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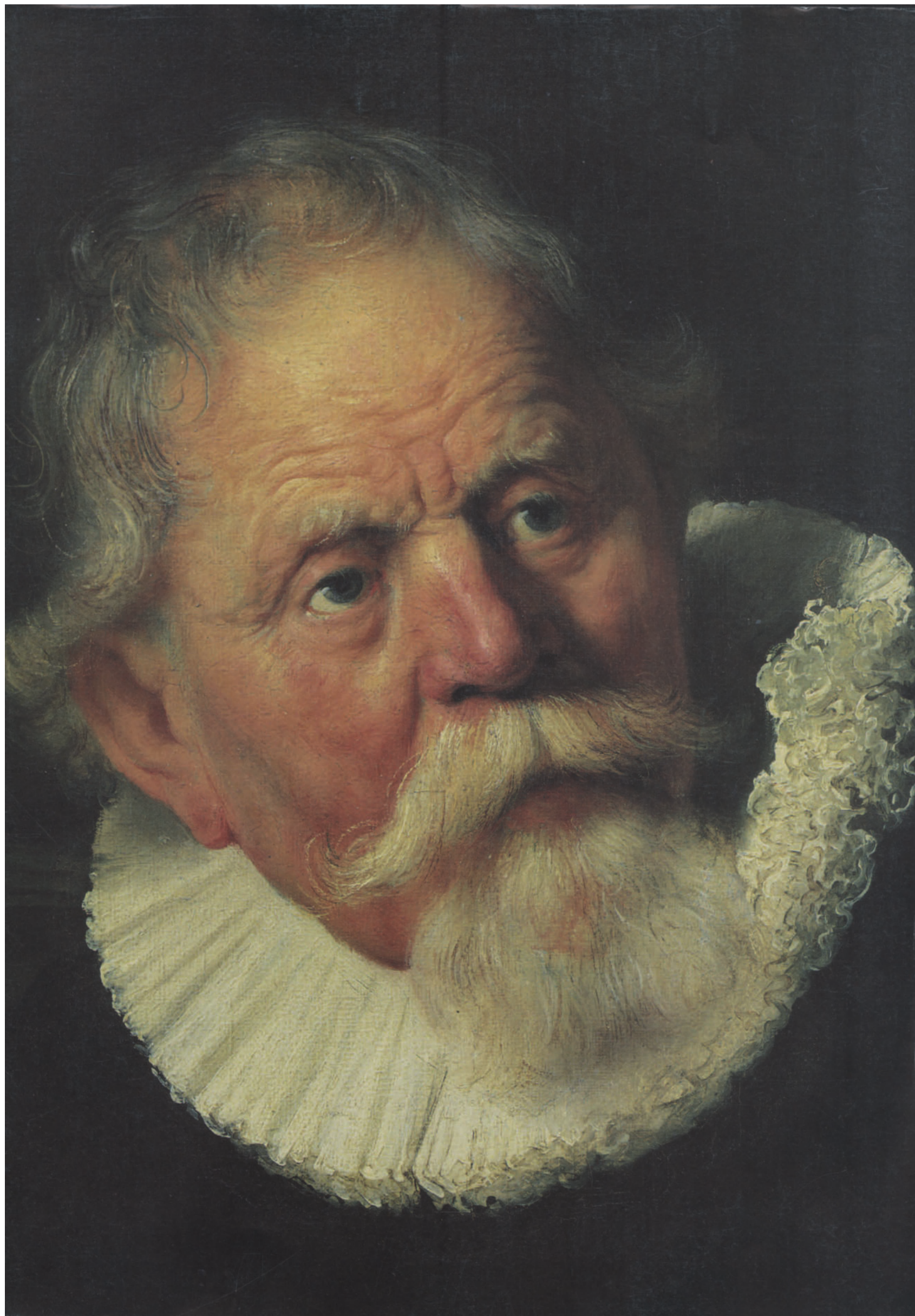
A CORPUS OF  
**REMBRANDT  
PAINTINGS**

Stichting Foundation  
Rembrandt Research Project

A CORPUS OF  
**REMBRANDT**  
**PAINTINGS**  
**II**

1631–1634

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A CORPUS OF  
**REMBRANDT  
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Frontispiece:

Detail of no. A 77, *Portrait of the shipbuilder Jan Rijksen and his wife Griet Jans*,  
London, Buckingham Palace, H.M. Queen Elizabeth II

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# Preface

When working on research as long-term and broadly-based as this project, one becomes keenly aware that any scholarly publication can be no more than an account of the insights gained at one particular point in time. The shifts in our views since Volume I was committed to print at the end of 1979 have been not inconsiderable, and they are one reason why an initial version of the text for Volume II has had to be revised on many points. Only to a small extent are the changes connected with the emergence of paintings unknown to us before; this has led to one addition to the Leiden works discussed in Volume I (no. A 40a). They come about mainly from recent advances in art history and other fields, and certainly also from developments within our own thinking. This second volume bears the mark of these changes.

Among the important publications in the field of art history one must mention especially the volumes in which Prof. Werner Sumowski discusses and reproduces the drawings and paintings from Rembrandt's school that he has been documenting and classifying for many years<sup>1</sup>. It hardly needs saying that this material, that up to now has been either submerged among Rembrandt's works or has been difficult to bring together, is of crucial importance when one is trying to identify paintings by Rembrandt's pupils and to distinguish them from those by Rembrandt himself. Although there are still all kinds of problems of interpretation connected with this area, the appearance of these publications has been an event from which we have already profited in the present volume, and shall continue to profit in the future ones. Mention must also be made of *The Rembrandt documents*, edited by Walter L. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen<sup>2</sup>, which, for all its imperfections, has become an indispensable tool. On the fringes of our discipline, where it has an interface with physics, there has been the introduction by the Metropolitan Museum in New York of the technique of neutron activation autoradiography<sup>3</sup>. Used on the Rembrandt paintings in the Museum done on canvas, this has opened up fresh and unsuspected opportunities for observation. We are grateful to Maryan Wynn Ainsworth, John Brealey, Egbert Haverkamp-Begemann and Pieter Meyers for enabling us to include a selection of their autoradiographs in the present volume. Clearly beyond the borders of art history were the contacts we have had with the handwriting experts Ir. H. Hardy and Mrs R. ter Kuile-Haller of the Forensic Laboratory of the Ministry of Justice at Rijswijk, who at the initiative of Prof. W. Froentjes undertook research to test the applicability of their methods to painted signatures.

Although, at their request, we have not included the results of their investigations case by case, our conversations with them sparked off ideas the yield from which can be found in Chapter V of the Introduction.

The shifts in our own views and lines of enquiry bear mainly on the relations between Rembrandt and the younger artists working in his studio and usually referred to collectively as his 'pupils', even though they were of interest for workshop production really only after they had completed their apprenticeship. Further study of this workshop production, including drawings, will undoubtedly provide further perspectives, and we hope that this and following volumes will be able to offer a number of rewarding hypotheses on this point. Attention to this aspect also brought a somewhat sharper focus to our view of Rembrandt's Leiden work discussed in Volume I, and led us to alter or revise some of our earlier judgments in that volume. It may be useful to our readers – it is in any case so to us – to be reminded that the balance of arguments on which every opinion is based can change as the result of fresh arguments, or of different weight given to those already known.

For details of our method of work, and of the incorporation of our findings in the text of the catalogue entries, we would refer the reader to what was said in the preface to Volume I. There has however been a not unimportant change in the choice of the material to be covered, which was previously based on the Bredius publication of 1935–37. For reasons of time we have decided to restrict the choice to the paintings included by Gerson in his book of 1968. We have of course extended this to cover the paintings rejected by him that we consider to be authentic (nos. A 46, A 62, A 70 and A 91), plus those we look on as being copies after lost originals (nos. C 45, C 46, C 48 and C 76) or that we find to be too important or illuminating to be left out (nos. C 58 and C 71). The selection thus arrived at for this volume lacks three paintings whose whereabouts we have been unable to trace – the *Portrait of a man in red* that was included by Gerson (though not seen by him, either) and was earlier in the Howard Young Galleries in New York (Br. 176, Bauch 364, Gerson 151), a small, oval *Bust of a young woman* (Br. 93) that might have been of interest, and the *Zacharias in the Temple* previously in coll. Georges Lehmann, Paris (Br. 542), which in our opinion at least shows a Rembrandt composition (also reflected in other versions) from the same time as the Moscow *Incredulity of Thomas* (no. A 90), that is to say around 1634. Of Br. 157, published by Gerson in another, apparently better version, a third version turned up. After in-



specting this painting we saw however no sufficient reason to include it in our catalogue.

Of the very many people to whom we are indebted for their contributions in various ways to the appearance of the present volume, most have already been mentioned in the preface to Volume I. Various of them really deserve to be mentioned again, because they have again made it possible for us to examine the paintings in their possession or under their supervision, or have drawn our attention to paintings that we had not yet studied. In particular, we should repeat what was said earlier with respect to the Netherlands Organization for the Advancement of Pure Research (Z.W.O.); but for their generous support it would not have been possible for us to complete the necessary research nor to bring out this book. Among those not yet named, special thanks are due to Mr Jacques Vis for his substantial contribution to the drafting of the text, and to Mrs C. M. Groen for again putting at our disposal her description of various paint samples. Miss J. C. M. Boreel and Mrs D. Dhuygelaere were helpful in giving us valuable assistance. For their cooperation in widely-differing ways we owe many thanks to the following institutions and individuals:

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The immense care that goes into producing a book like this – the full extent of which has become plain to us only with the experience of Volume I behind us – makes us all the more grateful to those who, far more than the authors, have taken the responsibility of this care upon themselves – Mrs L. Peese Binkhorst, who in the editing has again shown total mastery of both the broad lines and the tiniest detail; Mr D. Cook-Radmore, whose translation is as always a monument of patience and painstaking care; and the publisher, who has shown

the greatest possible understanding of our out-of-the-ordinary requirements.

Summer 1983

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- 3 M. W. Ainsworth, J. Brealey, E. Haverkamp-Begemann and P. Meyers, 'Paintings by Van Dyck, Vermeer, and Rembrandt reconsidered through autoradiography' in: *Art and autoradiography: insights into the genesis of paintings by Rembrandt, Van Dyck, and Vermeer*, New York (The Metropolitan Museum of Art) 1982, pp. 9–99.

