



Fig. 1
REMBRANDT,
The Standard Bearer,
1636.
Oil on canvas,
120.5 x 97.5 cm.

Amsterdam,
Rijksmuseum,
inv. no. SK-A-5092.

Short notice

Hero or Buffoon?

Remarks on Rembrandt's *Standard Bearer*

• BOUDEWIJN BAKKER* •

Rembrandt's *The Standard Bearer* is a remarkable painting, if only for its brilliant execution (fig. 1). All experts praise the astonishing painting technique, the masterful use of light and dark for the composition and the suggestion of spatial depth. In this respect, the work is comparable to other large-format depictions of half-length figures in eastern or antiquated dress Rembrandt painted in the sixteen thirties, most notably *Flora* (1633), *Minerva* (1635), *Self-Portrait* (1635), *Man in Russian Costume* (1639) and *King Uzziah Stricken with Leprosy* (1639/40).¹ Beyond that, what above all distinguishes *The Standard Bearer* are the many questions it raises with respect to the interpretation of the depicted figure. Over the last forty years, various authors have attempted to situate the work within Rembrandt's own oeuvre and within the iconographic tradition. Serving as points of reference for the second approach were two very different sixteenth-century representations of the standard bearer in print, both with accompanying or related captions. This resulted in markedly disparate outcomes. Assessments of whether Rembrandt had a specific purpose in mind when incorporating his own facial features in his depiction of the man have also led to highly divergent conclusions.

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This short notice is motivated by two recent publications by Jonathan Bikker, who describes *The Standard Bearer* essentially as a work in which the artist portrays himself as a proud Dutch patriot, and Eric Jan Sluijter's response, who posits that Rembrandt presents himself in the painting as a comical theatrical figure.² Besides these two interpretations, several past interpretations will be analysed and compared. In addition, a print by Hendrick Goltzius heretofore undiscussed within this context will be presented as a critical source for the figure of the standard bearer. Building partly on the findings of his predecessors, the present author devises a third, alternative approach, whereby emphasis is placed on the ambiguous nature of Rembrandt's picture.

Patriotic Soldiers

At first glance, Rembrandt's painting fits seamlessly in a small series of painted portraits of standard bearers, or ensigns, in Dutch civil militia companies.³ The resemblance lies chiefly in the figure's characteristic pose: generally facing right, but with bent arm and elbow in the side perpendicular to the picture plane and the face turned in the viewer's direction (fig. 2). Nevertheless, major differences can also be observed. Unlike the other painted standard bearers (including Rembrandt's



Fig. 2
EVERARD CRIJNSZ
VAN DER MAES,
*Willem Jansz Cock,
Flag Bearer of the
Oranje Vendel,
The Hague, 1617.*
Oil on canvas,
198 x 102 cm.
The Hague,
Haags Historisch
Museum, inv. no.
0000-0029-SCH
(detail).

Fig. 3
REMBRANDT,
*The Standard Bearer
(Floris Soop), 1654.*
Oil on canvas,
138 x 113 cm.
New York, The
Metropolitan
Museum of Art,
inv. no. 49.735.
The Jules Bache
Collection, 1949.

much later portrait of Floris Soop, see fig. 3), *The Standard Bearer* is not the portrait of a specific, identifiable member of a militia company. Instead, it shows a man with Rembrandt's own facial features dressed as a standard bearer in partly contemporary but predominately sixteenth-century raiment. As such, the painting is more akin to his series of painted and etched *tronies* and half-figures from the sixteen thirties, for which he chose unidentifiable, nameless models as his sitters, though also frequently himself, rendered in a more or less recognizable form. As in the present painting, these figures are often depicted wearing exotic or antiquated clothing, and in multiple instances, are given an attribute such as a weapon or iron gorget, likewise lending them a military air. In attire and pose, some of these display a marked similarity to *The Standard Bearer*.⁴ In every case, however, the military attributes and associations are kept fairly general.

