APPENDIX V

THE PESSIMISTIC INTERPRETATION OF "KNOW THYSELF"

A. SYNOPSIS

I. *Interpolation of "know thyself" where tradition suggests "recognize that you are mortal"*

A	consolation literature		
1	mid-1st cent. A.D.	Seneca	
2	1st/2nd cent. A.D.	Plutarch	
B	triumph literature		
3	14th cent.	*Gesta romanorum*	
C	Philip of Macedon and the slave		
4	1581	J. Borja	Fig. 12
5	1626	J. Riolan	

II. *Miscellaneous examples*

6	1st/2nd cent. A.D.	Plutarch	
7a	1st/2nd cent. A.D.?	mosaic from Via Appia	Pl. 38
7b	date unknown	carnelian ringstone	
8	2nd cent. A.D.	Lucian	
9	date unknown	Menander?	
10	10th cent.	Liudolf, Duke of Swabia	
11	1508	Erasmus	
12	1522	W. Pirckheimer	
13	1548	G. Corrozet	
14	*c.* 1550?	O. Fine	
15	1550/1600	English finger-rings	Pl. 39
16	1585	S. Alberti	Pl. 31
17	1582/90	J. Hoefnagel	
18	1609/15	P. Paaw	Pl. 8
19	1611	C. Bartholin	Pl. 32
20	1621	G. Fabricius Hildanus	
21	1668	H. S. Schilling	Pl. 36
22	1683	G. Franck	

III. *The "death-in-a-mirror" motif*

A	"certain"		
23	152[9?]	L. Furtenagel	Pl. 40
24	*c.* 1630?	J. Ribera	Fig. 13
25	*c.* 1640/1660?	J. Jordaens	Pl. 41

B	probable independently of *A*		
26	*c.* 1625?	N. Tournier?	Pl. 42
27	*c.* 1625?	T. Bigot?	
28	1626	N. Renieri	Pl. 43
29	1627	O. Fialetti	Pl. 34
30	1666	G. Blasius	Pl. 35
C	probable dependently on *A* and *B*		
31	later 17th cent.	anon. still-life painter	Pl. 44
32	before 1661?	S. Luttichuys	Pl. 45

proposed addenda

19.1	1619	S. Egbertsz	Pl. 5
20.1	1625	J. Fonteyn	Pl. 6
20.2	1632	F. van Loenen after N. Tulp	Pl. 1

B. TEXTS

I. *Interpolation of "know thyself" where tradition suggests "recognize that you are mortal".*

A consolation literature. Cf. Cicero, *Ep. ad fam.* V. 16. 2 "Est autem consolatio peruulgata quidem illa maxime quam semper in ore atque in animo habere debemus, homines nos ut esse meminerimus"; anon., *Cons. ad Liuiam* 367 "sed mortalis erat . . ."; Seneca, *Ep.* LXIII. 15 "nunc cogito omnia et mortalia esse et incerta lege mortalia"; S. Ambrose, *De obitu Valent.* XLVIII (Migne, *P.L.*, xvi, col. 1434) "homo natus est, humanae fuit obnoxius fragilitati"; S. Jerome, *Ep. ad Paulam super obitu Blaesillae filiae* (Migne, *P.L.*, xxii, col. 468) "hominem te esse memento!" [cf. *B* below].

1 L. Annaeus Seneca, *Ad Marciam de consolatione* ed. Ch. Favez, Paris, E. de Boccard, 1928. Cap. XI:

> Mortalis nata es mortalesque peperisti; putre ipsa fluidumque corpus, et . . . sperasti tam inbecilla materia solida et aeterna gestasse? Decessit filius tuus, id est decucurrit ad hunc finem ad quem quae feliciora partu tuo putas properant: hoc omnis ista quae in foro litigat, in theatris <spectat>, in templis precatur turba dispari gradu uadit; et quae diligis et quae despicis unus exaequabit cinis. Hoc uidere licet illa pythicis oraculis adscripta uox: NOSCE TE. Quid est homo? Quodlibet quassum uas et quolibet fragile iactatu . . .: Quid est homo? inbecillum corpus et fragile, nudum, suapte natura inerme, alienae opis indigens, ad omnis fortunae contumelias proiectum . . . .[253]

2 Plutarch, *Consolatio ad Apollonium*, c. 116, translated. Excerpt:

> If, then, a man shows excessive grief when he is about to die or when his children have died, must he not manifestly have forgotten that he is [only] a man and that the children he begat were mortal? For it is not like a sensible man to be unaware that man is a mortal animal and that he is born to die . . . . There are two of the inscriptions at Delphi which are most necessary to life: "Know thyself" and "Nothing in excess"; for all the others depend on these. These are in harmony and accordance with each other, and

