A painting re-attributed to Aelbert Cuyp: connoisseurship and technical research

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There are few seventeenth-century Dutch painters for whose works questions of attribution are as problematic as they are in the case of Aelbert Cuyp. Until recently few dared to pronounce clearly and confidently on the matter. But today we have a number of useful scientific methods at our disposal. This article focuses on a single painting that has hitherto been labelled ‘dubious’ for reasons that are not entirely clear, and reaches a conclusion that is based on connoisseurship and technical examination. We also call for the study of Cuyp’s œuvre to be based on a clearly defined account of the methods used, which should widen the scope of the debate.

River landscape with seven cows and the ruins of Mermwede Castle (Fig.18) comes from the illustrious Czernin collection, where it was ever published, so that users are obliged to rely on the unillustrated edition. The book is essentially only serviceable when read alongside the well-illustrated but otherwise obsolete monograph by S. Reiss: Aelbert Cuyp, London 1975 (hereafter cited as Reiss 1975). An important, more recent addition to the scholarship on Aelbert Cuyp is A.K. Wheelock, ed.: exh. cat. Aelbert Cuyp, Washington (National Gallery of Art), London (National Gallery) and Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum) 2001–02.

18. River landscape with seven cows and the ruins of Mermwede Castle, here attributed to Aelbert Cuyp. c.1648. Panel, 71 by 90.5 cm. (Collection of Ilone and George Kremer, Netherlands).

1 Most frequently consulted in questions of attributions concerning Cuyp is Alan Chong. See his Aelbert Cuyp and the Meanings of Landscape, Ann Arbor 1992 (hereafter cited as Chong 1992). As is clear from the title of this Ph.D. thesis, the composition of Cuyp’s œuvre is not its main subject, but the book does contain a catalogue of works judged by Chong to be authentic (category A), dubious (category B) or not authentic (category C). Regrettably, Chong does not explain the principles on which his conclusions are based. No trade edition of the thesis was ever published, so that users are obliged to rely on the unillustrated edition. The book is essentially only serviceable when read alongside the well-illustrated but otherwise obsolete monograph by S. Reiss: Aelbert Cuyp, London 1975 (hereafter cited as Reiss 1975). An important, more recent addition to the scholarship on Aelbert Cuyp is A.K. Wheelock, ed.: exh. cat. Aelbert Cuyp, Washington (National Gallery of Art), London (National Gallery) and Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum) 2001–02.
Attention to certain similarities with Fig. 18, while at the same time referring to the Washington painting as 'superior and closer to secure works by Cuyp'. As is so often the case with attributions, once doubts are expressed, they prove extremely difficult to refute.

The panel on which Fig. 18 was painted dates from the mid-seventeenth century and still has its original dimensions. It was made from Baltic oak and was painted in or after 1648. It should be noted that there was a sharp decline in the use of oak panels during the First Anglo-Dutch War (1652–54), as new imports came to a halt. The panel’s width of 90.5 cm. is very close to three Dordrecht feet; in this period Dordrecht used the South Holland foot (a foot being eleven inches of 2.75 cm. to 90.75 cm.). The panel’s height was determined proportionally.

All the pigments identified in the painting were used in the seventeenth century. A striking discovery is the presence of lead-tin yellow, a pigment for which the formula was lost in the first few decades of the eighteenth century. In many of his works Cuyp availed himself of yellow lake, one of the pigments used to make green. This pigment withstands light poorly, and has indeed vanished from many of Cuyp’s paintings. In this work it was primarily used in the green of the riverbank, and the discoloration is relatively minor.

Research in the conservation studio reveals that the work was painted in four stages. The artist began by making a sketch on the primed panel. He then painted the sky, and immediately after he added the foreground adjoining it, or in some cases overlapping it, but without adding any details. The fence was also painted at this stage. In the third stage, the cows were painted in the spaces that had been left for them. Finally, he added the details and his signature.

The fact that the artist left spaces for the cows while painting the sky and the landscape means that he must have made a preparatory sketch on the primed panel. Although such under-painting was probably standard practice in this period, it cannot be detected either with the naked eye or in X-radiograph images or infra-red reflectograms. The artist would undoubtedly have made this sketch with strongly diluted oil paint, possibly using the residue in the tray in which the brushes were cleaned. Since a layer of this kind subsequently became part of the paint layer, it is not surprising that scarcely any traces of it can be found.

