

# A visit



17-12-2010



17-12-2010





17-12-2010





17-12-2010



17-12-2010







At a first glance

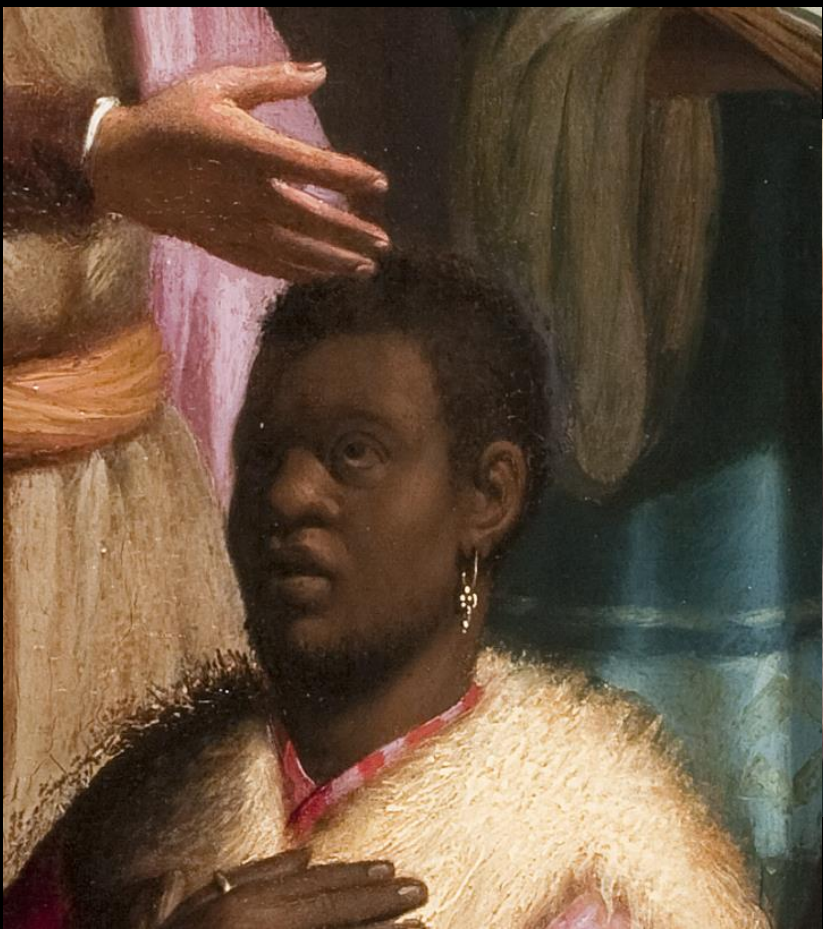












Three different faces?