[253] Cf. Wilkins, p. 58.

the one seems to be revealed to the full through the other. For the avoidance of excess is contained in knowing oneself, and knowing oneself in the avoidance of excess .... So anyone who keeps in mind these oracular precepts will easily be able to adapt them to all the affairs of life ... and not go beyond what is fitting either by boasting superiority or by being humbled and cast down in wailing and lamentation through weakness of spirit and fear of death ....[254]

B triumph literature. Cf. Arrian, *Dissertationes Epicteti* III. 24. 85 *ὑπομμνήσκοντες ὅτι ἄνθρωποί εἰσιν;* Tertullian, *Apologeticus* XXXIII "Hominem se esse etiam triumphans in illo sublimissimo curru admonetur. Suggeritur enim ei a tergo 'Respice post te! hominem te esse memento'"; S. Jerome, *Epistola ad Paulam super obitu Blaesillae filiae* (Migne, *P.L.* xxii, col. 468) "monitor quidam humanae imbecillitatis apponitur, in similitudinem triumphantium quibus in curru retro comes adhaerebat per singulas acclamationes ciuium dicens 'Hominem te esse memento!'"; S. Isidore, *Etym.* XVIII. ii. 6. "ut ad tantum fastigium euecti mediocritatis humanae commonerentur"; Zonaras, *Chronicon* VII. 21 (Migne, *P.G.*, cxxxiv, col. 612).

3 *Gesta Romanorum*, 14th cent., ed. H. Oesterley, Berlin, 1872. Cap. 30, p. 328:

Rex quidam erat qui statuit pro lege, quod victori de bello redeunti fieret triplex honor et tres molestie .... Secunda molestia erat, quod iste servus eum colaphizabat ne nimis superbiret, et dicebat "Nosce te ipsum et noli superbire de tanto honore! Respice post te et hominem te esse memento!".[255]

C Philip of Macedon and the slave. Cf. Aelian, *Var. hist.* VIII.15

ᾤετο δεῖν αὐτὸν ὑπομμνήσκεσθαι ὑπό τινος τῶν παιδίων ἕωθεν ὅτι ἄνθρωπός ἐστι, καὶ προσέταξε τῷ παιδὶ τοῦτο ἔχειν ἔργον.

4 Juan de Borja, *Empresas morales*, Praga, 1581. Fol. 100^{v}:

Hominem te esse cogita. No ay cosa mas importante al hombre Christiano que conoçersse, porque si se conoçe no sera soberuio viendo que es poluo y çeniça, ni estimara en mucho lo que ay en el mundo viendo que muy presto lo ha de dexar. Tener esto delante los ojos es el mayor remedio que puede hauer para no descuydarsse ni dexar de hazer lo que deue, y haziendo lo assi passara la vida con quietud, porque los trabajos que le succedieren conoçera que los mereze y passar los ha con paciencia, y las prosperidades no le eleuaran conociendo que se le dan sin merezerlas. Preciaronsse los antiguos (aunque no tuuieron fee), tanto de este conocimiento para conseruar la virtud, que se escriue de aquel gran Philippo Rey de Maçedonia que despues de hauer vencido en la batalla de Cheronea a los Athenienses porque con esta gloria no se en soberueciese mas de lo neçessario mando que cada mañana quando le despertassen la primera cosa que le dixessen fuesse: Leuantate Rey y acuerdate que eres hombre: cosa muy digna de traer siempre en la memoria, y es lo que seda a entender en esta vltima empressa de la muerte, con la letra, HOMINEM TE ESSE COGITA, que quiere decir, ACVERDATE QVE ERES HOMBRE.[256]

The image which corresponds to this text is a skull (Fig. 12).

5 Johannes Riolanus, *Anthropographia et osteologia*, Paris, 1626. 'AV ROY', p. 1:

... se cognoistre soy-mesme. C'estoit la seule science de Iuppiter, qu'il feit grauer en lettres d'or, sur le frontispice du temple d'Apollon. C'estoit la leçon qu'vn page donnoit au Roy Philippe pere d'Alexandre le Grand, tous les matins à son leuer. Souuenez vous Philippe que vous estes Homme ....

[254] Cf. Wilkins, ibid.
[255] Cf. Wilkins, pp. 79–80.
[256] Cf. Wilkins, p. 232.