The sky and land were painted virtually without hesitation. Where the different colours have been placed against one another, it can be shown that the land was painted over the sky in several places. While painting the sky, the artist left space for the fence. That the paint was indeed applied rapidly can be seen with the naked eye at the boundaries between land and water and between the sky and the fence. The sky had not yet dried when the fence was being elaborated. In other words, sky, land and fence were painted – in that order – wet-in-wet. This conclusion has been confirmed by X-radiographs and infra-red reflectograms.

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A painting re-attributed to Aelbert Cuyp

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2. For the painting’s presence in the Czernin collection, see R. Juffinger: *Residenzgalerie Salzburg. Gesamtverzeichnis de Gemäle*, Salzburg 2010, p.365, fig.10; and esp. the essay ‘*Schreibzimmer meines Vaters zu Wien 1835*’. Ein Aquarell mit der Widmung des Schreibzimmers von Johann Rudolph Graf Czernin von Chudenitz’, in *ibid.*, p.510, fig.32.


4. *Echtheid nicht unbedingt sicher. Die rote Signatur scheint später aufgesetzt zu sein*; unpublished notes by Theodor von Frimmel (kept at the Residenzgalerie, Salzburg). We are grateful to Inuna Walderdorff and Roswitha Juffinger for kindly sharing their knowledge of the Czernin collection.

5. They are nos.121 (Washington), 124 and 125 (both Marquess of Bute), B 14 (Frick Collection, New York), B 15 (Karlsruhe) and C 59 (Rotterdam). Space does not...
Given the rapid and somewhat impasto application of the paint in the sky and the landscape, it is not surprising that the painter repeatedly went over the contours of the spaces left for the cows as indicated in the sketch, most notably in details such as the cows’ horns. Where this happened — and this can be inferred from the X-rays — the artist uncovered the cows’ contours by scraping away the surplus paint (Fig. 28).

Once the sky, land and fence had been painted, the group of cows could be elaborated in detail. The artist probably developed his conception of the cattle in a series of preparatory studies. The numerous repetitions of cattle in particular positions and even of groups of cows indicate that Cuyp possessed a stock of drawings. This undoubtedly included drawings such as A cow lying down (Fig. 21). Cuyp must have had these drawings close

permits us to discuss the similarities and differences with all these paintings.

7 Dendrochronological analysis by Peter Klein, Hamburg, 4th December 1994.
8 The dimensions also correspond closely to those of The conversion of Saul; Wheelock, op. cit. (note 1), no.16. We are grateful to Sander Paarlberg for drawing our attention to this.
9 Martin Bijl and Eddy Schavemaker are preparing a publication on the dimensions of seventeenth-century paintings.
10 Analyses were performed in 2011 by Libby Sheldon, London (unpublished report, F2164).
12 Aelbert can be assumed to have adopted this working method from his father, Jacob, who had published a wide range of quadrupeds in the series Diversa animalia. Jacob used this volume as a source for his portraits of children with animals and for his scenes with figures in a landscape. The son also drew on this source, especially for his early work. For the numerous borrowings, see Reiss 1975, pp.27, 30–31, 43, 84 and 87; and S. Paarlberg el al.: exh. cat. Jacob Gerritsz. Cuypers 1594–1652, Dordrecht (Dordrecht Museum) 2002, pp.13–14, 49–51, 76–77, 94 and 108.
13 Wheelock, op. cit. (note 1), no. 103. Similar folds in the necks of cattle can be observed in other drawings by Cuyp.
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23. Detail of infra-red reflectogram of Fig.18. (Image by R. Gerritsen, Amsterdam).

