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Aristotle's Apron

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This study concerns the apron in Rembrandt's 1653 *Aristotle with a Bust of Homer*. Though the philosopher's attire lacks historicity and resembles fictive theatrical costumes, one item situates it in "the present" and is recognizably realistic: the apron. It is argued here, for the first time, that the apron, a garment associated with artisanal occupations, is also indicative of experiential investigations carried out by the "new" natural philosophers who created and developed the scientific revolution in the early modern era. This movement also engaged artist and patron, Rembrandt and Ruffo.

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Fig. 1 Rembrandt, *Aristotle with a Bust of Homer*, 1653, oil on canvas, 143.5 x 136.5 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 61.198 (artwork in the public domain)

- 1 *Aristotle with a Bust of Homer* (fig. 1) is rightly regarded as one of Rembrandt's masterpieces; Walter Liedtke considered it the greatest Dutch picture in the United States, an opinion few would argue against.¹ Until 1961, this picture was in private hands, but when it was acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art, it became the museum's "Mona Lisa," not least because of the then fabulous price of \$2.3 million, "the highest amount ever paid for any picture at public or private sale."² However, the picture's multiple facets of meaning did not become clear until 1966, with the publication of Julius Held's seminal essay, which shaped subsequent discourse.³ While his basic arguments have been accepted, scholars have focused on sensorial theory, arguing over which

organ Rembrandt prioritized as the body's primary conduit for experiential knowledge.

- 2 In this essay, the issue considered is Aristotle's apron. For many years the identification of this garment was problematic; it was described as a vest, a gown, a doublet, a tabard, and a tuniclike sleeveless vest, but Julius Held settled the issue when he correctly identified it as an apron. Despite its prominence, Rembrandt's choice of this garment was seemingly inexplicable. For Held, what was significant was its color, black, which he associated with the Galenic theory of humors, whereby an excess of black bile causes melancholia, adding that this illness was endemic to philosophers. Held also observed that it "makes a splendid pictorial foil" for the chain. These observations, however, only explicate the garment's appearance, not the reasons for its selection. The same is true for Liedtke, who regarded the apron as a formal device whose function was to enhance the lustrous materiality of the honorific chain. But, he too did not suggest a rationale for its depiction. And neither scholar considered what it might have signified to a seventeenth-century viewer. The apron is singular—no other portrait of a philosopher depicts the motif.
- 3 This study essays an explanation that links the apron to a momentous new movement of the early modern era, the scientific revolution that altered the course of Western European history.⁴ Essential to this new worldview, which emerged in the sixteenth century, was the empirical study of nature made possible by innovative concepts and theoretical notions, new technologies and instruments, and a plethora of animals, plants, and minerals that arrived in Europe from all areas of the globe, as well as cultural artifacts. Printing disseminated the flood of information in text and imagery. And by the seventeenth century, collectors' cabinets displayed the wonders of the world; academies were formed to report the latest concepts and discoveries, to perform experiments to test hypotheses, to debate and investigate, and to publish what was brought before the academies.⁵ The "hands on" approach of the "natural philosopher" (natural historian or scientist) is perhaps exemplified by Vesalius, who performed public dissections himself. It is coincidental of course, but Vesalius's *On the Fabric of the Human Body* was published in 1543, the same year that Copernicus's heliocentric text *On the Revolutions of the Heavenly Spheres* appeared in print.
- 4 Rembrandt was touched by these cultural currents in Amsterdam, where "the sciences" were pursued in various venues. And as a man of his age, he, too, formed a "cabinet of curiosities" for his pleasure and use, and perhaps for discourse with learned friends and acquaintances.⁶ Two days before his death, Rembrandt showed a visitor four preparations: flayed arms and legs that Vesalius had anatomized, he said.⁷ Their provenance was prestigious, a fact that mattered to Rembrandt; it demonstrates his knowledge of medical history and medical practice, and also reinforces the argument that "science" was among Rembrandt's passionate interests. He might even be regarded as an experimenter and investigator in the effects that he obtained with pigments, oils, tools, and techniques. The chain adorning Aristotle is an alchemist's dream come true: gross matter is transformed into gold, in appearance, if not in fact. To claim that the apron in Rembrandt's picture is linked to this transformational movement may seem to be overreaching, but there are good reasons to regard it in light of the scientific concerns and mentalities of the mid-seventeenth century. Initially, Rembrandt depicted a different apron, one that had cap shoulders, thus resembling surgeons' apparel.⁸ Aesthetic reasons likely determined the change to the apron as it is today.
- 5 Mere identification, however, does not explain what an apron is or what it signified in the early