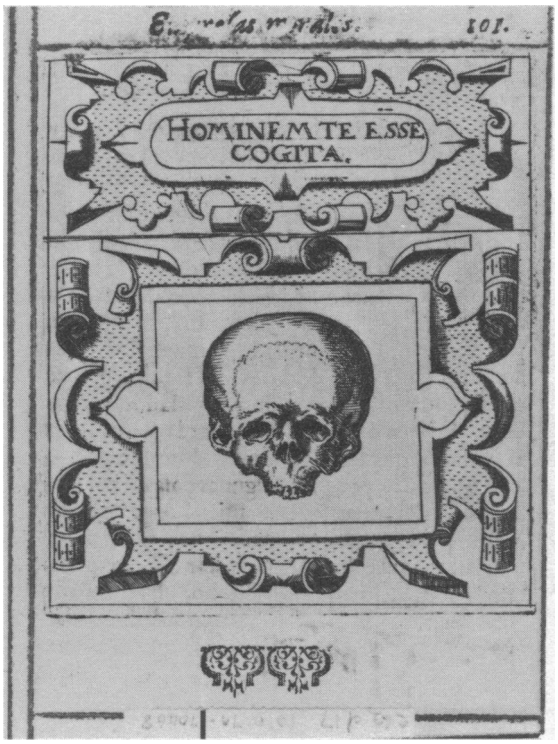

Figure 12. Emblematic image to illustrate *"Hominem te esse cogita"*, anonymous engraving for J. de Borja, *Empresas morales*, Praga, 1581, fol. 101[r].

II. *Miscellaneous examples*

6 Plutarch, *De E apud Delphos* 394C, translated. Excerpt:

> ... "Know thyself" seems to be a kind of antithesis to "Thou art", and yet, in a sense, in harmony with it. For the latter is uttered in awe and reverence to the god as an eternal being, while the former is a reminder to mortal man of the nature and weakness of his situation.

7a A mosaic from the Via Appia, now in the Museo Nazionale Romano, shows a skeleton pointing to the words *ΓΝΩΘΙ CAYTON.*[257] See Pl. 38.

7b A carnelian ringstone, apparently ancient, carved with a skeleton and the inscription *ΓΝΩΘΙCEAYTON,* is recorded as having passed through the collections of Praun, Mertens-Schaafhausen, and Rhodes. The Rhodes gems were dispersed privately, and the whereabouts of the present gem seems to be unknown.[258] The design may be related to that of **7a**.

[257] Cf. Wilkins, pp. 58–59. R. Paribeni, *Le terme di Diocleziano e il Museo Nazionale Romano,* Rome, Libreria dello Stato, 1928, p. 64, no. 49 (1025).

[258] G. Treu, *De ossium humanorum larvarumque apud antiquos imaginibus capita duo,* diss. Berlin, 1874, p. 18, no. 50. C. W. King, *Handbook of engraved gems,* 2nd ed., London, 1885, p. 179.

8a Lucian, *Dialogues of the dead* 3 (otherwise 2), 'Pluto', tr. M. D. Macleod, Loeb edition vol. 7, London, Heinemann, 1961, pp. 14–19.

The dead Croesus, Midas, and Sardanapalus lament the loss of their respective wealth, gold, and luxury. Menippus pesters them with reproaches: they had expected people to worship them, treated free men with contempt, and "forgotten all about death". He leaves them with the words: "Bravo, go on. You keep up your whimperings, and I'll accompany you with song, with a string of 'Know Thyself's for my refrain. That's the proper accompaniment for such lamentations."

8b Lucian, *Dialogues of the dead* 12 (otherwise 14), 'Philip and Alexander', ibid., pp. 60–67.

The shade of Philip welcomes the shade of Alexander to the underworld, and points out the falsity of Alexander's former claim to be immortal. Philip ends: "Won't you learn to forget your pride, and know yourself, recognize that you are now dead?".

Although the advice in each case is that the dead should recognize themselves as such, it is implicitly retrospective. The reproach is uttered only because they had not recognized their mortality while alive.[259]

9 *Comparatio Menandri et Philistionis*, in *Menandri sententiae*, ed. S. Jaekel, Leipzig, Teubner, 1964, p. 111.[260] Lib. II, vv. 166–174 translated:

Menander.

On death

If you want to know yourself,
look at the tombs as you walk along.
In them are the bones and powdery dust
of kings, dictators, philosophers,
of men who were proud of their family or their wealth
or their fame or personal beauty.
None of these things did time allow them:
in a common underworld all mortals dwell.
Looking on these things, "know thyself".

The date of this work is unknown. Some scholars place it in the 4th/6th centuries A.D., while allowing that it may contain verses by Menander himself (342/1–293/89 B.C.).