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# Introduction

# Chapter I

## Stylistic features of the 1630s: the portraits<sup>1</sup>

### *General characteristics and composition*

Following the experiments that in the *tronies* – including the self-portraits – from the previous years in Leiden had led to very divergent results<sup>2</sup>, Rembrandt emerges in 1631 as an accomplished portrait painter with his own approach to the genre. The various standard types of portrait may well have provided him with a point of departure; but the individual nature of his portraits from the 1630s does not seem to be wholly explainable either by his earlier essays at the subject or by the tradition current in Amsterdam such as one sees embodied in the work of a usually routine-bound portraitist such as Nicolaes Elias. (1590/1–1654/56), or of a more varied and interesting artist such as Thomas de Keyser (1596/7–1667). One has rather to assume that, in an entirely personal way, Rembrandt gave form to a new idea of what portraiture was about, an idea that was in the air around 1630. Precisely at that moment Constantijn Huygens – admittedly with all due deference – described the stereotype portrait formula of Van Miereveld and Van Ravesteyn as out-of-date in its simplicity and trueness-to-life. Against this, he looked on the work of Rembrandt and Lievens as something fresh, seeing the former as more the history painter and Lievens as more the potential portraitist: ‘ut huic potissimum parti, tanquam, potius hominis, corporis, inquam, animique mirabili compendio, incumbat’ (that the latter may apply himself best to that part [of art] that as it were provides a wonderful summing-up of the whole man, of both his body and his spirit)<sup>3</sup>. What portrait type or style Huygens had in mind is not entirely clear; one might tend to think of the small full-length portrait that Thomas de Keyser had painted of him in 1627 (London, National Gallery, no. 212), in which he is seated in an interior and is handing a letter to a servant – but Thomas de Keyser is not even mentioned in Huygens’ manuscript. He does dwell on the portrait done of him by Lievens at the latter’s own request (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. no. C 1467, on loan from the Musée de la Chartreuse, Douai since 1962), showing the figure half-length in an informal pose<sup>4</sup> and with a facial expression that Huygens himself called ‘cogitabundus’ (musing)<sup>5</sup>. It may well be that a

strongly individual stamp produced by a relaxed pose and a pronounced facial expression formed part of what Huygens saw as being a new kind of portrait. At all events, such a characteristic (often interpreted as recording a fleeting moment) is *par excellence* a typical feature of the portraits Rembrandt produced as soon as he began working in Amsterdam – i.e. not so much of the busts, which are very close to the traditional type in their composition, as of the full-length and knee-length portraits.

In the very first two portraits dating from 1631, the year Rembrandt moved to Amsterdam to establish himself as a portrait painter, one is struck by how the widely differing characterization of the sitters has led to very different solutions to the problem of composition. In the *Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts* in the Frick Collection (no. A 43) the marked outline of the figure rising against a predominantly light background is combined with the space-creating effect of one hand resting on a chairback that coincides with the boundary between the actual space occupied by the viewer and the pictorial space. The trivializing effect of excessive illusionism is avoided by the chairback being shown very perfunctorily, and by a certain simplification of the forms. The same is true of the Leningrad *Man at a writing-desk* (no. A 44), though the relationships between the light values are different – a murky indication of an interior forms the background for the figure; here the pose of the man, seen from the side and looking up from his writing-desk, has even more emphatically the nature of a fleeting action. The fact that such actions appeared previously in Amsterdam group portraits suggests that they provided the source from which Rembrandt drew ideas for a hitherto unknown dramatizing of some of his single portraits. He never went further, in this respect, than in the 1633 *Portrait of a young man rising from his chair* in the Taft Museum, Cincinnati (no. A 78), which provides an obviously deliberate contrast with its pendant, the portrait of a passively seated woman, now in New York (no. A 79). More subtly individualized poses mark other knee-length portraits such as those of Marten Looten (no. A 52), Joris de Caullery (no. A 53) and of an anonymous young woman in Vienna (no. A 55). Sometimes they are enlivened by a meaningful gesture, like the Vienna *Portrait of a man seated* (no. A 45), or by showing the sitter engaged in an activity indicating his occupation or status, as in the Kassel *Portrait of a man trimming his quill* (no. A 54). Such gestures are of interest in that they form part of the figure’s overall structure, in which a scarcely perceptible shifting of the axes suggests halted motion. In the case of companion-pieces,

<sup>1</sup> A chapter on the history paintings from the 1630s will be included in Volume III.

<sup>2</sup> See Vol. I, pp. 7–9.

<sup>3</sup> J. A. Worp, ‘Constantijn Huygens over de schilders van zijn tijd’, *O.H.* 9 (1891), pp. 106–136, 307–308, esp. 121–122 and 128.

<sup>4</sup> A. van Schendel, ‘Het portret van Constantijn Huygens door Jan Lievens’, *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 11 (1963), pp. 5–10; A. A. E. Vels Heijn, ‘Portret van Constantijn Huygens. Jan Lievens (1607–1674)’, *Openbaar Kunstbezit* 14 (1970), no. 13.

<sup>5</sup> Worp, op. cit. (note 3), p. 130.

Fig. 1. A 54. *Portrait of a man trimming his quill*, 1632 (presumed companion-piece to no. A 55). Kassel, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Kassel



Fig. 2. A 55. *Portrait of a young woman seated*, 1632 (presumed companion-piece to no. A 54). Vienna, Akademie der bildenden Künste



postures and gestures may offer a calculated balance between the two sitters (figs. 1 and 2). One has only to compare the stereotyped knee-length portraits by somewhat earlier artists with those of Rembrandt to realize how much he varied the pose of his models, giving each an individual rhythm and balance. The few full-length portraits show a similar tendency; they often have the head slightly forward and counterbalancing the upper body, which is leaning a little backwards; of the four examples dating from 1634, three – the portraits of Marten Soolmans and his wife (nos. A 100 and A 101) and of Johannes Elison (no. A 98) – show this motif. In the Kassel *Portrait of a man standing* of 1639 (Br. 216), the subject however has his head upright balancing the body leaning to one side.

Rembrandt's use of gestures and postures suggesting action in group portraits conformed with current practice. But while in those by Cornelis van der Voort and Nicolaes Elias. this involved individual actions designed to introduce some variety in the poses of the sitters, Rembrandt's *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* (no. A 51) already shows plainly his intention to subordinate all the various postures to a single action – in this instance an anatomy demonstration on which attention is focussed. The Buckingham

Palace *Portrait of the shipbuilder Jan Rijcksen and his wife* from the following year (no. A 77) stages the handing over and receiving of a letter, once again a motif borrowed from earlier group portraits but now enriched by a new homogeneity of action and reaction as the condensation of a fleeting moment. The two compositions of the *Anatomy lesson* and the *Shipbuilder* follow a similar pattern: the bulk of the figures and their diagonal poses and gestures are instrumental in suggesting the pictorial space and the intersecting silhouettes mark the compact, asymmetrical structure in the picture plane. The lighting that lends the figures relief spreads out to the surrounding interior only as much as is needed to give a summary definition that leaves the background with an almost abstract, tectonic function. A similar relationship between figures and the space surrounding them, with an increased emphasis on the independence of space filled with filtered light, will in 1641 and 1642 result in the *Portrait of the minister Cornelis Claesz. Anslo and his wife* (Br. 409) and the 'Night watch' (Br. 410).

In his busts Rembrandt departed least from the traditional type of composition. Within this compass their strongest feature is the suggestion of a limited space within which the sitter appears, his

corporality tempered by an atmospheric effect; the various pictorial means used to achieve this will be discussed below. Yet from the compositional viewpoint too, in the arrangement of forms within the available picture area and the relationship between plastic form and the background one finds a variety of solutions that often evidently are connected with the appearance and costume of the sitter and of course also have to do with the shape of the picture area.

When Rembrandt was working with a rectangular format (and the decision on this will for a large part have rested with the person commissioning the portrait<sup>6</sup>), the visible part of the body is relatively large – down to about the waist. This can already be seen in the small busts of Jacques de Gheyn III and Maurits Huygens of 1632 (nos. A 56 and A 57), but is evident mainly in the portraits from 1635. In these something is shown of the hands: he had first done this in a number of *tronies* – the *Self-portrait in a cap* of 1633 in Paris (no. A 72) and the *Dresden Bust of a young woman smiling* of 1633 (no. A 76). No authentic example of this has survived intact, but a number of later originals that have been made oval<sup>7</sup> – such as the London *Portrait of Philips Lucasz.*

6 Cf. Chapter IV, 'Patrons and early owners'.

7 Though oval panels were *de rigueur* in the 1630s, especially for portraits (but also for landscapes and still-lives) it must be assumed that some of the panels that are now oval were originally rectangular and were made into ovals only later – probably in the period after c. 1690 when the oval portrait came back into vogue (cf. for instance, the series of oval portraits of the Governors of the Rotterdam Chamber of the United East-India Company, which was started just before 1700 and in which various copies come from rectangular originals; see cat. Rijksmuseum 1976, pp. 706–711, inv. nos. A 4490–4524).

Evidence for initially rectangular panels having later been made oval can be found in:

1. The presence, on the back, of the remains of bevelling with straight ridges. Assuming that the purpose of bevelling was to allow the panel to fit into the shallow rebate of a frame, one may conclude that only panels that are bevelled all round the edge were oval from the outset (see note 9). In cases where a panel has been cradled it is however usually no longer possible to check the presence and nature of the bevelling.
2. The presence of rough sawmarks along the edge of the panel, or of a splintered edge to the ground and paint layer. Only in extreme cases is evidence of this kind present to an extent that allows any conclusion to be drawn from it.
3. The presence in the paint layer, in most instances detectable mainly from the X-rays, of elements in the composition overpainted in such a way that they must have demanded a larger format.

On the grounds of one or more of these items of evidence it can, with a greater or lesser degree of certainty, be assumed that the following panels, now oval, were originally rectangular:

*Bust of a young woman*, 1632, Boston (no. A 50): remains of straight bevelling at the top.

*Bust of a man in oriental dress*, 1633, Munich (no. A 73): remains of bevelling along three sides.

*Bust of a young woman*, [1633], Amsterdam (no. A 75): remains of straight bevelling along the top and bottom.

*Portrait of a 40-year-old man*, 1633, Pasadena (no. A 86) and *Portrait of a 40-year-old woman*, 1634, Louisville (no. A 87): filling-in of presumed bevelling visible at left and right under the cradle only in the latter.

(Br. 202) – belong to the same type, which probably matched the taste of these years<sup>8</sup>. Still in 1641 the portraits of Herman Doomer and his wife, now split between New York and Leningrad (Br. 217 and Br. 357), form late examples of this type. In all the rectangular busts that have survived as originals the head is placed well above the middle of the picture area, and the latter is a good three-and-a-half times as high as the head itself; in view of the paucity of the material available one does however hesitate to use this to deduce rules as to what Rembrandt's habits were.

In the oval portraits one finds (if we limit ourselves to panels that may be assumed to have been oval from the outset<sup>9</sup>) that in the years 1632–1635 Rembrandt placed his busts in the picture area with a fair measure of variation. In most cases, however, the head reaches, with the chin, to a trace below the middle, and is bordered at the top by a generous amount of background. The scale and relation of the head to the picture area may differ quite substantially, as is shown by comparison between the

*Portrait of Philips Lucasz.*, 1635, London (Br. 202): remains of straight bevelling along three sides; hand and cuff masked by later overpainting.  
*Portrait of a woman*, 1635, Cleveland (Br. 350): remains of straight bevelling along four sides, and a hand and cuff masked by later overpainting.

There is no conclusive evidence for or against the oval format being original in the following cases:

*Portrait of the artist*, 1632, Glasgow, The Burrell Coll. (no. A 58): no bevelling or remains thereof; edges apparently sound.

*Portrait of a 62-year-old woman*, 1632, Tel Aviv, private coll. (no. A 63): edges are covered with glued paper and hence cannot be studied.

*Self-portrait*, 1633, Paris (no. A 71): no bevelling or remains thereof.

*Portrait of a young woman*, 1633, formerly Santa Barbara, private coll. (no. A 84): cradled, with no evidence of bevelling.

*Portrait of an 83-year-old woman*, 1634, London (no. A 104): bevelling or remains thereof.

*Portrait of a young man in a hat*, Leningrad (no. C 78): cradled, and no evidence of bevelling.