modern era. The Oxford English Dictionary defines the garment as “an article of dress worn in front of the body to protect clothes from dirt or injury or simply as a covering.”⁹ This definition encompasses various styles for different ages and classes. From these, only the type Rembrandt imagined for Aristotle is considered here. It was familiar to the artist in daily life and imagery. Moreover, he depicted it in other works dating to the years when *Aristotle* was painted.¹⁰ It connotes an artisan, one who possesses “mechanical” knowledge and skills, such as cobblers and scythe makers, but whose occupation lacks “theory.”¹¹

- 6 The opening lines of Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar* (1599) recognize the apron as an artisan’s defining garment.¹² Plebeians who have taken an unsanctioned holiday to celebrate Caesar’s triumph encounter officials who chastise them: “know you not, being mechanical, you ought not to walk upon a labouring day without the sign of your profession? Speak, what trade art thou?” One replies: “Why, sir, a carpenter.” This reply elicits a further rebuke: “Where is thy leather apron, and thy rule? What dost thou with thy best apparel on?”
- 7 But not all occupations requiring aprons were “mechanical”; surgeons and alchemists had associations with natural philosophy. These professions were borderline, regarded by some as craft, by others as more elevated pursuits; the distinction was largely based on whether an occupation required theoretical knowledge or if practical skills sufficed.¹³ Barber-surgeons performed many services, from cutting hair to advanced medical procedures; alchemists were similarly diverse. In England, members of the London Company of Barber-Surgeons were required to attend a public dissection carried out by the organization’s official anatomist.¹⁴ Its regulations also insisted on the use of full-length aprons and sleeves of white cloth worn by the anatomist and his assistants, which were changed twice daily during the dissection for “seemliness and cleanliness.”¹⁵ These surgeons depended on theory as well as practice.
- 8 Also in the sixteenth century, the physician Paracelsus (1493–1541) wore an apron.¹⁶ He argued for their use by “chemical” physicians, whom he urged to wear “plain leather dress and aprons of hide to wipe their hands.”¹⁷ This attire signified a new approach to medical healing, chemical rather than Galenical. Paracelsus portraits circulated in print and paintings, as pictures by Rubens¹⁸ and Rembrandt attest.¹⁹ Rubens’s interpretation is physiognomically inaccurate, but a brown “shirt” may refer to Paracelsus’s signature leather. Rembrandt’s picture (now lost or unidentified) was offered for sale in 1659 to Cardinal Leopoldo de’Medici (1617–1675), co-founder of the Accademia del Cimento; he turned it down, and it remained in a Dutch collection.²⁰ Among the leaders of the “new science,” Galileo cannot be omitted, although evidence regarding his apron is equivocal. It was leather and used when gardening; we may surmise, however, that when he was making optical instruments he donned one for protection.²¹ But Galileo recognized that what he did privately was inappropriate when in polite company. He is reported to have quipped when visitors appeared at his door while tending vines that he was “ashamed” to be seen in “this clown’s habit,” adding: “I will go to dress myself as a philosopher.”²²
- 9 In the common imagination, alchemy and alchemists are regarded as fantastical, but history relates a different story.²³ Known for his deep interest in natural philosophy, Emperor Rudolf II encouraged alchemical studies, providing practitioners with laboratories, as did many German-speaking princes, yet alchemical iconography in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries

often pokes fun at the “mad scientist,” whose distinguishing attire is a full-length apron. However, Robert Boyle (1627–1691) and Isaac Newton (1643–1727), alchemical scientists who shaped “the new worldview,” were members of the Royal Society and had laboratories for chemical experimentation.