10 Epitaph of Liudolf, Duke of Swabia (died 957), formerly in S. Albanuskirche, Mainz:[261]

SISTE VIATOR ITER PER ME TV GNOTI SEAVTON
NAM QVOD ES HOC FVERAM QVOD SVM NVNC ET ERIS
NON MIHI LIVDOLFO TOTVS SVFFECERAT ORBIS
NVNC SPECVS HOC CINERI SVFFICIT HICQVE SAT EST
HINC VT IS ETERNAM REQVIEM MIHI DET ROGO DICAS
OMNIA QVI FECIT MEQVE VEHI VOLVIT.

[259] Cf. Wilkins, p. 58.
[260] Cf. Wilkins, pp. 57–58.
[261] F. X. Kraus, *Die christlichen Inschriften der Rheinlande*, part ii, Freiburg i.B. and Leipzig, 1894, pp. 99–100, no. 223.

11 Erasmus Roterodamus, *Adagiorum chiliades tres, ac centuriae fere totidem*, Venice, 1508.

I. dcxv, 'NOSCE TEIPSUM', fol. 74r: "Citatur a gnomologis graecis ex Antiphane senarius *εἰ θνητὸς εἶ βέλτιστε θνητὰ καὶ φρόνει.* Eandem sententiam sic extulit Pindarus, *θνατὰ θνατοῖς πρέπει*...."

12 Bilibaldus Pirckeymherus (Wilibald Pirckheimer), *Apologia seu podagrae laus*, Nuremberg, 1522. Excerpts, fol. C1r:

> [Podagra.] ... demonstro, quam euanidum formae bonum, quam facile corporis pereat robur, quam fluxi sint honores, quam opes labiles, quam generis nobilitas nihil, quam inanis sit omnis omnium mortalium gloria, ac ita efficio, ut homines se homines esse meminerint, nec diis se conseant ęquales... [fol. C3r] ... [doceo] cunctaque certo termino metiri, seipsum cognoscere, finem qui omnem manet carnem assidue pre oculis habere....

13 Gilles Corrozet, *Le conseil des sept sages de Grece*, Lyons, 1548. 'Les dits de Chilo', p. 24:

> Nosce teipsum
> Congnoy toymesme, en considerant comme
> Tu es mortel, debile, & fragile homme.

> La plus grande science, que lhomme puisse auoir, cest congnoistre soymesme: car sil sçait toutes les sciences humaines, & il ne se congnoist, il est ignorant. L'homme en se congnoissant, recongnoist Dieu pour son createur & seigneur: & luy, creature mortelle, & seruiteur inutile.... Ce commandement estoit anciennement escri à lentrée du portail du temple d'Apolo en Delphos, à fin quil fust imprimé en la memoire des hommes.

14 An engraving representing the head of a fool wearing a fool's cap and collar, but whose face is replaced by a map of the world attributed to Oronce Fine (1494–1555). The design illustrates the vanity of the world, and this message is made explicit by such pessimistic inscriptions as "vanitas vanitatum ..." and, surmounting the whole "NOSCE TE IPSVM".[262]

15 Two English, Elizabethan, gold finger-rings in the Victoria and Albert Museum London.

15a (museum no. M 18/1929) has a revolving bezel which is decorated with a skull of enamelled gold and inscribed "NOSSE TE IPSVM".

15b (museum no. 920/1871) also has a setting decorated with a skull of enamelled gold, around which is inscribed "† NOSSE TE YPSVM" (Pl. 39). But it also bears a second inscription, an optimistic one to counter the pessimistic Delphic maxim: "† DYE TO LIVE", inscribed around the outer lateral surface of the setting.[263]

16 Salomon Alberti, *Historia plerarunque partium humani corporis*, Wittenberg, 1585.

A woodcut on the title-page represents a skull with an hourglass and a snake, surmounted by the legend *ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΑΥΤΟΝ*. See Pl. 31.

[262] Mentioned by Gillian Hill, *Cartographical curiosities*, London, British Library, 1978, p. 39; an impression from the Bodleian library was in the exhibition of the same title at the British Library, London, 1978–1980, no. 45.

[263] Cf. F. Parkes Weber, op. cit., note 246 above, p. 756.

17 Joris Hoefnagel, *Missale romanum* (illuminated by J. H., 1582–90), Vienna. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, cod. 1784. Fol. 107^{v}:

ΓΝΩΘΙ ΣΕΑΥΤΟΝ

VIVE MEMOR LETHI PASCENDIS VERMIBVS ESCA
ET QVOD FORMATVS PVLVERIS PVLVIS ERIS.

