermore reported that a number of the corresponding pictures originally could have been authentic, but they had undergone such a radical treatment that they 'wie ein Ei dem andern ähneln', whereby they could be identified as fakes among the other works without much difficulty. Winkler expressed a slight reservation with the remark that the 'hinter Glas und Rahmen sorgfältig verborgenen Bilder' should be closely examined at some time. The 'discovery' was taken over by the *Berliner Tageblatt*, after which the news spread rapidly through the world press and also led to a debate in the scholarly literature.¹⁰

The sensation-making announcement encouraged the naming of names, as transpired from a letter submitted by the Hague art historian Cornelis Hofstede de Groot (1863-1930) in the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* of 2 March 1927.¹¹ Hofstede de Groot also remarked that it was very praiseworthy that Winkler did not reveal any names, since it does not do justice to the owners 'who certainly remained in good faith and wanted to play their part, to grace the exhibition and grant the audience a sensation and lust to the eye, and yet, the last word should be given to the discussion of authenticity, only when one examines the paintings without glass and frame in strong light. The way the paintings hang in London, to be viewed amidst a crowd of countless visitors, one can only presume, or arrive at a certain presumption, but one should refrain from this being the last word.' Furthermore, Hofstede de Groot remarked, 'it is not difficult for the expert who has studied the exhibition with attention, to identify the paintings in question.'



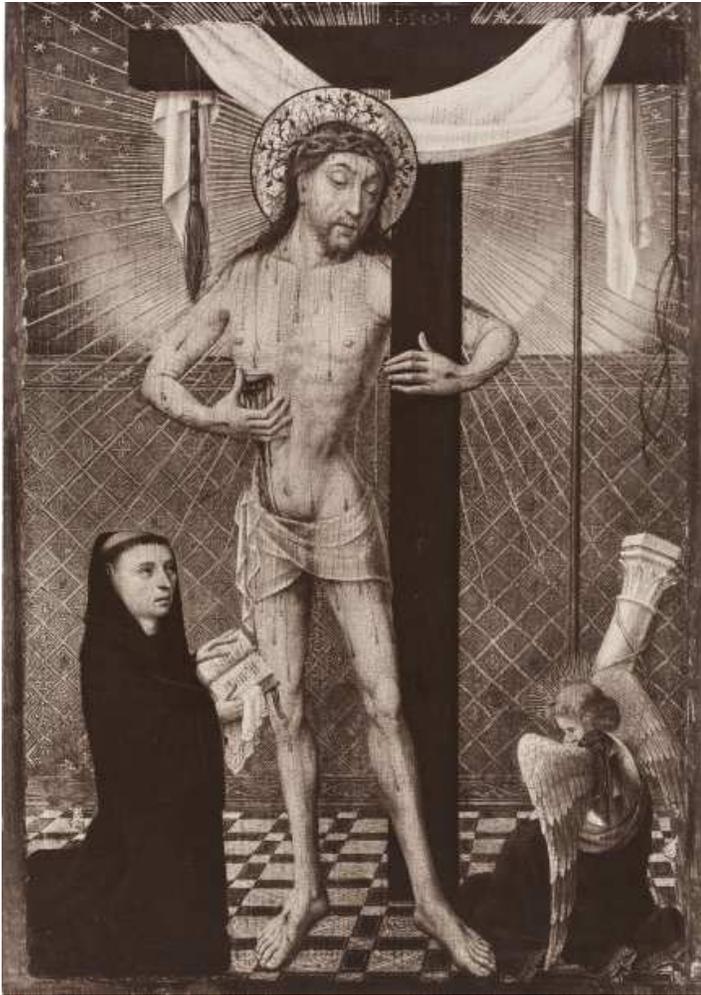
4. Georges Hulin de Loo.
From: *Mélanges Hulin de Loo*,
Brussels/Paris 1931



5. Emile Renders.
From: *West-Vlaanderen 4*
(1955), p. 34

The ‘angesehener und bewährter belgischer Kunsthistoriker’ indicated by Winkler by whom the dozen forgeries apparently remained undetected, was none other than the Ghent professor Georges Hulin de Loo, as a member of the Belgian committee partly responsible for the selection of old master paintings (ill. 4). It must have been an unpleasant experience for him that such doubt came to exist in this manner regarding his expertise, more so because he had written for the catalogue of the collection of Emile Renders (ill. 5), which was published as a luxury edition simultaneously with the exhibition.¹² Because paintings from Renders’ collection were not only amply represented in the exhibition, they were also now, due to Winkler’s perceptiveness, brought into discredit.

Immediately after the appearance of Winkler’s article in *Der Kunstwanderer*, Hulin de Loo tried to contact Renders, in an attempt to obtain clarification in this controversial matter, according to a letter of 22 February 1927.¹³ Renders wrote to Hulin: ‘J’ai beaucoup pensé à ce que vous m’avez dit, c[’est]-à-d.[ire] qu’on pourrait penser que je sois visé dans l’article de Mr. Winckler [sic]. Je n’avais pas pensé aussi loin, puisque j’avais reçu de Monsieur Winckler [sic] une lettre plein d’éloges concernant ma collection. Car à votre demande je lui avais envoyé quelques photographies. Il n’est jamais entré dans votre esprit de me demander la provenance de mes tableaux, parceque le véritable connaisseur ne voit que le bon ou le mauvais tableau.’ With the letter Renders included an appendix in which he summarised the provenance of the exhibited works. In particular the doubts that arose about the *Christ as the Man of Sorrows with a Benedictine Monk* were close to his heart, because on the provenance of this painting, he added: ‘Vu le caractère tout a fait extraordinaire de



6. Anonymous
Netherlandish artist, 15th
century, *Christ as the Man of
Sorrows with a Benedictine
Monk*, after restoration by
Jef Van der Veken. New
York, The Metropolitan
Museum of Art, The
Cloisters Collection, inv. no.
1974-392. Photo: The
Hague, RKD, photo archive
Max J. Friedländer, image no.
0001343534

cette oeuvre, il [Winkler] faudrait être fou pour en discuter l'authenticité' (ill. 6). Renders acknowledged that, on reflection, it would have been better if the provenances of the paintings were mentioned in the catalogue but he abandoned them because he did not want to arouse envy in the former owners.¹⁴

After Renders had signed the letter, he apparently figured out what the reason could have been for Winkler's publication. In a postscript he reports that he met the German art dealer and collector Dr. Hans Wendland, who had been accused by Friedländer 'et d'autres Allemands' of the loan of a painting to the exhibition. 'Il paraît que les Allemands sont furieux contre nous tous parcequ'ils ont été exclus. Ils ignorent que c'est le gouvernement Anglais qui n'a pas voulu d'eux, et c'est nous qui devons encaisser les reproches. Ne serait ce pas là l'origine de la colère de Mr. Winckler [sic]? S'il savait que j'ai été à Berlin, et à mes frais, pour faire des démarches officieuses, je serais pour lui son meilleur ami, et il ne s'attaquerait pas aux collectionneurs belges.' Although the political situation in Europe as a result of the First World War indeed seemed to have played a role in the selection of the lenders, the motive suggested by Renders is no more than an unconvincing attempt at distraction.¹⁵

Renders must also have been aware of this himself, because in a letter to Hulin de Loo a month later, he reported that all owners of the English edition of the catalogue were sent a supplement with the provenances of the exhibited paintings.¹⁶ And, he continues, 'puisqu'il faut se défendre contre les gens malintentionnés, un Winkler, un Delville, et autres esthètes plus intrigants que savants, je continue à rassembler mes documentations.'¹⁷ To show his goodwill, he therefore sent Hulin a few transcriptions of certificates in which the former owners confirm that their painting was transferred to the ownership of Renders and also where they themselves had obtained the painting in question. Renders concluded his letter with an apology: 'Ne voulant que des tableaux intacts, j'en ai laissé passer des certains; ce que je regrette maintenant. Un jour viendra, et il n'est peut-être pas bien loin, où le grand [sic] savant Winkler reconnaîtra lui-même que je sais quelque chose.'

While Renders probably somewhat managed to dispel the accusations against the origins of his collection of paintings, Hulin felt nonetheless compelled to defend himself because a few months after the closure of the exhibition, on 9 June 1927, he gave a lecture at the *Académie Royale de Belgique* in which he discusses the accusation that he had considered fake paintings as originals.¹⁸ He began by saying that in such major exhibitions where many paintings are on loan it is inevitable that largely unknown works are among them and therefore barely examined. It is, Hulin said, the very objective of such exhibitions to be introduced to unknown works and to discuss them, 'd'où le danger de surprises désagréables.'¹⁹ He stated that unlike Winkler, he was able to discover only two paintings that were certainly false, which were moreover not from the collection of Renders. One of the exposed paintings, depicting the *Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine*, indeed generated suspicion in advance, admitted Hulin, but after a detailed examination by an experienced restorer there was little objection to the authenticity of the work (ill. 7).²⁰ And, as he added, is it not true that even the famous and most experienced among the restorers of paintings, the late Professor Hauser from Berlin, has become a victim of forgeries that have been copied after a single specific example?

'En présence d'un amateur fort compétent, M. Renders', thus Hulin, he had the opportunity to question Van der Veken about his forgeries. Van der Veken admitted to Hulin that the *Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine*, which passed all tests previously performed with flying colours and was displayed in the exhibition's *Souvenir Book*, was copied by him some fifteen years ago after a heavily damaged painting of smaller size which was attributed to the Master of the Legend of Saint Lucy (ill. 8).²¹ As proof of his authorship Van der Veken could present photos and a copy in watercolor. He also admitted being the manufacturer of an *Annunciation* (ill. 9).²² Hulin concluded his lecture with the complaint: 'Dieu nous garde le plus longtemps possible de cet enfantillage sénile qu'est la prétention à l'infaillibilité en matière de science.' From Hulin's formulation it is not clear how the connection with Van der Veken was achieved, but the presence of Renders, who worked in previous years with Van der Veken, seems to imply that he had acted as a contact person.²³ This suspicion was reinforced by the honour which Renders claimed for himself a few months later in a letter to Friedländer



7. Jef Van der Veken, *Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine*. Sale The Hague (Glerum), 12-13 November 1996, no. 205. Photo: The Hague, RKD, Archive Jef Van der Veken, image no. 0000382095



8. Attributed to the Master of the Legend of Saint Lucy, *Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine*. London, collection G. Newton Robinson. Photo: The Hague, photo collection RKD, image no. 0000136473



9. Jef Van der Veken,
Annunciation. Sale Cologne
(Math. Lempertz), 29
November-3 December
1968, no. 32. Photo: The
Hague, RKD, Archive Jef Van
der Veken, image no.
0000382071

regarding Hulin's presentation: 'ci joint un bulletin de l'academie des B.[eaux] A.[rts] dans lequel M. Hulin reconnait son erreur concernant les Nos 86 et 283 admis à l'exposition de Londres. C'est moi qui ai signalé ces deux faux à M. Hulin bien avant que Dr. Winkler écrivit dans le *Kunstwanderer* que le "Baronchellimeister war sehr gut vertreten"!'²⁴ It seems that Renders, by participating in the debate actively, tried to refute the suspicions pointed in his direction, with the assumption that it would not be obvious that he would further awaken investigators to the authenticity of his collection.