- 10 Associating the apron with artisanal or “mechanical” professions, however, does not explain its appearance in a seventeenth-century portrait of Aristotle, although the practice of natural philosophy may. The hypothesis suggested in this study depends on Rembrandt’s knowledge of the historical Aristotle.²⁴ Surely Rembrandt knew that Aristotle studied natural history and epitomized the natural philosopher in earlier eras.²⁵ Conversations with learned persons, the painter’s erudition and imagination coalesced to portray natural philosophy’s duality: on the one hand, cogitation with logic as its instrument, and on the other, observation, investigation, and experimentation. To represent this distinction Rembrandt turned to Aristotle’s wardrobe, selecting two garments: an ample white gown and a stark black apron. The latter covers and protects the robe, but the magnificent chain is slung across the apron only. Are both equally honored or is Rembrandt highlighting the necessity and value of artisanal skills?²⁶
- 11 What is known currently about Aristotle’s immersion in natural history?²⁷ It is estimated that he wrote about 550 books; less than one third of which exist. Among the most important lost texts are natural history studies, including books on dissection. During his four-year residence on Lesbos, he researched the island’s flora, fauna, and aquatic life.²⁸ In addition to his own investigations, it was believed that Alexander the Great sent Aristotle specimens and detailed descriptions of creatures he encountered while campaigning. Pliny the Elder is specific about this vast research undertaking.²⁹ Armand Marie Leroi posits that Callisthenes, Aristotle’s nephew, undertook this task.³⁰ These may have been assembled in pedagogical collections for their inherent interest.³¹
- 12 No authoritative portrait of Aristotle exists, but Rembrandt did own a bust so identified in the 1656 inventory of his collection and a bust of Homer as well.³² That sculpture was the model for Homer in the painting of 1653. In the absence of a drawing after the Aristotle bust it is impossible to determine whether it was also Rembrandt’s model. Consensus about the philosopher’s appearance in Rembrandt’s day did not exist. Whatever the source, Rembrandt imprinted *Aristotle* with the artist’s empathetic sensibility, and the painting betrays his irrepressible impulse to animate the characters he fashioned. His patron, Don Antonio Ruffo (1610–1678), was the recipient of this exceptional picture, a work he esteemed throughout his life, as he did the artist. He ordered two additional pictures from Rembrandt, *Homer* and *Alexander the Great*, and, in 1669, Ruffo added 189 etchings to his collection of 7 Rembrandt prints, recorded in the 1648 Ruffo inventory. In keeping with his interest in philosophy, Ruffo added at least four philosopher portraits by Italian painters to his collection, which at his death numbered 364 paintings. In addition to being a keen art lover, Ruffo’s other major interest was natural philosophy. He strongly supported the advancement of the “new science” in Messina, both personally and in its institutions.³³
- 13 Documents exist concerning the shipping of Rembrandt’s picture, but none mentions its subject. After a three-month journey, the picture was in the patron’s hands; it was entered on September 1, 1654, in his art collection inventory as: “half-length figure of a philosopher made in Amsterdam by the painter named Rembrandt ‘it appears to be Aristotle or Albertus Magnus.’”