The verses are illustrated by two "vanitas" images: the half-consumed corpses of a man holding money-bags and of a woman looking at herself in a mirror (cf. section III of this appendix, p. 98 below).[264]

Among the many pessimistic motifs on this page, there is one other which alludes to "know thyself":

"ILLE EST MAXIME SEIPSVM SCIENS QVI SE ESSE EXISTIMAT NIHIL."[265]

18a Two engravings, published in 1609 and 1610, show the interior of the anatomy-theatre of Leiden university with six skeletons, bearing pennants, standing around the circumference: cf. Apendix III no. **14**, p. 73 above. The inscriptions on the pennants were selected to remind visitors of "de brooscheydt ende nieticheydt vande menscheliche lichamen".[266] One of the inscriptions in each engraving is *nosce teipsum*. The full list of inscriptions is as follows, reading from left to right:

	1609 (Pl. 8)	1610
i.	PVLVIS ET VMBRA SVMVS.	MORS ULTIMA LINEA RERUM.
ii.	Omnes eodem cogimur aequa lege necessitas sortitur insignes et imos.	NASCENTES MORIMUR.
iii.	NOScE TE IPSVM.	PRINCIPIUM MORIENDI NATALIS EST.
iv.	HOMO BVLLA.	MORS SCEPTRA LIGONIBUS AEQUAT.
v.	Mori vltimum. Vita Breuis.	PULVIS et UMBRA SUMUS.
vi.	MEMENTO MORI.	NOSCE TE IPSUM.

The context indicates that *nosce teipsum* here means "know that you are mortal". The inscriptions were presumably chosen by Pieter Paaw, the director of the anatomy-theatre; cf. no. **18b** of this appendix.[267]

18b P. Scriverius (Schrijver), *In theatrum anatomicum, quod est Lugduni in Batavis, secante et perorante V.C. Petro Pauio med. botanico & anatomico praestantissimo*, [Leiden, 1615]. Bibliographical details in Appendix III no. **14c**, p. 73 above. Excerpts, vv. 61–65, 91–7:

[264] Th. A. G. Wilberg Vignau-Schuurman, *Die emblematischen Elemente im Werke Joris Hoefnagels*, Leiden, Universitaire Pers, 1969, vol. 1 pp. 238–239, and vol. 2 fig. 8.

[265] Presumably a quotation: cf. Arnold Geilhoven, *Gnotosolitos*, Brussels 1476, fol. 2^{v}, col. i "Ille vere solus est se sciens qui nichil se esse credit."

[266] J. J. Orlers, *Beschrijvinge der stad Leyden*, Leiden, 1614, p. 149.

[267] Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer, 'Un amphithéâtre d'anatomie moralisée', in *Leiden University in the seventeenth century*, Leiden, Universitaire Pers, 1975, pp. 216–277.

Hic, hic disce mori viator, & te
nosse ante omnia disce, disce quid sis.
Quam res lubrica vita tota nostra est!
Quid speras, homo vane, quidque spiras,
quidve altum sapis? . . . .
Ne te fallere posse crede mortem;
per mendacia mille, perque fraudeis
haec te prosubiget, tuoque demet
personam capiti, nihilque fies
qui comptis modo crinibus nitebas.
Hei! quam gaudia vana, quam caduca!
Hei! quam solstitialis herba vita est! . . . .

19 Caspar Bartholin, *Anatomicae institutiones corporis humani*, [Wittenberg], 1611.

A device on the title-page (Pl. 32) shows a skull and crossbones surmounted by a two-headed figure, one of whose heads is young, the other old. On the left is the inscription "Nosce Teipsum." and on the right "Memento mori.".

20 Wilhelm Fabry von Hilden (Fabricius Hildanus), *Spiegel dess menschlichen Lebens*, Berne, 1621.

The book contains a woodcut of the following design:[268] [*within a decorative border*] "NOSCE TE IPSVM | [black letter] Erkenn dich selbst zu aller frist, | Gedenck auch dass du sterblich bist. | [woodcut: on a pedestal, (left) a winged hourglass with (above) a vessel emitting smoke or vapour; (centre) an open-mouthed human skull with cervical vertebrae *in situ*; (right) a flowering plant in a flask of water and a withered plant outside it] | [printed on the side of the pedestal] MEMENTO MORI."

The author of this book, which is a long treatise in verse on moral subjects, was a superior surgeon who was also interested in anatomy (Pl. 20). He corresponded with Pieter Paaw, who had shown him round the Leiden anatomy-theatre in 1611.[269] His interest in anatomy would have brought him into contact with the pessimistic sense of "know thyself" which is illustrated in the present woodcut. Cf. nos. **16, 18, 19** of this appendix.

21 Henricus Sigismundus Schilling, *Tractatus osteologicus, sive osteologia microcosmica . . . cui denuo adjicitur discursus . . . hominem μικρόκοσμον, sive cognitionem sui considerans*, Dresden, 1668.

