

“Gij zult niet feestbundelen”

34 BLJDRAGEN

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Thoré-Bürger: Rembrandt to the rescue – side by side with Raphael

Rembrandt remains to be done for France and for artists and art lovers in all countries. – W. Bürger, 1857¹

Raphael looks backwards; Rembrandt looks forward One is the past, the other the future. – W. Bürger, 1860²

Thanks to this series of discoveries about Rembrandt's family, his relationships and entourage, we can begin to understand the man. To know the artist, we have far more significant evidence than anything written or published: we have the work of the painter and graphic artist. REMBRANDT, l'homme et son oeuvre – the title is complete. All that remains is to write the book. – W. Bürger, 1866³

Some twenty years ago Peter Hecht presented his lucid and engaging account of Thoré's pivotal role in the evolving canon of Dutch art, "Rembrandt and Raphael back to back: Thoré's contribution."⁴ This paper provides biographical information that may throw further light on W.Bürger's interest in Rembrandt, and on his preoccupation with the art-historical roles of Rembrandt and Raphael during his political exile.

Le citoyen Thoré: l'homme politique

On 27 March 1848, Théophile Thoré (fig. 1) truncated his Salon review with a defiant flourish: "We shall not delay our readers any longer with the Salon of 1848. Politics holds far more interesting spectacles for us. Today we are creating more than art or poetry (*la poésie*), we are making living history."⁵

Some eight years later, however, Thoré, now

signing himself "W.Bürger," was to be found in Brussels, urgently pursuing an art-historical project: a monograph on the life and works of Rembrandt. He had now turned to a new source of "living history" in the art of a bygone era – Rembrandt, and the art of the seventeenth-century Dutch republic. This became a new cause, a life-line after his disillusionment with "l'histoire vivante" of contemporary politics.

He had found that "making living history" was a more recalcitrant venture than expected. Despite his vociferous participation in political



1 H. Jannin, *Théophile Thoré*, from the series *Républicains Socialistes*, 1848–49, lithograph.

clubs, committees, commissions, demonstrations and banquets; his embattled editorship of the radical newspaper, *La Vraie République*;⁶ his manifestos and *professions de foi* for candidacy in three elections;⁷ Citizen Thoré increasingly found himself in vigorous opposition to the trends and leadership of the Revolution. As a result, he twice had to flee from France: first in 1848 (for a few months)⁸ and then, more drastically, a year later in June 1849, after which he was sentenced to permanent exile.⁹

His early years of political exile were fugitive and peripatetic. He travelled incognito, using a series of pseudonyms to evade French agents and the police surveillance imposed on refugees of the failed 1848 revolutions. He initially joined other political exiles, participating in their debates, rivalries and squabbles. He also published militant republican tracts in Switzerland,¹⁰ England (1852)¹¹ and Belgium,¹² always exhorting his French readers to continue the struggle. However, with the consolidation of the Second Empire, his hopes for the Second Republic and his own political ambitions gradually faded. His life became increasingly solitary, and he became acutely aware that, as *homme politique*, he had lost touch with his French public.

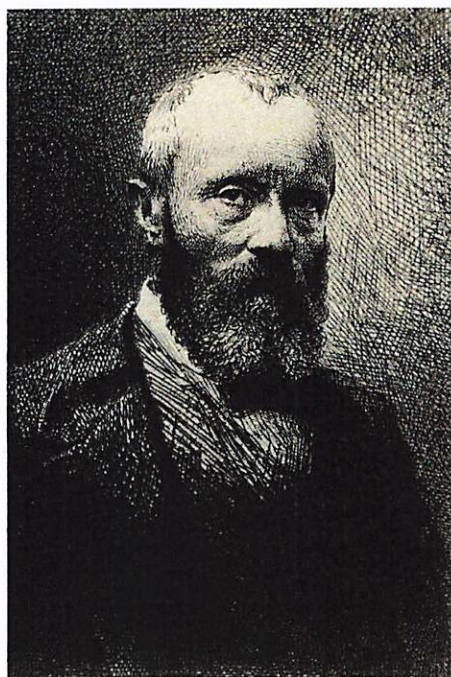
As if this was not sufficient disappointment, the formerly influential art critic who had known *le tout Paris* was the dismayed witness of his own oblivion. He commented bitterly to Paul Lacroix that in the torrent of art criticism inspired by the 1855 Exposition Universelle in Paris, the name "T.T." was nowhere mentioned "although his former criticism influenced, and was perhaps inseparable from, the artistic traditions of those past years."¹³

Nevertheless, Théophile Thoré was shortly to make a new name for himself, one that would become inseparable from the historiography of Dutch art. As Hecht pithily observed: "he was a man of strong political convictions who paid dearly for his radical views ... by having to go into exile for ten years," during which time "he became an international authority on old master

painting, and the most important connoisseur in the field of Dutch seventeenth-century art."¹⁴

"W[illiam] Bürger"

His renowned researches into seventeenth-century Dutch art date only from the last four years of his exile. He was by then living mostly in Brussels where in 1855 he had taken on a new literary commitment: the launching of the newly founded *Revue universelle des arts*.¹⁵ This was the first vehicle for his return to writing about art in his new guise of "W.Bürger" (fig. 2). His role at the *Revue* enabled him to re-establish contact with the professional art world, putting him in touch with museum curators, critics, art-historians, librarians and publishers, as well as public and private art collections, and current exhibitions, as can be seen from the earliest issues of the new journal. This was the positive side of the new enterprise, for it allowed "W.Bürger" gradually to re-familiarize himself with the world of "art and poetry" that Citizen Thoré had roundly rejected in 1848.