Conversely, it also happens that oval panels have been made rectangular, though this is less common. The *Bust of a young woman*, [1633], Amsterdam (no. A 75) was, having once been brought down to an oval, filled in to restore it to a rectangle; the same undoubtedly happened with the *Bust of a young woman smiling*, 1633, Dresden (no. A 76) after it had been reduced to an octagon. The panels for the portraits of Dirck Jansz. Pesser and his wife Haesje van Cleyburgh of 1634 (nos. A 102 and A 103), which were in all probability originally oval, were first sawn to make 12-sided panels and then extended to rectangles. The *Portrait of a woman* of 1635 in the UCLA Art Gallery, Los Angeles (Br. 351) was not only radically overpainted, but was also altered into a rectangle by the simple addition of spandrels.

8 Cf. for example S. Slive, *Frans Hals II*, London 1970, figs. 66 (1625), 75 (1628), 81 (1627), 82 (1627) and 136 (1633).

9 To judge from bevelling running all round the edges, the following panels were originally oval:

*Portrait of a 40-year-old man*, 1632, New York (no. A 59).

*Portrait of a young man*, 1632, Sweden, private coll. (no. A 60).

*Portrait of a 39-year-old woman*, 1632, Nivaa (no. A 62).

*Portrait of a man*, Dresden (no. C 77).

*Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq*, 1633, Frankfurt (no. A 82).

This is most probably also the case for the portraits, mentioned in note 7, of Dirck Jansz. Pesser and his wife of 1634 (nos. A 102 and A 103), and perhaps for some of the paintings mentioned there that offer no clear evidence as to their format.



New York *Portrait of a 40-year-old man* (no. A 59) and the *Portrait of a young man* (no. A 60), both from 1632. An exception in every respect is the *Portrait of a 39-year-old woman* of 1632 in Nivaa (no. A 62), in which the sitter is seen at an unusually small scale with the head placed very high in the picture area<sup>10</sup>. Usually, however, Rembrandt exploits the oval shape of his panel to arrive at an arrangement of areas with which the head and ruff offer, with the framing, an interplay of similarly-shaped ovals in varying positions that lends aesthetic point to the fashionable oval shape of the picture.

#### *Tonal value and contrast*

In his portraits from 1631–1633 Rembrandt used a variety of backgrounds. A minority of them show a dark and almost even tone with a minimally lighter accent along a single contour – the *Portrait of a young woman seated* (no. A 55), the *Portrait of a 62-year-old woman* (no. A 63) and the *Portrait of a young man* (no. A 60), all from 1632, and the *Portrait of a woman* (no. A 83), the *Portrait of a young woman* (no. A 84), both from 1633; such a dark background may offer a cursory indication of an interior, as in the *Portrait of a man at a writing-desk* of 1631 (no. A 44). Over against these there is a majority of cases where the background shows a greater or lesser degree of shading from a light to a middle tone, with or without a cast shadow from the figure on what is evidently intended to be seen as a light rear wall. This variety of solutions recalls the widely varying experiments that the artist carried out in the late 1620s in a number of *tronies*, varying from very dark, even backgrounds (nos. A 21 and A 22) to freely-brushed light grey ones (nos. A 14 and A 19). Yet there does seem to be a system at work in the way he exploits the possibilities in the portraits from the 1630s. It cannot be mere chance that all the examples mentioned of relatively smooth, dark backgrounds relate to portraits of figures facing left (i.e. towards the light) – mainly women, therefore, and in two cases presumably unmarried men (nos. A 44 and A 60) – that were not designed with a pendant in mind<sup>11</sup>. If one takes into account the fact that in the case of companion-pieces with lighter and more varied backgrounds it is precisely those in the

women's portraits that tend towards a somewhat darker tone than those in the men's portraits, then the point of using a dark background becomes clear. Given the fact that heads facing the light offer less opportunity for showing contrasty internal detail than those facing to the right and set almost at right angles to the light, the contour of the lit part of the head takes on an important function in defining the plastic shape. In all the cases mentioned, and in the portraits of women facing to the left in general, the contour of the averted half of the face is treated with great care and suggests the structure of the forehead, cheekbone, cheek and chin by means of subtle convexities. All the more markedly does the contour have this important function in a left profile such as that in the exceptional *Portrait of Amalia of Solms* in the Musée Jacquemart-André (no. A 61), where there is hardly any question of plasticity being suggested by further chiaroscuro effects. A dark or relatively dark background serves, in cases like these, to enhance the importance of the contour by the strength of the contrast and to allow the contour to make, by itself, the same contribution to a suggestion of plasticity that is usually made in the right-hand side of the head by a complex combination of half-shadows, shadows and reflexions of light. In the heads facing to the right – invariably those of men – the contour never has more than a supporting function to fulfil: the deepest cast shadow on the collar and the cast shadow along the nose create the necessary depth, and the interplay of light and shadow on the further cheek is enough to provide the convexities making up the shapes of the face.

It is interesting to note that in the years 1631 and 1632 Rembrandt was plainly searching for the most satisfactory tonal value to give to the backgrounds in both large and small male portraits. Insofar as our material warrants conclusions, the background is seen in certainly three of the single portraits, as well as in other paintings, to have been painted, wholly or partially, a second time – in the *Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts* of 1631 (no. A 43), and in the *Portrait of Marten Looten* (no. A 52) and the *Portrait of Jacques de Gheyn III* (no. A 56), both from 1632. In all three of these cases the revision resulted in a background appearing light along the edge of the figure and becoming gradually darker, especially towards the top. The consequence is that it is precisely the dark costume of the sitter, with its relatively sparse internal detail that contrasts strongly with the adjacent light paint of the background. Here too the contrast finds its justification in the important function that the contour has to take over from internal detail in suggesting plasticity. In this context it is significant that in the pendant of the *De Gheyn* – the *Portrait of*

<sup>10</sup> The hand depicted holding a book suggests an analogy with the busts in a rectangle that have been described, but it is an old addition by a different hand.

<sup>11</sup> As we know, it was usual for the man's portrait to be intended to be on the right hand of the woman as portrayed (i.e. hung to the viewer's left), the *dexter* side, and for the woman's to be on the man's left hand (i.e. hung to the right). This affects the degree to which the faces receive the light falling from the left – exceptions apart, the averted side of the man's face is to a large extent in shadow, while the woman's face is for the most part fully lit.

*Maurits Huygens* (no. A 57) – Rembrandt evidently did not feel the need to strengthen the contrast along the contour. Here, internal detail and such elements as the depth-creating accent of the curled-over lobe of the lace collar, take over the function of suggesting depth and plasticity. The existence side-by-side of two such different solutions illustrates the importance Rembrandt attached to the balance between contrast on the one hand and internal detail on the other.

In the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* of 1632 (no. A 51) the background has likewise been – partially, and probably wholly – gone over again in a darker tint. From what has just been said one can guess the reason for this: because of the wealth of contrast within the group, the self-contained nature of the complex contour against the first, lighter background may have resulted in an excess of contrast and to an overemphasis on the plastic value of the group as a whole, at the expense of the spatial relationship between the figures. It is precisely in the matter of illusionism that Rembrandt appears in this painting to have sought to avoid any excess. Cast shadows – on collars, and on the head of the corpse (here set down over light paint applied earlier) and its feet – generally border other, dark areas and thus contribute more to a linking, atmospheric effect than to the plastic independence of separate forms. Where strong contrasts occur – besides the inevitable ones between the white collars and dark clothing – a three-dimensional effect has been aimed at. This is evident in the second (originally the first) figure from the left which stands out with its light areas largely set against dark areas and vice versa, and particularly in the figure of Tulp. He faces the light and needed, in addition to a pronounced contour, the depth-creating device of a greatly foreshortened hand and its cast shadow (added at a late stage) in order to lend his bulk the necessary emphasis.

From 1633 onwards the artist appears to have become more sure from the outset of the emphasis to be given to contrasts along the outline on the one hand and internal detail on the other. Dark backgrounds continue to be used in less or more elaborately detailed portraits of women facing the light, such as that of a young woman of 1639 in Amsterdam (Br. 356). On the whole, however, there is a tendency towards a varied mid-tone, irrespective of whether the figure is placed against a neutral background, a more definitely-indicated wall or the indication of an interior or curtain. The contrasts created along the contour then have their share in the definition of form to the extent this is needed – and no more.

#### *Suggestion of depth and definition of form*

In looking at the backgrounds in Rembrandt's portraits there is a further motif that warrants attention – the cast shadow that in a number of portraits (mostly of men) is thrown onto a wall to the right by the figure lit from the left. This motif was not new; it can be found long before 1630, for instance in Rubens and Frans Hals, and even occasionally in the 16th century. But although Rembrandt from an early stage, and in a variety of ways, showed the backgrounds to his busts as a wall (usually a plastered one)<sup>12</sup> it was not until 1632 that he made frequent use of the cast-shadow motif. In some cases the cast shadow is found to have been painted over part of the background already done in lighter paint; one can see this in the little *Portrait of Maurits Huygens* (no. A 57) and the much larger *Portrait of Joris de Caullery* (no. A 53), both of 1632. It is perhaps going rather far to describe this as an afterthought, especially as the same addition over lighter paint also occurs later on, in the Paris *Self-portrait in a cap* of 1633 (no. A 72) and the Pasadena *Portrait of a 41-year-old man* (no. A 86). Perhaps the first instance of a cast shadow planned from the outset (i.e. with a reserve left for it in the light grey paint of the adjoining background) is – if our observations through the thick layer of varnish are to be relied on – provided by the *Portrait of a 40-year-old man* of 1632 (no. A 59). This was certainly the case with the Los Angeles *Portrait of Dirck Pesser* of 1634 (no. A 102) and – exceptionally in a woman's portrait – the latter's companion-piece no. A 103.

In all these cases the cast shadow is shown as a partly visible and vaguely described shape, more of a warm-toned area in the background with a blurred outline than a recognizable silhouette of the sitter<sup>13</sup>. It is plain that the motif is intended primarily to give the illusion of a concentrated beam of light in a space that extends beyond the picture area, the rear confine of which is the wall a short distance behind the sitter. Though not lacking in logic in connexion with the direction of the incident light, it is evidently a deliberately-employed means of enlivening the background with a range of differing tones: compared with the *Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts* of 1631 (no. A 43) where light areas on both sides of the dark silhouette of the figure merge into a darker zone to the top, or with the Vienna *Portrait of a man*

<sup>12</sup> Cf. nos. A 8, A 14, A 19.

<sup>13</sup> Differently from Frans Hals, where the cast shadow is a quite sharply-outlined area – if not clearly recognizable as a shape – in a dark and contrasting tint. Differently, too, from the *Half-length figure of Rembrandt* in a private collection (Br. 25) which shows a clearly recognizable form, and from the *Portrait of a man* in Boston (no. C 72) where the form and siting are quite different from Rembrandt's habits.

Fig. 3. A 52. *Portrait of Marten Looten*, 1632. Los Angeles, Cal., Los Angeles County Museum of Art



*seated* (no. A 45) which shows a less symmetrical distribution of light and dark tones, the New York *Portrait of a 40-year-old man* (no. A 59) exhibits great refinement in nuances and contrast resulting from the addition of the shadow – a function that can also be served in knee-length works by the broad indication of accessory objects, as in the *Portrait of a man trimming his quill* of 1632 (no. A 54) and the *Portrait of Johannes Wtenbogaert* of 1633 (no. A 80).