Armed horseman

Coachman and co-driver







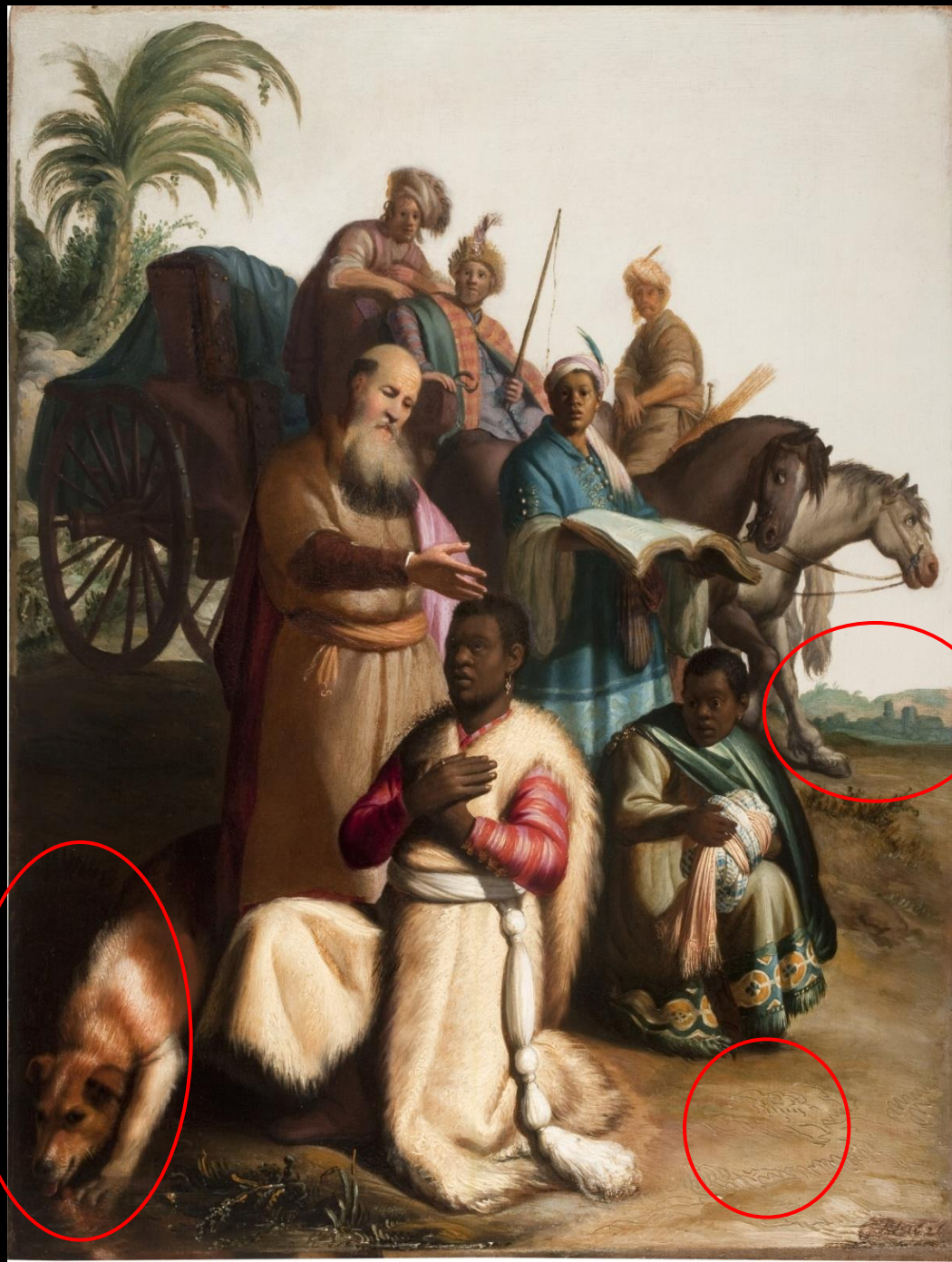


17-12-2010



Pieter Vis

17











Signature



# A second glance

## The subject

In the Bible is only one passage that mentions a baptism of a (most likely) coloured man:

Acts 8: 26-40: the apostle Philip who baptizes an Ethiopian Eunuch



### Bible New testament Acts 8: 26-38

Then an angel of the Lord said to **Philip**, 'Get up and go towards the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza. So he got up and went. Now there was an **Ethiopian eunuch**, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury.