What makes this painting different is that it centres on one specific kind of soldier: the standard bearer. This has given many authors reason to ponder whether Rembrandt perhaps had a specific intention in mind. In 1968, Horst Gerson saw in the painted figure 'a striking resemblance to Rembrandt himself', while cautioning that 'The personal meaning that Rembrandt may have given it [the work] remains a closed book to us'.⁵ Elsewhere, he observed that earlier Rembrandt experts 'consider this to be a self-portrait, a suggestion that seems to me (and others) most unlikely'.⁶

Writing in 1986, Christian Tümpel, who bypassed the question of the extent of self-representation altogether, observed that ensigns held an important psycho-military function as bearers of 'the symbol of the company, its flag', thus suggesting that the meaning of *The Standard Bearer* might be sought in that specific role.⁷ In 1989, the authors of the *Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings* followed

Tümpel's lead, also ruling out the possibility of a self-portrait: 'Rather there seems to be a link with a 16th-century tradition ... of depicting ensigns as types of courage and contempt of death, as inscriptions on Goltzius prints suggest.' To argue their point, they referred primarily to three engraved depictions of standard bearers by Goltzius. They chose to illustrate only one of these prints (dating 1587, fig. 4) together with its accompanying – not explicitly patriotic – caption, thus leaving out another print (dating 1585, fig. 5) far more similar in pose to that of Rembrandt's painted equivalent.⁸ As a consequence, the latter print was long ignored by later authors. On an aside, the *Corpus* authors also referred to *The Captain of the Infantry*, the pendant print of the 1587 *Standard Bearer*, without mentioning its explicitly patriotic caption.⁹

One year later, Perry Chapman took matters a step further by suggesting that Rembrandt, in his painting *The Standard Bearer*, had chosen to portray

himself as 'the artist-patriot'. She first based her argument on the patriotic caption accompanying Goltzius's *The Captain of the Infantry*.¹⁰ She then pointed out several other paintings by Rembrandt whose content was political-military in nature, as well as other – more or less reworked – semi-military self-portraits, which, in her estimation, also 'gave him a way to affirm his allegiance to the *vaderland*'. She purported that, in *The Standard Bearer*, Rembrandt modelled his own face after the 'legendary Dutch character' – which Erasmus described as 'martial prowess and straightforward simplicity' – 'by thickening his features and exaggerating his long moustache'. Furthermore, Chapman included the quasi-sixteenth-century costume in her reasoning: 'To contemporary Dutchmen this costume signified not merely soldiers, but ancient Batavians, as evidenced by Otto van Veen's series of twelve paintings illustrating the Batavian revolt'. Viewed as such, Rembrandt's *Standard Bearer* expresses nothing

Fig. 4
HENDRICK
GOLTZIUS, *The
Standard Bearer*, 1587.
Engraving,
275 x 190 mm.
Amsterdam,
Rijksmuseum, inv. no.
RP-P-OB-4639.

Fig. 5
HENDRICK
GOLTZIUS, *The
Standard Bearer*, 1585.
Engraving,
215 x 157 mm.
Amsterdam,
Rijksmuseum, inv. no.
RP-P-OB-10.198.



less than his own personal devotion to his fatherland.¹¹ One year later, Van Thiel briefly commented on this: 'It may be that [Rembrandt] found his own face to be a suitable model ... To deduce from this Rembrandt's patriotic sentiment goes beyond that which scientific exegesis permits.'¹²

Hero or Buffoon?

All was quiet around *The Standard Bearer* until 2006, when Marieke de Winkel, in her book on the clothing in Rembrandt's works, discussed the painting in the context of sixteenth-century German print series of picturesque, often rather comical mercenaries, also known as *Lansquenets*, drawing particular attention to a print by Jörg Breu the Younger (fig. 6)¹³ and a later copy thereof by Filippo Napoletano (fig. 7). She observed the strong similarity in the pose and overall appearance (most notably, the drooping moustache), but also in the clothing, especially the doublet with

puffed sleeves, the feathered beret and codpiece.¹⁴ In their 2019 catalogue of Rembrandt's paintings, De Winkel and Volker Manuth moreover quote Hans Sachs(?)'s satirical caption to Breu's print – 'Stoffel Allweg Vol' (Stoffel always drunk) – from which they conclude that, in light of his 'fat, almost droll' appearance, the standard bearer would very unlikely be a self-portrait, but 'a character type fitting more into the tradition of the *tronie*'.¹⁵