A further lighting effect serving to create an impression of depth, which Rembrandt used only a few times and which he seems to have invented himself, is the use of a narrow beam of light that falls

only on the head and shoulders, leaving everything that is located further to the front and downwards lost in shadow. An effect of this kind naturally lends itself better to knee-length portraits than to busts. Possibly the New York *Man in oriental dress* of 1632 (no. A 48) is the first instance of this device being used, with an undeniably impressive result. If so, then the *Portrait of Joris de Caullery* would have to be seen as the transposition of this principle to a commissioned portrait. Remarkably enough one has to wait until 1635 before this motif reappears, this time in bust portraits. This much can, at least, be deduced from such pictures as the *Portrait of Antonis*

Fig. 4. Thomas de Keyser, *Portrait of a man*, Kassel, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Kassel



*Coopal* (Br. 203); it may perhaps also have been seen in a number of busts that were later made oval, such as the *Portrait of Philips Lucasz.* (Br. 202)<sup>14</sup>. Even more than the cast shadow on the background, this differentiation in dark and light has the effect of making the pictorial space seem a fragment of a larger spatial whole, in which not only the presence

but also the specific nature of the light source is decisive for the appearance of the figure and for the atmospheric quality of the space surrounding it.

An important element in this same approach may be recognized by the fact that the amount of attention given to form and to rendering of materials drops off sharply as the eye shifts towards the periphery of the picture, and usually as soon as it leaves the centre of interest – the head and the collar beneath. This applies to both busts and larger compositions. It is least pronounced in portraits of young sitters, whose stylish clothing seems almost more interesting than their faces – the young couple

<sup>14</sup> In this form it also had an influence on artists in Rembrandt's circle. Cf. the *Portrait of an officer*, once coll. E. Bührle, Zurich (Br. 204), which J. W. von Moltke in: *Von Moltke Flinck* (no. 142) rejected as a work by Flinck, and Gerson (Br.-Gerson 165) through a misunderstanding ascribed to Flinck on Von Moltke's authority. Cf. also the Amsterdam *Bust of a man in oriental costume* (Br. 206).

whose pair of portraits is split between the Taft Museum in Cincinnati and the Metropolitan Museum in New York (nos. A 78 and A 79), and Soolmans and his wife (nos. A 100 and A 101). Yet already in that of Nicolaes Ruts of 1631 (no. A 43), where the attention paid to plastic form is still distributed relatively evenly over the whole picture and extends to, for instance, the crisply modelled hands, the principle is apparent in the summarily-done chairback in the extreme foreground. The following year brings substantial simplifications in comparable works (fig. 3). In the *Portrait of Marten Looten* (dated in the January of 1632!) (no. A 52) one finds not only the degree of modelling in the hands considerably lessened, but also the internal detail in the black costume that – far more than in the *Nicolaes Ruts* – is defined predominantly by its contour, which besides serving this purpose also has a certain measure of independence: to the right it runs in two long and carefully-calculated convexities (which only vaguely match the suggestion of the upper arm and of the cloak hanging over the forearm), while to the left a step in the contours hints at the revers of the cloak hanging down behind the shoulder and thus at the three-dimensional character of the body, something that is hardly suggested in any other way. This kind of drastic simplification of form, coupled with the quite individual nature of the contour (almost invariably arrived at through corrections), occurs regularly in the following years. The 1633 *Portrait of Johannes Wtenbogaert* (no. A 80) is a prime example of how the solution arrived at in the *Marten Looten* is developed further – though there is otherwise no indication of a varying intensity of the lighting, only the head and collar are crisply modelled, while the hands are shown comparatively cursorily in a subdued tone (the lower worked up even less than the upper), and the nature and function of the contours are closely similar to those in the *Marten Looten*. A comparison with a knee-length portrait by Rembrandt's slightly older contemporary Thomas de Keyser in Kassel (fig. 4) shows how very personal an approach this is. Though in the De Keyser painting there is also a certain differentiation in the rendering of material and degree of detail – in this case determined entirely by the chiaroscuro effect – one is struck by the extent to which the whole figure is modelled with equal emphasis, the material of the items of dress is rendered and each cast shadow is used to create an effect of depth, and by how passive a role is played by the contour which merely forms the boundary of crisply-defined plastic forms.

In Rembrandt the importance given to the main shape of the subject leads to a less emphatic render-

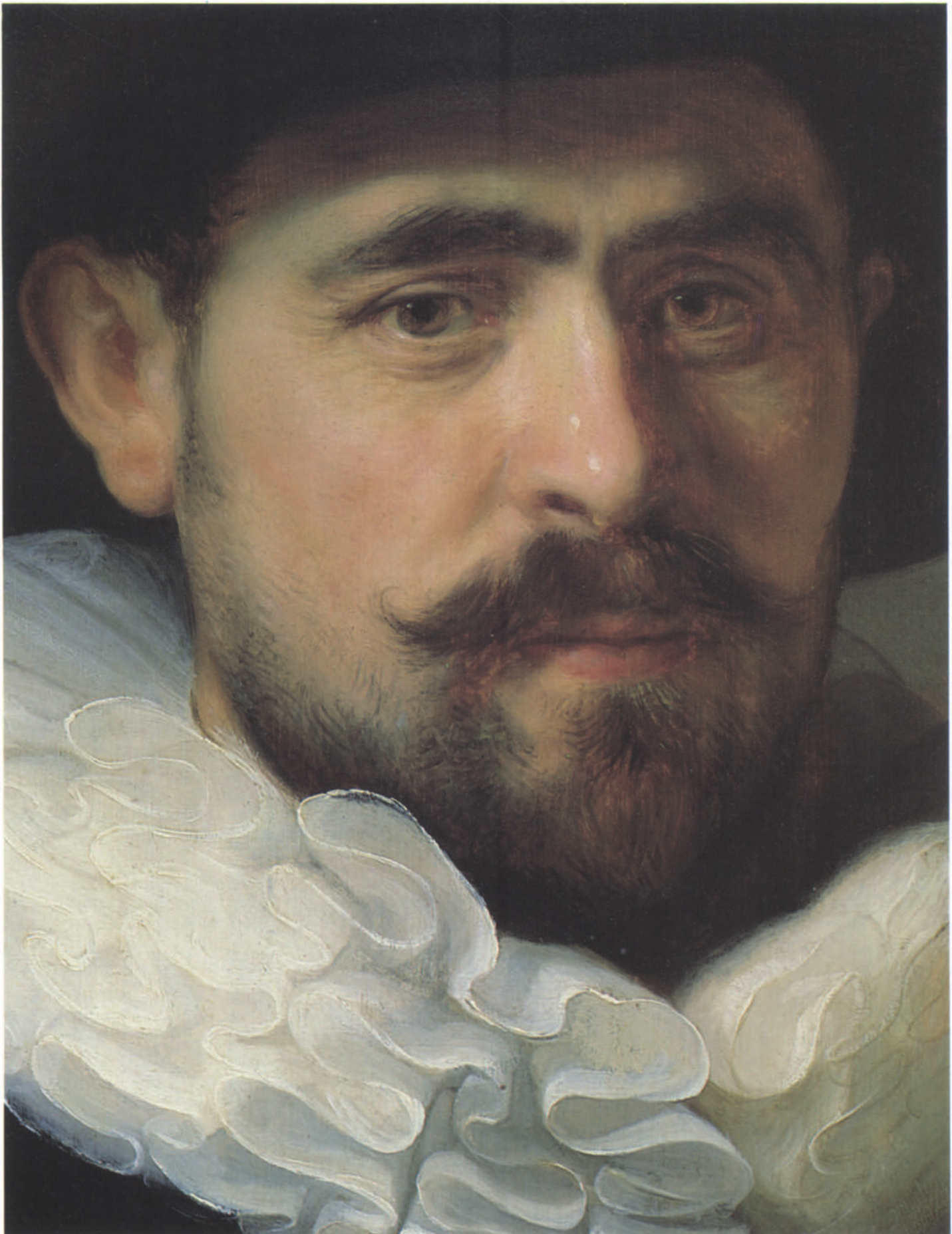
ing of material and detail in the figure – certainly close to the outline, whose idiosyncratic rhythm greater emphasis would interfere with. The same applies to the accessories: indications of architectural shapes, where they are present, are rudimentary in the extreme, and pronounced contrasts in colour and light values are studiously avoided (just as are, remarkably enough, any straight lines); here again, the *Portrait of Johannes Wtenbogaert* (no. A 80) offers a clear example. The same applies not only to still-lives of books but to items of furniture, too; the chair in the *Portrait of a man trimming his quill* of 1632 (fig. 1) seems almost to form part of the figure, and in its contour presents the same rhythm of gentle convexities meeting at an angle. The contour of the backrest of the chair from which the modishly-dressed young man in the Cincinnati portrait of 1633 (no. A 78) is seen rising chooses to avoid a simple intersection with the contour of the figure, and instead bends aside just in time, as if to match the dynamic of the latter. Even in this portrait, with its rather elaborate depiction of costume, the contrasts are muted and form is dealt with summarily towards the edges of the picture.

On this last point, a competing tendency appears by the end of the 1630s. While the Kassel *Portrait of a man standing* of 1639 (Br. 216) still exhibits this characteristic to a large extent, the Amsterdam *Portrait of a young woman* from the same year (Br. 356) shows a far more fully-developed illusionism, continuing in a limited but rich colour-scheme into the fan and the silver armrest at the bottom edge. A similar contrast can still be seen in 1641, between on the one hand the portraits of Herman Doomer (Br. 217) and Baertje Martens (Br. 357) and on the other those of Nicolaes Bambeeck in Brussels (Br. 218) and Agatha Bas in Buckingham Palace (Br. 360). It is clear that around 1640 the availability of a choice, appearing in Dutch painting in general at about that time, between a view of simplified form governed by atmosphere and depth and a greater clarity of form and colour offered Rembrandt, too, novel opportunities.

It will be obvious from the foregoing that the various pictorial devices used by Rembrandt in his portraits of the 1630s serve the purpose of focussing the viewer's main attention on the face. The eye is also drawn to the collar, which in a way forms a basis for the head and determines its position in space, especially where in the men's portraits facing towards the right a pleated collar tilts up slightly and intersects the lit side of the face (fig. 5). Counterpointing the lit mass of the ruff with its billowy folds, there is against the averted side of the face a deep hollow in the collar, accentuated by a dark



Fig. 5. A 86. *Portrait of a 41-year-old man*, 1633 (detail 1 : 1). Pasadena, Norton Simon Museum of Art



cast shadow. The further cheek stands out against this – not sharply but usually clearly, thanks to light reflected from the illuminated surface of the collar. This reflexion of light – a zone done in a cool, opaque grey placed in the usually almost translucent brown of the shadow side of the face – is not a device invented by Rembrandt, but he does use it as an extremely effective way of suggesting roundness and depth, not only in the averted side of faces turned to the right, but also and especially in the nearer side of heads facing left; the latter are usually those of women, whose large flat ruffs or lace collars are ideal sources of reflected light.

The reflexion of light is only one component in the play of light and shade – basically quite simple, yet subtle and infinitely varying in its effect – that suggests the plasticity of the head. A characteristic feature of this is that gradual transitions are more important than contrasts, and that the continuity of form takes precedence over its interruption by linear elements. Such discontinuities are formed only by the nostrils and, to a lesser extent, the mouth-line, though the latter always merges into the shadow at the corner of the mouth and thus takes on a modelling function. The borders of the upper eyelid, though they consist of no more than small strokes of brown paint, are – certainly in the lit side of the face – divested of their linear character to such an extent that the upper border suggests the shadow of a fold in the skin while the lower becomes the shadow of the eyelid on the eyeball. This is brought about by scarcely perceptible widenings and narrowings of the paintstroke, and especially the way this paintstroke is integrated into an adjacent area of shadow and into the surrounding brushwork, thus achieving unity in the plastic effect. A similar concern may explain why the transitions from lit to shadow areas are, particularly on the forehead, done with extreme attentiveness using transitional tints – mainly a cool grey that merges into a warmer brown – so that often a rich pattern of convexities is created.