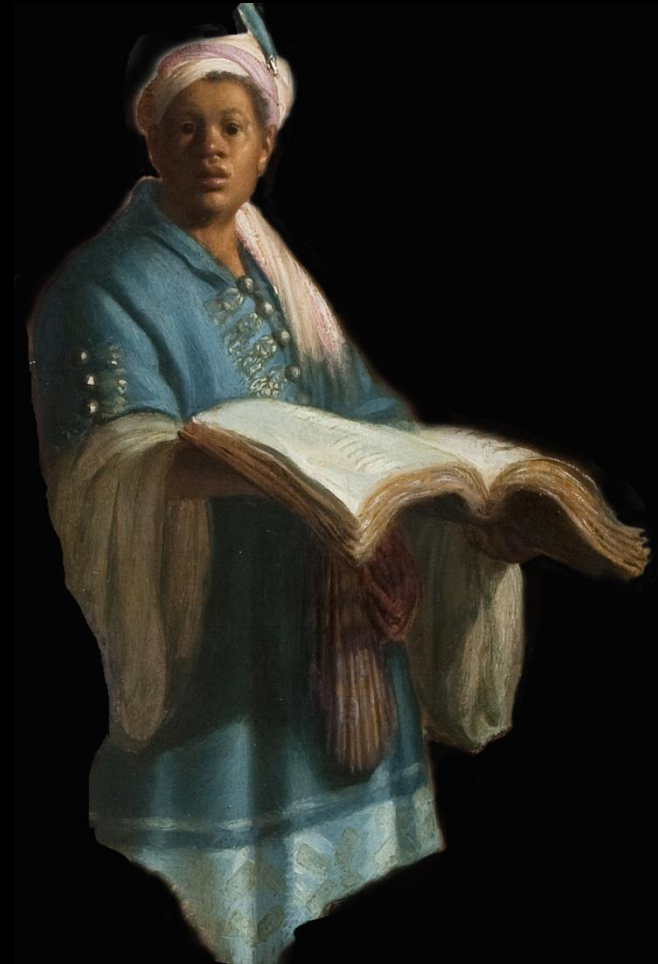


He had come to Jerusalem to worship and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah.



Then the Spirit said to Philip, 'Go over to this chariot and join it.' So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, 'Do you understand what you are reading?' He replied, 'How can I, unless someone guides me?' And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. ....

.





.....The eunuch asked Philip, 'About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?' Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. As they were going along the road, **they came to some water**; and the eunuch said, 'Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?' He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, **Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip baptized him.**



## The artist





1625 - 1629: initial *R* or monogram (short form) *RH*

1629 - Jan. 1632: monogram (long form)

1632: monogram (l.f.) plus patronym

Late 1632 - early 1633: first name

1633 - 1669: first name plus "d"

*RL*  
*RL - van Rijn*  
*Rembrant. fr.*  
*Rembrandt. f.*





## The discoverer

Henri Defoer (1936 - )  
Ernst van de Wetering (painter),  
2004

# Historical context



The Apostle Philip Teaching the Minister of the Ethiopian Queen  
fresco Monastery Decani – 1327, Kosovo





Baptism of the Eunuch, Lambert Sustris, 1545-50  
Oil on canvas, 71 x 132 cm, Louvre





Doop van de Moorse kamerling Gillis Claesz. de Hondecoeter (ca 1575-1638)





"Philip the Evangelist preaching the Gospel in Samaria", workshop of Dirck Crabeth 1559

The stained-glass window number 24 (detail) in the Sint Janskerk at Gouda



The Baptism of the Eunuch  
Jan van der Elburcht 1550-1563  
Oil on panel, 186.5 × 99 cm  
Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen

Originally left wing of a triptych. Central panel depicting the The Miraculous Draught of Fishes in the Onze-Lieve-Vrouwekathedraal, Antwerp.