- 14 Don Antonio Ruffo, a nobleman with extensive properties on Sicily and the mainland, was a prominent, erudite cultural figure in the ancient port city of Messina. Overlooking the curved harbor, his palace was sumptuously decorated with frescoes, tapestries, and a substantial collection of 166 choice paintings, inventoried in 1648. Entertainments were hosted therein, and it was the setting for learned discourse. The Accademia della Fucina (The Academy of the Forge), founded in 1639, likely met there.³⁴ One purpose of “The Forge” was to introduce “modern” theory and practice into the curriculum of Messina’s university, most notably that of the medical faculty. By 1642, Messina’s senate had extended its protection to the academy, providing funding for its publications. It should be stressed that senators were also academicians, insuring a sense of collective identity as well as political, intellectual, and social cohesiveness among Messina’s aristocracy. The enlightened senators characterized Messina as a “new Athens,” equal to or surpassing other centers of learning. The city’s senate funded publications by the academicians, an impressive forty-seven texts between 1642 and 1671, with fourteen, the second largest group, devoted to science.
- 15 The Ruffo family played a central role in encouraging Messina’s “modern” scientific orientation. Don Antonio and his nephew Giacompo Ruffo (?–1674) supported scientists and their investigations, offered hospitality, engaged in informal conversations, and corresponded with them after their departure from Messina.³⁵ Giacompo had studied in Pisa in the 1650s, where he befriended some of the foremost natural philosophers, among them the founder of microscopic anatomy, Marcello Malpighi (1628–1694).³⁶ When Malpighi arrived in Messina he enjoyed “the most learned and pleasant discourse with his host” Giacompo, who urged him to visit his noteworthy garden and his uncle Antonio’s.³⁷ Both Ruffos provided him with estates where he could carry out animal and plant dissections.
- 16 As an after note, when Malpighi moved to Bologna to take up a professorship, he met Guercino, the artist Ruffo had engaged to paint a pendant to the *Aristotle*. Guercino, in 1665 correspondence with his patron, relates that he had had a lengthy conversation about Ruffo’s art collection but does not give specifics.
- 17 Antonio Ruffo and his milieu in Messina deserve to be reconsidered in the literature of art history. By no means a backwater, Messina and its enlightened citizens cultured a new spirit of inquiry that has been disregarded.³⁸ Messina was part of the network of scientific exchange that fostered investigation, theory, and discoveries. Given this rereading, Ruffo’s oft-quoted inventory entry “Aristotle or Albertus Magnus,” written after studying Rembrandt’s picture, should not be regarded as indicating ignorance; rather, it is insightful and highlights Ruffo’s learning. Ruffo was not confused when he added “or Albertus Magnus.”³⁹ The thirteenth-century Dominican monk (1200–1280) was the first Western commentator on the Aristotelian corpus and was regarded as an emulator of his forebear. An empiricist and natural historian in his own right, he was referred to as “the second Aristotle.”⁴⁰ Thus, Ruffo’s identification is not off mark, as supposed, given the theatrical costume Rembrandt created for the philosopher. Rather, it demonstrates Ruffo’s ability to recognize Rembrandt’s individuality, his skill, and invention. The apron, as remarked earlier, is unique. Though humble wear, it evokes the “new natural philosophy,” science as it was carried out in Rembrandt and Ruffo’s day that altered the course of history. Aristotle was re-read by

Rembrandt; no longer the sclerotic Scholastic, he became the thoughtful investigator, the experimentalist, the progenitor of modern science, and a natural philosopher whose mind mastered the conundra of nature.⁴¹

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Illustration

Fig. 1 Rembrandt, *Aristotle with a Bust of Homer*, 1653, oil on canvas, 143.5 x 136.5 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, inv. 61.198 (artwork in the public domain)

¹ Walter Liedtke, *Dutch Paintings in the Metropolitan Museum of Art*, 2 vols. (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art/New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

² Sanka Knox, "Museum Gets Rembrandt for 2.3 Million: Record Price is Paid by the Metropolitan at Auction Sale," *New York Times*, November 16, 1961, front page, first paragraph (with photograph).

³ Julius S. Held, "Rembrandt's *Aristotle*," in *Rembrandt Studies*, rev. ed., Julius S. Held (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991), 17–58.

⁴ I. Bernard Cohen, *Album of Science: From Leonardo to Lavoisier 1480–1800* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1980).

⁵ Martha Ornstein, *The Role of Scientific Societies in the Seventeenth Century* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1928).

⁶ Bob van den Boogert et al., *Rembrandt's Treasures* (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 1999).

⁷ Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen, comp., assisted by S. A. C. Dudok van Heel and P. J. M. de Baar, *The Rembrandt Documents* (New York: Abaris Books, 1979), 583–85, doc. 1669/3;

van den Boogert et al., *Rembrandt's Treasures*, 55.

⁸ Maryan Wynn Ainsworth et al., *Art and Autoradiography: Insights into the Genesis of Paintings by Rembrandt, Van Dyck, and Vermeer* (New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1987), 51.