In the official Rijksmuseum publication, titled *Rembrandt: The Standard-Bearer* (2023), Jonathan Bikker also characterizes the painting as 'the depiction of the standard-bearer as a type in the tradition of the sixteenth-century prints'. He even describes Napoletano's print after Breu as Rembrandt's 'direct model', though the latter 'substituted the figure's lance for a banner transforming a run-of-the-mill soldier into a courageous standard-bearer', for contemporaries recognizable as 'an exemplar of

Fig. 6

JÖRG BREU
THE YOUNGER,
Lansquenet
(*'Stoffel Allweg Vol'*), c. 1520–35,
published c. 1575–90.
Woodcut,
280 x 170 mm.
Province, Brown
University Library,
John Hay Library,
Anne S.K. Brown
Military Collection,
inv. no. 2-SIZE DD107.7
.R6 1580.

Fig. 7

FILIPPO
NAPOLETANO,
Lansquenet with
Halberd, 1614.
Etching, 119 x 95 mm.
Amsterdam,
Rijksmuseum
Research Library,
325 D 19.



virility and courage'. Bikker sidesteps the mocking title of *Napoletano's* model (Breu) but finds support once again – as did the *Corpus*, Van Thiel and Chapman – in the lofty caption accompanying one of Goltzius's semi-allegorical standard bearers.

Following primarily Chapman's train of thought, Bikker continues his reasoning: 'The use of antiquated dress ... lends the figure an iconic status [as] the Dutch ensign of the Eighty Years War. Rembrandt perhaps also intended the viewer to make an association with the Batavians ... The standard-bearer stands for the Dutch in general and their valiant fight for independence.' And then, just as Chapman: 'It seems likely that this is the foremost reason why Rembrandt gave the ensign his own features.' Regarded in this way, Rembrandt emerges as an artist who casts himself in the prototype of the patriotic and soldierly Dutchman.¹⁶ In the 2024 *Rijksmuseum Bulletin*, Bikker briefly reiterates this reading of the painting, while simultaneously introducing the new observation that Rembrandt's ensign 'proudly poses before a column, the symbol par excellence of fortitude'.¹⁷

In the same year, Erik Jan Sluijter responded with his own thorough analysis of the painting, resulting in a surprising interpretation that essentially contradicts that of Bikker.¹⁸ Like Chapman, he situates the painting among the manifold self-portraits, *tronies* and half-figures from the sixteen thirties showing Rembrandt's own facial features, but then chooses a different course, proceeding on a suggestion raised by Van Thiel in 1990: 'The robust ... standard-bearer with his soldierly moustache has the charisma of the actor whose simple appearance on stage is enough to captivate the audience', achieved in part 'through the proud pose of the martial model'.¹⁹ Sluijter continues, stating that Rembrandt presents himself here in what 'his contempo-

raries would have recognized as theater dress'. But at this point, he takes a turn down a path diametrically opposed to Chapman and Bikker, as well as the *Corpus* authors and Van Thiel: he observes no connection whatsoever to Goltzius's proud and elegant ensigns, but does indeed see a link with Breu's grotesque *Stoffel*. Sluijter emphatically underscores the pictorial and particularly the theatrical tradition – extending into Rembrandt's own day and found even in his own works – in which ensigns and other extravagantly and fancifully attired soldiers are presented as comical figures in a satirical context. Especially because of the feathered beret, frequently used by Rembrandt but here draped with extraordinary elegance, the noticeable drooping moustache and the (albeit scarcely visible) codpiece, he is convinced that 'Rembrandt took care to emphasize that *The Standard Bearer* should be perceived as a comical painting'.²⁰