2 Léopold Flameng, *W.Bürger*, etching. Frontispiece, *Salons de Bürger*, Paris 1870

However, it emerges from his correspondence with Paul Lacroix, that his work at the *Revue* was also a source of administrative hassle and frustration, tedious editorial tasks, disagreements with colleagues, annoying printing delays and concerns about circulation and finances.¹⁶ By late 1856 he felt his life was purposeless, as can be seen in a despondent note, penned on 7 October, in which he doubts that he will survive until his fiftieth birthday: "I am a lost man, if nothing new arises in my life; some sustenance, passion, work, struggle, love, entertainment, a touch of craziness. I will not get through the winter, or, if I do drag [myself] painfully through those dark days, I shall finish before [my birthday] 23 June."¹⁷

He did indeed reach his fiftieth birthday, for in a matter of weeks, his optimism and sense of purpose was restored by a transformative experience: a fortnight's visit to the Netherlands in October 1856. He wrote to a close friend in Belgium (who had looked after him during his recent despondency) that he was cheered up by the activity and interest of the journey, by the country generally, but especially by the art collections he explored in Amsterdam, The Hague and Rotterdam. He was enthralled by the paintings, which he studied carefully,¹⁸ and he also met the renowned Rembrandt scholar, Dr P. Scheltema.¹⁹ Newly motivated, he found a project to sustain him: a book on the life and works of Rembrandt.

Soon after his return to Brussels, he bombarded his friend and colleague in Paris, Paul Lacroix, "the most knowledgeable of bibliophiles," with urgent enquiries about earlier publications on Rembrandt, particularly about French translations of publications by English and Dutch authors. In his letters, he lists works by authors such as Smith (especially volume VII of his *catalogue raisonné* of Rembrandt's paintings), Immerzeel, Pilkington, Burnet, Nieuwenhuys, Reynolds and Josi (fig. 3).²⁰ He enquires about the current state of Rembrandt research in France, whether contemporary French critics have done any work on Rembrandt, and what has been written on the Dutch school generally. Soon after he wrote:

"For Bürger, who is working on Rembrandt: is there a catalogue of Rembrandt's painted work, as there are by Smith for van Dyck, van Hasselt for Rubens?"²¹ The frustrations of his six-year alienation from the art world and his acute sense of isolation from France is palpable in his anxious requests.

By January 1857 he was sufficiently familiar with the Rembrandt literature to start work on his own book. His researches were further stimulated by his visit in May to England to review the great Art Treasures of England exhibition in Manchester.²² He enthused about the Old Masters ("oh! the treasures that are there"), which included some twenty-eight paintings by "my Rembrandt."²³ After leaving Manchester, he visited collections in or around London, especially to view works by Rembrandt.²⁴ He wrote about his memorable visit to Buckingham palace ("Oh! I stayed four hours, all alone, among these treasures"), and of his plans to visit Thomas Baring and the Dulwich gallery.²⁵ Armed with a letter of introduction from Paul Lacroix, he was also permitted to study the Rembrandt drawings held in the normally inaccessible Print Room at the British Museum.²⁶ Lacroix introduced W.Bürger as one of his collaborators on the *Revue universelle*, "who is preparing a magnificent history on Rembrandt and who has come to study the paintings by the master in England."²⁷

Bürger himself could not resist announcing his forthcoming book in a lengthy footnote to his section on Rembrandt in his review of the Manchester exhibition. He explains that whereas Rembrandt's graphic work was well known in France, and elsewhere, his paintings were not; nor was the artist's genius properly appreciated since most French critics discussed paintings they had not seen from collections outside France. In short, Rembrandt remains "to be done" ("est à faire") for France, and for artists and art lovers of all countries. "What is needed, besides the elucidation of the *new* art of which he is one of the initiators, is a chronological study of his works, which has never been done. The author of this book has under-

school, as typified respectively by Rembrandt and Rubens.

Bürger was evidently gratified that his championship of Rembrandt and the Dutch school was understood by his friend Proudhon, as a surrogate political campaign by the censored Citizen Thoré. He agreed (privately) with his fellow exile that he couldn't care less about old canvases in which he did not detect "l'Homme": "Yes, (between us) my idea is that one can promote truth and justice while speaking of a ray of sunshine, and that a remark about Rembrandt can mean as much for the Revolution as a manifesto by citizen Ledru-Rollin about the universal Republic."³² The erudite W.Bürger here alludes to the futility of their former political activism, but confirms the possibility of furthering their political ideal of a universal Republic through his writings on art – with Rembrandt as a beacon.