⁹ *Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford University Press, 1971), 1:105, 419.

¹⁰ 1639, etching, *Death of the Virgin* (physician taking a pulse); 1645, *Holy Family* (Joseph); 1652, etching, *Christ in the Temple* (artisan seated beside Jesus); 1655, etching, *The Goldsmith*.

¹¹ Jost Amman and Hans Sachs, *The Book of Trades*, 1568, repr., intro. Benjamin A. Rifkin (New York: Dover Publications, 1973).

¹² William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, ed. T. S. Dorsch (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1958), 1.1.1-7.

¹³ Paul Oskar Kristeller, "The Modern System of the Arts," in *Renaissance Thought II: Papers on Humanism and the Arts* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 163–227; Pamela Smith, *The Body of the Artisan: Art and Experience in the Scientific Revolution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004). <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226764269.001.0001>

¹⁴ J. F. South, *Memorials of the Craft of Surgery in England*, ed. D'Arcy Power (London, 1886), 136–42.

¹⁵ Geoffrey Keynes, *The Life of William Harvey* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), 87.

¹⁶ Henry M. Pachter, *Paracelsus: Magic into Science* (New York: Henry Schuman, 1951), 16.

¹⁷ Charles Webster, *Paracelsus: Medicine, Magic, and Mission at the End of Time* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 21: "[he] 'allied . . . with the artisan class,' and an engraving of Paracelsus intended for a major medical treatise depicts him 'in the dress of an artisan.'"

¹⁸ Kristin Lohse Belkin, *Copies and Adaptations from Renaissance and Later Artists: German and Netherlandish Artists*, Corpus Rubenianum Ludwig Burchard 26 (London and Turnhout: Harvey Miller Publishers, 2009), 1:234–38, pl. 6.

¹⁹ Michiel Roscam Abbing, ed., *Rembrandt 2006: New Rembrandt Documents* (Leiden: Folioor Publisher, 2006), 2:76.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Dava Sobel, *Galileo's Daughter: A Historical Memoir of Science, Faith, and Love* (New York: Walker and Company, 1999), 115.

²² Stillman Drake, *Galileo at Work: His Scientific Biography* (New York: Dover Publications, 1978), *xiii*. The anecdote is recorded in Sir Robert Southwell's diary and commonplace book, 1659–61 (British Library, Egerton MS 1632, 60r).

²³ Peter Marshall, *The Magic Circle of Rudolf II: Alchemy and Astrology in Renaissance Prague* (New York: Walker & Company, 2006).

²⁴ Amy Golahny, *Rembrandt's Reading: The Artist's Bookshelf of Ancient Poetry and History* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003). See, also, Marika Keblussek, *Boeken in de Hofstad: Haagse boekcultuur in de Gouden Eeuw, Historische Vereniging Holland* (Hilversum: Uitgeverij Verloren, 1997). Book culture in The Hague, where court and government coexisted, is the subject of this study. The author points out that in addition to being the center of the book trade, home to publishers and the book stalls of the Binnenhof, where books from France and other "nations" were available, The Hague was also a center of international diplomacy and a refuge for foreigners, where libraries of distinguished individuals with wide-ranging interests were available. Also considered are the books in educational institutions, such as Breda's *Illustre School*, where classical texts were studied. Even medieval romances were available at The Hague. <https://doi.org/10.5117/9789053566091>