To further bolster his theory, Sluijter points out (the first author to do so) that the beautifully painted 'banner' is in actuality little more than an embroidered bed sheet, used by Rembrandt in other paintings as well. In his view, this could only have been a deliberate choice, aimed to further accentuate the comical character of the man depicted. Among contemporary viewers it may have brought to mind, for example, Gerbrand Adriaensz Bredero's popular comedy *Moortje*, in which mock ensigns hold up 'banners' in the form of bed sheets, aprons and diapers. Finally, Sluijter posits that by giving this mock figure facial features so clearly resembling his own, Rembrandt – no doubt intentionally – introduces an additional satirical quality: just as the standard bearer, as a type, is ridiculous in his inflated vanity, so too is the painter laughable, who – like Rembrandt in this painting – portrays himself for the public at large.

Goltzius's *Mars*

This concise overview shows that Rembrandt's *Standard Bearer* can lead to substantively different, even diametrically opposed interpretations depending on an author's preferred choice of formal and written sources. In the process, however, several prints by Goltzius have been overlooked.

First to be considered is Goltzius's *Standard Bearer* from 1585 (fig. 5), in which the figure's pose bears a far greater resemblance to Rembrandt's *Standard Bearer* compared to any of his other engraved standard bearers, though he turns farther to the left. Here too, the figure stands in contraposto, one hand resting on the hip as he raises his standard with the other. More interesting, however, is another martial type – quite different from the elegant contemporary officer – that Goltzius chose repeatedly as his subject matter: the robust, heavily moustachioed mythical or legendary war hero, with examples such as the *Great Hercules* and the *Ten Roman Heroes*. Yet the image of this type that truly catches the eye is Goltzius's chiaroscuro woodcut of the god of war, *Mars*, a reworked version of his earlier engraving *Publius Horatius*.²¹ In fact, when viewed in mirror image (fig. 8), Mars's pose – with his pronounced elbow in foreshortened perspective and his outwardly turned hand resting on his hip – is identical to that of Rembrandt's ensign. He too stands, half backlit, in a radiant light beam emanating from above left, and he too wears an extravagant headdress, a billowing sash and a large, drooping moustache. Also striking is the painting's muted colour scheme, likewise reminiscent of the woodcut.²²

These similarities can hardly be coincidental. Rembrandt, an avid collector of sixteenth-century graphic arts, was unquestionably entirely familiar with Goltzius's graphic oeuvre.²³ It is true that Goltzius's auto-graph prints of Mars are extremely

rare, likely already in Rembrandt's time, but around 1620, Willem Jansz Blaeu reprinted the printing blocks in new colour combinations, such as the one reproduced here.²⁴ An interesting side note is that Karel van Mander strongly advised the study of colour woodcuts, a technique that in his view perfectly lent itself to the depiction in print of the supple transition of light and dark shades in a painting.²⁵ Until the *Standard Bearer*, never had Rembrandt employed precisely this application of chiaroscuro as effectively in a figure painting.

And what then of *Jörg Breu's Stoffel*? He too has a large moustache and an elbow that protrudes forward, and wears clothing strongly resembling that of the figure in Rembrandt's *Standard Bearer*, including the codpiece. In this respect, he exemplifies the traditional stereotypical representation of the *Lansqueniet*. Indeed, the mention of these kinds of prints in the 1656 inventory of Rembrandt's possessions suggests he could very well have known Breu's small woodcut.²⁶ Yet this was not strictly necessary, as there are plenty of other possibilities from which he may have drawn his inspiration, not in the least the figure in Goltzius's 1585 *Standard Bearer*, who despite the cheerier moustache and the absence of the codpiece, essentially has the same pose and wears the attached puff sleeves with lace cuffs (fig. 5). Taken as a whole, such considerations above all qualify both Goltzius's *Mars* and his 1585 *Standard Bearer* as formal sources for Rembrandt's *Standard Bearer*.