The muting of contrasts within the face meets a need for pictorial cohesion. It is taken so far that the boundary between the iris and the white of the eye is seldom sharp, and often lacks contrast, so that any great measure of independence of details in the eye area is avoided<sup>15</sup>. Similarly, the eyelashes are indicated only exceptionally when, through being light in colour and contrasting with the shadow side of the face, they can help to create an effect of depth –

as they do in the heads of the shipbuilder (no. A 77) and of the minister Johannes Elison (no. A 98). The artist does take care, though, to show the play of light in the eye and on the moisture on its surface – a dot of light in the iris (the latter mostly done in translucent paint) gives a reflexion of the light-source, and opposite this he places a dab of lighter, opaque paint that gives a vivid suggestion of a local lightening of the iris; small white dots along the flesh colour mark the lower edge of the eye, hinting at the moisture at this point. At no other place in the head is the rendering of substance so pronounced, albeit using a minimum of pictorial means. In comparison the skin areas are seen primarily in terms of chiaroscuro, ranging from the heavy and thickly-painted cast shadow along the nose to the similarly thickly-painted highest lights on the forehead, below the lit eye and on the ridge and tip of the nose. The nature of the skin – smooth, weathered or wrinkled – is expressed by the colour used, which in the light can vary from very white to reddish, by a subtle alternation of cool and warm tints, and, in the case of shallower or deeper wrinkles, by merging dark accents or by pronounced brushwork. The brushstroke tends to have a rhythm of its own and the paint a character of its own, far removed from any meticulous illusionism. Heads like those of the shipbuilder (no. A 77) and of an 83-year-old woman of 1634 (no. A 104) demonstrate how much the individual form of the face portrayed is integrated into the dynamic of the brushwork. In the centre of the face the brushstroke pattern is very dense, and adapts itself a great deal to the shape being depicted. At the periphery it takes on far greater autonomy. Areas of hair tend to be indicated broadly, mostly in a variety of browns and greys, with here and there a depth-creating accent (especially in the moustaches). Ears, too, are usually treated in an extremely summary way.

The subduing of over-strong contrasts and of the individuality of the various parts of the head is in line with the tendency, already mentioned, to reduce the modelling. This is seen most clearly in the knee-length portraits, where tactility diminishes from the head to the hands and from one hand to the other, as if the intensity of the lighting is continuously falling off towards the edge of the composition. In the history paintings of the 1630s, too, this is quite emphatically the case – there, a lit centre in the foreground and a dark and vague periphery are the rule. In the portraits a similar principle is applied to the definition of form. The result matches the perceptual experience that the area on which the eye can focus in a single glance is limited in extent, and that observation in the ad-

<sup>15</sup> What happens if this subtle reserve is not taken into account is demonstrated by, for instance, the *Portrait of a 47-year-old man* in Paris (no. C 75), where the crisp outlining of form in various passages – and especially in the eyes – argues against Rembrandt's authorship.



joining field of view is less specific. It may moreover produce three-dimensional differentiation, as in the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* where simplification of form and decreasing emphasis on modelling are related to the distance at which the subjects are seen. Similar gradations in the *Portrait of the ship-builder Jan Rijcksen and his wife*, where the heads are at roughly the same distance from the viewer, make it evident however that the principle does not stem primarily from the need to suggest depth, but rather from a concern to concentrate optical intensity in an area intended to be a focus of attention.

The concentration of bright light, detail and plastic definition in a central focus of interest seems to have been a basic principle in Rembrandt's approach in the 1630s. This principle is perhaps seen most clearly in the group portraits but is also clearly present in the single portraits. That a great deal of thought was given to applying this principle may be deduced from the numerous corrections of tonal value and contours that he made in his portraits especially in the early 1630s. We sense this principle not only in the portraits – the approach is also basic to the history paintings: Rembrandt's portraits and his history paintings both evidently stem from the same imagination. In both of them the guiding principle involves the same hierarchy of optical intensity, decreasing towards the periphery. Though this vision may have something to do with straightforward perception, as a stylistic principle it lends a fresh pictorial intensity to the appearance of the human figure in a space determined by light, shade and an almost palpable atmosphere.

J. B., E.v.d.W.

## Chapter II

### The canvas support\*

#### Introduction

After working almost exclusively on panel during his years in Leiden, Rembrandt frequently made use of canvases in Amsterdam<sup>1</sup>. Two reasons prompted us to undertake an investigation of these fabric supports. In the first place, earlier investigations had raised the hope that the thread density (as we shall call the number of threads per unit of length in the two directions) might provide a rough but valuable criterion when dating paintings<sup>2</sup>. Secondly, there was the question of why one or more sides of the canvas frequently show no signs of cusping or scalloping, i.e. deformations in the fabric due to stretching. Could it be concluded at once, from

an absence of cusping, that a painting like this had been reduced by later hands on the side or sides in question?

Research in the area of fabric supports has been less extensive than the study of panels<sup>3</sup>. There have, of course, long been general notions as to the differences in the kinds of canvas used by various schools<sup>4</sup>. Methods of stretching have occasionally been the subject of study<sup>5</sup>, but those used in 17th-century Holland have been looked at hardly at all<sup>6</sup>, and there have been only a few, limited attempts at a systematic examination of the types of canvas occurring within the oeuvre of a single artist<sup>7</sup>. In questions connected with the enlargement of fabric supports by later hands, restorers usually do give attention to the nature of the seams and the difference in canvas structure, but they have only occasionally reported on these in publications<sup>8</sup>. In the case of 17th-century Dutch canvases in general, Meier-Siem has done statistical study on a somewhat broader scale, based on the paintings in one museum<sup>9</sup>; he concentrated on measurement and comparison of thread densities. Following his

<sup>1</sup> Canvas as a support for paintings in oil was introduced in Italy by the end of the 15th century. Its use as a support for paintings with other binding mediums however dates much further back; stretched over wooden panels, it was used already in ancient Egypt during the New Empire and later (A. Lucas, *Ancient Egyptian materials and industries*, London 1962, revised and enlarged by J. R. Harris, pp. 353 and 355). Pliny mentions its use in the Roman period (*Nat. Hist.* XXXV, 51). Banners and other textile objects for temporary use could be decorated with paint. From the 15th century, paintings in a glue medium on relatively fine fabric have survived by or in the style of such painters as Rogier van der Weyden, Hugo van der Goes, Mantegna, Dürer, Bruegel, Hans Bol, Jacob Cornelisz. van Oostzaan and many others (see: E. D. Bosshard, 'Tüchleinmalerei – eine billige Ersatztechnik?', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 45 (1982), pp. 31–42). Painting in oil on canvas most probably developed in Venice. Titian was the first to use mainly canvas supports (H. Miedema and B. Meijer, 'The introduction of coloured ground . . .', *Storia dell'arte* 35 (1979), pp. 79–98, give statistics showing how canvas superseded wood as the usual support in Venice). Vasari mentions as advantages of canvas that it is 'of little weight and, when rolled up, easy to transport' (quoted from *Vasari on technique*, G. B. Brown ed. 1907, Dover publication, New York 1960, p. 236). See also: C. Villers, 'Artists canvases. A history', *ICOM committee for conservation, 6th triennial meeting*, Ottawa 1981/2/1, pp. 1–12.

Samuel van Hoogstraten, in his discussion of the advantages of canvas, points out that canvas is 'bequaemst voor groote stukken en wel geprimuurt zijnde lichtst te vervoeren' (suited most for large paintings and, when well primed, easiest to transport) (S. van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderkonst*, Rotterdam 1678, p. 339).

In the Netherlands the use of panels was not superseded by that of canvas to the same extent as in Italy (Miedema and Meijer, op. cit., p. 82). Rembrandt used panels throughout his career, even for relatively large paintings. During his late years canvas is however more frequently used.

In the Passion series for Prince Frederik Hendrik, a cedar panel was used for the first painting and canvas for the others. Little is known of what influence patrons had on the choice of the support, though one may assume they did sometime influence that decision, or even made it. An important reason for Rembrandt's choosing canvas must have been its suitability for large formats. The production of large-size portraits and history pieces, starting in the early Amsterdam years, thus explains the frequency with which Rembrandt used canvases from 1631 onwards.

<sup>2</sup> See Volume I, p. XII and cat. exh. *Röntgenonderzoek van de oude schilderijen in het Centraal Museum te Utrecht* (by M. E. Houtzager, M. Meier-Siem, H. Stark, H. J. de Smedt), Utrecht 1967, pp. 61–63.

\* In preparing this chapter I received help and inspiration from many people, and most of all from the students and temporary assistants who worked in my department at the Central Research Laboratory for Objects of Art and Science in Amsterdam. They helped with the tedious thread-counting and measuring of cusping, etc. Their enthusiasm for this project was an important stimulus to me. I am greatly indebted to Greet van Duyn, Brigitte Blauwhoff, Michiel Franken and Peter Dam, and to Loutje den Tex and Koos Levy-van Halm, who carried out most of the research into written sources and archival material. I owe much to discussions with Mr C. A. Burgers of the Rijksmuseum (Amsterdam), Frans Dijkhuizen of the University of Groningen, Dr M. Meier-Siem (Hamburg), Emil Bosshard of the Schweizerisches Institut für Kunstwissenschaft (Zürich), Karin van Nes of the Central Research Laboratory, Jan Diepraam (Amsterdam), Mrs M. G. A. Schipper-van Lottum (Amsterdam) and Truusje Goedings (Amsterdam). In the very beginning the textile experts Dr J. E. Leene and Mrs R. Bolland did the thread-counts of a great number of 17th-century canvas weaves. They are thanked together with all others who kindly supplied information. Dr Leene and Mr Bosshard were kind enough to read through the manuscript and offer useful criticism.

<sup>3</sup> See for instance: Jacqueline Marette, *Connaissance des Primitifs par l'étude du bois*, Paris 1961; J. Bauch and D. Eckstein, 'Dendrochronological dating of oak panels of Dutch seventeenth-century paintings', *Studies in conservation* 15 (1970), pp. 45–50; J. Bauch, D. Eckstein and M. Meier-Siem, 'Dating the wood of panels by a dendrochronological analysis of the tree-rings', *N.K.J.* 23 (1972), pp. 485–496; J. Bauch, D. Eckstein, G. Brauner, 'Dendrochronologische Untersuchungen an Eichenholztäfelchen von Rubens-Gemälden', *Jahrbuch der Berliner Museen* 20 (1978), pp. 209–221; J. Bruyn, 'Een onderzoek naar 17de-eeuwse schilderijformaten, voornamelijk in Noord-Nederland', *O.H.* 93 (1979), pp. 96–115.

<sup>4</sup> See for instance Th. v. Frimmel, *Handbuch der Gemäldeskunde*, Leipzig 1904, pp. 14–18; [Chr. Wolters], 'Fabric paint supports', *Museum* 8 (1960), pp. 135 ff.; J. Rudel, 'Le problème du support dans l'histoire de la peinture', *L'information d'histoire de l'art* 7 (1962), pp. 158–164; K. Nicolaus, *DuMonts Handbuch der Gemäldeskunde, Material, Technik, Pflege*, Köln 1979, pp. 35–38.

<sup>5</sup> Thomas Brachert, 'Historische Keilrahmensysteme', *Maltechnik/Restauro* 79 (1973), pp. 34–38, with references to publications on the subject of historical stretcher systems by W. Brandt, R. Buck, R. E. Straub, W. Slesinsky, S. Summrecker, K. Wehlte and W. T. Chase and J. M. Hutt.