24. Detail of X-radiograph of Fig.18. (Image by R. Gerritsen, Amsterdam).

25. Infra-red reflectogram of Fig.20.

26. X-radiograph of Fig.20.

27. Detail of the signature in Fig.18.

28. X-radiograph detail of Fig.18.

29. X-radiograph detail of Fig.18.

30. X-radiograph detail of Fig.20.
to hand when he delineated the contours of the spaces to be left for the cattle. The similarity to the drawings is also clear from the folds in the cows’ necks, which can be seen in the drawing mentioned above as well as in the detail of the painting under discussion (Fig.22), most notably in the second cow from the left. We find similar folds in other images of cattle by Cuyp, for instance in the painting in Washington (Fig.20).

Notwithstanding the painter’s confidence regarding the chosen contours, he nonetheless deviated from the initial sketch in one, albeit minor, respect: the head of the seated cow in the left foreground was initially planned more to the right. This pentimento is visible with the naked eye.

As the artist painted the cows, filling in the areas left blank for them, he kept some of the contours unpainted. In these places, we see a colour varying from black to light brown. It is striking that the contours thus produced differ from the eventual colour of the cows. Furthermore, these lines do not follow all the outlines of the animals, particularly not in places where light colours border on the sky. The logical explanation is that these brownish-black contours are the visible remains of the artist’s underpainting.

It may be noted that such dark brown or black underpainting is visible through the thin, now transparent, paint in the contours of cows’ hooves in numerous paintings from Cuyp’s middle and late periods, which might easily be interpreted as a sign of hesitation on the artist’s part. However, the thinner the paint, the less time elapses before it becomes transparent. In the present painting, the effect is virtually absent, since the paint was applied more thickly and has therefore not become transparent.

Cuyp’s method of tackling the contours differs from that of artists such as Jan van Goyen and his circle. The latter tended to place figures in a painted landscape without leaving space for them beforehand, and contours applied earlier would frequently remain visible. In works by Italianate painters such as Jan Both, black outlines for the figures are often visible, either because the lines were not covered by the paint or because the paint has become transparent. In the present painting, the contours are emphatically present, which means that they were intended as part of the end result.

At the same time, in some places we see that the artist painted the cows over areas of sky, and that the colours — since the sky was still wet — became mixed, softening the contours’ boldness. The ease with which this was achieved highlights the artist’s masterly technique. The resulting effect can best be demonstrated in the standing cow silhouetted against the sky. The cow’s head stands out in sharp relief, the white of its neck blending subtly with the tones of the sky. This technique convincingly captures the effect of reflected light. While the phenomenon described above is clearly visible in this part of the painting, it can also be revealed in some of the darker areas of the landscape with the aid of infra-red reflectography. This method recalls the way in which Rembrandt added fresh dimensions to the liveliness of his portraits and tronies in the 1630s. This method of painting the landscape, which, not seen in work of slightly earlier colleagues of the artist, is also curiously absent from paintings by Abraham van Calraet, the artist who, broadly speaking, continued Cuyp’s work, and whose black contours around cattle are more reminiscent of painters such as Jan Both than of Cuyp. 14 As far as we know, the method described here is unique in seventeenth-century landscape.

After Cuyp had painted the cows he proceeded to the fourth stage, adding the finishing touches such as the birds in the sky, the light, beige-coloured bushes, the highlights in the grass, and the characteristic reed stems catching the light in the foreground. The details of the horizon and the contours of some of the cows’ backs, with individual hairs highlighted by reflected light, also belong to this stage. The staff placed against the fence on the right was added at the same time: it was an afterthought, presumably intended to heighten the diagonal effect of the dyke and fence. Finally, the artist added his signature to the painting (Fig.27), wet-in-semi-wet, as is clear from the cross-section. 15 All this indicates that the

14 Contours of this kind are clearly visible in Calraet’s Cattle piece in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (SK-C-122).
15 The cross-section was analysed by Libby Sheldon; see note 9 above.
painting was laid in rapidly, and that the final details, including the signature, were completed before the paint had dried. The entire painting was evidently finished in a matter of days.