If this was his intention then Renders hardly succeeded. The Dutch collector and art historian Frits Lugt (1884-1970), who apparently bought a catalogue before entering the exhibition and armed with a pencil browsed the exhibition rooms, entrusted his thoughts to paper about numerous paintings without much fuss.²⁵ Regarding the *Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine* he writes: 'very bright colouring' and 'retouched / according to Winkler even / completely fake / yes!' And at the *Annunciation*: 'old? / hanging high'. Also, paintings from the collection of Renders did not escape a critical judgement. He noted about the so-called Renders Madonna (ill. 10): 'highly suspicious', 'peculiar craquelure' and 'initials de Gros on the back, very suspicious, absolutely fake'.²⁶ Behind the attribution to Hans Memling of the so-called Renders Magdalen (ill. 11), an exact copy after the right panel of the *Braque Triptych* by Rogier van der Weyden, he wrote three big question marks and noted 'later?'²⁷ And also of the quality of *Christ as the Man of Sorrows with a Benedictine Monk* he was not impressed: 'pretty worthless / could be old' (ill. 6).²⁸



10. Reproduction attached to a piece of cardboard representing Rogier van der Weyden's *Virgin and Child, the so-called Renders Madonna* (Tournai, Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. no. 481), on which grid lines are drawn. Photo: The Hague, RKD, Archive Jef Van der Veken, image no. 0000357830



11. Copy after Rogier van der Weyden, *Saint Mary Magdalen, the so-called Renders Magdalen*, after restoration by Jef Van der Veken. Belgian State. Photo: The Hague, photo collection RKD, image no. 0000140848

A few months after the closure of the exhibition a contribution was also published in *The Burlington Magazine* by the British art historian Roger Fry (1866-1934) in which it is explicitly mentioned that already during the exhibition, Winkler's assertion that the observed forgeries originated from two or three Belgian collections, was associated with the name of Renders: 'As M. Renders's Collection was the one which attracted most attention by the surprising quality of its revelations, this phrase was interpreted by several critics and art-historians in this country as applying particularly to that. During the course of the exhibition these suspicions were largely canvassed among those interested in the subject, and the more important pieces in the Renders Collection were singled out as the culprits to which Dr. Winkler had alluded.'²⁹ Although it was agreed given Winkler's wish to study the paintings more closely, as 'on the day after the exhibition closed to the public, facilities were generously afforded to serious amateurs to examine the pictures', and Fry made use of it, he nevertheless disputes the validity of the doubts sown about the collection of Renders: 'for I found no evidence in the pictures themselves which could bring them under suspicion of being forged.' But he agreed that the *Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine* is a forgery, about which, so he wrote, it is said it was manufactured by the same hand which was also accountable for the paintings of Renders. But, he concluded, this cannot be correct, since this forgery is of an entirely different quality and appearance than the works from the collection of Renders. After reading the article Lugt wrote down on a sheet of notes that he added to his copy of Renders' collection catalogue: 'see the naive article by Roger Fry in Burlington Magazine'.³⁰



12. Copy after Rogier van der Weyden, *Saint Mary Magdalen*, before restoration by Jef Van der Veken. Belgian State. Photo: The Hague, photo collection RKD, image no. 0000140847

Whereas Winkler expressed himself with a certain reservation, Maurice Delacre († 1938), however, like Hulin de Loo Professor at Ghent University, was downright displeased about the way Renders attempted to mislead the public.³¹ In a cynically worded article in the May issue of *Gand artistique* he expressed his amazement about the spectacular metamorphosis of the Renders Magdalen, previously no more than a very mediocre copy, after having undergone a ‘restoration’ and assured the reader that there is nothing left of the original representation (ill. 12).³² He criticizes Renders’ attribution to Hans Memling and wonders: ‘Ne pensez-vous pas que M. Renders nous prend pour un peu simples?’ Delacre does not mention Van de Veken by name, but talks about a ‘restaurateur qui rendrait des points à Memling lui-même.’ The offense of Delacre did not get past Renders. Except that he responded to Delacre in the July issue of the same magazine, he wrote in a disgruntled way in the previously cited letter to Friedländer: ‘Profitant de l’erreur commise par les organisateurs de l’exposition, deux grincheux collègues de M. Hulin, membres de l’académie, et à qui le Ministre avait refusé le concours pour l’arrangement de l’exposition, attaquèrent vivement la compétence de M. Hulin. Les deux charmants collègues s’appellent Delville, un peintre et Delacre un petit collectionneur. Vous aurez lu dans la revue “Gand artistique” mai et juillet 1927, ce que M. Delacre dit des organisateurs et de moi-même, et ce que j’ai répondu.’³³ Nevertheless, even Friedländer had his doubts, for in his own copy of the second volume of *Die altniederländische Malerei* he noted in pencil on the Renders Magdalen in the catalogue section, which he had once called just a ‘genaue Wiederholung’ after Rogier van der Weyden: ‘ang.[eblich] Memling / (Renders / Ansicht) / echt?’³⁴

Following Winkler, Friedländer also paid attention to the exhibition in a contribution in *Der Cicerone*.³⁵ Remarkably, he did not devote a single word to the matters raised by his colleague Winkler and the unenviable position in which Hulin was placed. Perhaps Friedländer did not wish to put Hulin under pressure in public, whom he highly appreciated as an art historian. That all the commotion, however, did not go unnoticed by him is clear from the previously mentioned statement from Hofstede de Groot in the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*.³⁶ De Groot writes that he repeatedly visited the exhibition in Friedländer’s company and that this brought him in contact with some of the suspicion-ridden paintings. Friedländer thus told Hofstede de Groot that he was in possession of a picture of the damaged original of the *Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine*, of which Van de Veken had made his imitation (ills. 7-8). ‘The damaged spots belonged to the Christ Child holding the ring, to put it on the Holy Bride’s finger. This damaged piece must have been in the possession of a forger, who imitated it in enlarged size. However, he did not know how to cope with the missing spot. With what he has made of it, one gets the impression that the Christ Child is cleaning the nail of the outstretched holy hand. The ring, which should have been put on the finger, is missing, because it was lacking in the example that the forger imitated. In this case one can say with 99 percent certainty that this piece is a fake, but an attentive critic does not say it is a forgery before all the possibilities of a comprehensive course of



13. Rogier van der Weyden, *Virgin and Child, the so-called Renders Madonna*, before restoration by Jef Van der Veken. Tournai, Musée des Beaux-Arts, inv. no. 481. Photo: Brussels, KIK/IRPA, negative no. B017058



14. Rogier van der Weyden, *Virgin and Child, the so-called Renders Madonna*, during restoration by Jef Van der Veken. Photo: The Hague, RKD, Archive Jef Van der Veken, image no. 0000357831

research have been considered.³⁷ Nevertheless, the painting was, like the *Annunciation*, omitted in the *Memorial Volume* published later that year.³⁸

Furthermore, regarding another painting in the exhibition, depicting a 'Madonna', according to Hofstede de Groot, Friedländer possessed a photo of it 'in the state before the restoration. There were holes in the depiction itself, with the paint completely fallen off. Currently, the painting is hanging in London in a restored state, the holes filled and temporarily restored. This adjustment was skillfully done, yet in a personal style and this style was visible in some other paintings over their entire surfaces. Provisional conclusion: the person who only reworked the missing parts on

the real painting, painted the other pieces entirely.³⁹ Although it cannot be indisputably proven, it is very plausible that this is the Renders Madonna that was heavily restored by Van der Veken a few years earlier, and which recently underwent extensive research (ills. 13-14).⁴⁰ The work was published for the first time by Hulin de Loo in 1924 and in the same year also by Friedländer. In contrast to Hulin, who rebukes the depiction of the Christ Child as weak and concludes this part of the depiction to be by a workshop assistant, Friedländer postulated in the second volume of *Die altniederländische Malerei* outright that he identified it as being by the hand of Rogier van der Weyden.⁴¹ Perhaps there is another reason for Friedländer's reticence in public during the exhibition in 1927: with the publication of the painting a few years earlier, he did not notice the applied but highly sophisticated restoration.

That the phenomenon of false or falsified Flemish primitives continued to persistently cast doubts appears to be the case as Winkler more than two years later, on 23 September 1929, during the annual conference organized in Leipzig of the *Verband von Museumsbeamten zur Abwehr von Fälschungen und unlauterem Geschäftsgebaren*, again refers back to his statements that he made in *Der Kunstwanderer* in 1927.⁴² He not only held Van der Veken responsible for the forgeries that slowly became evident in the course of time, but he also held others responsible for the 'geschickte Weise' of forging of 'primitive Bilder'. Moreover, on second thoughts, he wished to rephrase what he had claimed in the discussion of the exhibition: that the majority of the twelve exhibited works were not 'gefälscht' and a few 'verfälscht', but on the contrary: 'die Mehrzahl [war] höchstwahrscheinlich verfälscht'.⁴³ Furthermore, he reported that the presence of wholly forged or partly forged paintings at the exhibition was confirmed although in a general sense, but that he also received his fair share of accusations of slander. As an explanation for the accusations he indicates that nobody before him had revealed the presence of the forgeries. He also repeated, because of the importance of the content, the most crucial aspects of the paper that Hulin de Loo had provided for the *Académie Royale de Belgique*. After listing countless newly signalled forgeries, whereby he claimed that he suspected that a number of them were produced by Van der Veken, he finished by wishing 'noch Zweifel an den beiden Madonnen aus dem Rogierkreise aus[zu]drücken, die bei Friedländer "Altniederländische Malerei", Bd. II, Taf. 76, 78, ausgeführt sind. [...] Ich urteile allerdings nur nach den Abbildungen bei Friedländer.'⁴⁴ It concerned two paintings with a depiction of the *Virgin and Child* included by Friedländer in catalogue C under the works by followers and copyists of Rogier van der Weyden.

The following year it was announced to the participants of the conference, this time gathering in Stockholm, that Friedländer had reacted in writing on the postulated suspicions by Winkler and saw absolutely no reason to consider both paintings as forgeries.⁴⁵ Winkler had reacted to this, also in writing, and was evidently prepared to withdraw his former conclusions, further emphasising that his opinion was merely based on the images. It appeared that Winkler felt insufficiently supported by Friedländer, because he also stated that he would greatly appreciate if Friedländer would be prepared to comment on forgeries of early Netherlandish paintings. The

conference participants decided to request an account by Friedländer regarding this subject. Whether the request ever reached him or he turned it down is unknown, but in the announcements from the *Verband von Museumsbeamten* there is no mention of any account by Friedländer. But Friedländer may also have regarded it as superfluous since in 1929 *Echt und Unecht. Aus den Erfahrungen des Kunstkenner* appeared, in which an entire chapter is devoted to forgery practices.⁴⁶ Friedländer characterises the creation and discovery of forgeries as a continuous race between forger and expert. After all, advancing knowledge about technique and style on the part of the connoisseur necessitates that the forger must look for increasingly sophisticated methods in order not to be detected. After devoting extensive attention to the various techniques applied by forgers and the characteristics by which a falsified or forged painting can be recognised, he also vents for the first time his dissatisfaction regarding the gloating over the expert when he does not recognise a forgery and his judgement thus appears fallible: ‘Von Zeit zu Zeit werden aber Reinfälle angesehener Kunstforscher mit schadenfrohen Sensationslust begrüßt. Der Laie zieht nicht ohne Befriedigung aus solchen Vorkommnissen den Schluß, es gäbe keine zuverlässige Sachkunde auf dem Gebiete der Kunst. Eine plumpe Denkweise vermag nicht mit Wahrscheinlichkeiten zu rechnen.’ After stating that subjectivity is embedded in connoisseurship, resulting in the fact that this branch of scholarship is difficult to monitor, he came to the conclusion that ‘angesehene Kenner zumeist Fälschungen zum Opfer gefallen [sind], deren Art neu war. Das heißt: die ersten Produkte eines Fälschers sind die gefährlichsten. Offenbar ist es leichter zu bemerken: dies ist eine Arbeit von jener verdächtig gewordenen Art –, als zu urteilen: dies kann nicht echt sein. Die positiven Eigenschaften der Fälschung verraten sich eher als die negativen.’ It seemed obvious that these words were partially dictated by the unfortunate mistake that his respected colleague Hulin de Loo had made.