<sup>6</sup> K. Wehlte, 'Altholländische Spannmethoden für Gewebe', *Maltechnik* 63/64 (1957–58), pp. 38–42; K. Nicolaus, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 39–40, fig. 45.

<sup>7</sup> J. Plesters and L. Lazzarini, 'Preliminary observations on the technique and materials of Tintoretto', *Conservation of paintings and the graphic arts. Preprints of Contributions to The Lisbon Congress 1972*, pp. 153–180, esp. 154–155; H. von Sonnenburg, 'Zur Maltechnik Murillos 1. Teil', *Maltechnik/Restauro* 86 (1980), pp. 159–179, esp. p. 176 note 5.

<sup>8</sup> See for instance L. Kuiper, 'Restauratie-verslag van Hendrick ter Brugghen's Aanbidding der Koningen', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 19 (1971), pp. 117–135, esp. 117 and fig. 3; K. Nicolaus, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 41–42, figs. 46–48.

<sup>9</sup> See note 2.

Fig. 1. Detail (1:1) X-ray of *Belshazzar's feast* (London, National Gallery) indicating the back of the original canvas as partly covered with a radioabsorbent paint layer. Warp vertical. (Positive print)

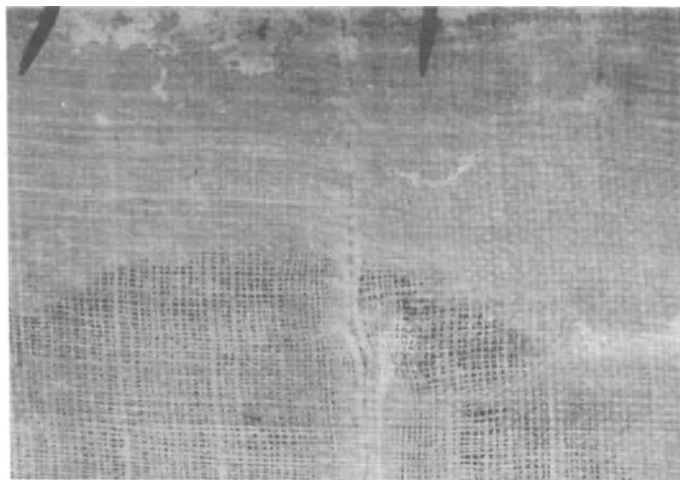
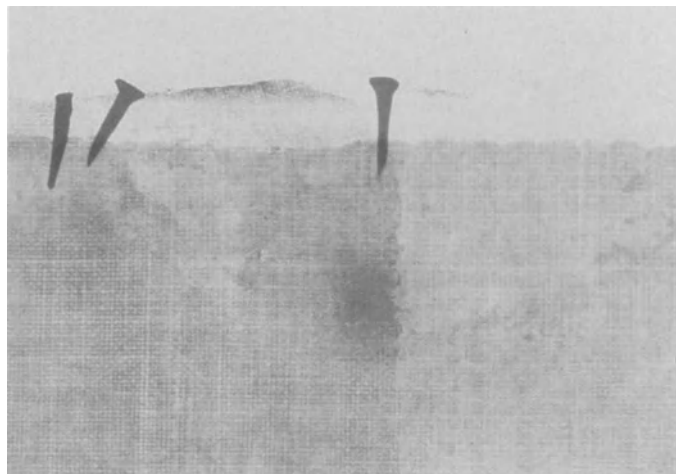


Fig. 2. Detail (1:1) X-ray of *Flora* (London, National Gallery) showing remnants of the imprint of the original canvas and that of the finer transfer canvas. (Positive print)



example, similar measurements were made on the Rembrandts on canvas in the Mauritshuis<sup>10</sup>.

In a few other instances the study of paintings by Rembrandt has included attention to the canvas. On the basis of the theory that the *Syndics of the Cloth Hall* (Br. 415) was painted on a piece cut from the canvas of the *Claudius Civilis* (Br. 482) there was a study made of the fabric of the canvases in question<sup>11</sup>. In another case, that of the Berlin *Samson threatening his father-in-law* (Br. 499), the study of cusping played a part in the discussion of the original format of this painting<sup>12</sup>. The matter of the width of the fabric as it came from the loom – or ‘strip-width’ – has likewise been looked at a few times in connexion with Rembrandt’s paintings<sup>13</sup>. Although the significance of the painter’s canvas as a source of information has thus not been ignored, one can in general say that the opportunities for incorporating this kind of information in art-history research have scarcely been explored.

The main reason why the fabric support has so far attracted relatively little attention is that it has hardly been accessible to study. With by far the majority of old paintings the canvas is covered at the

back by a layer of lining canvas<sup>14</sup>, while the edges have usually been trimmed off during previous restorations<sup>15</sup>. It is thus exceptional that observations can be made on the canvas itself; one is largely reliant on radiographs, and these usually cover only part of the painting. There are hardly any really large collections of X-ray photographs made with a scholarly purpose in mind<sup>16</sup>. Existing collections of X-rays relate as a rule to the collections of a particular museum, where the radiographs have been kept on file after use in answering incidental questions, usually to do with the paint layer. The Rembrandt Research Project has at its disposal X-rays of 217 paintings on canvas that Bredius attributed to Rembrandt. In 113 instances these take in the whole surface of the painting, while the remainder cover only part of it. The scope of this collection warrants an attempt to answer the questions that have been touched on above; in doing so, other aspects will be looked at that can provide a picture of the practices followed in Rembrandt’s workshop where canvases are concerned. The main period considered here is 1631–1642.

10 A. B. de Vries, M. Tóth-Ubbens, W. Froentjes, *Rembrandt in the Mauritshuis*, Alphen a.d. Rijn 1978, pp. 206, 214 and 216.

11 A. van Schendel, ‘Notes on the support of Rembrandt’s *Claudius Civilis*’, *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift* 25 (1956), pp. 38–42.

12 *Katalog der ausgestellten Gemälde des 13.–18. Jahrhunderts*, Berlin-Dahlem 1975, p. 338, no. 802. The technical examination of the X-rays in connexion with the original size of the painting was focussed on the presence and depth of the cusping (personal communication of Mr Hans Boehm).

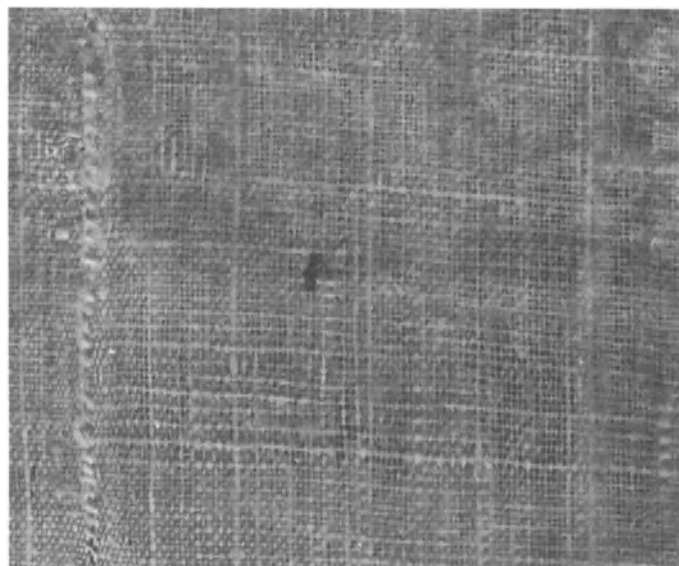
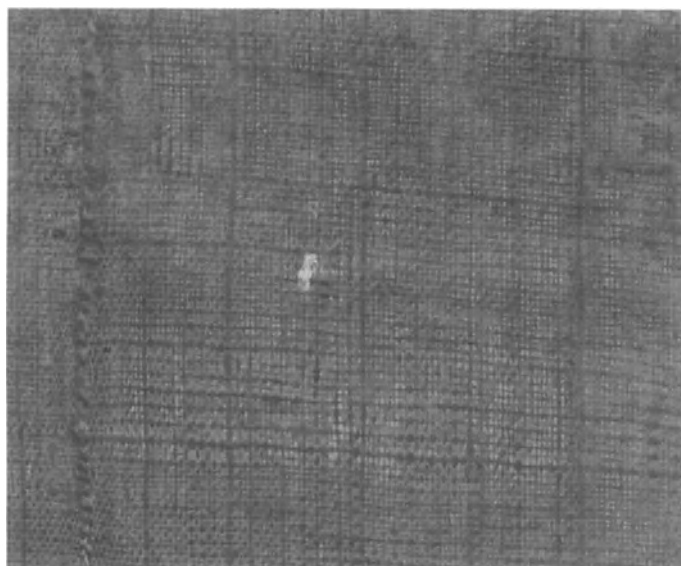
13 A. B. de Vries, M. Tóth-Ubbens and W. Froentjes, op. cit. (note 10), p. 83, express astonishment at the unusually large width of the strip of canvas on which the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* was painted. Van Schendel, op. cit. (note 11), pp. 40–41 states that the width of canvas used for the *Claudius Civilis* must have measured just over 200 cm, the equivalent of 3 cells.

14 For a history of lining see for instance Westby Percival-Prescott, *The lining cycle. Fundamental causes of deterioration in painting on canvas: materials and methods of impregnation and lining from the 17th century to the present day*, National Maritime Museum, Greenwich 1974; R. H. Marijnissen, *Dégradation, conservation et restauration de l'oeuvre d'art*, Bruxelles 1967, pp. 21–65. V. Schaible, ‘Der Weg der Doubliertechniken. Versuch einer Zwischenbilanz’, *Maltechnik/Restauro* 89 (1983), pp. 250–256.

15 Edges of canvas that are pulled around stretcher-bars tend to weaken and eventually tear along the edge of the stretcher. Usually the ground and paint have flaked off at these places. As the removal of rusted nails was time-consuming and damage to the canvas could hardly be avoided, restorers used to cut the canvas along outer edges of the strainer or stretcher and then line it, using the edges of the slightly larger lining canvas to restretch the painting.

16 X-Rays of 109 pictures attributed to Rembrandt and 76 attributed to pupils were assembled in the late 1920s by Alan Burroughs at the Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Mass. (see A. Burroughs in: *Burl. Mag.* 59, 1931, p. 3). In more recent years Dr M. Meier-Siem in Hamburg collected numerous X-rays of paintings in various museums. Jean Rudel, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 158–164, esp. 160 note 1, mentions the existence of a collection of canvas samples started by Jacqueline Marette in the Louvre.