Rembrandt now stands as his new cause, and as Hecht observes, Thoré goes further in the second volume by giving Rembrandt (and the Dutch school) another historic role as: "the legitimate source of inspiration for contemporary art."³³ In the introduction Bürger recounts how during his solitary exile he pondered endlessly about the differences between Rembrandt and Raphael, and how, whenever he thought about Rembrandt and the Dutch, Raphael and the Italians sprang to mind: "For years, we lived continuously partly with the Italians and Raphael, and partly with our Dutch [artists] and Rembrandt – who never left us. The illustrious masters, my only company during my solitude, tormented me day and night, constantly challenging me with their enigmatic differences,"³⁴ until a happy moment of enlightenment solved his dilemma. He recalls how, after coming across an illustrated magazine with pictures of the two geniuses, he cut out their images and pinned them onto the wall – not facing each other, but back-to-back. Above them he scrawled "JANUS" which, together with the configuration of the two "R's" back to back, now threw light on their puzzling differences. One looked towards the past; the other to the future: thus Raphael as

the culmination of an ideal art of the past, and Rembrandt as the legitimate ancestor of modern art. Each genius was hereby given his full due, while their respective historic roles were clearly differentiated.

Since Bürger was immersed in writing *Rembrandt: l'homme et l'œuvre*, it is not surprising that he sought to impute a vital significance to his hero's art-historical role – especially as this was subsumed in his wider political aspirations. But one might wonder why he was so concerned with Raphael, or indeed why Raphael (with the Italians) was on his mind at all. Why was he so intent on dividing his baffled attention evenly between Rembrandt and Raphael? Although the differences between Italian and northern schools, especially in their relationship to contemporary art, was a frequently debated issue³⁵ and a long-standing theme in Thoré-Bürger's art criticism,³⁶ there is another likely source for his current preoccupation with Raphael. At the same time as embarking on his Rembrandt project, Bürger was also committed to another (somewhat surprising) assignment: the editing and annotation of the French edition of Johann-David Passavant's magisterial book on Raphael.³⁷ Although Paul Lacroix is credited with the editing and annotation, the task was in fact undertaken by "W.Bürger."

The evidence for this unexpected role is found in Paul Lacroix's unpublished correspondence. A letter of March 1857 from Passavant to Lacroix thanks him for agreeing to improve the French translation and for any further editing and improvements.³⁸ A few months later Bürger wrote to thank Lacroix for all he has done to create work for him, and he promises to attend to the publication on Raphael: to check the proofs, perfect the style, correct mistakes, and to add whatever notes he can.³⁹ And indeed, the frequent and voluminous footnotes designated as "De l'éditeur" have a familiar ring: there are several references to Bürger's review of the Manchester exhibition; to articles in the *Revue universelle des arts*; to the opinions by his friend Louis Viardot,⁴⁰ and to other authors and research with which Bürger

was familiar, including an obscure early article by himself!⁴¹

That the venerable Passavant was less than delighted with these intrusions into his book, can be seen in his petulant complaints to Lacroix. He objects to changes in the text which do not convey his ideas, and he bitterly resents the citations of contradictory opinions by other writers, such as Louis Viardot. He wants several notes to be deleted, for they undermine his work, which is the fruit of more than twenty years serious research. He is prepared to accept criticism when published in reviews, but he resents giving space to opposing views within his own book, especially during his own lifetime. He insists that they should either be corrected (since they are in his view erroneous), or deleted.⁴² Bürger, in response, wrote to the publisher that he was embarrassed to hear of Passavant's dissatisfaction with some of the additions and corrections, and suggests that perhaps one should try to satisfy "this gallant old man" ("ce brave vieillard").⁴³ Which, if any, of Passavant's objections were met is impossible to ascertain.

Passavant's pioneering study of Raphael, first published in German in 1839, has been described as the first modern scholarly monograph on an artist, owing to its "adherence to stylistic criteria rather than biographical narrative as the construct for analysing its subject."⁴⁴ Is it possible that Bürger's Rembrandt project was encouraged and guided by Passavant's example? In his Manchester review, Bürger singles out Passavant as the unsurpassed authority on Raphael, whose renowned work was about to be published in French, adding that this study, to which Passavant dedicated ten years of his life, has "the great merit of presenting the chronological succession of Raphael's works in its three periods."⁴⁵ Bürger's researches on Rembrandt were along the lines of Passavant's example: collecting archival material on Rembrandt's life and work, and relating it to a chronological analysis of the artist's stylistic development, based on having viewed as many paintings as possible. Thus, while devising a

symbolic back-to-back configuration of Raphael and Rembrandt's respective roles in the history of European art, he was, in another sense, also considering the two artists side by side.

In 1860, when Bürger returned to France, he was already widely recognized as a leading authority on Dutch art⁴⁶ and had begun to publish his pioneering research on Vermeer, with whose name Thoré-Bürger is "most indissolubly linked."⁴⁷ Once back in Paris, he plunged into a whirlwind of new demands, including reviews of current exhibitions of both Old Masters and contemporary art.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, he remained committed to his project of a chronological catalogue all of Rembrandt's paintings. By 1861, he had made the crucial visit to German museums,⁴⁹ but, as he informed a young scholar, Carel Vosmaer, he still had not viewed all the necessary paintings: "I am missing only one or two museums in Europe. I haven't seen the Hermitage in Saint Petersburg. I have to go there soon, and it is only after that trip that I can dream of publishing my long announced work."⁵⁰

This was the start of a correspondence – and a warm friendship – between Bürger and Vosmaer, which focused on their shared passion for Rembrandt. For Vosmaer, Bürger was a mentor and source of emulation, whose studies of Rembrandt had surpassed all earlier authorities: "No one has gone deeper [than Bürger] into understanding the special genius of Rembrandt, his principles, as well as the man and his works, above all his paintings."⁵¹