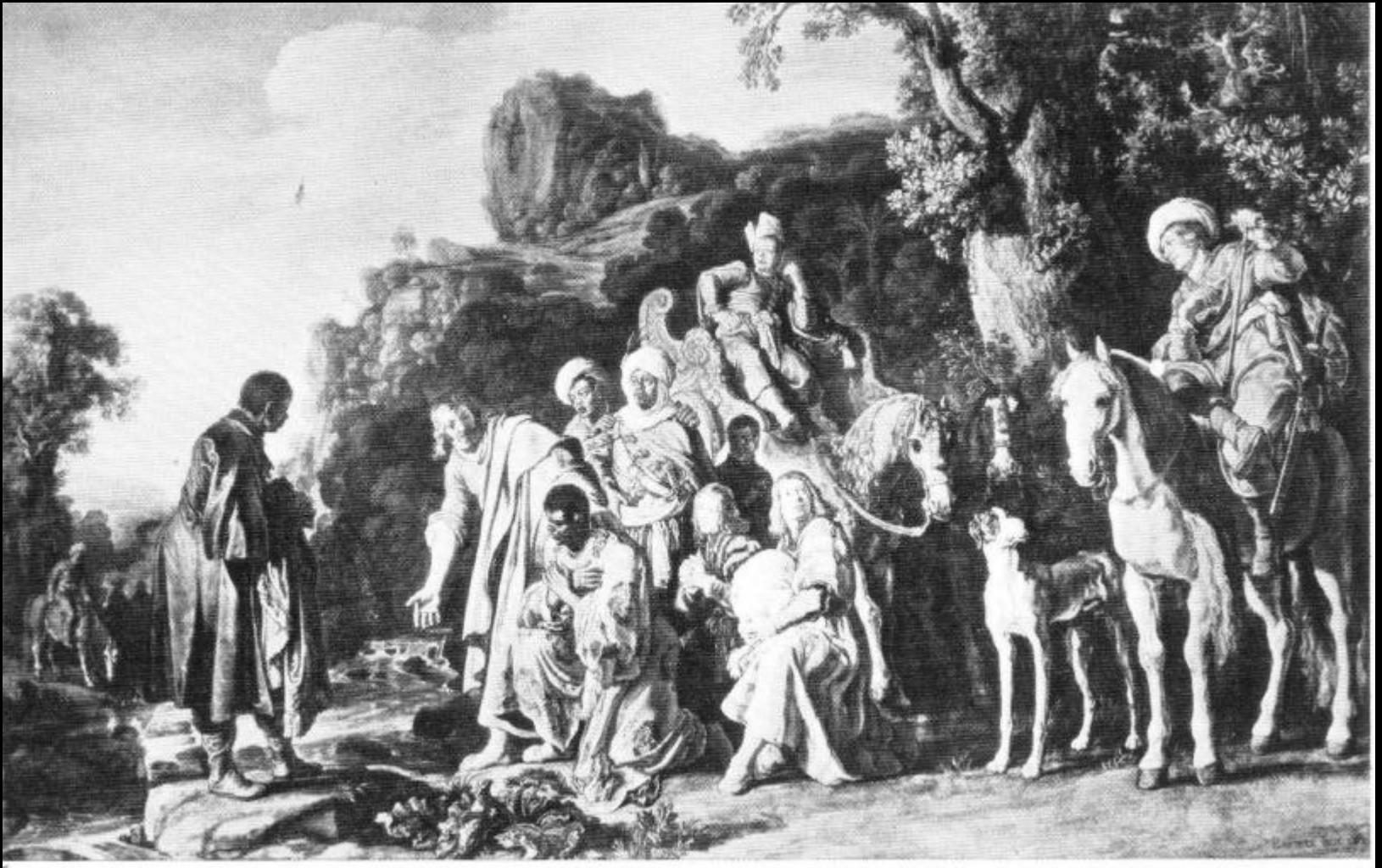


Philip baptises the Eunuch, Fe: Galle, Philips, inv. Maerten van Heemskerck, 1575  
gravure; IV/VI, h x w 195 mm x 269 mm, Prentenkabinet Museum Boijmans van Beuningen





The Baptism of the Eunuch, Pieter Lastman 1608, 37 x 56cm, oil on panel,  
Gemäldegalerie, Staatliche Museen Berlin



The baptism of the eunuch, Pieter Lastman, 1614, Oil on panel, 85 × 115 cm, Alte Pinakothek, München





The Baptism of the Eunuch, Pieter Lastman, 1615/20, Oil on panel, Fondation Custodia Paris