The frontispiece (Pl. 36), and parts of the text, illustrate the pessimistic sense of "know thyself". Cf. Appendix III no. **34**, p. 82 above.

22 Georg Franck von Franckenau, *Nosse Deum nosse se unica sapientia! . . .*, Heidelberg, 1683.

[268] Reproduced by E. Hintzsche, *Guilelmus Fabricius Hildanus 1560–1634*, Hilden, Rönsberg, 1972, p. 70.

[269] Wilhelm Fabry (Fabricius) von Hilden, *Von der Fürtrefflichkeit und Nutz der Anatomy*, Aarau, H. R. Sauerländer, 1936 (Veröffentlichungen der Schweizerischen Gesellschaft für Geschichte der Medizin u. der Naturwissenschaften, no. X), p. 188.

Excerpt, p. 7: "Anatome quin imo est perquam necessaria omni homini ad cognitionem sui ipsius .... Nam ... ex ea miseram vilemque naturae suae conditionem discit, videtque se inter stercus & urinam nasci ...". Cf. Appendix III no. **37**, pp. 82–83 above.

III. *The "death-in-a-mirror" motif*

A skull (or skeleton) together with a mirror was sometimes used in painting to represent "know thyself" in the pessimistic sense. The motif had its origin in depictions of the sin of vanity: vanity was forgetfulness of mortality, "know thyself" a reminder of it. In some examples the skull (or skeleton) is reflected in the mirror; in others they are merely juxtaposed.

The following ten examples are divided into three groups. In group *A*, the interpretation "know thyself" seems inescapable, in group *B* independently probable, and in group *C* a reasonable deduction from analogy with the first two groups.

A

23 Laux Furtenagel, Portrait of Hans Burgkmair and his wife, 152[9?]. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Gemäldegalerie no. 167.

The sitters hold before them a mirror in which they see two skulls. On the frame of the mirror there are two inscriptions: "ERKEN DICH SELBS" on the side, and at the top "O MORS". See Pl. 40.

24 A lost painting, formerly in the Orleans collection, where it was recorded in 1786 in an engraving by Jacques Couché (Fig. 13).[270] Although engraved as a self-portrait by Caravaggio, the painting was a version of a painting by Ribera of which five other versions have been published. The composition has been dated to the early 1630s.[271]

The picture shows a man looking in a mirror; behind him, a skull. The man has been identified as Socrates, who was generally portrayed in seventeenth-century painting with a mirror, symbol of his famous self-knowledge.[272] However, one of the surviving versions of the painting bears an old inscription "SCVLAPIO", and since Aesculapius, in at least one source, was also associated with "know thyself",[273] this identification, as *difficilior interpretatio*, may be correct. Whichever name we give to the man, "know thyself" would be the theme of his attributes.

The surviving versions of the painting lack the skull. If it was not an original part of the Orleans picture, it must have been added by someone (perhaps Couché himself)

[270] J. Couché, *Galerie du Palais Royal*, vol. 1, Paris, 1786, 'Portrait de Michel Ange Amerighi de Caravagge peint par lui même'.

[271] N. Spinosa, *L'opera completa di Ribera*, Milan, Rizzoli, 1978, p. 127, nos. 234–238.

[272] Delphine Fitz Darby, 'The wise man with a looking-glass', *Art in America*, 1948, **36**: 113–126. A. Pigler, 'Sokrates in der Kunst der Neuzeit', *Die Antike*, 1938, **14**: 281–294.

[273] Achilles Bocchius, *Symbolicarum quaestionum . . . libri quinque*, Bologna, 1574, pp. 116–7, lib. II, symb. LIIII.

who was familiar with the traditional use of the mirror and skull to denote "know thyself" as a reminder of mortality.[274]

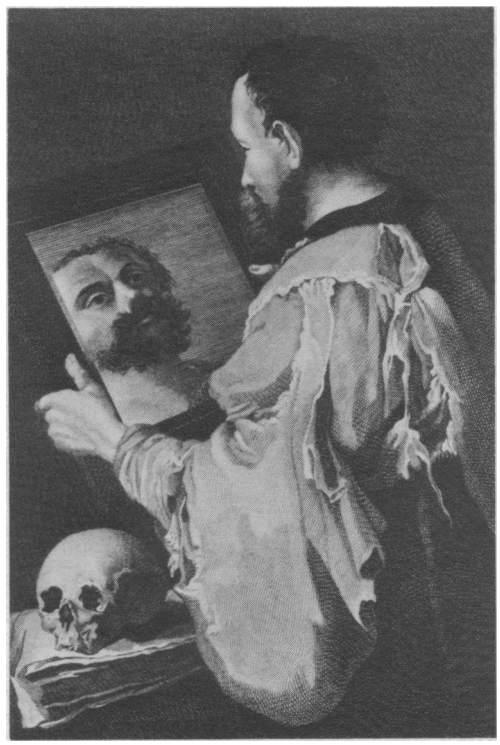

Figure 13. Jacques Couché, "Portrait de Michel-Ange Amerighi de Caravagge peint par lui-même" (so called), engraving, *c.* 1786, after a painting by Jusepe de Ribera, *c.* 1630/1635, printed in the *Galerie du Palais Royal*, Paris, 1786.