Bürger's continuing dedication to Rembrandt is found in his art criticism and art historical studies, as well as through his activities as collector, auctioneer or agent.⁵² Occasionally Rembrandt was explicitly recruited for his old republican dreams, as in a letter of 1864: "It seems to me impossible to talk about Rembrandt, for example, without destroying hypocrisy and despotism without glorifying the light which is liberty, and all the human qualities that relate to politics and the Revolution, to progress and civilization."⁵³

Determined to complete his Rembrandt opus, the long awaited visit to St Petersburg was at last planned for June 1865: "I will then be able to do my Rembrandt," he wrote to Vosmaer earlier in the year. "Hurry up, my friend, if you want to complete [your work] before me."⁵⁴ However, the journey was cancelled due to the epidemic raging in the city,⁵⁵ and work delayed yet again. Nevertheless, the following year, in his updated second edition of Scheltema's important biographical research, he declared that it would now be possible to write a book on Rembrandt that would combine exactitude with literary merit, incontestable competence concerning art, and even the poetic originality of the Shakespeare of Holland.⁵⁶ Again he stakes his own, albeit wistful, claim: "For several years the annotator of Scheltema's publications has been working on this ambitious work. Will he have the time and energy to leave this last evidence of his fanaticism for Rembrandt?"⁵⁷ Unfortunately, he did not, and his friend Vosmaer did indeed complete his own monograph on Rembrandt before Bürger.⁵⁸

Bürger died on 30 April 1869, aged 61. His partly completed manuscript, together with other

unfinished work, was left in the hands of his devoted protégé Marius Chaumelin, who soon after Bürger's death ensured the republication of Bürger's *Salons* of the 1860s.⁵⁹ A few years later, in 1873, in a volume dedicated to Thoré-Bürger, Chaumelin announced: "En préparation, Rembrandt. L'Homme et l'Oeuvre par W.Bürger. Notes et fragments coordonnées et publiés par Marius Chaumelin, légataire des manuscrits de Thoré."⁶⁰

Despite Chaumelin's best intentions, Bürger's unfinished manuscript, the last evidence of his "fanaticism for Rembrandt," was never published⁶¹ – to the evident dismay of his contemporaries.⁶² His researches nevertheless had an enduring influence on younger scholars such as Vosmaer and Bode, and contributed to the burgeoning scholarship and critical reception of Rembrandt's work. Bürger's ambition to produce a chronological catalogue of all of Rembrandt's paintings anticipated the projects of later generations, leading up to our own times. Furthermore, in the context of his own life and work, it was his own initial Rembrandt project that rescued Citizen Thoré from despondent political exile and launched him on his renewed career as W.Bürger.

1 W. Bürger, *Trésors d'art exposés à Manchester en 1857 et provenant des collections royales, des collections publiques et des collections particulières de la Grande-Bretagne*, Paris 1857, p. 245, note 2: "Rembrandt est à faire pour la France et pour les artistes et les amateurs de tous les pays."

2 W. Bürger, *Musées de la Hollande*, 2 vols., Paris 1858–60, vol. 2, p. x: "Raphael regarde en arrière; Rembrandt regarde en avant. ... L'un est le passé, l'autre l'avenir."

3 P. Scheltema, *Rembrandt: discours sur sa vie et son génie*, ed. W.Bürger, Paris 1866, p. 154: "Grâce à cette série de découvertes sur la famille de Rembrandt, sur ses alliances et son entourage, nous pouvons donc commencer à connaître l'homme. Pour connaître l'artiste, nous avons des témoignages plus significatifs que tous les papiers écrits ou imprimés: nous avons l'œuvre du peintre et du graveur. REMBRANDT, l'homme et son œuvre: le titre est tout fait; il n'y a plus qu'à faire le livre."

4 P. Hecht, "Rembrandt and Raphael back to back: Thoré's contribution," *Simiolus* 26 (1998), pp. 162–78; this article was first given as a paper at the symposium "The evolving canon of seventeenth-century Dutch and Flemish painting," Utrecht University, 8 November 1996.

5 T. Thoré, "Salon de 1848," *Le Constitutionnel* (27 March 1848); republished in W.Bürger, *Salons de T. Thoré: 1841, 1845, 1846, 1847, 1848*, Paris 1868, p. 565: "Nous n'arrêterons pas longtemps nos lecteurs sur le Salon de 1848. La politique nous réserve des spectacles plus intéressants. Nous faisons aujourd'hui mieux que de l'art et de la poésie, nous faisons de l'histoire vivante."

6 Founded by le Citoyen Thoré, it had two runs: the first between 17 May–21 August 1848 (which was suppressed for six weeks before being decisively [definitively?] banned); the second (renamed as the *Journal de la Vraie République*, subtitled "Sans la révolution sociale, il n'y a point de vraie république") between 29 March–13 June 1849. The paper generally supported the Jacobin socialism of Louis Blanc; it was joined in editorship by Pierre Leroux, Georges Sand and Barbès from 2 May 1849.

7 23 April 1848, (confirming Republic); 4–8 June 1848 (by-elections National Assembly); 17–22 September 1848 (National Assembly for three candidates representing Department of Seine); 21 May 1849 (Legislative Assembly).