Timeless Attire

In her discussion of the clothing in *The Standard Bearer*, De Winkel writes that, in the sixteen thirties, Rembrandt consistently paid great attention to the historical accuracy of the clothing and fabrics in his paintings, based on a thorough knowledge of the sixteenth-century graphic arts.²⁷ To this end,



Fig. 8
 HENDRICK GOLTZIUS,
Mars, 1586-90.
 Chiaroscuro woodcut,
 247 x 175 mm
 (mirrored).

Amsterdam,
 Rijksmuseum, inv. no.
 RP-P-OB-10.307.

he would undoubtedly have studied detailed prints in his own personal collection, by Dürer, Van Leyden and other masters, as is also advised by Willem Goeree and Samuel van Hoogstraten.²⁸ De Winkel purports that Rembrandt relied exclusively on these print examples, given that in his own day, one century later, authentic early and mid-sixteenth-century garments were no longer available.²⁹ However, examples found in black-and-white prints – and especially in woodcuts – could not possibly have provided adequate detail for Rembrandt to devise such remarkably accurate depictions of ornately decorated historical clothing pieces. He would certainly have consulted actual physical samples of textiles accessible to him. Now known is that these types of costumes were common in the theatrical world of that era.³⁰ Conceivably, costumes used for such purposes were one source of information. Nevertheless, De Winkel plausibly asserts, on the basis of contemporaneous written sources, that such clothing pieces were merely made to elicit a superficial visual effect and by no means suitable for conveying an accurate picture of sixteenth-century costumes.³¹ Consequently, there is every reason to believe the poet Andries Pels, a younger contemporary of Rembrandt, when he writes that the painter collected ‘armour, helmets, Japanese daggers, furs and ruffs’ because he found them ‘schilderachtig’ – that is, appealing to paint, picturesque – for the purpose of applying a certain ‘singularity of decoration’ when devising the raiment of his historical figures.³²

Indeed, Rembrandt’s standard bearer wears a combination of various striking and unusual, richly decorated garments, composed of partly contemporary (the sash, the shirt with cuffs, the gorget, the scarf) and partly sixteenth-century (the doublet with puffed sleeves, the codpiece, the beret with feathers, the poniard) elements.



< Fig. 9

REMBRANDT,
Self-Portrait, c. 1637.
 Oil on panel,
 63 x 50 cm.
 London, Wallace
 Collection,
 inv. no. P52 (detail).
 Photo © Wallace
 Collection, London,
 UK / Bridgeman
 Images

Accordingly, the painter has dressed his figure as a timeless character and, as it were, elevated him above and beyond the present. Such a semi-fantasized half-figure wearing a characteristically 'picturesque', richly diverse costume enabled Rembrandt to lavishly manifest his mastery of varied paint treatment, fabric imitation and manipulation of light and dark. Not without reason is this magnificent painted canvas generally regarded as a milestone in Rembrandt's turbulent artistic development in the mid sixteen thirties.

A Battered Warrior

All considered, one may wonder whether Rembrandt's standard bearer might have been intended as a comical character, and more specifically, as a theatrical caricature of a brute braggart raising a flag. Neither the figure's pose nor his attire offers convincing clues. After all, the pose, though theatrical, is entirely in accordance with the seventeenth-century pictorial tradition. Furthermore, the man's clothing can hardly be described as rags; on the contrary, his raiment is extravagant and costly. In this context, his face deserves special attention. Unlike most of Rembrandt's painted half-length figures from the sixteen thirties, dressed in ornate 'eastern' or 'Russian' attire, he clearly bears the painter's own facial features as presented, for example, in the (self-) portrait in the Wallace Collection from about the same year (fig. 9).³³ The flaxen, drooping moustache is identical to that of the etched self-portrait from 1633 (fig. 10). Both figures gaze directly at the viewer, though by comparison the facial expression of Rembrandt's standard bearer is more difficult to define – pensive, perhaps surprised, almost sad (fig. 11) – and scarcely reconcilable with the immaculate, refined, dashing raiment and his self-confident, even

challenging pose. This contradictory effect is further enhanced by the flabby, rosy cheeks and the slightly open mouth, with the unkempt moustache draping down over the upper lip.³⁴ On closer inspection, the overall impression can only be described as distinctly ambivalent, tragic rather than heroic or comical: the standard bearer is a seasoned but battered warrior, who, thanks to his proud attitude and expensive attire, still manages to superficially maintain the allure of fearlessness.