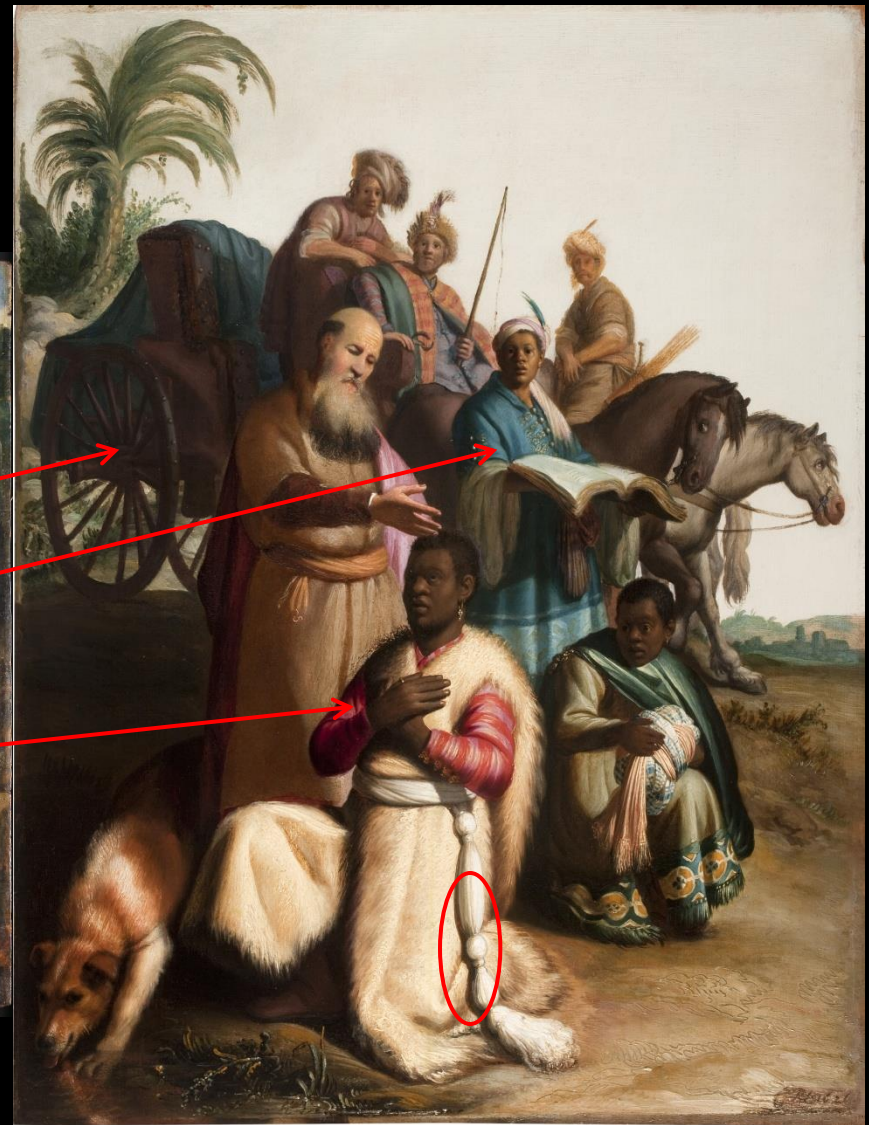
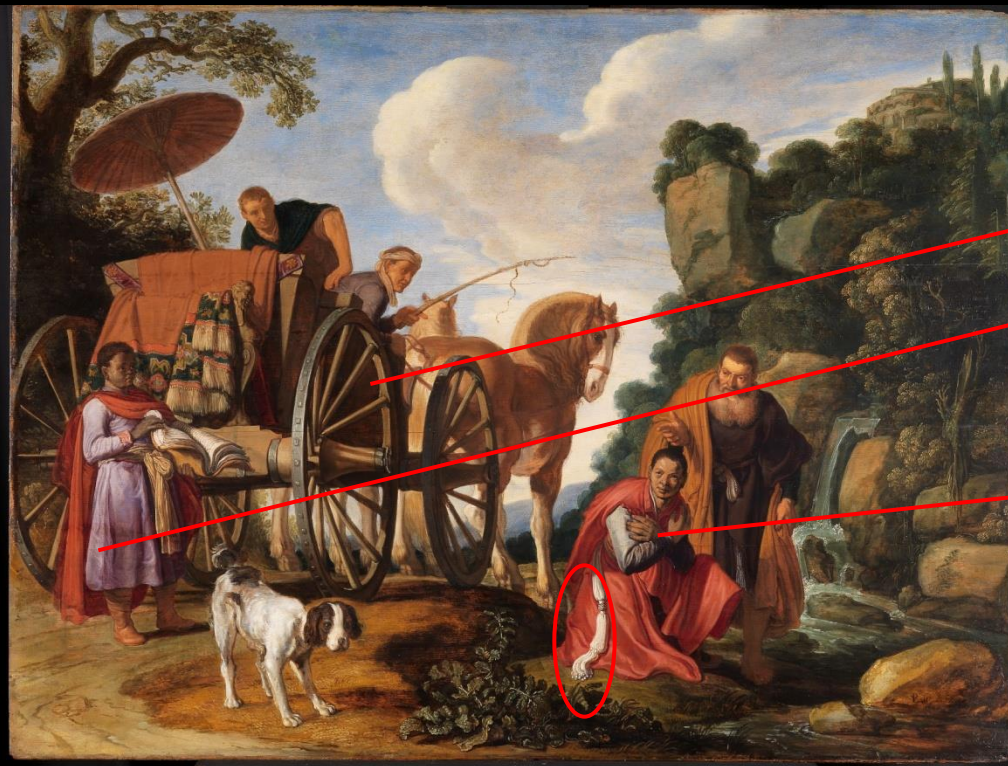