In *Von Kunst und Kennerschaft*, Friedländer’s last publication devoted to connoisseurship, he adopted a significantly tougher stance when it came to forgery practices. Words such as deception, trickery and duplicity are applied. As soon as a forgery appeared, according to Friedländer, it usually proceeded as follows: ‘Lange dauernde Diskussion und Meinungsstreit über Fälschungen gibt es selten. Der typische Vorgang läuft so ab: das Werk taucht auf aus dem Dunkel, wird bewundert, dann durchschaut, verurteilt und sinkt in den Orkus. Es hinterläßt nichts als schweigende Scham bei den Beteiligten und überlegenes Schmunzeln bei den Unbeteiligten.’⁴⁷ He himself also, he writes, has not always seen the lack of authenticity of works of art: ‘Ich möchte ja nicht, daß meine Darlegungen den Eindruck hervorbrächten, ich fühlte mich sicher. Dies ist keineswegs der Fall. Nicht nur ich selbst bin, sondern auch meine Lehrer, die ich verehere, sind getäuscht worden, allerdings, wie es nachträglich aussah, unbegreiflicherweise.’⁴⁸ And regarding the many forgeries flooding the market from Belgium: ‘Da die Fälscher ihrer Auffassung des Berufes nach Fabrikanten sind, stellen sie oft mehrere Exemplare eines Fälsikates her, wie denn aus den belgischen Werkstätten, die in den letzten Jahrzehnten den Bedarf an altniederländischen Tafeln reichlich befriedigt haben, Dubletten aufgetaucht sind.’⁴⁹



15. Master Wilhelm or Master of Saint Veronica, *Christ as the Man of Sorrows with the Virgin and Child and Saint Catherine*. Antwerp, Royal Museum of Fine Arts, inv. no. 5070. Photo: Brussels, KIK/IRPA, negative no. B167775

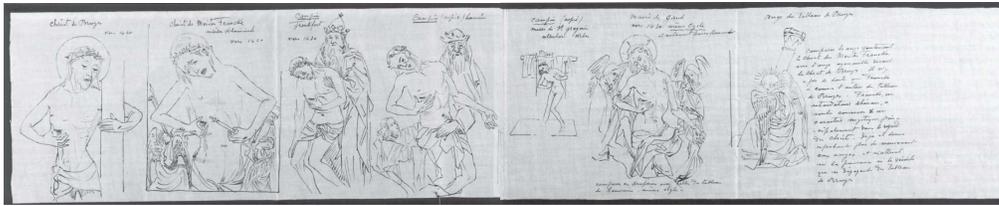
Acquisitions by Renders

A year after the London exhibition Renders published an exchange of letters in *Apollo*, in a probable attempt to provide implied evidence for his connoisseurship, which he had indulged in four years earlier with 'le savant historien et technicien Dr Max Friedländer' regarding a painting from his collection and gave his article the subtitle: 'découvert à Bruges, avec le concours de [sic] Dr Max Friedländer'.⁵⁰ It concerned a panel with *Christ as the Man of Sorrows with the Virgin and Saint Catherine*, that Renders according to himself had discovered in the house of an elderly resident of Bruges (ill. 15). In order to emphasise his connoisseur's eye, Renders, with an eye for the effect it will have, literally cited the replies from Friedländer in his report of the trials and tribulations concerning his discovery. In an initial reaction, dated 15 March 1924, Friedländer wrote to Renders: 'Ich habe so viel Vertrauen zu Ihrem bewährten Gefühl, dass ich meine, Sie können sich ruhig Ihrem Instinkt anvertrauen.' Following this, so continued Renders, he left for Cologne in order to verify the origins of the painter's oeuvre in the museum there and wrote a report of his findings. He was convinced that the Bruges panel was by the same hand as a panel depicting the *Crucifixion* in the

museum in Cologne and that the Bruges panel should equally be ascribed to the same master that painted the *Madonna mit der Wickenblüte*.⁵¹ After Friedländer explained one thing and another in a follow up correspondence about 'die etwas dunkle Benennung der frühen Kölnischen Bilder', over which there was still a lack of clarity with Renders, he ended his letter with a recommendation: 'Falls Ihr Bild an Qualität der Kreuziging in Köln und der Madonna mit der Wicke, gleichkommt, rate ich zum Ankauf.' Thus, wrote Renders, the valuable help and advice of Dr. Friedländer led him to purchase the Bruges panel. He sent a photo of his acquisition to Berlin and received the following reply: 'Das Kölnische Bild ist sicherlich ein vortreffliches Werk des sog. Meisters Wilhelm, den man auch Meister der Hl. Veronica genannt hat. Ich glaube nicht dass es besseres in dieser Stilart gibt, u. gratuliere zu der Erwerbung.' Renders ended his report with the statement that from a detailed study he was able to relate the Bruges panel to 'Meister Wilhelm'. The most delicate question that is raised in art criticism, he continued, relates to the attribution. It demands extensive preparatory studies, for which both the historian and the technical specialist are necessary. These qualities are not typically found in one and the same art expert. It is therefore important that the historian, who studies the critical sources, and the technical specialist, who has perfected his knowledge of the stylistic characteristics of artists, work very closely together. From his argumentation it is however unclear which role he assigned himself in this. Friedländer encompassed both qualities, as he had confirmed at the beginning.

Furthermore, regarding the panel depicting *Christ as the Man of Sorrows with a Benedictine Monk* Renders had sought contact in 1924 with Friedländer, as appeared from a transcript of the letter that Renders sent to Georges Hulin de Loo (ill. 6).⁵² In the letter Renders explained that the painting was of outstanding quality and he attempted to place it in the context of a painterly tradition. While Renders claims not to have felt empowered to make an announcement about the attribution, he did however have an idea about it and wrote half jokingly: 'Hé bien, M^r. Friedländer, je pense que l'oeuvre est de Hubert!'

Almost immediately after Friedländer had received Renders' examination of his newly acquired painting, he wrote back, as appears once again from a transcript that Renders sent to Hulin de Loo.⁵³ Friedländer confirmed that he was very interested to hear of Renders' 'höchst interessanten und Sachkundigungen [sic] Bemerkungen zu diesem offenbar ausgezeichneten Werke'. In so far as he could judge from the photo that was sent, so Friedländer wrote, he was in agreement with Renders that this was a high quality painting that, on the basis of the fall of drapery folds in the clothing, must date from before 1420. Despite this, Friedländer also noticed some anomalies that are not in accordance with Renders' proposed early dating, such as the perspectival construction of the tiled floor and the 'realistic' depiction of the head of the figure of Christ, parts of the composition that were overpainted in a clever manner by Van der Veken.⁵⁴ Friedländer established that he had never seen such an appealing work and confirmed this with the announcement: 'Jedenfalls gratuliere ich Ihnen zu dieser Erwerbung die nur einem "Kenner" glücken konnte. Der banale Händler und unselbständige Sammler wäre an diesen Stück vorbeigegangen.'



13-14. Drawings and notes by Emile Renders placing the *Christ as the Man of Sorrows with a Benedictine Monk* (ill. 6) in a pictorial tradition. Ghent, University Library, Archive Georges Hulin de Loo, Hs 3095, no. 1008. © Ghent, University Library

Renders, who without doubt was aware of the heavy restoration that his acquisition had endured, attempted not only to secure Friedländer's approval, but also tried to entice Hulin de Loo to form a similar opinion. More than a year after the dispatch of the transcripts Renders wrote to Hulin: 'Quand vous avez vu pour la première fois mon "Christ de Pitié" il vous a frappé tout comme il m'avait frappé; et spontanément vous m'avez félicité tout comme M^r. Friedländer m'avait félicité. Tous les deux vous avez vu juste et grand! L'appréciation des deux plus forts savants en la matière me suffit. Et maintenant je m'amuse en observant l'attitude que prennent les peureux, les hésitants et les chercheurs de puces devant une oeuvre inconnue et pas cataloguée.'⁵⁵ Hulin did not allow himself to be so easily convinced, because a few months later Renders sent him an almost three page study, supplemented by illustrations from his hand, in which he drew parallels between the *Christ as the Man of Sorrows with a Benedictine Monk* and paintings with comparable depictions by among others Master Francke, Robert Campin (his research on the existence of the Master of Flémalle alias Robert Campin had not yet begun in these years) and Jacques Daret (ills. 13-14).⁵⁶ To what extent Hulin confirmed Renders' explanation is unknown, but the fact that he also found the painting difficult to place within the painterly tradition of the fifteenth century, seems evident from the foreword of the catalogue of Renders' paintings collection from 1927 in which he remarked that the work 'reste un problème pour tous les connaisseurs.'⁵⁷ Despite this the panel aroused no real suspicion, because it was approved for the London exhibition *Flemish and Belgian Art, 1300-1900* in 1927.⁵⁸

That Friedländer also viewed an acquisition by Renders on occasion with suspicion is evident from the letter from Renders in reaction to the lecture of Hulin de Loo in 1927.⁵⁹ It concerned a painting with a depiction of the *Virgin and Child* that was taken by Renders to be an authentic work by Quinten Massijs (ills. 15-16).⁶⁰ On the



15. Quinten Massijs, *Virgin and Child*, after restoration by Jef Van der Veken. Brussels, Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, inv. no. 6647. Photo: The Hague, RKD, Archive Jef Van der Veken, image no. 0000382092



16. Quinten Massijs, *Virgin and Child*, during restoration by Jef Van der Veken. Photo: The Hague, RKD, Archive Jef Van der Veken, image no. 0000382091

basis of the photo Friedländer judged that the painting made him think of the work of the Brussels forger, by which he undoubtedly meant Van der Veken.⁶¹ This suspicion was apparently also sparked by the lack of details about the provenance. Renders made great efforts to remove Friedländer's doubts. He 'revealed' that he had bought the painting for 53,000 francs – the asking price was 75,000 francs – from a 'petit antiquaire de Bruxelles' who had in turn bought it for 2,500 francs. It is precisely the working method as described by Hélène Verougstraete, Roger Van Schoute and Jean-Luc Pypaert in the catalogue of the exhibition devoted to Van der Veken in 2004-2005: Renders made money available to Van der Veken to purchase paintings in a poor state and then to restore them to the level of perfect-looking Flemish primitives.⁶² Thereafter, Renders reported extensively about his research on a painting with a similar subject from the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium in Brussels with the eventual conclusion that his painting should be considered as original and that of the museum as a copy (ill. 17).⁶³ In order to emphasise the authenticity of his find he also referred to the judgement of Hulin: 'Quant à son authenticité et sa pureté absolue, je suis bien tranquille [sic]. M. Hulin a vu les petites restaurations insignifiantes et m'a chaleureusement félicité pour cette intéressante trouvaille!' Renders maintained his contention by expressing the conviction that 'le jour où vous aurez l'occasion de comparer les oeuvres, vous serez entièrement de notre avis. Vous constaterez également qu'il ne peut être question ni de "stark restauriert" ni de "verfalscht" [sic] ni de "Falschüng" [sic] trois mots lancés au Burlington House par Winkler qui ont mis en méfiance les esprits hésitants.'



17. Workshop copy after Quinten Massijs, *Virgin and Child*. Brussels, Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, inv. no. 377. Photo: Brussels, KIK/IRPA, negative no. B203279

As part of the same effort to remove doubt about the authenticity of a section of his paintings collection, Renders' contribution in *The Burlington Magazine* from 1928 entitled 'Cracks in Flemish Primitives' also served this purpose, as would appear from the same letter to Friedländer: 'En attendant que Dr. Winkler écrive ce qu'il a déclaré verbalement au Burlington House, au sujet de ma collection, je prépare une étude scientifique'.⁶⁴ And as proof for the support received from the art historical field: 'J'ai donné cette conférence devant M. Hulin et quelques autres savants. Je n'ai rien que des félicitations.' Without referring to the exhibition of 1927, Renders claimed in his article to have as his objective the illustration, on the basis of an overview of 'the different methods employed by fakers to produce artificial cracks' and a number of paintings from the Bruges Saint John's Hospital and from his own collection – *Christ as the Man of Sorrows with a Benedictine Monk* and the *Renders Magdalen* – of 'certain important points regarding the distinction between genuine and imitation Flemish primitives' (ills. 6 and 11). The clever selected details from his own work should, alongside those of the works from the Saint John's Hospital, be taken as examples of craquelure caused by ageing. He did not, however, show images of how artificially applied craquelure should look. Just as Renders at the time probably led Hulin de Loo to Van der Veken in an attempt to demonstrate his reputation of being trustworthy, he also addressed himself with a similar mindset in his article to 'the majority of collectors and critics', of whom he brazenly claimed that they knew too little of the difference between genuine and imitation. 'It is advisable even for those who have a natural gift of feeling and vision to know by what practical means it is possible to distinguish between the authentic primitive and the forgery, to learn how the cracks and the areas of pigment enclosed by them differ as between an original and a fake.'