Figs. 3-4. Detail (1:1) X-ray of *Still-life with dead peacocks* (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum) demonstrating the better legibility of the weave in the positive print (fig. 4)



#### *Radiographs as a means of studying the canvas*

As a rule the weave of the canvas is readily observable in radiographs, as are any cusping and seams present. It is however important to keep in mind that the canvas itself hardly shows up at all in an X-ray – it is the imprint of the canvas in the radioabsorbent layer of ground that provides an image of the canvas structure. Normally speaking, the lining canvas is consequently not visible in the X-ray<sup>17</sup>. This can be demonstrated most clearly in the *Claudius Civilis*, which like other works done for the Amsterdam city hall was originally on a twill canvas. This painting has undergone a complete transfer, and now has a canvas with a linen weave as its support. On the radiograph, however, one still sees clearly the weave of the twill canvas that has been removed, and there is no trace of the new support<sup>18</sup>. One can in fact take it as a rule that the canvas structure seen in an X-ray is that of the original canvas. Various circumstances can however result in exceptions to this rule, so that misleading conclusions may confuse the outcome of studies of the canvas. Sometimes the back of paintings has at some time in the past been covered, as a conservation measure, with paint that proves to be radioabsorbent. When this has been done on the back of the original canvas, as in the case of the London *Belshazzar's feast* (Br. 497), the results of thread counting are unaffected, though there is a drastic

change in the appearance of the fabric<sup>19</sup> (fig. 1). But when this layer of paint has been applied after the painting has been lined, as with the Kassel Rembrandts<sup>20</sup>, then the structure of the lining canvas may 'swamp' that of the original canvas in the radiographic image. The results of thread counting will then give misleading information. Only if a radiograph of the whole painting is available can such a result be avoided in cases like this; for when this paint-layer is applied the areas underneath the stretcher remain bare (cf. no. A 54 fig. 2), and a threadcount can be carried out in those areas (fig. 12). A further danger lies in the possibility that when an original canvas was being removed, the weave imprint of this original canvas was sanded away during the transfer operation. This seems to be the case with the London *Flora* (Br. 103), where only at the edges are there places where this has evidently not happened; there, the imprint of the original canvas in the radioabsorbent ground can still be seen, while elsewhere there is a fine and very regular

19 De Mayerne, in his famous manuscript preserved in the British Museum, gives several recipes for treating the back of a canvas, either with pure thickened oil (p. 5 verso; E. Berger, *Quellen für Maltechnik während der Renaissance und deren Folgezeit*, Munich 1901, reprint 1973, p. 104) or a size body-colour (p. 141, edn. Berger p. 312). Treatment with a radioabsorbent layer is dealt with on p. 141 (edn. Berger p. 314), where oil prepared with lytharge or minium is given preference. Anthony van Dyck provided De Mayerne with a recipe for treating a flaking oil painting, or prevent flaking, by applying a layer of oil with finely ground umber to the back of the canvas (p. 153 verso, edn. Berger p. 338). The structure of the fabric was – as a rule – treated with glue size, rubbed into the canvas to close and flatten the surface (cf. note 37), while the canvas structure at the back remained relatively open. This explains the difference between the radiographic images of the weave imprints at back and front of the canvas (cf. see also fig. 11 where at the righthand edge a drop of paint at the back of the canvas can be seen).

20 In the case of the *Portrait of a man trimming his quill* (no. A 54), the *Portrait of a man* (no. A 81) and the *Portrait of Nicolaes Bruyninck* (Br. 268) this crudely-applied layer is still visible in the X-rays. In recent X-rays of *Jacob blessing the sons of Joseph* (Br. 525) such a layer no longer impairs the radiographic image.

17 With edges where the vague radiographic image of the lining canvas is not 'swamped' by the radioabsorbency of the painting itself, the weave of the lining canvas can often be made out.

18 Cf. figures 1 and 2 in A. van Schendel's article mentioned in note 11.

structure (fig. 2) that is evidently due to a radio-absorbent adhesive used for sticking the new canvas to the paint layer. From descriptions of the usual methods for transferring canvases it is however clear that abrading the layer of ground was not the rule<sup>21</sup>. The occurrence of the exceptions just mentioned to the rule that only the original weave is seen in the radiograph makes one cautious in using thread-counts of old paintings done from the X-rays; but our experience is that these are indeed exceptional cases, and in general the radiograph is a reliable source for studying the fabric. For greater legibility, details from X-rays to show the canvas weave will be reproduced here as positive prints<sup>22</sup> (cf. figs. 3 and 4).

Using only radiographs when studying canvases naturally entails a number of limitations. It is not possible to trace all the properties of the yarns in the weave; it is impossible to say, for instance, whether flax, hemp or some other fibre material was employed<sup>23</sup>, nor can one tell anything about aspects such as the direction or angle of twist in the spun thread.

*Historic sources on the nature and origin of canvas used by painters*

Artist's canvas, as such, did not exist in the 17th century, in the sense that weavers or those commissioning it were not producing fabric especially for painters. That used by artists was produced with other functions in mind. Dutch sources mention ticking, which was woven as a covering for mattresses and quilts, sailcloth produced in the first place for shipyards and linen cloth intended for

clothing, bedding and the like<sup>24</sup>. An English source speaks of sackcloth or sackencloth, apparently intended for packing goods<sup>25</sup>. Such canvas was not manufactured in urban centres with strict quality control, as was the case with the finer kinds of cloth<sup>26</sup>, but came from rural areas like Twente, the Achterhoek in eastern Gelderland, the countryside of North Holland, and Brabant<sup>27</sup>. It was however also imported on a large scale from, for instance, Northwest France, Silesia and Westphalia<sup>28</sup>. We know from 18th-century sources that in that period there were cloth factors, merchants who supplied the weavers with orders and with the material they needed<sup>29</sup>; probably this system already existed in the 17th century as well.

The cloth was woven in various widths (see also below). We know again from 18th-century sources a great deal more than we do about the 17th century, but the widths of canvas encountered in the course of this investigation tend to match the standard widths mentioned there, so that we can suppose that these strip-widths had already been

21 V. Schaible, 'Die Gemäldeübertragung. Studien zur Geschichte einer "klassischen Restaurierungsmethode"', *Maltechnik/Restauro* 89 (1983), pp. 96–129.

22 The common use made of X-ray negatives can be explained by the fact that areas where white lead has been applied show up light in the radiograph, which makes for easy legibility. The imprint of the canvas fabric in the radioabsorbent ground, however, shows up dark in an X-ray negative. In a positive print the threads show light, which facilitates the reading of the weave. The measurements included in this chapter were however for various reasons carried out mainly on negatives. Theoretically the radiographic image of the canvas has a slightly larger scale than the actual canvas, as the beam of X-rays is conical and the X-ray film and the ground layer with the canvas imprint are c. 1 mm apart. This distortion is however too small to affect the measurements significantly.

23 According to J. Plesters and L. Lazzarini, op. cit. (note 7), p. 154, 'the distinction between flax and hemp fibres, especially when they are aged and somewhat degraded, is apparently not easy to make' (see also *ibidem*, note 12). It seems that sailcloth was made of hemp fibres; cf. S. Lootsma, *Historische studien over de Zaanstreek*, Koog aan de Zaan 1950, p. 108, where a hemp-mill ('hennip clopper moolen') is mentioned in connexion with the sail-cloth weavers' trade. Flax was apparently normally used for the finer linens, but the quality of the flax, even the year in which it was harvested and the soil it grew on could determine whether a certain batch of flax was to be used for coarser canvas such as sackcloth (cf. J. A. Boot, 'Het linnenbedrijf in Twente omstreeks 1700', *Textielhistorische Bijdragen* 7, 1966, pp. 21–64, esp. 22).

24 S. van Hoogstraten, op. cit. (note 1): 'lijnwaat, gaas of tijk, is bequaemst voor groote stukken . . . ' (linen cloth, gauze or ticking is most suitable for large size pieces). If by gauze an open-structured fabric is meant, this advice is surprising. So far, no Dutch canvas support with an open-structured, gauzelike weave has been met with; possibly Italian canvas types with a relatively open structure are referred to here (cf. Rudel, op. cit. note 4). Cf. also Simon Eikelenberg's manuscript notes on painting technique written about 1700 (Alkmaar, Municipal Archive), p. 404: 'Tot schilderen kiest men gemeenlijk zeyldoek of lijnwaet, dat digt en gelijkdradig is en weynig noppen heeft.' (For painting one usually selects sailcloth or linencloth, which is tightly woven and of equal yarn quality in warp and weft direction and which has few knots.) The equivalent of sailcloth was mentioned as 'canevas' (canvas). S. Lootsma, op. cit. (note 23), p. 176 cites an 18th-century letter in which mention is made of 'canefas of zeijldoeken' (canvas or sailcloths).

25 M. K. Talley, 'Extracts from the executors account-book of Sir Peter Lely, 1679–1691: An account of the contents of Sir Peter's studio', *Burl. Mag.* 120 (1978), pp. 745–749, esp. 747. In the same inventory canvas and 'satten' (satin) are listed as support material.

26 J. A. Boot, op. cit. (note 23), p. 44.

27 J. A. Boot, op. cit. (note 23), p. 21; S. Lootsma, op. cit. (note 23), p. 38; J. G. van Bel, *De linnenhandel van Amsterdam in de XVIIIe eeuw*, Amsterdam 1950, pp. 12–21.

28 S. Lootsma, op. cit. (note 23), p. 38; J. G. van Bel, op. cit. (note 27), pp. 21–47; J. Horner, *The linen trade of Europe during the spinning wheel period*, Belfast 1920, p. 353; J. Bastin, *De Gentse lijnwaadmarkt en linnenhandel in de XVIIe eeuw*, Ghent 1968, p. 15; L. Guicciardini, *Beschrijvinghe van alle de Nederlanden*, Amsterdam 1612 (first Italian edn. 1567), pp. 97–98, 217. Nicolaas Witsen mentions in his *Aeloude en Hedendaagsche Scheeps-Bouw* II, Amsterdam 1671, p. 135, canvases of Dutch, French and Flemish origin for the rigging of a ship of a given capacity.

29 See for instance J. A. Boot, op. cit. (note 23), where an analysis is given of the diary of Aleida Leurink (1682–1755), daughter of the linen-factor Jan Leurink. Although she was the wife of a minister (in the village of Losser, Twente), she was commissioning weavers and trading canvas on a small scale.

common for a long time<sup>30</sup>. The articles to be manufactured from the canvas were obviously based on the existence of such standard widths. In a sail loft, for instance, the size of the sails was expressed in the number of 'cloths' needed, and since we know from various sources that the Dutch sailcloth weavers produced strips three feet wide we can assume that 'a cloth' had a width of about 85 cm (or  $\frac{5}{4}$  ell)<sup>31</sup>.

### Thread density

It is quite obvious that with such widely varying origins and such differing functions, there were appreciable variations in the fabric supports. The great majority of the canvas used by Dutch painters does it is true exhibit a tightly-woven linen weave, but this occurs in a widely-varying density and yarn quality (see table A). Paintings on twill canvas represent only a small percentage<sup>32</sup>.

Whereas with twill there are a large number of criteria for distinguishing one fabric from another, since there are innumerable variants in the pattern of intersection of the threads, the pattern in linen weave is simple and invariable<sup>33</sup>. The only way of comparing canvases with a linen weave is to measure the number of threads/cm in the warp and weft (a 'threadcount') and, so far as the radiograph allows, to compare the peculiarities of the yarn used. To ascertain the thread density counts have to be taken at various places on the painting in both warp

and weft, after which average values can be worked out<sup>34</sup>. It is found important to record the spread of the counts, so as to form an impression of the degree of irregularity of the thread density (cf. table B).

The thread density within one and the same canvas – even very large canvases such as that of the '*Night watch*' (Br. 410) which has three strips of cloth from the same bolt totalling 13 m in length – is fairly constant; at all events, it is constant enough to say that if the average number of warp threads per centimetre differs by more than one thread, one can practically discount the possibility of the canvases in question coming from the same bolt of cloth. The number of weft threads, with their often more varying thickness, can differ a great deal more within a single roll, especially since the force with which the threads are beaten-up during the weaving process can vary so that they may be packed together more or less closely. When comparing threadcounts, therefore, the count of the warp threads is the more significant figure.