This duplicitous effect is further reinforced by two other tangible elements in the painting: the banner and the dark half-column in the background right. The cloth as a banner is indeed reminiscent of the mock banners in *Moortje*, but these were unquestionably pieced together from discarded rags, whereas the standard raised in the painting is a spotless, costly piece of cloth, and therefore in stark contrast to the comical association of those in *Moortje*. Apparently, the viewer is at first misled. Something similar occurs with the semicircular stone column: anyone with some education would be able to read this object as a traditional image of steadfastness. However, a closer look reveals that the column is cracked in several places, again ostensibly undermining its superficial meaning.³⁵ In Rembrandt's day, this would not have escaped his viewers' notice. Seen in this light, the quasi-banner and the cracked column jointly contribute to the ambiguousness described above. It is precisely this elusive character of Rembrandt's *Standard Bearer* that makes this man one of the most intriguing personas he created during those years. Why Rembrandt chose himself as the model, and more importantly, whether he perhaps had a special reason for doing so, are questions the present author dares not to address.

< Fig. 10

REMBRANDT,
Self-Portrait, 1633.
 Etching, 13.2 x 10.3 cm.
 Vienna, Albertina,
 inv. no. DG 1926/13
 (detail, mirrored).

< Fig. 11

Detail of *The
 Standard Bearer*
 (fig. 1).