8 He fled to London with Louis Blanc and Marc Causidière in June 1848, after being implicated in the invasion of

the Assembly of 15 May and the June insurrection; Blanc and Caussidière remained in exile, but Thoré's name was cleared in December 1848, after which he returned to Paris.

9 After joining the failed anti-government demonstration on 13 June 1849 (led by Ledru-Rollin in protest against the French occupation of Rome), the offices of his newspaper *Journal de la vraie république* were ransacked. Thoré fled the country, this time crossing the border into Switzerland. On 14 November 1849, he was condemned at the High Court of Versailles to permanent exile, but later returned to France after the general amnesty of 1859.

10 T. Thoré, *Liberté*, Brussels 1850; T. Thoré, "Lettre à Barbès," *L'Exilé: almanach pour 1851*, pp. 36–41; T. Thoré, "De la souveraineté universelle," *La Révolution* (18 and 21 October 1851); T. Thoré, "Lettre du citoyen Thoré sur la constitution," *La Révolution* (8, 11 and 17 November 1851).

11 T. Thoré, "Les aigles et les dieux": première publication de l'Union socialiste, London 15 May 1852.

12 Anonymous (T. Thoré), *La restauration de l'autorité ou l'opération césarienne par un ex-représentant du peuple*, Brussels 1852.

13 Letter to Paul Lacroix, datable mid 1855, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Fonds Lacroix, ms. 9623, Thoré file 1476, nr. 22 (hereafter cited as Arsenal, Fonds Lacroix): "Vous voyez bien, que dans le grand flux de paroles, et d'écrits, sur votre exposition, son nom n'est pas même prononcé, quoi que sa critique jadis ait touché, et soit peut-être inséparable de la tradition artistes des dernières années."

14 Hecht, op. cit. (note 3), p. 164.

15 Founded by Paul Lacroix (in Paris) but directed and published in Brussels with Thoré as the editor behind the scenes, and one of the major contributors. It rejected any national bias, and was dedicated to a new universal history of art which would contribute to progress and to the advent of the future universality for humankind.

16 See several unpublished letters: Arsenal, Fonds Lacroix, Thoré file 1476, nrs. 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20b, 38.

17 Published in F. Delhasse (ed.), "Notes et souvenirs de Théophile Thoré, 1807–1869," *Nouvelle Revue Rétrospective* 15 (1901), p. 171: "Je suis un homme perdu, s'il ne survient pas de nouveau dans ma vie; un aliment quelconque, de la passion, du travail, de la lutte, de l'amour, de la distraction, un grain de folie. Je ne passerai pas l'hiver, ou, si je traîne douloureusement ces jours sombres, je finirai en juin avant le 23." See also F. Suzman Jowell, "From Thoré to Bürger: the image of Dutch art before and after the *Musées de la Hollande*," *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 49 (2001), pp. 53, 60, note 72.

18 Letter dated 20 October 1856 to his friend Félix Delhasse (under whose name he was travelling): "During these last days you understood that I was very depressed and you cared for me well. I have been cheered up a bit by the activity and interests of the trip. You could not imagine what I've done since I left. ... I have taken enough notes to write volumes, and have made discoveries about dates and other matters. ... Ah! if only Holland would have me write catalogues for their museums! There are hardly any catalogues, only insignificant notes, and for such treasures!" ("Dans ces dernières heures,

vous avez senti que j'étais très malade au moral, et vous m'avez bien soigné. Je suis un peu ragaillardisé par l'activité et la curiosité du voyage. Vous n'imaginerez pas tous ce que j'ai fait depuis mon départ. ... J'ai des notes pour faire des volumes, et j'ai fait des découvertes de dates et autres. ... Ah! si la Hollande voulait me faire faire les catalogues de ses musées! Il n'y en a point de catalogues, que des notes insignifiantes, et pour tant de trésors!") Published in P. Cottin (ed.), *Thoré-Bürger peint par lui-même: lettres et notes intimes*, Paris 1900, pp. 158–60.

19 Ibid., p. 160.

20 Unpublished letter datable to late 1856, Arsenal, Fonds Lacroix, Thoré file, nr. 13: "le plus savant des bibliophiles." He lists J. Smith, *A catalogue raisonné of the works of the most eminent Dutch, Flemish and French painters*, vol. 7, London 1836; J. Immerzeel Jr., *Lofrede op Rembrandt*, Amsterdam 1841; J. Immerzeel Jr., *De levens en werken der Hollandsche en Vlaamsche kunstschilders*, Amsterdam 1843; M. Pilkington, *Rembrandt and his works*, London 1829; J. Burnet, *Rembrandt and his works*; C.J. Nieuwenhuys, *A review of the lives and works of the most eminent painters*, London 1834; J. Reynolds, "A journey to Flanders and Holland, in the year MDCCCLXXXI," in E. Malone (ed.), *The works of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, 2 vols., London 1797, vol. 2, pp. 170–218; C. Josi, *Beredeneerde catalogus der werken van Rembrandt van Rhyn, en van zyne leerlingen en navolgeren, herkomende uit het kabinet van wylen den Heer C. Ploos van Amstel*, Amsterdam 1810. Penned in minuscule, barely legible writing, the letter is compressed on two sides of a small lightweight page.