The Baptism of the Eunuch, Pieter Lastman, 1623, Oil on panel, 85 × 115 cm, Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe



# Lastman versus Rembrandt

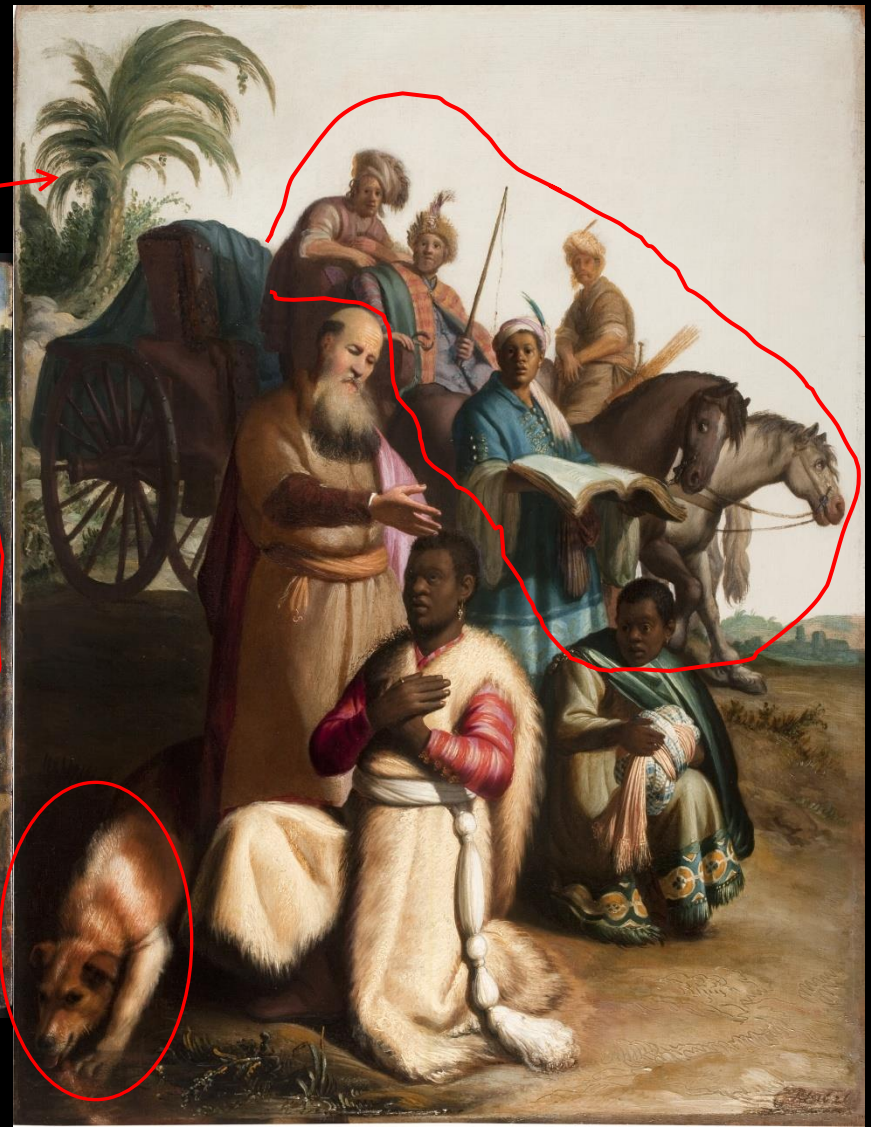
## Resemblances





# Lastman versus Rembrandt

## Differences





# Lievens/Rembrandt



Jacob anointing the stone at  
Beth-El, Lievens, 1625/26  
Etch 200 x 160 mm  
Rijksmuseum





= ?