The question of the Master of Flémalle

In these years Renders began to publish on the art historical question that occupied scholars since the nineteenth century and to which he referred as 'l'énigme du Maître de Flémalle' or 'the enigma of the Master of Flémalle'.⁶⁵ Together with others, Winkler, Hulin de Loo and Friedländer also took part in this debate.⁶⁶ The core question in this issue was whether a group of paintings exhibiting a closely related style to that of Rogier van der Weyden should or should not be separated as constituting the work of the Master of Flémalle and if this anonymous artist, such as Hulin had suggested, could be identified with Robert Campin who, according to Tournai archival sources was the teacher of a certain 'Rogelet' or 'Rogier de le Pasture' or indeed Rogier van der Weyden. For a period of about two decades Friedländer operated on the understanding that the Master of Flémalle alias Robert Campin was a different personality to Rogier van der Weyden, though he had major doubts regarding the manner in which both artists are related to each other. In the foreword of the second volume of *Die altniederländische Malerei* from 1924 Friedländer writes that what he presents to the reader about the Master of Flémalle and Rogier van der Weyden should be interpreted as a collection of facts that were reached after a long process of research and deliberation. The result, as he proposes, remains, however, subject to

doubt: 'mein Text geht den Weg der Forschung, nicht den des historischen Geschehens.'⁶⁷

The weak point in the hypothesis that assumed the existence of two artistic personalities that were related to each other as teacher and pupil, was according to Friedländer that on the basis of stylistic grounds there was no clear division between the work of both painters. When considering the *Merode Triptych*, then, 'den Autor [tritt] deutlich als eine von Rogier verschiedene Persönlichkeit [hervor]. Die Gefahr einer Verwechslung scheint fernzuliegen. Die Grenzlinie aber, deren wir hier sicher zu sein glauben, wird verwischt, sobald wir, ausgehend vom Merode-Altar, andere Schöpfungen dem "Werke" des sogenannten Flémalle-Meisters hinzufügen.'⁶⁸ He also questioned whether Rogier, certainly given that he was almost thirty, was rather to be considered as workshop assistant to the Master of Flémalle and thus that the common stylistic features were a result of that: 'Jedenfalls gewinnen wir aus diesem Zusammenhang ein Argument für Atelieregemeinschaft zwischen den beiden Meistern, damit ein Beweisstück für die Identität Robert Campins und des Flémalle-Meisters, zugleich aber einen warnenden Hinweis, Rogiers Verhältnis zum Flémalle-Meister nicht als ein Schülerverhältnis schlechthin aufzufassen, und damit wieder ein Argument gegen die Identifizierung.'⁶⁹

Friedländer was convinced that the *Merode Triptych* should be attributed to the same hand as the panels with representations of the *Virgin and Child*, *Saint Veronica* (ills. 18-19) and the *Holy Trinity*, by which, due to the alleged provenance from a monastery in Flémalle, the Master of Flémalle was given his name.⁷⁰ However, at the same time he noticed stylistic characteristics in the Frankfurt panels that 'mit Entschiedenheit' point to Rogier, which led him to suggest that the panels were possibly the result of a collaboration between the Master of Flémalle and his assistant Rogier van der Weyden. The unclear division between both artists was most clearly to be seen here and Friedländer considered it very understandable that 'ein Kenner vom Range Ludwig Scheiblers' (1848-1921), his former teacher at the Berlin museums, 'die Bestimmung auf Rogier vor diesen Tafeln niemals aufzugeben bereit war, verstehen auch den Versuch, den Firmenich-Richartz gerade an dieser Stelle unternahm, die "Werke" der beiden Meister zusammenschweißen.'⁷¹ Although Friedländer did not wish to go so far, these words would ultimately herald a change in perspective.

In the thesis presented by Renders a few years later in his publication *La solution du problème v.d. Weyden, Flémalle, Campin*, the solution to an age-old problem appeared to be found.⁷² Building upon the insights of Friedländer, Renders was led to a denial of the existence of the Master of Flémalle and considered the work ascribed to him as the immature work of Rogier. He also denied that the 'Rogier' or 'Rogelet de le Pasture' mentioned in the Tournai archival sources was identical to Rogier van der Weyden. In Friedländer he felt he had found an ally in terms of his views. In 1931, shortly after the date of appearance, Renders suggested to Friedländer to write a review about his book. Friedländer replied to him in a letter dated 10 April 1931 that he was not unwilling to consider this: 'Falls ich über Ihr Buch schreibe, möchte ich es in einer deutschen Zeitschrift tun, um gut verstanden zu werden. Die Übersetzung



18-19. Master of Flémalle (Robert Campin), *Virgin and Child and Saint Veronica*. Frankfurt am Main, Städel Museum, inv. nos. 939, 939A. © Städel Museum

entstellt meinen Text fast stets. – Ich habe Ihr Buch zu studieren begonnen, bin noch keineswegs fertig. Sagen aber kann ich schon heut, daß Sie ausgezeichnet gearbeitet u.[nd] mich in wesentlichen Punkten überzeugt haben. Die Trennung der beiden “Rogier”, womit der Campin-Hypothese der Boden entzogen wird, scheint mir durchaus gelungen zu sein.⁷³ He also expresses his appreciation for Scheibler again: ‘Ich weiß nicht, ob ich Ihnen erzählt habe, daß L. Scheibler bis an sein Lebensende die Frankfurter Tafeln für Werke Rogiers gehalten hat. Und Scheibler verstand von dessen Dingen in seiner Generation am meisten, mehr als v.[on] Tschudi u.[nd] Bode.’⁷⁴

However, Friedländer considered the political battle between Flemings and Walloons that the issue had raised, objectionable. Renders’ thesis implied that by denying the existence of the Master of Flémalle, the school of Tournai, formed by Robert Campin and his pupils Rogier van der Weyden and Jacques Daret, as defended by Jules Destrée (1863-1936), former Minister of Arts and Sciences and chairman of the *Société les Amis de l’Art Wallon*, would as well be denied.⁷⁵ Instead, Renders proposed the hypothesis that Rogier was a pupil of Jan van Eyck who worked in Flanders. The unmistakable wording in which this dispute was argued, illustrates for example a discussion of Renders’ book by Urbain Van de Voorde in the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* of 23 April 1931: ‘But meanwhile we Flemings are also not obliged to allow our cultural patrimonium to be plundered by zealous Walonian regionalists, who, empty-handed as they stand in the face of history, attempt to claim much of our influence. This needs to be curtailed, because after this first breach they will quickly turn to other objects. The snowball had begun to roll tremendously.’⁷⁶ Friedländer preferred not to be drawn into this dispute: ‘Schlimm ist das Politische in dieser Frage. Dadurch wird die wissen[schaftliche] Objektivität arg behindert. Ich fühle mich, wie Sie sich denken können, völlig neutral. Dennoch wird auch meine Äußerung von den Politikern als politisch beeinflusst betrachtet werden. Leider Gottes.’⁷⁷

Renders rather quickly sent a letter to Friedländer in which he announced the positive reception of his book. Friedländer replied to him on 1 May 1931: 'Vielen Dank für Ihren letzten Brief. Ich gratuliere zu der günstigen Aufnahme, die Ihre Darstellung findet. Ohne Zweifel wird auch Widerspruch laut werden, hoffentlich in anständiger u.[nd] würdiger Tonart u.[nd] frei von politischer Leidenschaftlichkeit. Ich habe Ihren Text eifrig studiert, bin aber noch nicht zu Ende gekommen. Besonders tiefen Eindruck macht mir Ihre Erwägung, daß, wenn Campin der Fl.[émalle]-Meister wäre, Roger als ein unselbständiger Nachahmer dastünde.' He also revealed why the Master of Flémalle as an independent artistic personality had failed: 'Dann noch etwas wichtiges: jede richtige stilkritische Kombination ist fruchtbar, hat gute Folgen, wird durch neue Funde bestätigt. Die Konstruktion des Fl.[émalle]-Meisters aber hat bei jeder neuen Erscheinung versagt. Als wir das schöne Frauenportrait aus Petersburg bekommen hatten, sagte Hulin: Fl.[émalle]-M[ei]st[er] ich dagegen: Roger. Als der kleine Georg in London auftauchte, schwankten alle erfahrenen Kenner zwischen R.[oger] u. Fl.[émalle]-M[ei]st[er]. Die Grenze, die durch neues Bildmaterial deut[licher] hätte werden müssen, wurde immer unklarer.'⁷⁸

A few months later in *Pantheon* under the title 'Flémalle-Meister-Dämmerung' the review promised by Friedländer regarding the book by Renders appeared, whom he referred to as a 'selbständiger Beobachter, ein unabhängiger Bilderkenner, ein enthusiastischer Kunstfreund'.⁷⁹ He repeats what he claimed already in 1916 in his first survey entitled *Von Eyck bis Bruegel*, namely that the so-called Master of Flémalle was created from a rib from Rogier and states: 'Anstoß genommen hat man schon immer an dem seltsamen Umstand, daß ein Mann von 27 Jahren, der maître genannt und von der Stadt [Tournai] geehrt worden ist, als Lehrling in das Atelier Campins eingetreten wäre. Renders bestreitet die Identität der Personen in den beiden Urkunden, wie ich glaube, mit vollem Rechte.'⁸⁰ If the mention of a 'Rogelet de le Pasture' in the Tournai archival sources contains no references to the apprenticeship of Rogier van der Weyden with Robert Campin, then there would be, according to Friedländer, no grounds for the hypothesis that the Master of Flémalle can be identified with Campin. The artistic personality of the Master of Flémalle is according to Friedländer definitively less certain. Already in *Die altniederländische Malerei* 'spürt man, wie sich das Wetter zusammenzieht, das in dem Buch von Renders losbricht.' Friedländer seemed entirely convinced by the evidence claimed by Renders: 'Mit der Möglichkeit des Anders-Werdens pflegen die Stilkritiker zu rechnen, sie sollten aber lernen, mit der Notwendigkeit des Anders-Werdens zu rechnen.' No matter how much Friedländer was influenced by the solution Renders put forward for 'the riddle of the Master of Flémalle', the conviction that Rogier van der Weyden was a pupil of Jan van Eyck in Bruges and therefore had his roots in Flanders, was viewed by him with caution: 'Man braucht nicht so weit zu gehen wie Renders, der [...] Roger ganz eigentlich als einen Schüler Jan van Eycks betrachtet.' He was however of the opinion that much of Rogier's development could be explained if there had been a relationship between the two.