Cuyp did not learn the technique of rapid wet-in-wet painting from his father, Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp, who is primarily known as a portrait painter. For his preferred subject-matter, landscapes, he sought inspiration first and foremost from painters such as Jan van Goyen and Salomon van Ruysdael. The depiction of landscapes with paint applied impasto, wet-in-wet, was introduced around 1647 by the young Jacob van Ruysdael, with an unprecedented degree of realism and a preference for strong chiaro scuro.16 Cuyp can be assumed to have been familiar with Ruysdael’s early work, which had rapidly gained popularity. He embraced this new realism, with which Ruysdael recorded his own region of Haarlem and its environs, and applied it to his own world, the river landscape around Dordrecht. It should be noted, however, that Cuyp painted realistic and imaginary subjects at the same time. His famous Herdsman with cattle at Dulwich Picture Gallery depicts an imaginary landscape with herdsmen and cattle,17 comparable to his typically Dutch landscapes but with mountains in the distance and Mediterranean light effects. This must have been produced at roughly the same time as a number of paintings featuring cows by the waterside.

The development of a painter such as Cuyp should not be construed in too linear a fashion. In working towards his own interpretation of light in the landscape in the mid-1640s, Cuyp had other sources of inspiration besides Ruysdael’s naturalism, namely the Italianate artists who had returned from southern Europe, in particular Jan Both and Herman van Swanevelt. He had already successfully endowed a Dutch subject – the ruins of Rijnsburg Abbey – with a golden glow in 1645, in a kind of backlighting that Reiss has dubbed contre-jour.18 Other artists from this period also worked simultaneously in different styles:

examples include Frans Hals and Jan van Goyen, and indeed Rembrandt, who went so far as to produce a series of three small paintings in different styles."19

Cuyp retained the habit of laying in his paintings rapidly throughout his career. Even in his later paintings, when the sunny atmosphere of his work became its dominant feature and a smoothly painted surface was therefore essential – the haziness of the blue sky near the horizon could only be rendered convincingly if the surface was absolutely smooth – he continued to apply this method. To achieve this smoothness, it was essential to apply the paint with a brush made from badger hair. In the present painting, as in River landscape with eight cows (Fig.20) discussed below, the sky has been built up chiefly with bold, vertical brushstrokes that are longer in the left half of both paintings. That any comparison with the smooth skies of the later, more ‘Italianate’ landscapes would be inappropriate is obvious, given the difference in the intended effect.

Aside from the highly individual working method described above, Fig.18 displays several other characteristics that link the painting conclusively to Cuyp. We can start by mentioning the brightly lit reeds that serve as a repoussoir in the foreground, their sharp lines particularly characteristic of his later work. They were probably used for the first time in the river landscapes with cows that were painted around 1648.

Cuyp’s cows often possess somewhat block-like heads, a shape that also appears in his drawings of cattle. The folds in the skin of the cows’ necks can also be observed in both drawings and paintings.

For the colour green, the artist used yellow lake mixed with lime rather than with aluminium. This pigment, which easily becomes discoloured, appears to have been abandoned later in the seventeenth century; Abraham van Calraet was among those who ceased to use it.

Among the paintings that are most closely related to Fig.18, the painting in Washington (Fig.20) is by far the most important. The two works are virtually the same size and display a marked affinity in their details. This affinity is confirmed by the X-rayographs (Figs.24 and 26) and infra-red images (Figs.23 and 25) of the two works. The legibility of the former is impeded by the cradles that have been attached to both. For this reason, the comparison is best confined to a few details. Both X-rayographs (Figs.31 and 32) reveal that the painter strengthened the drawing within the contours at the cows’ flanks with light-coloured paint. The short grass has been rendered in exactly the same way in both paintings. This was already clear from a comparison of the two painted surfaces, and it is confirmed by the X-rayographs (Figs.29 and 30). These images also show a portion of the sky in which the impasto application of paint – the artist used rather dry, loose paint – is also identical. The two infra-red images (Figs.23 and 25) likewise reveal that the short grass was painted in the same way.

The similarities in the treatment of the sky are somewhat less obvious. The visible differences are primarily the consequence of the different conditions in which the photographs were taken. Furthermore, the different weather conditions that the painter

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17 Hofstede de Groot, op. cit. (note 2), no.130; Reiss 1975, fig.44; Chong 1992, no.80, and Wheelock, op. cit. (note 2), no.14.
20 See Wheelock, op. cit. (note 1), no.97.
21 The work was rejected in Chong 1992, no.C 43; see also W.T. Kloek: Aelbert
sought to express – stormy in the Washington painting and tranquil in Fig.18 – should be taken into account. The vertical brushstrokes mentioned above are also visible in both infra-red images.