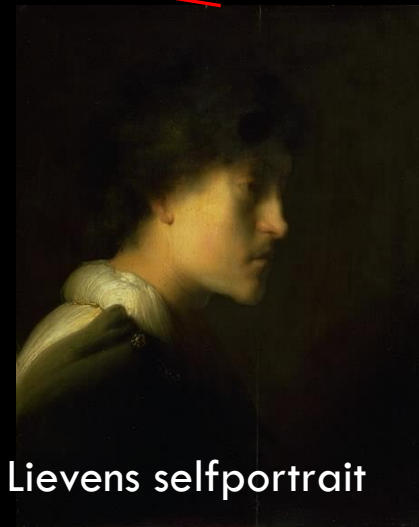
Detail Musical  
Allegory 1626,  
Rembrandt



Lievens selfportrait



Lievens portrait



Lievens selfportrait

## Other compositional aspects



- Every one is focussed on the baptism, even the brown horse
- Group forms a curve around the baptism
- High/Low viewpoint or are we looking against a hillock?
- Light is spread evenly
- Colours are bright, but without sharp contrasts
- 'Houding' realized by gradation in colours and tones



# Possible symbolic elements



**Palmtree:** symbol for Resurrection



**Snowwhite fur coat:** second life after baptism

**Black skin and white fur coat:** Philip washes the black Ethiopian, dispels the colour

**The belt:** the believer girds himself with virtue



**Dog:** represents creatures unable to understand this sacred event



## Inconsistencies?

- Carriage rather small for 5 persons
- It must be a strong eunuch to hold a heavy book without support
- A fur coat in the desert?
- Neither Philip nor the eunuch are standing in the water as the bible describes
- Brown horse is standing alongside the carriage
- 3 horses are (too) closely standing together