Dirk De Vos in his monograph on Rogier van der Weyden from 1999 proposed that Friedländer had become too much influenced by what Friedländer himself describes as 'klug gewählten' details from the paintings by the Master of Flémalle and Rogier van der Weyden, whom Renders cleverly placed opposite each other in order to demonstrate that the works were in fact produced by the same hand. 'In the process, he mixed details of different sizes, his black-and-white photographs concealed differences of colour, blurred enlargements were retouched and nowhere was the overall composition taken into account.'⁸¹ Furthermore, certain images were shown in mirror image in order to simplify the comparison of the various details.⁸²

After the appearance of Friedländer's discussion in *Pantheon*, Renders again wrote a letter to Friedländer in which he asked if he could translate the piece into French. On 24 October 1931 Friedländer replied: 'Ich habe nichts dagegen, wenn Sie glauben im Interesse der Wahrheit eine französische Übersetzung meines Pantheon-Aufsatzes verbreiten zu sollen. Lieber ist mir freilich, möglichst wenig in den wirren Streit hineingezogen zu werden. Ich glaube, Sie können mit Gleichmut die Sache reifen lassen. Wenn Sie Recht haben, wie ich meine, werden sich aus ferneren Beobachtungen Tatsachen von selbst ergeben, die Ihre Ansicht bestätigen.'⁸³ Furthermore, from a letter from a few years later it appeared that Friedländer did not subscribe to the aggressive manner in which Renders greeted colleagues who had a different opinion. He wrote on 5 July 1939, probably in reaction to an allegation by Renders that Hulin de Loo stuck doggedly to his approach based on his earlier identification of the Master of Flémalle with Robert Campin and Rogier van der Weyden as a separate artistic personality: 'Über Hulin urteile ich etwas anders als Sie. Ich kenne ihn seit 1902 u.[nd] habe oft seinen Scharfblick beobachtet. Freilich hat er den sehr menschlichen Fehler, der sich namentlich im Alter bemerkbar macht, an Irrtümern u.[nd] Hypothesen starr festzuhalten. Auf dem heikeln Gebiet der Kunst muß man jeder Zeit bereit sein, um zu lernen u.[nd] Vermutungen fallen zu lassen. H.[ulin] ist allem in allem reicher an Kenntnissen u.[nd] Erfahrungen als Irgendjemand in Belgien.'⁸⁴

In the fourteenth and last volume of *Die altniederländische Malerei*, which appeared in 1937, Friedländer returned again to what he claimed in the second volume.⁸⁵ The conviction with which he defended Renders' insights several years before in *Pantheon*, remained unchanged. In his monograph from 2002 about Robert Campin, Felix Thürlemann stated that Friedländer identified with the views of Renders because it represented an escape from the dilemma of the difficulty in drawing the line between the Master of Flémalle and Rogier van der Weyden.⁸⁶ With this he disagreed with the argumentation proposed by Erwin Panofsky in the introduction to the reprinted *Die altniederländische Malerei*, where he stated that Friedländer's flexibility was not only a question of intellectual conviction, but also of character: 'In point of fact, [Friedländer] would occasionally abandon a position even where it was unnecessary (in other words, if his original judgment had been quite right), as when he, who in a masterly page had defined the basic difference between the Master of Flémalle and Rogier van der Weyden, allowed himself to be swayed by the clamorous zeal of those

who insisted that these two painters were the same person. This generous tolerance was a matter not only of intellectual conviction but also, I think, of character; for M.J. Friedländer was, appearances notwithstanding, a man both modest and kind. The iron self-control and elegant aloofness of the Prussian *Geheimrat* and the quick-witted irony of the native Berliner were only an armour indispensable for the protection of a warm and vulnerable heart.⁸⁷ Panofsky, whom Friedländer knew well, could not have worded it better. The same courtesy characterises the tone of his letters. On the one hand the willingness to be open to the views of others for the sake of scholarship, on the other hand too kind when for the sake of personal gain people tried to make good impressions.

Albert Châtelet stated in his monograph on Robert Campin from 1996 that Friedländer in 1950 when the exhibition *120 beroemde schilderijen uit het Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum te Berlijn* was on display in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, shared with insiders the fact that he let himself be misled by Renders' thesis.⁸⁸ However the situation, in the modest contribution published by Friedländer as a result of this exhibition in the *Maandblad voor Beeldende Kunsten*, it is noticeable that he formulates cautiously when he writes: 'Wir stossen hier auf die unsichere, immer unsicherer gewordene Grenze zwischen den beiden Meistern. Einige Gelehrte haben in neuerer Zeit das Werk des Flémalle-Meisters dem Werke Rogiers vorgestuft' and in connection with the *Portrait of a Fat Man* that is variously attributed to both artists (ill. 20): 'Also auch hier werden wir geneigt, den Flémalle-Meister zu verabschieden.'⁸⁹ One of the last letters Friedländer wrote to Renders dated from 18 July 1951. In relation to the now twenty year old thesis Friedländer happily announced: 'Im Londoner Handel ist eine alte Kopie nach dem Mittelbilde des Merode-Altars aufgetaucht mit der Inschrift: Rogier van Brughe. Wichtiger Argument für Ihre-unsre-These!'⁹⁰



20. Master of Flémalle (Robert Campin) or Rogier van der Weyden, *Portrait of a Fat Man*. Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Gemäldegalerie, inv. no. 537A. © Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

The question of Hubert van Eyck

Another issue in which Friedländer a thesis of Renders had ‘als die Wegschaffung eines Hindernisses aufatmend begrüßt’, concerned the question of the extent of the participation of Hubert van Eyck, the older brother of Jan van Eyck, in *The Ghent Altarpiece* or *The Adoration of the Mystic Lamb*, that according to the quatrain on the outside was begun by him.⁹¹ In contrast to the investigation regarding the Master of Flémalle, in which Friedländer, urged by already existing doubts, made a complete turnaround, he found himself from the outset in the same camp as Renders regarding the question of Hubert van Eyck. Once again building on the insights of Friedländer, who was not successful in identifying two different artistic personalities in *The Ghent Altarpiece*, Renders claimed to have found the solution. In his book that appeared in 1933 entitled *Hubert van Eyck. Personnage de légende* he presented the older brother of Jan van Eyck as a legendary figure that never actually existed.⁹² According to Renders the quatrain was added no earlier than the late sixteenth century by jealous Ghent city patriots, after *The Ghent Altarpiece* was removed from the church for a period of time due to Iconoclasm. While Friedländer in this respect saw a welcome proof for the anonymity into which Hubert had sunk, he was nevertheless of the opinion that the existence of the older brother was still not completely invalidated, in the way Renders indisputably claimed to have proved. After all, he observed: ‘Legenden pflegen ein Kern von Wahrheit zu enthalten.’⁹³

Just as Winkler in 1927 during the exhibition in London felt obliged to take a stand, he did this again after the appearance of *Hubert van Eyck. Personnage de légende*. In 1934 he devoted a discussion to this in the *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* with the title ‘Der Streit um Hubert van Eyck’.⁹⁴ From the text in businesslike formulated language it is unmistakable that Winkler had taken offense to the lack of scholarly approach supporting Renders’ argumentation and he established that the storm that Renders in the course of two years had caused with the statement of his thesis in the Belgian press after the appearance of his book, had not grown but was rather watered down to a ‘storm in a teacup’. ‘Es scheint, als ob die Gemüter, die sich bei der Ankündigung der Thesen Renders erhitzt hatten, inzwischen des Streites müde geworden oder von seinem Buch enttäuscht worden seien.’ He also criticised the high-handed tone with which Renders, both in this publication and in the previous one about the Master of Flémalle, peers who hold a different view of the situation – including Hulin de Loo – and moreover the way in which he distilled from Friedländers carefully formulated views radical visions that he subsequently presented as personal findings. That Winkler in his discussion had hit a nerve with Renders was clear from a letter Renders wrote in January 1935, but from which it is not clear whether it was ever actually sent to Winkler. In alternating abusive and poisonous words Renders spewed his gall over the established scholars who did not want to recognize the correctness of his thesis and preferred not to mention him, a ‘non-diplômé’, at all: ‘Vous dites que mon livre n’a suscité que de très faibles échos. Cela est très juste et j’ai constaté ce fait indéniable et symptomatique [sic] avec un plaisir énorme, parce que ce silence est une preuve que mon livre a réduit au silence les esprits ébranlés et malades

des conservateurs, des professeurs, des philologues et autres diplômés [sic], tous des “Fachgelehrten”. Ah! si ces messieurs avaient su répondre au [sic] trois petites questions que je n’ai cessé de poser dans mon livre – vous me reprochez mes répétitions – tous ces savants auraient sorti leur fusil et leur sabre pour me tuer, pour couper en lambeaux et trainer [sic] dans la boue le malheureux corps du maudit banquier!”⁹⁵

Looking back it seems surprising that Friedländer, who due to his academic reputation was highly appreciated by his peers, could have let himself be used by Renders. Where others decided to ignore or to respond to Renders in his attempts to gain status, Friedländer remained, in the words of Panofsky, ‘a man both modest and kind’. The position that Renders eventually gained in the art historical field, is not based thus on the value of his academic insights, but is rather due to the tolerant and accommodating attitude of Friedländer who from the perspective of his intellectual conviction remained open to theses that could offer a solution to an art historical problem. The gracious character of Friedländer also explains why he never clearly stated his position in the Van der Veken affair, of whose forgery practices he was no doubt well aware. Had he done so, this would have placed his relationship with Renders, who judging by the tone of his letters he appreciated, under considerable pressure.

This contribution was written in the framework of doctoral research on the connoisseurship of Max J. Friedländer and was first published in French, with some different illustrations in: D. Vanwijnsberghe in collaboration with C. Bourguignon and J. Debergh (eds.), *Autour de la 'Madeleine Renders'. Un aspect de l'histoire des collections, de la restauration et de la contrefaçon en Belgique dans la première moitié du XXe siècle*, Brussels 2008 (*Scientia Artis*, vol. 4), pp. 147-176. Friedländer's extensive archive comprising photos and reproductions of paintings from principally the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, was bequeathed in 1958 to the Rijksbureau voor Kunsthistorische Documentatie (RKD) in The Hague. A section of his library came to the RKD as part of the same bequest. The remaining section was purchased by Utrecht University. That is where a part of Friedländer's personal archive was already housed, comprising art-historical notes, notebooks, correspondence, manuscripts, etc. In 2007 this loan was transferred to the RKD by the heirs. For the realisation of this contribution I am extremely grateful to Jean-Luc Pypaert for allowing access to his unpublished *Infection. L'oeuvre de Jos Van der Veken dans Die altniederländische Malerei de Max Friedländer*, to Anne-Marie De Pauw for providing access to a number of items relevant to Friedländer in the Archive Jef Van der Veken (since 2013 the Archive Jef Van der Veken is kept at the RKD), to Till-Holger Borchert for providing access to the Archive Emile Renders (Bruges, Groeningemuseum) and to Didier Martens and Dominique Vanwijnsberghe for their trust. Furthermore I would like to sincerely thank Edwin Buijsen, Rudi Ekkart and Michiel Franken for the help they provided, and Joy Kearney for translating the text into English from Dutch. It was my deliberate choice to translate only the Dutch quotations into English, and maintain the quotations in German and French. For I consider it to be important to present to the reader the exact tone of voice applied by Friedländer and Renders in the discussion of the topics.

Notes

1. R. Stettiner, 'Gefälschtes altniederländisches Bild', *Mitteilungen des Museen-Verbandes*, 26 August 1911, p. 4, no. 317. – The *Verband von Museumsbeamten zur Abwehr von Fälschungen und unlauterem Geschäftsgebaren* was founded in 1898 in Germany with the objective of offering museum curators at home and abroad a platform to exchange information about forged works of art. The members met annually at a closed conference lasting several days, that was held each time in a different place. Excursions also formed part of the conference. To prevent the undermining of the objectives the members were strongly advised to treat the publications of the *Verband von Museumsbeamten*, including the *Verhandlungen* and the *Mitteilungen* as confidential and not to share them publicly with third parties: 'die

Mitglieder [sind] verpflichtet die Drucksachen des Verbandes sorgfältig und geheim aufzubewahren. Sie verpflichten sich ferner, im Falle ihres Ausscheidens aus dem Verband die sämtlichen Drucksachen an den Vorort zurückzugeben, sowie dafür Sorge zu tragen, daß im Falle ihres Todes die Drucksachen an den Vorort zurückgegeben werden.'

2. *Verhandlungen der vierzehnten Versammlung des Verbandes von Museums-Beamten zur Abwehr von Fälschungen und unlauterem Geschäftsgebaren*, Brussels, 27-28 September 1911, p. 23, no. XIX; M.J. Friedländer, 'Über Fälschungen und Verfälschungen von Tafelbildern', *Mitteilungen des Museen-Verbandes*, 22 March 1912, pp. 1-3, no. 346.

3. Friedländer 1912 (note 2).

4. M.J. Friedländer, *Der Kunstkenner*, Berlin 1919.

5. M.J. Friedländer, 'Grundsätzliches über Fälschungen', *Belvedere* 4 (1923), pp. 121-124.

6. M.J. Friedländer, *Die altniederländische Malerei – Rogier van der Weyden und der Meister von Flémalle*, vol. II, Berlin 1924, pp. 132-133, under no. 109. Van der Veken recognised himself in the description 'die Brüsseler Fälscher'. See for this: H. Verougstraete, R. Van Schoute and T.-H. Borchert (eds.), exh. cat. *Fake or Not Fake. Het verhaal van de restauratie van de Vlaamse primitieven*, Bruges (Groeningemuseum) 2004-2005, p. 121, note 5. For forgery practices in Belgium see also: Friedländer 1912

(note 2) and *idem*, *Von Kunst und Kennerschaft*, Oxford/Zürich 1946, p. 243.