NOTES

- * I wish to thank Huigen Leeftang, Eric Jan Sluijter and Marleen Slooff for their critical commentary in response to an earlier version of the present article.
- 1 Josua Bruyn, Bob Haak, Simon Levie and Pieter van Thiel, *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 3: 1635-1642, Dordrecht/Boston/London 1989, nos. A 112, A 114, c 92 (and Ernst van de Wetering (ed.), *A Corpus of Rembrandt Paintings*, vol. 4: *The Self-Portraits*, Dordrecht 2005, no. c 92), A 122, A 128 respectively.
 - 2 See Jonathan Bikker, *Rembrandt: The Standard-Bearer | Rembrandt: De Vaandel-drager*, Amsterdam 2023, pp. 20-22 (intended for a broader public, without notes and bibliography); acquisition description by Jonathan Bikker, 'Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn (Leiden 1606-1669 Amsterdam): *The Standard Bearer*, 1636', in *Rijksmuseum Bulletin* 72 (2024), no. 1, pp. 70-71 (with limited bibliography); Eric Jan Sluijter, 'Rembrandt's "Standard Bearer": On Costume, Comedy, and Self-Portrayal, circa 1627-1637', *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 16 (2024), no. 2, see <https://jhna.org/articles/rembrandts-standard-bearer-costume-comedy-self-portrayal-1627-1637/> (consulted 10 March 2025).
 - 3 Pieter van Thiel counts in total six portraits produced before 1636; see 'The Standard Bearer', in Christopher Brown, Jan Kelch and Pieter van Thiel (eds.), *Rembrandt: The Master and his Workshop: Paintings*, exh. cat. Berlin (Gemäldegalerie SMPK)/Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum)/London (The National Gallery) 1991, pp. 201-02, cat. no. 26.
 - 4 See for example 'Self Portrait' with Plumed Cap and Lowered Sabre, also known as 'Self Portrait' as an Oriental, 1634. Erik Hinterding and Jaco Rutgers (Ger Luijten ed.), *The New Hollstein Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, 1450-1700: Rembrandt*, 7 vols., Ouderkerk aan den IJssel 2013, no. 135.
 - 5 'De robuuste vaandeldrager vertoont ... een opvallende gelijkenis met Rembrandt zelf.'; 'De persoonlijke zin, die Rembrandt deze afbeeldingen van zichzelf en Saskia [Saskia as Flora, 1635] gegeven mag hebben, blijft voor ons een gesloten boek.' See Horst Gerson, *De schilderijen van Rembrandt*, Amsterdam 1968, p. 250-51, cat. nos. 35, 36.
 - 6 See Horst Gerson, *Rembrandt: The Complete Edition of the Paintings by A. Bredius, Revised*, London/New York 1969, cat. no. 433.
 - 7 Christian Tümpel with Agnes Tümpel, *Rembrandt*, Antwerp 1986, p. 139.
 - 8 *Corpus* 3 1989 (note 1), pp. 224-31, cat. no. A 120, esp. pp. 228 and 231; see Marjolein Leesberg (Huigen Leeftang ed.), *The New Hollstein Dutch and Flemish Etchings, Engravings and Woodcuts, 1450-1700: Hendrick Goltzius*, 4 vols., Ouderkerk aan den IJssel 2012 (henceforth NHD Goltzius), nos. 284, 285, 288. In the *Corpus*, only the NHD Goltzius no. 288 appears, with as its caption (translated from the Latin): 'I, the standard-bearer, ensure steadfastness of mind and of heart: as long as I stand, the line holds, if I flee, it flees also.' My thanks to Daan den Hengst for the translation. Two years later (1991), one of the *Corpus* authors, Pieter van Thiel, again characterized *The Standard Bearer* as 'a symbolic representation of the qualities of every true standard bearer – the courageous hero running the greatest risk'; see Van Thiel 1991 (note 3), p. 200.
 - 9 NHD Goltzius no. 278, with caption (translated from the Latin): 'I, the commander, lead the way and ensure that Mars's recruits remain undaunted because I teach them to defy all dangers by my good example.' For the two pendants, see Huigen Leeftang and Ger Luijten (with ass. of Lawrence W. Nichols et al.), *Hendrick Goltzius (1558-1617): Drawings, Prints and Paintings*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum)/New York (The Metropolitan Museum of Art)/Toledo (The Toledo Museum of Art) 2003, pp. 78-79, cat. nos. 26.1, 26.2.
 - 10 NHD Goltzius no. 281.
 - 11 H. Perry Chapman, *Rembrandt's Self-Portraits: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Identity*, Princeton 1990, pp. 38-43. Indeed, one of the solders in a single painting in that series is wearing (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. SK-A-422) a comparable costume.
 - 12 'Het kan zijn dat hij [Rembrandt] zijn eigen kop een geschikt model heeft gevonden ... Daaruit Rembrandts patriottische gezindheid af te leiden gaat verder dan de wetenschappelijke exegese toelaat.' Van Thiel 1991 (note 3), p. 202.
 - 13 See Guido Messling (Hans-Martin Kaulbach ed.), *The New Hollstein German Engravings, Etchings and Woodcuts, 1400-1700: Jörg Breu the Elder and the Younger*, 2 vols., Ouderkerk aan den IJssel 2008, no. 28. Breu's print is found in a later reprint (1883), then titled *Römisch kaiserlich Majestät Kriegsvölker im Zeitalter der Landsknechte*, originally compiled by Joost de Necker c. 1520-35 and subsequently published c. 1575-90 by his son David de Necker in Vienna.