# Technical aspects



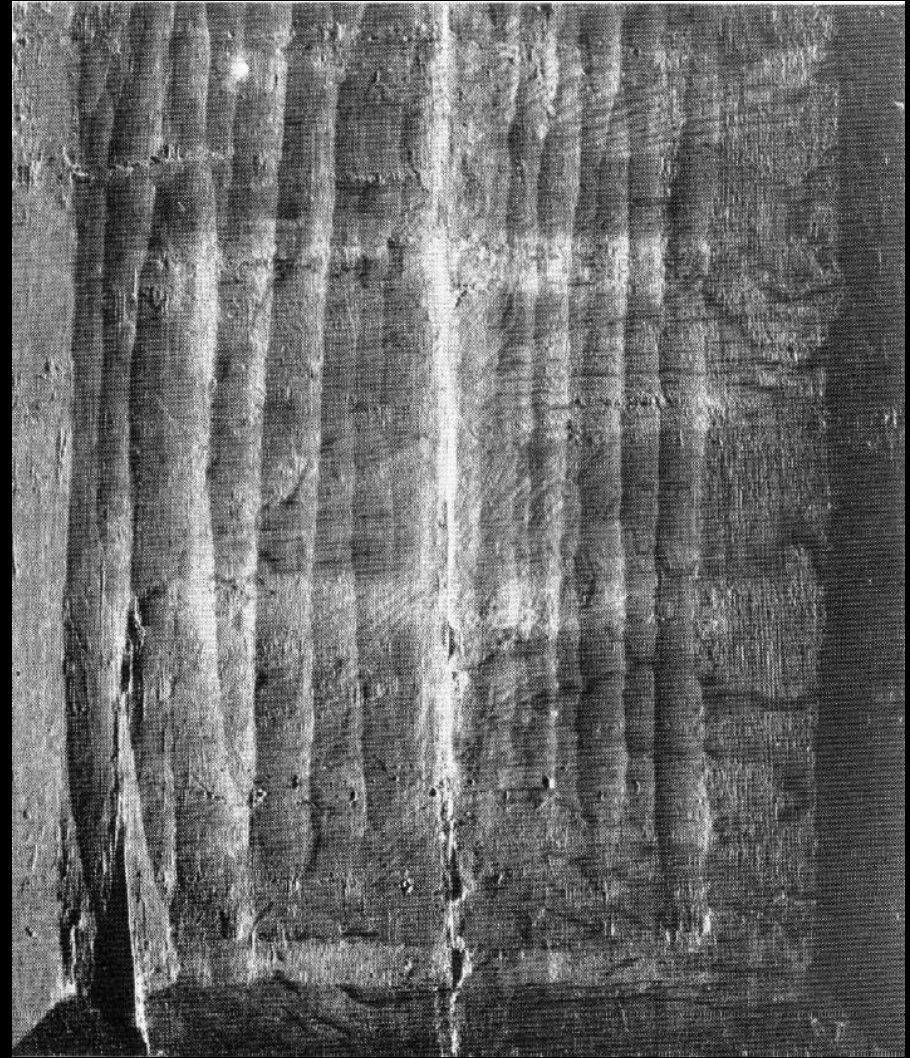
2 oak planks 5 – 10 mm, 63,5 x 48 cm

- Ground light yellow
- Very fine paint particles
- Only 8 pigments used
- Retouches around palmtree and vertical join
- Traces of brown underpainting

Impasto on fur coat



## Technical aspects (2)







Stoning of St Stephan, Rembrandt, 1625, Oil on canvas 89 cm × 123 cm  
Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon





Balaam and the ass, Rembrandt,  
1626, oil on panel (63 × 47 cm)  
Musée Cognacq-Jay, Paris



Balaam and the ass, Lastman 1622, oil on canvas, 40 x  
60 cm, verzameling Capt. E.C. Palmer Clapton Revel





Musical Allegory 1626, Rembrandt  
Oil on panel, 63,5 x 47,6 cm  
Rijksmuseum



Christ Driving the Money Changers from the Temple, Rembrandt (1626)  
43.1 × 32 cm, Oil on panel  
Pushkin Museum, Moscow





Tobias and Anna with the little goat,  
Rembrandt, 1626  
Oil on panel, 39.5 x 30 cm  
Rijksmuseum





The Baptism of the Eunuch, Rembrandt f. 1641 , etch 178 x 214 mm, Rijksprentenkabinet Amsterdam





REMBRANDT. The Baptism of the Eunuch.  
Van Vliet 1631 etch, copy of a lost Rembrandt painting



Abraham Bloemaert, *Baptism of the Eunuch*. 1620-25; oil on canvas, 219,0 x 153,6 cm. Instituut Collectie Nederland, on loan Centraal Museum, Utrecht.





The Baptism of the Eunuch by Rombout van Troyen (1630), oil on panel  
H 18.1 cm W 25.7 cm, Catharijnmuseum Utrecht



The Baptism of Queen Candace's Eunuch  
Both, Andries and Jan  
Ca. 1640  
212 cm x 155 cm  
Prado





Philippus tauft den Mohren, ca 1640, Gerrit Claesz. Bleker, oil on panel,  
Christliches Museum, Esztergom Deutschland





The Baptism of the Eunuch, Aelbert Cuyp, c. 1642, 42 1/2 x 59 1/2 in. The Menil Collection, Houston





The Baptism of the Eunuch, David Colijns (1582-1664/6) oil on canvas 78.6 x 114.2 cm.





Herman Nauwicx  
Saint Philippe  
approx. 1641 /49  
76 cm x 74 cm  
Oil on canvas, Louvre





Landscape with the Baptism of the Eunuch, attributed to Ferdinand Bol, 1636  
Oil on canvas, 85,5 × 108 cm Niedersächsisches Landesmuseum, Hannover

Still to be answered:

Why became the theme of the Baptism of the eunuch so popular in the 17th century?











Two negroes,  
Rembrandt 1661,  
Mauritshuis



Copyright the Kremercollection 2008 | Silber by Casa - gedrukt





Philip baptizes the Eunuch  
Attributed to Salomon de Bray black chalk



Landscape with the Apostle Philip Baptizing the Eunuch, (1590-1632?)  
David Vinckboons





70 x 104cm, Pieter Lastman, 1614, paneel



*Jan Lievens (Dutch, 1607-1674). Portrait of Rembrandt, ca. 1629. Oil on panel (57 x 44 cm). On loan from a private collection.*