7. Exh. *Flemish and Belgian Art, 1300-1900*, London (Royal Academy of Arts – Burlington House), 8 January-5 March 1927.

8. R. Witt, 'The Flemish Pictures [...]', *The Times*, 7 March 1927.

9. F. Winkler, 'Die flämisch-belgische Ausstellung in London', *Der Kunstwanderer* 7 (1927) February, pp. 221-224.

10. F. Winkler, 'Fälschungen primitiver niederländischer und deutscher Bilder', *Mitteilungen des Museen-Verbandes*, May 1930, no. 630, p. 3; A.P. Laurie, 'Forgeries of Old Masters. Means of Detection', *The Times*, 20 May 1927; R. Fry, 'The Authenticity of the Renders Collection', *The Burlington Magazine* 50 (1927) May, pp. 261-267; letter sent in by A.P. Laurie, 'The Identification of Forged Pictures', *The Burlington Magazine* 50 (1927) June, pp. 342-343; 'Editorial: The Forger and the Detective', *The Burlington Magazine* 51 (1927) July, pp. 3-4 and in reaction to this a second letter sent by A.P. Laurie, 'The Forger and the Detective', *The Burlington Magazine* 51 (1927) July, pp. 50-51; letter submitted by J. Greig, 'The Forger and the Detective', *The Burlington Magazine* 51 (1927) August, p. 102, after which the editors considered the correspondence concerning this subject to be closed.

11. C. Hofstede de Groot, 'De Vlaamsch Belgische tentoonstelling te Londen', *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 2 March 1927.

12. G. Hulin de Loo and E. Michel, cat. *Early Flemish Paintings in the Renders Collection at Bruges exhibited at the Belgian Exhibition, Burlington House, January, 1927 with an introduction by G. Hulin de Loo and notices by Edouard Michel*, London 1927. The French edition appeared shortly after the exhibition, this is clear from a letter from Renders to Hulin de Loo. Letter from E. Renders to G. Hulin de Loo, 19 March 1927. Ghent, University Library, Archive Georges Hulin de Loo, Hs 3095, no. 1035. *Idem*, cat. *Les peintures primitives des XVe – xVe & xVie siècles de la Collection Renders à Bruges (Exposition Burlington House, Londres, Janv.-Févr. 1927) avec un introduction par G. Hulin de Loo et des notices par Edouard Michel*, London/Bruges 1927. In this publication, in contrast to the English version, there is a 'Tables des matières avec notes documentaires' at the back that provides a condensed overview of the origins of the exhibited paintings. Friedländer received a copy with an assignment from the author: 'À Monsieur D^r Max Friedländer. hommage de témoignage de grande admiration et de grande reconnaissance du Collectionneur'. Utrecht, University Library. – The foreword written by Hulin de Loo is sprinkled with praise for Renders as collector and connoisseur: '[...] presque

toutes sont des trouvailles personnelles et sortent pour la première fois de l'obscurité: M. Renders est au suprême degré un d é n i c h e u r. [...] Ces oeuvres de premier plan ont été réellement devinées par M. Renders. C'est que, à la différence de beaucoup de grands collectionneurs de nos jours, il est un véritable c o n n a i s s e u r, à l'oeil des plus exercé, étudiant à fond, par des comparaisons personnelles, la technique des maîtres. Bien des historiens de l'art, auteurs de gros volumes, pourraient envier sa connaissance pénétrante du tableau et aussi l'intérêt passionné qu'il lui porte, car à la racine de tout effort prolongé et triomphant il faut qu'il y ait un grand amour.'

13. Letter from E. Renders to G. Hulin de Loo, 22 February 1927. Ghent, University Library, Archive Georges Hulin de Loo, Hs 3095, no. 1031.

14. Regarding the provenances see note 12.

15. R. Witt, 'introduction', in: exh. cat. London 1927 (note 7), p. ix-xii.

16. Letter from E. Renders to G. Hulin de Loo, 19 March 1927 (note 12).

17. For Jean Delville see note 18 and 24.

18. G. Hulin de Loo, 'A propos de pastiches modernes à l'Exposition de Londres', *Bulletins de la Classe des Beaux-Arts* 9 (1927), pp. 45-48. – As immediate cause for the discourse Hulin de Loo put

forward the remarks made by the painter Jean Delville (1867-1953), representative of Symbolism and further member of the *Académie*, during an earlier meeting of the *Classe des Beaux-Arts*.

19. This opinion was also held by Paul Lambotte, charged with the steering of the organisation of the exhibition: 'The reunion of so many treasures will allow fresh verifications, confirm various hypotheses, enrich the catalogues of certain masters by evident attributions, and will elucidate the problem of many anonymities.' P. Lambotte, 'The Exhibition of Flemish and Belgian Art, 1350-1900. Burlington House, 1927', *Apollo* 5 (1927), p. 1.

20. Exh. cat. London 1927 (note 7), p. 40, no. 86, as the Master of the Baroncelli Portraits. – Friedländer later told Winkler that the work was given in commission by 'marchand-amateur' Grétor, who worked for some time for the Berlin Kaiser Friedrich-Museum, to act as pendant for an original painting depicting the *Appearance of Christ to the Virgin*. See for this: Winkler 1930 (note 10), p. 4, note 1 and ill. 4.

21. Exh. cat. *A Souvenir Book of Illustrations*, London (Royal Academy of Arts – Burlington House) 1927. See for this also: F. Winkler, 'Fälschungen alter Bilder. Bemerkungen zu einigen in Zeitschriften und Büchern als echt veröffentlichten niederländischen Gemälden', *Kunst und Künstler* 28 (1930), p. 367.

22. Exh. cat. London 1927 (note 7), p. 106, no. 283, as Flemish school, c. 1500.

23. For the cooperation between Renders and Van der Veken, see: exh. cat. Bruges 2004-2005 (note 6), pp. 112-113. According to this publication Van der Veken visited the exhibition with Hulin de Loo and there he recognised his forgery that he had not seen since completing it, pp. 113-114. See also J. Lust, in: D. Vanwijnsberghe in collaboration with C. Bourguignon and J. Debergh (eds.), *Autour de la 'Madeleine Renders'. Un aspect de l'histoire des collections, de la restauration et de la contrefaçon en Belgique dans la première moitié du XXe siècle*, Brussels 2008 (*Scientia Artis*, vol. 4), pp. 77-146.

24. Letter from E. Renders to M.J. Friedländer, undated, received on 9 September 1927. The Hague, RKD, Archive and collection Max Jacob Friedländer, inv. no. 7. It is also possible that Jean Delville brought Hulin de Loo in contact with Van der Veken, since in a letter of 29 April 1936 to Renders in which he refers to the events during the exhibition in London, he claims that he was the one that convinced Hulin of the fact that the *Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine*, according to the exhibition catalogue ascribed to the Master of the Baroncelli Portraits, was a forgery and that he knew the restorer who had made it. Letter from J. Delville to E. Renders, 29 April 1936. Bruges, Groeningemuseum, Archive

Emile Renders. See also note 9 and 18.

25. Exh. cat. London 1927 (note 7), with notes by Frits Lugt. The Hague, RKD.

26. Exh. cat. London 1927 (note 7), p. 24, no. 38, as Hans Memling; Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 101, no. 29, as Rogier van der Weyden.

27. Exh. cat. London 1927 (note 7), p. 25, no. 42, as Hans Memling; Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 101, no. 26a, as 'genaue Wiederholung'. – Rogier van der Weyden, *Braque Triptiek*, panel, 41 x 69 cm (center panel), 41 x 34 cm (wings), Paris, Musée du Louvre, inv. no. RF 2063; Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), pp. 100-101, no. 26.

28. Exh. cat. London 1927 (note 7), p. 14, no. 6, as Flemish school, from the time of the Van Eycks.

29. Fry 1927 (note 10).

30. Hulin de Loo/Michel 1927 (note 12). The Hague, RKD.

31. M. Delacre, 'Sur un prétendu tableau de Memlinc figurant à l'Exposition de Londres', *Gand artistique* 6 (1927) May, pp. 84-87.

32. See D. Vanwijnsberghe, in: Vanwijnsberghe et al. 2008 (note 23), pp. 19-37.

33. E. Renders, 'À propos d'un article sur un prétendu Memlinc ayant figuré à l'Exposition de Londres', *Gand artistique* 7 (1927) July, pp. 128-

131, with a response by M. Delacre; see also note 24.

34. Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 101, no. 26a. The Hague, RKD.

35. M.J. Friedländer, 'Zur Londoner Leihausstellung belgischer Kunst', *Der Cicerone* 19 (1927), pp. 207-216.

36. Hofstede de Groot 1927 (note 11).

37. In *Von Kunst und Kennerschaft* (published for the first time in 1942 in an English edition) (note 6), pp. 248-249 and ills. 36-37, Friedländer repeats the incident in a slightly different manner: 'Vor Jahren sah ich bei einem Londoner Händler ein hübsches Brügger Bild von 1480, das stark verrießen war, die Madonna in ganzer Figur mit zwei weiblichen Heiligen. Ein belgischer Restaurator bekam es in die Hand. Ich weiß nicht, ob er es restauriert hat. Wiedergesehen habe ich es nicht. Wohl aber tauchte ein Falsifikat auf, erheblich größer und stattlicher als das Urbild. Ein kleines Unglück war übrigens den Fälscher zugestoßen. Die hl. Katharina, den Ring vom Christkind empfangend, war dargestellt, der Ring aber in dem schlecht erhaltenen Original nicht zu erkennen. In der Kopie befaßt sich das Kind völlig sinnlos mit dem Finger der Heiligen, da es keinen Ring zu vergeben hat.' – A year before the English publication of *Von Kunst und Kennerschaft* appeared, Friedländer already referred briefly to the *Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine* in a preview

publication titled 'On Forgeries' in *The Burlington Magazine* 78 (1941), p. 192, ills. IIC-D.

38. M. Conway (ed.), exh. cat. *Catalogue of the Loan Exhibition of Flemish & Belgian Art. A Memorial Volume*, London (Royal Academy of Arts – Burlington House) 1927, p. 40: '86 is not included in the present volume' and p. 114: '283 is not included in the present volume'.

39. Hofstede de Groot 1927 (note 11).

40. Exh. cat. Brugge 2004-2005 (note 6), pp. 62-77, no. 3.

41. G. Hulin de Loo, 'Dyptychs by Rogier van der Weyden – II', *The Burlington Magazine* 44 (1924), pp. 185-189. Regarding the Christ Child he writes on p. 186: 'However, the Child is the weak point in the picture: it is somewhat sluggish, lacking inner construction as if it had no skull nor jaws but only a stuffed skin: it does not give that impression of being a sculptured and coloured ivory which Rogier's children generally do. As this figure is an almost literal repetition, Rogier probably left its execution to a helper.'; Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 34.

42. *Verhandlungen der fünfundzwanzigsten Versammlung des Verbandes von Museums-Beamten zur Abwehr von Fälschungen und unlauterem Geschäftsgebahren*, Leipzig, 23-24 September 1929, p. 6, no. X; Winkler 1930 (note 10), pp. 2-9.

43. 'Fälschungen' are paintings that are entirely by the hand of the forger; 'Verfälschungen' are paintings that are originally authentic, but have been overpainted to a great extent by the forger (also called 'hyper restorations').

44. Winkler 1930 (note 10), pp. 8-9; Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 132, no. 109a, ill. LXXVI, as a copy after Rogier van der Weyden and p. 135, no. 119, ill. LXXVIII, as follower of Rogier van der Weyden.

45. *Verhandlungen der sechsundzwanzigsten Versammlung des Verbandes von Museumsbeamten zur Abwehr von Fälschungen und unlauterem Geschäftsgebahren*, Stockholm, 31 May-3 June 1930, p. 4, no. III.