- 14 Marieke de Winkel, *Fashion and Fancy: Dress and Meaning in Rembrandt's Paintings*, Amsterdam 2006, pp. 171-72. This book is an elaboration of idem, 'Rembrandt's Clothes: Dress and Meaning in his Self-Portraits', in *Corpus* 4 2005 (note 1), pp. 45-78. In these publications, De Winkel relies chiefly on a later copy after Breu's print by Filippo Napoletano.
- 15 Volker Manuth, Marieke de Winkel and Rudie van Leeuwen, *Rembrandt: The Complete Paintings*, Cologne 2019, pp. 689-90, no. 289.
- 16 Bikker 2023 (note 2).
- 17 Bikker 2024 (note 2). Here Chapman is absent from the list of relevant literature.
- 18 Sluijter 2024 (note 2).
- 19 'De robuuste ... vaandeldrager met zijn martiale snor bezit de uitstraling van de acteur wiens simpele verschijning op het toneel voldoende is om de zaal te boeien ... door de fiere pose van het krijgshaftige model'. Van Thiel 1991 (note 3), p. 200.
- 20 Like Sluijter, Huigen Leeftang interprets *The Standard Bearer* as a comical figure, comparable to Goltzius's *Great Hercules* (written communication to the present author, 28 January 2025); see also Leeftang and Luijten 2003 (note 9), p. 17.
- 21 NHD Goltzius nos. 156 (*The Great Hercules*), 163-172 (*Ten Roman Heroes*), 303 (*Mars*), 164 (*Publius Horatius*).
- 22 Where the clothing is concerned, this is in any event true of the illuminated areas. In the shaded areas, the original green tints have faded. See Petria Noble, Annelies van Loon and Jonathan Bikker, 'Rembrandt's *Standard Bearer*: New Findings from Imaging Analyses', *Rijksmuseum Bulletin* 71 (2023), no. 2, pp. 170-79, esp. pp. 173-75.
- 23 The 1656 inventory of possessions lists, among other items: 'Een dito [boeck], vol printen van Frans Floris, Buytewech, Goltseus en Abraham Bloemer' (A ditto [book], filled with prints by Frans Floris, Buytewech, Goltzius and Abraham Bloemaert'); 'Een dito [boeck] met gesneden kopere printen van Goltseus en Muller bestaende in Conterfeijtsels' (A ditto [book] with carved copper prints by Goltzius and Muller consisting of portraits'). See Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, *The Rembrandt Documents*, New York 1979, doc. 1656/12, resp. nos. 250, 313.
- 24 NHD Goltzius no. 303/III.
- 25 See Boudewijn Bakker, "'t welck een aerdige Inventie is": Karel van Mander over Parmigianino, de kleurenhoutsneede en de schilderkunst', *Delineavit et sculpsit* 55 (2024), pp. 87-97.
- 26 The 1656 inventory of possessions lists, among other items: 'Een dito [boeck] vol curieuse minijateur teekeninghe nevens verscheijde hout en kopere printen van alderhande dragt' (A ditto [book] full of curious miniature drawings along with various wood and copper prints of all sorts of costumes), 'Een Hoochduijts boeck met oorlochs figuren' (A High-German book with war figures) and 'Een dito met hout figuren' (A ditto with woodcut figures). See Strauss and Van der Meulen 1979 (note 23), doc. 1656/12, nos. 203, 282, 283.
- 27 De Winkel 2006 (note 14), pp. 173, 179.
- 28 De Winkel 2006 (note 14), p. 172.
- 29 De Winkel 2006 (note 14), p. 64.
- 30 See Leonore van Sloten and Frans Blom (eds.), *Directed by Rembrandt: Rembrandt and the World of Theatre*, exh. cat. Amsterdam (The Rembrandt House Museum) 2024.
- 31 De Winkel 2006 (note 14), p. 65.
- 32 'Harnassen, Moriljons, Japansche Ponjerts, bont, / En rafelkragen, die hij schilderachtig vond ... Tót ongemeenheid van optooisel'. Zie Andries Pels, *Gebruik én misbruik des tooneels*, 1681, intr. and comm. Maria A. Schenkeveld-van der Dussen, Culemborg 1978, p. 78, lines 1117-22. See also S.A.C. (Bas) Dudok van Heel, 'Enkele portretten à l'antique door Rembrandt, Bol, Flinck en Backer', *Kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* 32 (1980), pp. 2-9.
- 33 *Corpus* 3 1989 (note 1), no. c 96 (atelier), *Corpus* 4 2005 (note 1), no. 96 (autograph).
- 34 For the moustache and the gaze, compare also Otto and Eva Benesch (ed.), *The Drawings of Rembrandt*, enlarged edition, 6 vols., New York 1973, vol. 2, no. 434 (*Self-portrait*, c. 1636).
- 35 This was also already noted by Sluijter, see Sluijter 2024 (note 2), p. 10.