25 An illustration of "know thyself" by Jacob Jordaens, dated in the 1640s or 1650s. The illustration survives in two autograph drawings, an engraving after one of them (Pl. 41), and several painted and drawn copies. One of the autograph drawings, in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, has a cartouche inscribed "KENT V. SELVEN." The other, in the Morgan Library, New York, has a blank cartouche which, in the engraved version, is inscribed "NOSCE TEIPSVM".[275]

A woman combs her hair before a mirror held by a fool; an ancient philosopher draws her attention to a skull, and utters the following words, which are printed on the engraving:

[274] Though Couché's engravings of the Orleans pictures are generally accurate, they contain enough variations – in the plates of Titian's 'Death of Actaeon' and of Annibale Carracci's 'St. Roch' in the Fitzwilliam Museum, for example – to justify doubts about the faithfulness of this engraving.

[275] R. A. d'Hulst, *Jordaens drawings*, vol. 1, London and New York, Phaidon, 1974, pp. 289–291, nos. A 203, A 204, figs. 218, 219. On the Morgan drawing and its affiliations: F. Stampfle, *Rubens and Rembrandt in their century*, New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, 1979, pp. 59–60, no. 24.

Stulta, quid ad speculum fastus assumis inanes,
atque tibi forma, quae peritura, places?
Hic cernis quod eris, quodque es. Quid credere cessas?
Quae loquor, haec forsan iam dabit hora fidem.

B

26–28 Three paintings by a trio of Caravaggists, *c.* 1625.

26 is in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, where it is ascribed to Nicolas Tournier (Pl. 42).[276] It shows a woman dressed in antique costume and wearing the chaplet of a priestess. With her left hand she holds up a balance in equilibrium, while with her right she supports a mirror. In front of the mirror, and reflected in it, is a skull resting on a book.

27 is in the Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Antica, Rome. It is attributed to the "Candlelight Master" (Trophime Bigot?).[277] The composition is different from that of the Oxford picture (Pl. 42), but the iconography is essentially the same. The figure wears a white turban in place of a chaplet.

28 is an over-door painting by Niccolò Renieri (Regnier) now in the Galleria del Daniele, Palazzo Reale, Turin (Pl. 43). It is dated 6 June 1626. A replica is at the Landesmuseum, Troppau.[278] The subject is the same as that of the other two pictures (nos. **26, 27**), except for the fact that Renieri's figure is bare-headed.

The co-existence of these six attributes in each picture – antiquity, the woman, the head-dress (except in **28**), the balance, the skull, and the mirror – is explained if we identify the woman as the ancient Pythia, or Delphic priestess of Apollo, demonstrating the Delphic maxims *μηδὲν ἄγαν* and *γνῶθι σεαυτόν*. The balance would illustrate *μηδὲν ἄγαν* "nothing in excess", while the mirror and skull would illustrate *γνῶθι σεαυτόν*, "know thyself", as they do in *A* above.

The mirror-and-balance motif may be derived from the Alciati emblem which illustrates the sayings of the seven sages.[279] There, however, the balance illustrates *optimus in rebus modus est (ἄριστον μέτρον ἐν πᾶσιν)*, not *nihil nimis (μηδὲν ἄγαν):*

[276] Ashmolean Museum, *Catalogue of paintings*, Oxford, Visitors of the Museum, [1972], p. 160, no. 204, as a syncretic "Allegory of justice and vanity". *Summary catalogue*, Oxford, Ashmolean Museum, 1980, p. 93, as the same. E. Wind also considered it a pastiche, but meaning "Truth presenting her mirror to the vanities of the world" (Ashmolean Museum *Annual Report*, 1939, p. 30); however, there are many differences between the Oxford picture and the passage of Ripa's on which this interpretation depends (1611 edition, p. 530). B. Nicolson, *The international Caravaggesque movement*, Oxford, Phaidon, 1979, p. 61 as a 'Vanitas' by an imitator of Honthorst.