21 Unpublished letter, Arsenal, Fonds Lacroix, Thoré file, nr. 34: "Pour Bürger qui fait un travail sur Rembrandt: y-a-t-il une catalogue de l'oeuvre peint de Rembrandt comme il y a Smith pour van Dyck, van Hasselt pour Rubens. Connaissez-vous, par ex, Josi, *Catalogue raisonné des oeuvres de R.* (Je ne crois pas que ce soit en français)."

22 Published as a series in the Paris newspaper, *Le Siècle*, and then as a separate volume as *Trésors d'art en Angleterre*, cit. (note 1). It went into a third edition by 1865.

23 Letter to Delhasse, 13 May 1857, published in Cottin, op. cit. (note 17), p. 101: "oh! les trésors qu'il y a là." He comments also that the exhibited works of Rubens and van Dyck outclassed the Italian paintings, and even "my Rembrandt," adding that many superb works from other collections in England were not included.

24 He mentions his intention to visit Buckingham Palace, Hampton Court, Windsor, the Baring and Ellesmere collections. See the letter to Félix Delhasse dated 23 May 1857 published in Cottin, op. cit. (note 17), p. 174.

25 Unpublished letter dated 26 May 1857, to Félix Delhasse, Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, ms. 7911, Papiers de Thoré-Bürger (hereafter cited as Arsenal, Papiers), nr. 148: "J'ai vu hier Buckingham. oh! Je suis resté 4 h. tout seul parmi ces trésors." See also his later catalogue: "Les Rembrandt de Buckingham Palace à Londres," *Revue universelle des arts* 7 (1858), pp. 335–44.

26 W.Bürger, "Les dessins de Rembrandt au British Museum à Londres," *Revue Germanique* 3 (1858), p. 393: "Few foreign

art lovers, very few, I assume, have had the fortune to see these marvels. The Print-Room ... of the British Museum is a fairly inaccessible sanctuary; it may only be visited with special permission, and 'by few people at a time' I never saw a single person there" ("Peu d'amateurs étrangers à l'Angleterre, bien peu, je suppose, ont eu la faveur de voir ces merveilles. Le Print-Room ... du British Museum est un sanctuaire assez inabordable; il ne peut être visité qu'avec une permission spéciale, et, 'par peu de personnes à la fois' Je n'y a jamais rencontré un seul visiteur....")

27 Unpublished letter dated 12 May 1857, Arsenal, Papiers, ms. 7910: "... un de mes collaborateurs de la Revue universelle des arts, M. W. Bürger qui prépare une magnifique histoire de Rembrandt et qui est allé étudier les tableaux du maître en Angleterre."

28 See Bürger, *Trésors d'art en Angleterre*, cit. (note 1), p. 245, note 2: "Si l'on connaît bien en France, et partout, l'oeuvre gravé de ce grand artiste, son oeuvre peint n'est pas bien connu. ... La plupart des critiques français en ont parlé sans avoir même vu les tableaux conservés en Hollande, en Angleterre et ailleurs. Rembrandt est à faire pour la France et pour les artistes et les amateurs de tous les pays. Ce qu'il faudrait sur Rembrandt, outre l'éclaircissement de l'art nouveau, dont il fut un des initiateurs, c'est une étude chronologique de ses oeuvres, qui n'a jamais été faite. L'auteur de ce livre a entrepris de la faire selon ses forces. Son travail sera publié prochainement."

29 Arsenal, Fonds Lacroix, Thoré file, nr. 14.

30 W. Bürger, "Généalogie de Rembrandt," *L'Artiste* 4 (18 July 1858), pp. 161-63; W. Bürger, "La première femme de Rembrandt," *Revue Germanique* 4 (1858), pp. 560-78; P. Scheltéma, "Rembrandt," trans. and ed. W. Bürger, *Revue universelle des arts* 8 (1859), pp. 273-99, 369-91, 485-516.

31 W. Bürger, "Rembrandt au Musée d'Amsterdam," *L'Artiste* 4 (25 July 1858), pp. 182-88; W. Bürger, "Les Rembrandt des collections particulières d'Amsterdam: Galeries de M Six van Hillegom - de M. van Loon - du Baron van Brienem," *L'Artiste* 5 (12 September 1858), pp. 17-22. See also above (notes 25 and 26) re paintings in Buckingham Palace and drawings in the British Museum. His Rembrandt publications provoked a brief but acrimonious correspondence with one French authority in the field, Charles Blanc, who felt he had a claim on Rembrandt studies in France. See C. Blanc, "Correspondence," *L'Artiste* 5 (19 September 1858), pp. 45-46; *ibid.*, (26 September 1858), pp. 62-63.

32 On Proudhon's review and Thoré's response see Suzman Jowell, op. cit. (note 17), pp. 48-49.

33 Hecht, op. cit. (note 3), p. 168.

34 Bürger, *Musées*, cit. (note 1), vol. 2, p. ix: "Par un mirage singulier, toutes les fois que nous pensons à Rembrandt et aux Hollandais, aussitôt Raphael et les Italiens nous apparaissent Durant des années, nous avons donc vécu presque sans cesse, moitié avec les Italiens et Raphael, moitié avec nos Hollandais et Rembrandt qui jamais ne nous quitte. Ces morts illustres, notre seule compagnie dans la solitude, nous ont tourmenté, le jour et la nuit, en nous proposant sans cesse leurs énigmes si divergentes."