In the figures of the cattle, the treatment of the black cow in the middle of the painting in Washington is remarkably different. Since the painter used mainly black pigments for this animal, it is understandable that the X-radiograph also differs from the others.

The stripy folds of the cows’ necks, as described above in relation to Fig.18, are also visible in the infra-red images of the Washington painting. More striking still is the similarity of the cows’ horns. The scratching away of the underlying impasto to define the sharpness of the horns (Fig.28), as described above, is also visible in the X-radiograph of the Washington painting. The infra-red images reveal scratchy lines that were evidently drawn as part of the sketch in oil. Very similar lines appear in the neck of the cow seated in the foreground in Fig.20 and in the neck of the cow seated on the left in Fig.18. In the same two cows, similar highlights are discernible in the drawing within the contours, more precisely at the cows’ flanks.

In both paintings, an illuminated edge is visible along certain cows’ heads. This is most noticeable in the cow sitting second from the left in Fig.18 and along the edge of the head in the central sitting cow in the Washington painting. The artist used this technique to heighten the suggestion of depth.

As described above, the artist sometimes left spaces along the contours between the bodies of the cows and the background. This can be seen in the backside of the standing cow in Fig.18. Similar spaces have been left around the back of the cow sitting on the left in the Washington painting.

Another striking similarity is seen in the boundary between sky and dyke in the two paintings: the painter worked rapidly, and these sections overlap in some places and are juxtaposed in others.

The infra-red images also display one obvious difference between the two paintings. In Fig.18, the contours of some of the cows’ backs have been accentuated with a strongly illuminated edge, a feature that does not appear in the Washington painting. Should this accentuation of contours, given its absence from the latter work, be interpreted as an innovation? This would mean that Fig.18 would have to be dated a little later than the painting in Washington.

In view of the virtually identical way in which the two works were painted and in view of the similar placing of the final details, such as the birds in the sky, it is fair to assume that the two paintings were produced in close succession.

This said, the works also display important differences, ones that in our view shed light on the problems with which the artist was wrestling. For instance, the motif of the dyke on the right is used in two completely different ways. In the Washington painting, the artist also sought to convey distance in the right-hand section, by greatly reducing the size of the horseman and herdsmen. Their gaze – away from us – and the sunbeams emphasise this distance. In Fig.18, by contrast, the fence actually blocks off the view.


Two important conclusions can be drawn. First, we believe that these findings demonstrate conclusively that the two paintings were made by the same hand, and that this master was Aelbert Cuyp. Second, this account shows that much can be learned, in research on Aelbert Cuyp’s œuvre, from the findings of technical research on materials and painterly technique. The approach that revolves around stylistic criticism, which has hitherto been the decisive way of resolving questions of attribution, can be supplemented in crucial areas by these other methods.

Aelbert Cuyp developed the subject depicted here, that of cows by the waterside, in the 1640s. The earliest testimony to this is the drawing of Three cows near a fence with butterbur in the foreground (Fig.33), which originates from the early sketchbook that Cuyp used around 1642, most probably in the Dordrecht area.20 Although the artist did not include water in this drawing, he did sketch cows on a dyke near a fence. It is striking that the fence in this drawing also has a vertical staff propped against it, an idea that was re-used as an afterthought in Fig.18. Aelbert Cuyp evidently mastered the compact depiction of a herd of cows in the course of the 1640s. He must have been working on this theme in the mid-1640s, when he was concerned with conveying a particular quality of light. The Rijksmuseum’s River landscape with cows (Fig.14), a work that fits perfectly into the group of tonal, yellowish-brown works from the mid-1640s, was either painted by Cuyp himself, which would make it one of the master's first pictures of cows by the waterside, or provides indirect evidence of a relatively early rendering of this theme.21

Cuyp’s cows are often accompanied by herdsmen or a milkmaid. It may be assumed that he developed the motif of cows by the waterside from earlier images that included a figure – a presence that in Fig.18 is suggested only by the staff resting against the fence. Earlier in his career Cuyp had already developed the theme of the milkmaid by the waterside, famous from paintings such as those in Karlsruhe and Pasadena, for instance in a painting in Dublin.22 He probably moved on from this to the theme of cows reflected in the water – famous from one of the

34. River landscape with cows, by Aelbert Cuyp. c.1645. Panel, 42.5 by 72 cm. (Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam).