46. M.J. Friedländer, *Echt und Unecht. Aus den Erfahrungen des Kunstkenners*, Berlin 1929, pp. 19-33.

47. Friedländer 1946 (note 37), p. 239.

48. Friedländer 1946 (note 37), p. 240.

49. Friedländer 1946 (note 37), p. 243. – That Friedländer and Van der Veken met each other a few times, appears from for example a postcard that Friedländer sent on 13 July 1935 from Paris to announce his visit to Brussels: 'Monsieur J'ai reçu votre lettre et espère de Vous voir a Bruxelles, où je serai le 20 environ. Avec l'expression de ma haute considération'. The Hague, RKD, Archive Jef Van der Veken. In his notebook

Friedländer wrote on 19 July that indeed his visit to the studio of Van der Veken took place where he saw the *Crucifixion* of Hieronymus Bosch from the Brussels collection Franchomme (now in Brussels, Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, inv. no. 6639), that Van der Veken wanted to restore: 'v.d. Veken / Bosch Kreuzigg. / cf. Franchomme / Zustand. vdV. will / restaurieren'. Notebook of M.J. Friedländer, 1934-1935, p. 63. The Hague, RKD, Archive Max Jacob Friedländer, inv. no. 292.

50. E. Renders, *Un "Meister Wilhelm von Köln", découvert à Bruges, avec le concours de Dr Max Friedländer*, Bruges 1928, pp. 3-5. In English in: *Apollo* 8 (1928), pp. 4-5.

51. Master of Saint Veronica, *Madonna mit der Wickenblüte*, panel, 59 x 39,5 cm (center panel), 59,1 x 19,9 cm (wings), Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum, inv. no. WRM 10. See for more over this painter: S. Kemperdick, 'From Master Wilhelm to Master Wilhelm: the identity of the Cologne Master of St Veronica', *The Burlington Magazine* 154 (2012), pp. 87-90.

52. Letter from E. Renders to G. Hulin de Loo, 19 January 1924. Ghent, University Library, Archive Georges Hulin de Loo, Hs 3095, no. 985.

53. Letter from E. Renders to G. Hulin de Loo, 27 January 1924, including the transcript of the letter from M.J. Friedländer, 24 January 1924. Ghent, University Library,

Archive Georges Hulin de Loo, Hs 3095, no. 986.

54. For the radical restoration by Van der Veken see: H. von Sonnenburg, 'A Case of Recurring Deception', *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 51 (1993-1994), pp. 9-19. Leo van Puyvelde (1882-1965), just as Hulin de Loo professor at Ghent University, made a visit to Renders' painting collection with students, remarking that the depiction of the head of Christ did not tie in with the date. Letter from E. Renders to G. Hulin de Loo, 2 April 1925. Ghent, University Library, Archive Georges Hulin de Loo, Hs 3095, no. 1005.

55. Letter from E. Renders to G. Hulin de Loo, 2 April 1925 (note 54).

56. E. Renders, *Étude sur le Christ de Pitié de Bruges*, appendix with illustrations accompanying a letter from E. Renders to G. Hulin de Loo, 22 August 1925. Ghent, University Library, Archive Georges Hulin de Loo, Hs 3095, no. 1008. The illustrations represent, along with the Man of Sorrows, the angel and the Benedictine monk, the following paintings (or details from them): Master Francke, *Man of Sorrows with Angels*, panel, 42,5 x 31,3 cm, Leipzig, Museum der bildenden Künste, inv. no. 243; Master of Flémalle (Robert Campin), *Holy Trinity*, panel, 147,5 x 57,6 cm, Frankfurt am Main, Städelsches Kunstinstitut, inv. no. 39B; Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 111, no. 60; Copy after the Master of Flémalle (Robert

Campin), *Holy Trinity with Angels*, panel, 127,7 x 93 cm, Louvain, M – Museum Leuven, inv. no. 8; Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 113, no. 71a; Copy after the Master of Flémalle (Robert Campin), *Mass of St Gregory*, panel, 83,5 x 71 cm, New York, private collection (previously Hamburg, collection Eduard F. Weber); Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 114, no. 73a; Follower of the Master of Flémalle (Robert Campin), *Man of Sorrows with Angels*, panel, 36 x 28 cm, Ghent, Museum of Fine Arts, inv. no. 1904-A; Jacques Daret, Jean du Clercq from the *Visitation with Jean du Clercq*, panel, 57 x 52 cm, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Gemäldegalerie, inv. no. 542; Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 118, no. 78; Master of Flémalle (Robert Campin), Heinrich von Werl from the *Saint John the Baptist with Heinrich von Werl*, panel, 101 x 47 cm, Madrid, Museo del Prado, inv. no. 1352; Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 112, no. 67; Master of Flémalle (Robert Campin), patron's figure from the left wing of the *Merode Triptych*, panel, 64,5 x 27,3 cm, New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters Collection, inv. no. 56.70; Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 109, no. 54; Master of Flémalle (Robert Campin), patron's figure from the *Enthroned Virgin and Child with Saints Peter and Augustine*, panel, 48 x 21,6 cm, Aix-en-Provence, Musée Granet, inv. no. 300; Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 112, no. 66. – The direct motivation that Renders himself gave for his study was

the fact that he disagreed with the suggestion of Edouard Michel that the *Christ as the Man of Sorrows with a Benedictine Monk* can be placed within the Eyckian tradition. See E. Michel, 'Un Christ de Pitié au temps des Van Eyck', *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 66 (1924), pp. 273-278.

57. Hulin de Loo/Michel 1927 (note 12), p. 11. It is highly possible that Hulin did not correspond with Renders regarding his impression of the painting, but verbally shared it during a visit to his collection. That Hulin equally possessed a sharp keenness of observation, was proven in a speech that he held on 15 May 1943 during a conference in the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium in Brussels, in which he returns to the subject of Renders' painting. While he called the panel 'original et fort intéressant', he also noticed some weaknesses. In accordance with Bella Martens, Hulin is of the opinion that the angel on the panel of Renders is based on angel figures by Master Francke. An opinion that is remarkably contrary to that of Renders, who in his *Étude sur le Christ de Pitié de Bruges* (note 56), in fact claimed that Master Francke used the *Christ as the Man of Sorrows with a Benedictine Monk* as a model to base his angel on. The painting by Master Francke that is compared in both remarks is the *Man of Sorrows with Angels* from the Museum der bildenden Künste in Leipzig. The awkward depiction of the wings of the left angel, that both seem to emerge from the right

shoulder blade, as Hulin claims, is taken over precisely from the *Christ as the Man of Sorrows with a Benedictine Monk*: 'signe d'incompréhension de la part de l'imitateur.' Nevertheless, he continues, the angel of Master Francke has a natural body posture and harmonious linear form, characteristics that have disappeared in the *Man of Sorrows with a Benedictine Monk*. It cannot be otherwise, Hulin decided, that the *Christ as the Man of Sorrows with a Benedictine Monk* originated later than the *Man of Sorrows with Angels* from Master Francke. B. Martens, *Meister Francke*, Hamburg 1929, p. 248, note 273; G. Hulin de Loo, 'Traces de Hubrecht van Eyck. Empreintes contemporaines en Suisse et en Allemagne', *Annuaire des Musées Royaux des Beaux-Arts de Belgique* 4 (1943-1944), p. 16 and ill. XXIII-XXV (lecture held during a conference in the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium in Brussels, 15 May 1943).

58. Exh. cat. London 1927 (note 7). That Friedländer and Hulin de Loo did not notice the refined restoration, is no surprise, because still in 1974 the *Christ as the Man of Sorrows with a Benedictine Monk* was purchased by The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York to fill a gap in the collection. Sonnenburg 1993-1994 (note 54), pp. 11-12.

59. See note 18 and 24.

60. Quinten Massijs, *Virgin and Child*, panel, 47,5 x 34 cm, Brussels, Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, inv. no.

6647; *Inventaris catalogus van de oude schilderkunst*, Brussels (Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium) 1984, p. 186; M.J. Friedländer, *Die altniederländische Malerei – Quentin Massys*, vol. VII, Berlin 1929, p. 117, no. 20a, as 'Replik'. See also the letter Renders wrote to Hulin de Loo about this. Letter from E. Renders to G. Hulin de Loo, 24 July 1927. Ghent, University Library, Archive Georges Hulin de Loo, Hs 3095, no. 1044.

61. '[...] au gleichmäßige, Glatte u.[nd] Sauberkeit du pasticheur bruxellois'. Letter from E. Renders to M.J. Friedländer, undated, received on 9 September 1927 (note 24).

62. Exh. cat. Brugge 2004-2005 (note 6), p. 113 and ill. on p. 115.

63. Workshop copy after Quinten Massijs, *Virgin and Child*, panel, 62 x 50 cm, Brussels, Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium, inv. no. 377; cat. Brussels 1984 (note 60), p. 187; Friedländer, VII, 1929 (note 60), p. 117, no. 20, as Quinten Massijs.

64. E. Renders, 'Cracks in Flemish Primitives', *The Burlington Magazine* 52 (1928), pp. 59-65.

65. Renders published various articles in periodicals in which he explains his vision about the Master of Flémalle, including: *Un appel aux critiques d'art techniciens, pour la solution de l'énigme "Maître de Flémalle" (I)*, Bruges 1928, pp. 5-11. Appeared in English in: *Apollo* 8

(1928), pp. 5-8; 'The Riddle of the Maître de Flémalle', *The Burlington Magazine* 54 (1929) June, pp. 285-303, to which a letter was sent in a follow up from S. Reinach, in: *The Burlington Magazine* 54 (1929) July, pp. 55-56, with a response by Renders; 'Rogier van der Weyden', *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 72 (1930), pp. 10-25; with F. Lyna, 'Le Maître de Flémalle, Robert Campin et la prétendue école de Tournai', *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 73 (1931), pp. 289-297.

Friedländer received from this last contribution a reprint with an assignment from the author: 'à mon grand Maître le D^r. Max Friedländer'. The Hague, RKD. – In a letter to Hulin de Loo, dated 31 March 1929, Renders, still furious over Winkler's allegations during the London exhibition in 1927, set out his reasons for his research: 'Par cette étude je mets le Dr. Winkler devant un dilemme, car je veux qu'il sente que je ne suis pas le "banale Sammler" tel qu'il l'a cru. Il devra adopter ma thèse, si non il devra déclarer nulle et non avenue celle qu'il a soutenue contre Karl Voll, thèse (Winkler) qui fut spontanément admise par tous les savants (voir son livre p. 2, 3 et 4 concernant la Vierge glorieuse d'Aix) [Winkler resisted the denial by Karl Voll regarding the accuracy of the attribution of the *Enthroned Virgin and Child with Saints Peter and Augustine* (Aix-en-Provence, Musée Granet [see note 56]) to the Master of Flémalle]. Enfin je suis convaincu, qu'après lecture de mon étude, vous adopterez avec enthousiasme la solution

du problème que j'expose et que je démontre scientifiquement, je dirais même mathématiquement. Sur le terrain, que depuis des années j'explore à ma manière, je me sens inbattable [sic]. Vous me direz peut-être que ma témérité est excessive et dangereuse pour moi. Cette témérité n'est que la desir sincère de bien faire dans l'intérêt de la science et pour celà je n'hésite pas un instant de m'exposer à la risée de centamis de compilateurs cherchant à défendre ce qu'ils croient avoir inventé. Un simple geste d'un de Loo, d'un Friedländer ou d'un Winkler fera taire ces hurleurs.' Letter from E. Renders to G. Hulin de Loo, 31 March 1929. Ghent, University Library, Archive Georges Hulin de Loo, Hs 3095, no. 1070.

66. G. Hulin de Loo, *Bruges 1902. Exposition de tableaux flamands des XIV^e, XV^e et XVI^e siècles. Catalogue critique. Précédé d'une introduction sur l'identité de certains maîtres anonymes*, Ghent 1902, pp. XXXV-XLVII; *idem*, 'An Authentic Work by Jaques Daret, Painted in 1434', *The Burlington Magazine* 15 (1909), pp. 202-208; *idem*, 'Jacques Daret's "Nativity of Our Lord"', *The Burlington Magazine* 19 (1911), pp. 218-225; *idem*, 'Robert Campin or Rogier van der Weyden? Some Portraits Painted between 1432 and 1444', *The Burlington Magazine* 49 (1926), pp. 268-274; F. Winkler, *Der Meister von Flémalle und Rogier van der Weyden. Studien zu ihren Werken und zur Kunst ihrer Zeit*

mit mehreren Katalogen zu Rogier, Straatsburg 1913.

67. Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 7.