35 The issue was also highlighted at the Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition in 1857, where, probably on Waagen's advice, the northern and southern European schools were hung separately so that the chronological development of each faced the other from opposite walls. On the importance of this exhibition, see E.A. Pergam, *The Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition of 1857*, New York 2011.

36 On Thoré's evolving views on the Italian and Dutch schools, see F. Suzman Jowell, "Théophile Thoré," in P. Sénéchal and C. Barbillon (eds.), *Dictionnaire critique des historiens de l'art actifs en France de la Révolution à la Première Guerre mondiale*: www.inha.fr/fr/ressources/publications/dictionnaire-critique-des-historiens-de-l-art/thore-theophile.html. On Thoré-Bürger's image of Italy as enemy to originality and progress in European art since the Renaissance, and his denunciation of the fatal influence of Italian art, see F. Suzman Jowell, "Le voilà en France": Géricault according to Thoré," in R. Michel (ed.), *Géricault: conférence et colloque*, 2 vols., Paris 1996, vol. 2, pp. 779-99.

37 J.-D. Passavant, *Raphaël d'Urbain et son père Giovanni Santi*, trans. J. Luntenschutz, ed. P. Lacroix, 2 vols., Paris 1860.

38 France, Collection Françoise Breton, Henri Martin's Family archives.

39 Arsenal, Fonds Lacroix, Thoré file, nr. 15. W. Bürger refers to the forthcoming French edition of Passavant's book in his discussion of Raphael paintings exhibited at Manchester in May 1857. Bürger, *Trésors d'art en Angleterre*, cit. (note 1), p. 53.

40 Louis Viardot, who was a close friend of Thoré, had published several scholarly guides to European museums.

41 Passavant, op. cit. (note 37) p. 62, note 1, cites a reference by T. Thoré to Perugino's *Sposalizio* in the Caen Museum as published in *L'Artiste* in 1838. I have not traced the article.

42 Unpublished letter dated 7 December 1857, Arsenal, Fonds Lacroix, Passavant file 2315, nr. 2; unpublished letter dated 29 January 1858: "M. Viardot est cité en notes de l'éditeur pour des notices opposés aux miennes sans aucune décision. Il faudrait savoir s'il a raison ou s'il se trompe, ce qui lui arrive assez souvent. Dans ce dernier cas il faudrait le corriger, ou ne pas le citer. En général j'ai pris ce dernier parti dans mon livre, car pour réfuter tous les erreurs du écrivains sur Raphael, il faudrait écrire un volume en entier." On his indignation at other authors included in his book during his lifetime, see the unpublished letter dated 29 January 1858, Arsenal, Fonds Lacroix, Passavant file 2315, nr. 4: "Je comprendrai encore cette façon de faire si j'étais mort, mais vivant je ne puis accepter des critiques de mon livre dans mon livre même. ... il m'est très désagréable de voir figurer tous ces noms et toutes ces opinions contraires aux miennes. Si on critique mon livre soit dans les journaux où dans les revues, rien de mieux que ces personnes soient cités comme autorité. Mais dans mon livre il ne me semble point convenable que les contemporains y doivent trouver une place semblable. Dans mon livre je dois faire autorité et n'en puis souffrir aucune autre."

43 Arsenal, Fonds Lacroix, Thoré file 1476, nr. 32: "J'ai été très embarrassé pour les notes au Raphael, sachant par votre dernier lettre du 18 février, que M Passavant s'ebouriffait de

ce qu'on ajoute à son livre. Peut-être n'a-t-il point tout à fait tort, et mon avis est qu'il faut satisfaire ce brave vieillard, [illegible] ... aller de l'avant pour enlever le premier [illegible] des biographie"

44 L. Wolk-Simon, "Raphael drawings: pro-contra," in M.B. Hall (ed.), *The Cambridge companion to Raphael*, Cambridge 2005, pp. 208-09.

45 Bürger, *Trésors d'art en Angleterre*, cit. (note 1), p. 53: "Ce travail, auquel M. Passavant a consacré dix années de sa vie, a le grand mérite de présenter la succession chronologique des oeuvres de Raphael dans ses trois périodes."

46 See Gustav Waagen's acknowledgement that the recent and zealous work of W. Bürger had "much contributed to laying the foundations for a history of this great school, which may claim the meed of scientific value." Cited in Jowell, op. cit. (note 17), p. 46. Waagen mentions Bürger's 1857 *Trésors*, his 1858 *Musées*, and his *Galerie d'Arenberg à Bruxelles*, Brussels & Paris 1859.

47 F. Haskell, *Rediscoveries in art: some aspects of taste, fashion and collecting in England and France*, London 1976, p. 87; see also F. Suzman Jowell, "Vermeer and Thoré-Bürger: recoveries of reputation," in I. Gaskell and M. Jonker (eds.), *Vermeer Studies*, New Haven & London 1998, pp. 35-57.

48 See, for example, W. Bürger, "Exposition des tableaux de l'école française ancienne tirés de collections d'amateurs," *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 7 (1860), pp. 226-40, 257-77, 333-58. Among other publications, he wrote three reviews of the 1860 Paris Salon.