[277] *La peinture en Provence au XVIIe siècle* (Musée des Beaux-Arts, Palais Longchamp, Marseilles), Marseilles, J. Laffitte, 1978, p. 8 no. 7 with repr. and lit., as 'Vanitas' or 'Allégorie sur la mort', *c.* 1625. Nicolson, op. cit., note 276 above, p. 21 as the same. E. Panofsky, 'Et in Arcadia ego', in R. Klibansky and H. J. Paton (eds.), *Philosophy and history*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1936, pp. 223–254, fig. 4 and p. 235, as a 'Vanitas' picture. B. Nicolson and C. Wright, *Georges de la Tour*, London, Phaidon, 1974, reproduce the Oxford and Rome pictures together as figs. 78, 80, both entitled 'Vanitas'.

[278] Pier Luigi Fantelli, 'Nicolò Renieri "pittor fiamengo",' *Saggi e memorie di storia dell' arte*, 1974, **9**: 79–115, p. 105, no. 108, fig. 44 (Turin version) and no. 111, fig. 43 (Troppau version), both entitled 'Allegoria della Sapienza'.

[279] A. Alciati, *Emblemata*, Padua, 1621, emblema CLXXXVII, pp. 784–786.

Optimus in rebus modus est, Cleobulus ut inquit:
hoc trutina examen, siue libella docet.

Noscere se Chilon Spartanus quemque iubebat:
hoc speculum in manibus, uitraque sumpta dabunt.

29 A design for a title-page by Odoardo Fialetti (1573–1638), which was printed in Venice in 1627 and in Amsterdam in 1645. Bibliographical details in Appendix III no. **18,** p. 76 above.

The figure of Anatomia holds a mirror in one hand, a skull in the other: see Pl. 34. "Know thyself" was a traditional motto for anatomy (cf. Appendix III above), so we would have reason to interpret the mirror and skull in that sense even without the aid of section III. *A* of this appendix.

30 The additional engraved title-page of an anatomy-book by Gerardus Blasius, published at Amsterdam in 1666. Bibliographical details in Appendix III no. **33,** p. 81 above.

The engraving shows an anatomist who looks into a mirror and sees in it the skeleton that stands behind him: see Pl. 35. The reason for interpreting the scene in the sense "know thyself" is the same as in the previous example. Incidentally, Blasius was a great admirer of Nicolaes Tulp.[280]

C

31 A *vanitas* painting, apparently Dutch and probably of the third quarter of the seventeenth century.[281]

See Pl. 44. Among the reminders of mortality is a skull looking at its reflection in a mirror. The painter may have intended the motif only as a vague reminder of mortality, but since the other motifs show his awareness of their meaning (for example, the travelling-bag to illustrate life as a journey),[282] we should probably interpret the skull and mirror in the sense "know thyself", by analogy with III. *A* and *B* above.

[280] His *Commentaria in syntagma anatomicum . . . Veslingii,* Amsterdam, 1659, was dedicated to Tulp and three of Tulp's close colleagues, including Arnold Tholincx. In his *Anatome medullae spinalis . . .,* Amsterdam, 1666, fol. A3^{v}, Blasius copied word for word a sentence from Tulp's *Observationum . . . libri* (1641), I, c. 27, p. 56, with a dignified acknowledgment.

[281] One of two unattributed but perhaps related *vanitas* still-life paintings which include the skull-in-a-mirror motif. This one was offered for sale at Christie's, London, on 14 December 1979, lot 125 as "French school, circa 1660", and again on 18 December 1980, lot 168 as "E. Colyer". The other is in the Musée du Louvre, inv. no. 1946–15, included in the catalogue of the French school (text vol., 1972, p. 413; plate vol. II, 1974, no. 961), reproduced in colour in *Stilleben in Europa,* Münster, Westfälisches Landesmuseum, and Baden-Baden, Staatliche Kunsthalle, 1980, no. 124, pp. 212–213.

[282] Bergström, op. cit., note 194 above, p. 170, on a painting by P. Steenwyck in the Prado. The same motif appears in an etching by Bramer (Hollstein no. 4), and elsewhere.

32 A *vanitas* painting by Simon Luttichuys (1610–1661?), signed, not dated.[283]

See Pl. 45. Again, a skull reflected in a mirror illustrates the pessimistic meaning of "know thyself".

proposed addenda

19.1 identical with Appendix III no. **16.1,** p. 83 above.
20.1 identical with Appendix III no. **16.2,** p. 83 above.
20.2 identical with Appendix III no. **20.1,** p. 84 above.

[283] With Bernard Houthakker, Amsterdam, in 1979. L. J. Bol, *Holländische Maler des 17. Jahrhunderts,* Brunswick, Klinkhardt & Biermann, 1969, p. 309 and pl. 283.