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two pendants in the Robarts collection and the painting in Budapest – in a relatively short period of time.²¹

The motif of the dyke with a fence at the right in Fig.18 makes an old-fashioned impression. It primarily recalls the work of Salomon van Ruysdael from the 1630s. In a general sense, the fence enhances the diagonal effect, which is particularly common in Cuyp’s paintings, for instance in his milkmaids by the waterside. It seems likely that the artist was playing with this effect and that in his quest for pure Dutch motifs he reverted to the visual language of an older generation and in a sense revitalised it.

The far greater luminosity of the painting in Budapest might suggest that Fig.18 occupies an earlier place in Cuyp’s development. In their turn, the famous pendants of Bulls on a riverbank (Robarts collection),²² with their placing of the cattle in the water, appear to point to a later stage in the artist’s development. However, the pendants’ colouring is closer to the brownish-yellow tones of Cuyp’s middle period. Again, it is wise to bear in mind that stylistic developments are not linear.

The composition of Fig.18 recurs several times in other paintings, the attribution of almost all of which has been questioned.²³ Although space does not permit us to look at these works in the same detail, it should be observed in general that the repetition of motifs does not constitute grounds for rejecting the authenticity of paintings. In the case of Aelbert Cuyp, as with other seventeenth-century masters, the repetition may denote a successful composition, or a desire to draw on the same stock of motifs to achieve completely different effects.

In considering the attribution to Cuyp, it should be taken into account that the painting could be a copy from the same period or later, or that it might be the work of a pupil or one to which a studio assistant contributed. Besides Aelbert, various other pupils and assistants worked in his father’s studio; the son himself – although there is no documentary evidence for it – undoubtedly had assistants of his own. It is striking that some of the father’s assistants dedicated themselves to landscapes, producing work that displays similarities to that of the young Cuyp. Even so, the work of Cornelis Tegelberg, for example, possesses a clearly distinctive quality.²⁴ After the death of Jacob Gerritsz, Aelbert probably ran the studio in the same way, with assistants and pupils. In any case, Abraham van Calraet, who probably took over the studio in turn, was a zealous imitator of Cuyp’s work.

It is often said that Dordrecht painters working in the eighteenth century were still capable of producing paintings of the same calibre as Aelbert Cuyp’s. This is a dubious assertion. The loss of certain techniques in the eighteenth century makes it highly improbable that the skill needed to convincingly copy a painting in the style of Cuyp was still available at a time when the master’s work started to become considerably more expensive. It is also clear that numerous elements of Fig.18 would have been beyond the reach of any copyist or forger. First and foremost there is the method of painting, and there is also the addition of the herdsman’s staff, which, although it comes from Cuyp’s stock of ideas, would have been known to only the most intimate of the master’s assistants. Furthermore, given that this work was painted wet-in-wet, the notion that it could have been produced by a late imitator is highly improbable. In any case, it is incontrovertible that Cuyp’s primary imitator, Abraham van Calraet, had a different working method. Were the painting to have been a late forgery, it would in any case have to be dated before 1804, the year in which Count Graf Czernin purchased it. However, the unconstrained style of painting does not correspond to the works of late eighteenth-century imitators, which were generally painted with remarkable smoothness.

Clearly, any notion that the work might have been produced by a less talented assistant in or around 1650, when the studio was still being run by Cuyp’s father, Jacob Gerritsz, and subsequently signed by Aelbert Cuyp, can also be discounted.

All in all, the splendid wet-in-wet execution, the unique working method, the signature added while the paint was still wet, and the similarities to Cuyp’s paintings featuring cows by the waterside, provide ample reason to assert with all confidence that this painting was made by Aelbert Cuyp.