- ²⁵ Marieke de Winkel, *Fashion and Fancy: Dress and Meaning in Rembrandt's Paintings* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2006), 210. <https://doi.org/10.5117/9789053569177>
- ²⁶ Jan Heringa, *De Eer en Hoogheid van de Staat: Over de Plaats der Verenigde Nederlanden in het Diplomatieke Leven van de Zeventiende Eeuw* (Groningen: J. B. Wolters, 1961).
- ²⁷ Jonathan Barnes, *The Cambridge Companion to Aristotle* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).
- ²⁸ Armand Marie Leroi, *The Lagoon: How Aristotle Invented Science* (New York: Viking, 2014).
- ²⁹ Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, trans. H. Rackham, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1967), 8.17.46 (p. 35). The following text was available in Latin in the seventeenth century in European libraries: “King Alexander the Great being fired with a desire to know the natures of animals and having delegated the pursuit of this study to Aristotle as a man of supreme eminence in every branch of science, orders were given to some thousands of persons throughout the whole of Asia and Greece, all those who made their living by hunting, fowling, and fishing . . . to obey his instructions, so that he might not fail to be informed about any creature born anywhere. His enquiries addressed to those persons resulted in the composition of his famous works on zoology, in nearly fifty volumes.”
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 55–56.
- ³¹ James S. Romm, “Aristotle’s Elephant and the Myth of Alexander’s Scientific Patronage,” *American Journal of Philology* 110 (1990): 566–75. Widely accessible sources for Alexander’s interest in natural history are Pliny the Elder, *Natural History* (8.17.44), and Athenaeus (fl. 200 CE) in *Deipnosophistae* [Sophists at Dinner] (9.398c) <https://doi.org/10.2307/295280>
- ³² For the inventory of Rembrandt’s possessions when he declared bankruptcy, see Strauss, *Rembrandt Documents*, 348–88.
- ³³ For Antonio Ruffo, see Vincenzo Ruffo, “Galleria Ruffo nel secolo XVII in Messina (con lettere di pittori ed altri documenti inediti),” *Bolletino d’Arte* 10 (1916): 21–64, 95–128, 165–92, 237–56, 284–320, 369–88; Vincenzo Ruffo, “La Galleria Ruffo (appendice),” *Bolletino d’Arte* 13 (1919): 3–16; Corrado Ricci, *Rembrandt in Italy* (Milan, 1918); Jeroen Giltaij, *Ruffo en Rembrandt: Over een Siciliaanse verzamelaar in de zeventiende eeuw die drie schilderijen bij Rembrandt bestelde* (Zutphen: Walburg Pers, 1999), 13–16.
- ³⁴ Giacomo Nigido-Dionisi, *L’Accademia della Fucina di Messina (1639–1678) ne’ suoi rapporti con la storia della cultura in Sicilia* (Catania, 1903), 22, 23.
- ³⁵ Don Antonio Ruffo is mentioned in correspondence by Giovanni Borelli and Marcello Malpighi, regarding scientific research. See Howard Adelman, *Marcello Malpighi and the Evolution of Embryology* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1966), 1:219; Adelman, *The Correspondence of Marcello Malpighi* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 1975), 1:167–69, 216–18.
- ³⁶ Max H. Fisch, “The Academy of Investigators,” in *Science, Medicine and History: Essays on the Evolution of Scientific Thought and Medical Practice Written in Honour of Charles Singer*, ed. E. Ashworth Underwood (London: Oxford University Press, 1953), 2:536n87.
- ³⁷ Adelman, *Marcello Malpighi and the Evolution of Embryology*, 1:249, 371–72.
- ³⁸ Francis Haskell, *Patrons and Painters: A Study in the Relations between Italian Art and Society in the Age of the Baroque* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1963), 310. Haskell was the first historian to characterize the city as a “backwater of the . . . crumbling Spanish empire.”
- ³⁹ David C. Lindberg, *The Beginnings of Western Science: The European Scientific Tradition in Philosophical, Religious, and Institutional Context, 600 B.C. to A.D. 1450* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 229–31. <https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226482064.001.0001>

⁴⁰ “To Albertus Magnus, because he investigated the natural phenomena in emulation of Aristotle” (Alberto Magno ob res naturales aemulatione Aristotelica perquisitas). Text beneath a portrait of Albert the Great (painted ca. 1475 by Joos van Ghent) in a private chamber in the Urbino palace. See Luciano Cheles, *The Studiolo of Urbino: An Iconographic Investigation* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1986), 39.

⁴¹ Or could this be Homer? But that is another story. According to James S. Romm, *The Edges of the Earth in Ancient Thought: Geography, Exploration, and Fiction* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992), 112–16, Homer also was considered a natural philosopher in antiquity and in the early modern period by Neo-Stoics and others.

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