49 W. Bürger, "Un tour en Allemagne: coup d'oeil sur les musées de Brunswick, de Berlin, de Dresde et de Cassel," *Revue Germanique* 13 (1860), pp. 613-26; 14 (1861), pp. 200-23.

50 See the unpublished letter to Vosmaer, dated 3 June 1861, held in Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet: Vosmaer Collectie 548: Correspondentie van W. Bürger (Thoré) 1860-69, inv. nr. 3: "Il me manque encore un ou deux musées, pour avoir vu tout l'Europe. Je n'ai pas vu l'Ermitage Saint Petersburg. Je dois y aller bientôt, et ce n'est qu'après ce voyage que je songerai à publier mon travail déjà annoncé depuis longtemps." Bürger also congratulated Vosmaer on his research for his forthcoming book, which was also welcomed by Bürger in the hope that he will find information for his own work.

51 C. Vosmaer, *Rembrandt Harmens van Rijn: ses précurseurs et ses années d'apprentissage*, The Hague 1863, p. iii: "Nul n'a approfondi tellement ce génie tout particulier de Rembrandt, ainsi que ses principes, l'homme et ses oeuvres, surtout ses peintures." Reviewed, together with Vosmaer's *Rembrandt et ses sectateurs aux musées de Cassel, de Brunswick et de Berlin* in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts* 16 (1864), pp. 73-80. The professional friendship between Bürger and Vosmaer deserves a study in itself.

52 On his role in the purchase by the National Gallery, London, of *Christ blessing the children*, then attributed to Rembrandt, see F. Suzman Jowell, "Thoré-Bürger: a critical rôle in the art-market," *The Burlington Magazine* 138 (1996), pp. 120-21; W. Bürger, "Le Christ bénissant les enfants par Rembrandt (Galerie Suermondt, à Aix-la-Chapelle),"

Gazette des Beaux-Arts 21 (1866), pp. 250-59. On his acquisitions of a landscape then attributed to Rembrandt (present whereabouts unknown) for himself, and of a *Self-portrait* (Cologne, Wallraf-Richartz-Museum) for the collector Léon Double, see F. Suzman Jowell, "Thoré-Bürger's art collection: 'a rather unusual gallery of bric-à-brac,'" *Simiolus* 30 (2003), pp. 100-01.

53 Letter dated 21 December 1864, published in Cottin, op. cit. (note 18), pp. 222-23: "Il me semble impossible de parler de Rembrandt, par exemple, sans abîmer l'hypocrisie et le despotisme, sans glorifier la lumière, qui est la liberté, et toutes les qualités humaines qui touchent à la politique et à la Revolution, au progrès et à la civilisation."

54 Unpublished, undated letter to Vosmaer, Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet: Vosmaer Collectie, nr. 548: Correspondentie van W. Bürger (Thoré) 1860-69: "Alors, je pourrai aussi faire mon Rembr. Dépêchez-vous, mon ami, si vous voulez avoir fini avant moi."

55 Unpublished, undated (May 1865) letter to Vosmaer, Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet: Vosmaer Collectie, nr. 548: Correspondentie van W. Bürger (Thoré) 1860-69: "Je ne suis plus bien sur d'aller à Petersburg, à cause de l'épidémie qui y regne toujours."

56 Scheltema, op. cit. (note 3), p. xi: "A présent on pourrait faire sur Rembrandt et son génie, ... un livre historique, qui devrait joindre à l'exactitude le mérite littéraire, une compétence irrécusable en matière d'art, et même cet attrait poétique que comporte l'originalité du Shakspeare (sic) de la Hollande."

57 Ibid., p. ix: "L'annotateur des publications de M. Scheltema se prépare depuis longues années à cette oeuvre ambitieuse. Aura-t-il le temps et la puissance de laisser ainsi un dernier témoignage de son fanatisme pour Rembrandt?"

58 C. Vosmaer, *Rembrandt: sa vie et ses oeuvres*, The Hague 1868.

59 Marius Chaumelin ensured the publication of *Salons de W. Bürger, 1861-1868*, Paris 1870, for which he compiled a fragmentary preface from Thoré's notes. He also commissioned the portrait etching by Flameng for the frontispiece (fig. 2).

60 M. Chaumelin, *L'art contemporain*, introduction by W. Bürger (reprint of "Les tendances de l'art au XIXe siècle"), Paris 1873. Chaumelin's dedication of his book reads: "A toi qui m'as appris à aimer le vrai dans l'art, à rechercher l'idéal dans l'expression de la beauté vivante et passionnée, à détourner les regards du passé pour les diriger vers l'avenir; à toi, maître, je dédie ces pages comme une témoignage de la reconnaissance que ton amitié et tes leçons m'ont inspirés."

61 So far I have been unable to locate Chaumelin's papers and have therefore not found Thoré's manuscript – if it still exists. The search is still on.

62 Charles Blanc, for example, justified appending a catalogue of paintings to the second edition (1873) of his *catalogue raisonné* of Rembrandt etchings, by the disappointing absence of Thoré-Bürger's long-awaited volumes on Rembrandt's paintings, due to his untimely death. See C. Scallen, *Rembrandt, reputation, and the practice of connoisseurship*, Amsterdam 2004, pp. 73, 340, notes 77, 78.