68. Master of Flémalle (Robert Campin), *Merode Triptych*, panel, 64,1 x 63,2 cm (center panel), 64,5 x 27,3 cm (wings), New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Cloisters Collection, inv. no. 56.70; Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), pp. 64 and 109, no. 54.

69. Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 66.

70. Master of Flémalle (Robert Campin), *Virgin and Child, Saint Veronica, Holy Trinity*, panel, 147,5 x 57,6 cm (*Holy Trinity*), 149,1 x 58,3 cm (*Virgin and Child*), 148,2 x 57,7 cm (*Saint Veronica*), Frankfurt am Main, Städelsches Kunstinstitut, inv. nos. 939, 939A, 939B; Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 111, no. 60.

71. Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 68. Already the German art historian Eduard Firmenich-Richartz (1864-1923) viewed the work of the Master of Flémalle as the early work of Rogier van der Weyden. E. Firmenich-Richartz, 'Rogier van der Weyden, der Meister von Flémalle. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der vlämischen Malerschule', *Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst* 10 (1899), pp. 1-12, 129-144.

72. E. Renders, *La solution du problème v.d. Weyden, Flémalle, Campin*, 2 vols., Bruges 1931.

73. Letter from M.J. Friedländer to E. Renders, 10

April 1931. Bruges, Groeningemuseum, Archive Emile Renders.

74. Hugo von Tschudi (1851-1911) worked from 1884 to 1896 as assistant to Wilhelm Bode at the Berlin museums. In 1896 he was director of the Berlin Nationalgalerie. After he came into conflict in 1908 with the conservative Emperor Wilhelm II about his purchasing policy, the self-conscious Von Tschudi is dismissed and leaves, partly at the instigation of Bode, to Munich where he became *Generaldirektor* of the Bayerischen Staatsgemäldesammlung. Von Tschudi published an important contribution about the Master of Flémalle: 'Der Meister von Flémalle', *Jahrbuch der königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 19 (1898), pp. 8-34, 89-116. – Wilhelm (von) Bode (1845-1929) started his career in 1872 at the Berlin museums where he eventually rose to *Generaldirektor*. Driven by the quest for honour he managed to expand the collections with important acquisitions. The Kaiser Friedrich-Museum which opened in 1904 was thanks to his initiative. While Bodes personality in many aspects was the opposite to his close colleague Max J. Friedländer, their cooperation proved to be extremely fruitful.

75. J. Destrée, *Roger de la Pasture*, 2 vols., Paris/Brussels 1930.

76. U. Van de Voorde, 'Boekaankondiging. Emile

Renders. La solution du problème Van der Weyden – Flémalle – Campin. (Bruges. Firma Charles Royaert, 1931.)', *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant*, 23 April 1931.

77. Letter from M.J. Friedländer to E. Renders, 10 April 1931 (note 73).

78. Letter from M.J. Friedländer to E. Renders, 1 May 1931. Bruges, Groeningemuseum, Archive Emile Renders. – Rogier van der Weyden, *Portrait of a Woman*, panel, 47 x 32 cm, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Gemäldegalerie, inv. no. 545D; Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 93, no. 4; Rogier van der Weyden, *Saint George kills the Dragon*, panel, 14,3 x 10,5 cm, Washington, The National Gallery of Art, inv. no. 1966.1.1.

79. M.J. Friedländer, 'Flémalle-Meister-Dämmerung', *Pantheon* 8 (1931), pp. 353-355. Ten years later a contribution by Winkler under the same title appeared in *Pantheon* in which he again examines the issue. His main objective was to uncover the weaknesses in Renders' thesis. F. Winkler, 'Flémalle-Meister-Dämmerung', *Pantheon* 14 (1941), pp. 145-153. It prompted Friedländer to note in his notebook: 'Im Pantheon 1941 Mai? [sic] Winkler über Roger-Campin ca. [?] m[ein]e u.[nd] Renders g[egen]z[eitig] [?] wie Hulin, der kräftig gerühmt.' Notebook of M.J. Friedländer, 1941-1942, p. 29. The Hague, RKD, Archive Max Jacob Friedländer, inv. no. 303.

80. M.J. Friedländer, *Von Eyck bis Bruegel. Studien zur Geschichte der niederländischen Malerei*, Berlin 1916 (second, revised edition 1921), p. 23; Friedländer 1931 (note 79), p. 354.

81. D. De Vos, *Rogier van der Weyden. The Complete Works*, Antwerp 1999, p. 25.

82. F. Thürlemann, *Robert Campin. Eine Monographie mit Werkkatalog*, Munich/Berlin/London/New York 2002, p. 244.

83. Letter from M.J. Friedländer to E. Renders, 24 October 1931. Bruges, Groeningemuseum, Archive Emile Renders.

84. Letter from M.J. Friedländer to E. Renders, 5 July 1939. Bruges, Groeningemuseum, Archive Emile Renders.

85. M.J. Friedländer, *Die altniederländische Malerei – Schlussband*, vol. XIV, Leiden 1937, pp. 81-86.

86. Thürlemann 2002 (note 82), p. 246.

87. Foreword by E. Panofsky in: M.J. Friedländer, *Early Netherlandish Painting*, vol. I, Leiden/Brussels 1968, p. 12. – In his in memoriam for Friedländer Winkler characterises his attitude with regard to Renders as follows: 'Man möchte glauben, daß Friedländer, indem er dessen Thesen unterstützte, den feurigen Bewunderer, der zugleich ein wütender Brügger und Vlame war, nicht

enttäuschen wollte.' F. Winkler, 'Max J. Friedländer. 5.6.1867-11.10.1958', *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* I (1959), pp. 165-166. In response to the sending of a reprint about Rogier van der Weyden from the *Biographie Nationale* by Hulin de Loo (G. Hulin de Loo, *Rogier van der Weyden*, Brussels 1938 [reprint from: *Biographie Nationale*, vol. 27, Brussels 1938, col. 222-245]), Winkler writes this in his acknowledgements: 'Wie verblindet und einseitig – abgesehen von schlimmeren persönlichen Fehlern – wirkt daneben was E. Renders versucht hat! Ich darf Ihnen versichern, dass er in Deutschland, wo man eine Zeitlang seine Bücher an den Universitäten lebhaft diskutiert hat, wohl nicht einen einzigen Anhänger gefunden hat, ausgenommen Friedländer.' Letter from F. Winkler to G. Hulin de Loo, 24 December 1938. Ghent, University Library, Archive Georges Hulin de Loo, Hs 3095, no. 1192.

88. Exh. *120 beroemde schilderijen uit het Kaiser-Friedrich-Museum te Berlijn*, Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum) 17 June-17 September 1950. A. Châtelet, *Robert Campin. De Meester van Flémalle*, Antwerp 1996, p. 10. In a reaction Albert Châtelet shared that he took Friedländer's confession from Frithjof van Thienen (1901-1969), among other things professor at the Rijksacademie van Beeldende Kunsten in Amsterdam, and friends with Friedländer. In a period during the forties and fifties of the previous century they lived in close proximity to

each other in Amsterdam-Zuid: Friedländer in the Beethovenstraat 38^{II} and Van Thienen in the Gerrit van der Veenstraat 80^I. With thanks to Dominique Vanwijnsberghe.

89. M.J. Friedländer, 'Von den drei grossen Altniederländern aus dem Berliner Museum', *Maandblad voor Beeldende Kunsten* 26 (1950), pp. 146-147. – Master of Flémalle (Robert Campin) or Rogier van der Weyden, *Portrait of a Fat Man*, panel, 28,5 x 17,7 cm, Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin – Gemäldegalerie, inv. no. 537A; Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 111, no. 61, as the Master of Flémalle.

90. Letter from M.J. Friedländer to E. Renders, 18 July 1951. Bruges, Groeningemuseum, Archive Emile Renders. This letter confirms what Vitale Bloch, with whom Friedländer was good friends, wrote in his in memoriam: 'Right up until the end of his life [...] he did not let an occasion pass without making a new argument to identify Rogier van der Weyden with the Master of Flémalle.' V. Bloch, 'Afscheid van Dr. M.J. Friedländer', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 7 (1959), p. 35. With the copy having turned up reference is most likely being made to the panel that in 1955 was published by Valentin Denis. V. Denis, 'Un nouvel argument en faveur de l'unité de l'oeuvre de Roger Van der Weyden', *Annales de la Fédération historique et archéologique de Belgique*, (35^e Congrès – Courtrai, 26-30 Juillet 1953.), Courtrai 1955, p. 541-547. In a

letter dated 2 July 1953 Friedländer wrote to Denis: 'Die Kopie mit der Signatur mir in Photo bekannt. Ich teile ihr Urteil, dass damit ein Argument zu Gunsten der Identität R.(ogiers) mit dem Flémal.(le) Meister gegeben [ist]', *ibidem*, p. 547, n. 1. – Copy after the Master of Flémalle (Robert Campin), *Annunciation*, panel, 65 x 65 cm, Geneva, private collection; Friedländer, II, 1924 (note 6), p. 92, Add. 155.

91. Friedländer, XIV, 1937 (note 85), p. 75. – Hubert and Jan van Eyck, *The Ghent Altarpiece*, panel, 375 x 520 cm (wings opened), Ghent, Saint Bavo Cathedral, inv. no. 426; M.J. Friedländer, *Die altniederländische Malerei – Die Van Eycks – Petrus Christus*, vol. 1, Berlin 1924, pp. 22-39.

92. E. Renders, *Hubert van Eyck. Personnage de légende*, Paris/Brussels 1933. – Ludwig Scheibler already had indicated to Friedländer about the futility of trying to separate two hands in *The Ghent Altarpiece*: 'Wenn ich so glatte und saubere Lösungen des alten Problems lese [...], muß ich stets an die Warnung meines Lehrers Ludwig Scheibler denken, der mir vor 30 Jahren den Rat mitgab, mich nicht mit der Scheidung der Hände im Genter Altare zu befassen. Die Bemühung sei unfruchtbar. Den Rat habe ich nicht befolgt, am Ende aber resigniert bekennen müssen, daß eine reinliche Abgrenzung mir nicht geglückt wäre.' Friedländer, I, 1924 (note 91), pp. 84-85.

93. M.J. Friedländer, 'Hubert und Jan van Eyck', *Oud Holland* 52 (1935), p. 214. See for this also: M.J. Friedländer, 'Die Hubert-van-Eyck-Frage', *Pantheon* 12 (1933), pp. 254-256. – Despite the continuing doubts Friedländer nevertheless kept an open mind for Renders' thesis. When in 1939 a journalist from the Dutch newspaper *De Telegraaf* visited Friedländer on the occasion of his settling in The Hague, the question of Hubert van Eyck comes up: 'We asked Prof. Friedländer, who is of course an authority in this field, what his standpoint is in this. "I have put an appendix in the fourteenth and final volume in which I deal with this issue", replied Prof. Friedländer, who

obviously approached this subject with a certain amount of humour. "As people know, most colleagues disagree with Reynders [*sic*]. I am of the opinion that to a certain degree he is right".' 'Prof. Max Friedländer voltooit werk over Ned. schilderkunst', *De Telegraaf*, 31 October 1939.

94. F. Winkler, 'Der Streit um Hubert van Eyck', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 3 (1934), pp. 283-290.

95. Letter from E. Renders to F. Winkler, January 1935. Bruges, Groeningemuseum, Archive Emile Renders. – Just as in the case of the Master of Flémalle, Friedländer felt obliged to defend Hulin de Loo who had to suffer in *Hubert*

van Eyck. Personnage de légende: 'Ich begreife, bedauere aber, daß Ihr Text einen so scharf polemischen Charakter gegen Hulin angenommen hat. Nach langer Erfahrung bin ich höchst milde geworden gegen Irrtümer auf den Gebiet unserer gemeinsamen Studien. Für mich bleibt H.[ulin] selbst wenn er in zwei bedeutenden Streitfragen auf falsche Wege gekommen ist, ein scharfsinniger u.[nd], was seltener, scharfrichtiger Mann. Ich habe viel Gelegenheit gehabt, sein Können zu beobachten u.[nd] bin oft zu denselben Ergebnissen gekommen wie er.' Letter from M.J. Friedländer to E. Renders, 18 May 1933. Bruges, Groeningemuseum, Archive Emile Renders.