²¹ For these paintings, see ibid., nos.21 and 23.
²² Ibid., nos.22 and 23.
²³ The following paintings show marked compositional similarities to Fig.18: 1) River landscape with seven cows and the mine of Merwedew Castle, panel, 61 by 79 cm. (W. Weustenbug collection, Berlin; Chong 1992, no.B 139). The photograph of this slightly smaller copy in the Netherlands Institute for Art History (RKD), The Hague, is too poor to allow an assessment. 2) A moonlight view of cattle on a river bank, known from William Bull’s inventory of 1773 after Cuyp’s painting (Reiss 1975, p.112, no.75, where it is reproduced in reverse to demonstrate its similarity to our Fig.18; Chong 1992, p.47, listed under no.B 13 as a pastiche). This work, which has not survived, depicts cattle in virtually the same situation, but in moonlight with stormy clouds. Very similar to it is A Moonlight by moonlight (Chong 1992, no.C 82; formerly Goudstikker collection and Netherlands Institute for Cultural Heritage (ICN), The Hague; sale, Christie’s, Amsterdam, 14th November 2007, lot 17). Although the latter work was also rejected by Chong, Cuyp certainly appears to have played with the motif of a moonlit night with brooding clouds. 3) Cattle near a river, panel, 59 by 74 cm. (Dulwich Picture Gallery, London; Chong 1992, p.451, under no.C 51). There is a virtually identical version in the Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City. According to Chong, both these paintings were made by Jacob van Strij, yet the painting shows almost precisely the same group of cattle, the river and the ruins of Merwedew Castle, although here it is seen to the right of the silhouetted standing cow, glimpsed through a dip in the dyke. The curious composition virtually excludes the possibility of a pastiche, while an attribution to Van Strij can be ruled out on stylistic grounds. 4) Sunset after rain, panel (oval), 84 by 70 cm. (Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge; Reiss 1975, no.72; Chong 1992, no.C40). This painting, which Reiss reproduced as a vertical rectangle, regained its oval shape during restoration carried out in 1975. Chong classifies it as ‘an imitation’ and argues that its vertical oval shape precludes an attribution to Cuyp. However, the rendering of the trees is characteristic of Cuyp’s work of the first half of the 1640s, suggesting that this more complex composition was produced earlier than our Fig.18. 5) Landscape with maid milking a cow, canvas, 101 by 134 cm. (Detroit Institute of Arts; Chong 1992, no.C 47; G. Keyes et al.: Masters of Dutch Painting. The Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit and London 2004, no.22). The cattle, this time accompanied by a herdsman and a milkmaid, are rendered here with a few variations and on a smaller scale in the middle distance. This may well be a late painting in which Cuyp left much of the work to an assistant.
²⁴ The website of the RKD (www.rkd.nl) includes several works by Cornelis Tegelberg, who studied under Jacob Gerritsz Cuyp, and Pieter van der Leeuw, who is indeed named as one of Aelbert’s pupils. We are grateful to Marijke de Kinkelder for identifying these artists. For Tegelberg, see also Reis 1975, p.213, Landscape with herdsman and milkmaid; sale, London, Christie’s, 19th November 1895, lot 211 (RKD fig. no.000014229); and River Landscape with landing stage near a ramshackle house, at Galleria Caretto art dealers, Turin, in 2007 (RKD fig. no.0000124899); see also S. Paarlborg: ‘Een landschap van Richard Farrington en de impact van Aelbert Cuyp’, in C. Dumas et al., eds.: Liber Amicorum Manjke de Kinoelder, The Hague 2013, p.278, fig.5. The work of Pieter van der Leeuw sometimes resembles Aelbert Cuyp’s, but more frequently that of Adriaen van de Velde. Finally, we may mention Richard Farrington, an English merchant and painter who worked in Dordrecht from 1648 to 1664. A landscape for which this artist derived inspiration from Cuyp’s River landscape with herdsman and peasants, now in the National Gallery, London, can be found in the Dordrechts Museum; see Paarlborg, op. cit., pp.278–80, fig.4. The authors would like to thank Sander Paarlborg for drawing our attention to this painter and for the valuable advice he kindly gave on other points.