It has been noted that in the course of the 17th century painters tended to use canvas of ever-greater coarseness. Prescott made a passing reference to this tendency in connexion with Italian, Flemish and Spanish paintings on canvas<sup>35</sup>. He explained the phenomenon as due to growing confidence in the adhesion of newly-developed priming materials to the canvas. This explanation implies that a coarser canvas would have a more open structure, so that the ground could even 'lock into' the canvas. In the case of the canvas used by Rembrandt, this is not so; with both the coarse and fine, and the early and late canvases, the ground only occasionally penetrates between the threads. On the radiograph these places show up as isolated or clustered spots of white (cf. figs. 5 and 6). As a rule these canvases were obviously treated with glue size in order to close the fabric.

Meier-Siem, examining the canvases of mainly Northern Netherlandish 17th-century paintings, believed that the explanation for the use of coarser

30 When the metric system was introduced, the city of Ghent published a list of new seals that were to be used to mark the linens, also including the old seals (*Ordonnance et règlement concernant le marché aux toiles de la ville de Gand*, 1806). This publication provides us with a survey of the traditional standard widths. The ell was the unit of measure. Standard widths could also be based on fourth or even eighth and sixteenth parts of the ell. In this rather refined system of standard widths one finds such widths as  $\frac{3}{4}$  (Brabant) ell = 87 cm,  $\frac{5}{8}$  ell = 105 cm, and 2 ell = 140 cm, which are also familiar from 17th-century sources. The exact length of the ell varied of course from region to region.

31 Nicolaas Witsen, op. cit. (note 28), II, p. 127. A common length for a batch of canvas of this width, called the 'webbenlengte', was 52 to 53 ells (cf. Boot, op. cit., note 23, pp. 42 and 44).

32 Only five paintings by Rembrandt on twill canvas are known, all of them from the 1660s (Br. 326, 401, 415, 417 and 482). Van Schendel op. cit. (note 11) mentions three more paintings in the Amsterdam Town Hall as being painted on twill canvas. Much earlier in the 17th century and also in the 16th century it was used sporadically. Van Mander once mentions 'enen grooten doeck van tijck' (in the life of Frans Floris, *Schilder-Boeck*, Haarlem 1604, fol. 241). The *Portrait of Dirck Barendsz.* by Cornelis Ketel (from 1590) in the Amsterdam Historical Museum (inv. no. B 5786) is on an intricately-woven twill canvas. Pieter Isaacs' *Compagnie van Kapitein Gillis Jansz. Valckenier*, from 1599 in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (inv. no. C 455) is on a plain twill (I owe the information concerning the Cornelis Ketel to Dr H. Miedema, that on the Pieter Isaacs to Mr E. Bosshard, Zürich); Abraham Bloemaerts' *Adoration of the Magi* in the Centraal Museum, Utrecht (cat. no. 18) is painted on a striped twill canvas (for a reproduction see M. K. Talley, *Portrait painting in England: Studies in the technical literature before 1700*, 1981, fig. 24).

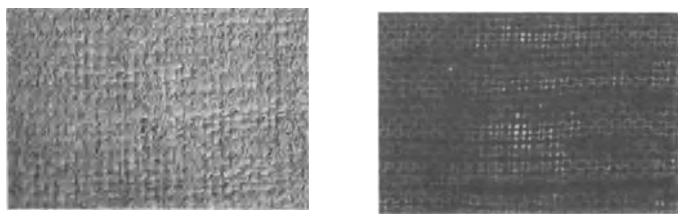
33 Cases where two warp threads are crossed by one weft thread, as one sometimes finds nowadays with painters' canvas, were not found with 17th-century canvases.

34 Our measurements were carried out with a Leitz thread counter (6 × magnification), each time over 2 cm. Depending on the number of available X-rays this was done 6 to more than 20 times in each direction. The average values of each set of measurements were then divided by 2 (to obtain the thread density per cm). The maximum and minimum values obtained are also given to provide an indication of the range of variation in thread density. With canvases composed of two or more pieces, the weave was measured separately in each piece. The choice of the places where measurements were taken was dictated by the degree of visibility of the canvas structure in the X-ray, though a reasonable spread over the surface was aimed at. Taking measurements on the same 'line' of warp and weft threads was avoided as much as possible. With X-rays where the canvas structure was too vague to allow for the use of a thread counter, counting was done with the naked eye and a ruler. For a specification of Frootjes' method of measuring, cf. A. B. de Vries, M. Tóth-Ubbens and W. Frootjes, op. cit. (note 10), p. 206.

35 Cf. W. Percival-Prescott, op. cit. (note 14), pp. 15–16.



Figs. 5–6. Detail (1 : 1) of back of original canvas of a late *Self-portrait* (The Hague, Mauritshuis) illustrating the ground penetrating between the threads (visible as dark shadows at centre) and corresponding detail of X-ray reproduced as a negative



canvas weave could be sought in an assumed predilection of the painters to use the visibility of the canvas structure as a deliberate effect<sup>36</sup>. This is an unsatisfactory explanation, as it can be deduced from the 17th-century recipes for preparing the canvas that the aim was to render the surface of a prepared canvas as smooth as possible<sup>37</sup>. With paintings that are still in a very good state of preservation the weave of the canvas is indeed scarcely apparent.

The key to a much more plausible explanation for the phenomenon has been found by Mrs K. Levy in sources relating to the sailcloth weavers in the village of Wormerveer. It seems that they tended, for reasons of economy, to set up fewer and fewer warp threads in their loom, for an ostensibly unaltered quality of canvas. The shipyards complained at this form of cheating, whereupon the quality of canvas (which had already become coarser) was officially imposed on the weavers as a fixed standard; the same trend towards using fewer warp threads however continued<sup>38</sup>.

From the chance recording of the case of the sailcloth weavers of Wormerveer one may, cautiously, conclude that a tendency to use a lower and lower number of threads per unit, to cut costs, was a general one. Table A shows however that wide variations in thread density remained throughout

the 17th century, and though the number of coarse canvases does increase over the century, there can be no question of even approximately dating a canvas on the ground of its threadcount.

One is struck by the fact that there is no correlation between the size of the canvas and the thread density. Very large canvases such as that of the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* (no. A 51), the *Man in oriental dress* (no. A 48) and the *Portrait of Cornelis Anslu and his wife* (Br. 409), are painted on canvases of relatively fine weave, whereas a painting of modest size, such as the *Entombment* (Br. 560), may be on extremely coarse canvas (see table B).

#### *Problems in determining the warp direction*

A precondition for a proper use of the threadcounts obtained – as for that of other data such as the strip-width – is that it must be possible to tell the warp from the weft. As the number of threads/cm usually differs in the two directions, comparisons between threadcounts on different canvases can be carried out only if the correct values – i.e. the number of warp threads and of weft threads in each case – are being compared. With canvases of very large dimensions this presents no problem, as one can take it that the warp runs the length of the strip of canvas. But with rather smaller paintings it cannot be taken as self-evident that the lengthwise dimension of the painting is at the same time the direction of the warp<sup>39</sup>. When canvas supports have an original seam, it may be assumed (with some reservation) that the warp runs parallel to this (see table C). Most canvases do not however have a seam, and both the lengthwise and the widthwise dimensions come within the largest strip-width we have encountered<sup>40</sup>. In that case, criteria for detecting the warp direction must be found in the nature of the cloth itself, as seen in the X-rays. These criteria can vary, and for each painting they are included under the SCIENTIFIC DATA heading of *Support*. Of the various ways of determining the warp direction that

36 Cf. Meier-Siem, op. cit. (note 2), p. 63. On the idea that the coarse surface of the canvas served mainly an artistic purpose, see also Wolters, op. cit. (note 4).

37 De Mayerne, op. cit. (note 19), gives various recipes that all testify to this intention. On pp. 5 and 5 *vo* (edn. Berger, p. 102) he mentions three times the smoothing of the first ground layer with pumice stone, and illustrates the priming knife, which is slightly curved in order not to cause scratches in the ground layer as the canvas yields to its pressure. On p. 87 (edn. Berger p. 252) he again recommends smoothing ('en raclant') first with the priming knife and then ('eguale') with pumice stone of the first ground layer. See also pp. 90 (edn. Berger p. 258), 96 (ibidem p. 272) and 99 *vo* (ibidem p. 278). Only in one, very short description of priming, on p. 95 (edn. Berger p. 268) is the smoothing not explicitly mentioned. Numerous other authors are also explicit about the wish to smooth the canvas by filling the fabric or pumicing the ground at some stage of the priming procedure. This is true of Vasari (Berger p. 29), Borghini – who refers to Flemish canvas paintings – (Berger p. 40), Armenini (Berger p. 53), Volpato (M. P. Merrifield, *Original treatises on the arts of painting*, New York 1967, 1st edn. London 1849, II, 729, 731), Pacheco (Berger p. 79) and Palomino (Berger p. 82). Not a single source makes mention of the specific surface quality of canvas.

38 Cf. S. Lootsma, op. cit. (note 23), pp. 116–117. Mrs K. Levy, who initially assisted as a graduate student in collecting written sources for the preparation of this chapter, found much interesting information on canvas used or usable by painters, which she intends to publish in a separate article on the subject.

39 In, for instance, the technical instruction sheet on the stretching of canvas issued by the Royal Academy for Visual Arts in Amsterdam, it is advised always to have the warp direction parallel to the longest side of the stretcher. This rule does not however apply to 17th-century paintings. Determining the warp direction does not present a problem with canvas of recent manufacture, provided it still has its selvedges. In the case of old paintings these have almost invariably been lost (cf. note 15).

40 The widest 17th-century canvas in one piece with a linen weave that we know of is a painting from 1642 by Pieter Soutman in the Haarlem Frans Halsmuseum (inv. no. 3.13); it is on a canvas which has a stripwidth of 204 cm (3 ell), as Mrs K. Levy kindly informs me. Mrs Levy also pointed out that a painting by P. de Grebber in the same museum, from which the edges have been cut, is on a canvas with a stripwidth of 192 cm (originally probably also 3 ell). The canvas of the Bucharest *Haman imploring the grace of Esther* (Br. 522), begun probably by Rembrandt around 1635, has a width of 187 cm. In view of the nature of the cusping along the long sides of the canvas, this must have been wider, possibly also 3 ell.



have been tried during this investigation<sup>41</sup>, there are only two that can offer a fair measure of certainty. One lies in the fact that in some kinds of canvas there is a clear difference in quality between warp and weft threads. In these cases one can assume that the threads running in the warp direction are more evenly spun (because they have to withstand high stresses during the weaving) while those in the weft direction display frequent thickenings. Coarse fibres have been used for spinning the latter<sup>42</sup>, and sometimes even the 'left-overs' from when the fibres have been hackled<sup>43</sup>. There is then a greater likelihood of short lengths of thicker thread occurring during the spinning, especially since the yarn for the weft is probably not twisted as tightly<sup>44</sup>. If this discrepancy in yarn quality is noted, then it may be assumed that the more regularly-spun threads are the warp (cf. fig. 4).

A second criterion can be adopted in cases where there is no appreciable difference between the yarn quality in the two directions. During measurements it has been found that, as mentioned earlier, the statistical spread in one direction is often much greater than in the other (cf. table B). In canvases

where, for other reasons, one can be certain which is the warp direction, it can be seen that the number of warp threads/cm shows a great deal more constancy than does the number of weft threads/cm. This may be explained by the technique of weaving, which means that the warp threads are held at the same distance apart by the reed, the 'comb' through which they run, each time the weft is beaten up. Variations in the force with which the weft threads are beaten up cause, as has already been explained, the greater variations in the density of the weft. Only with very evenly-woven canvases will neither of these criteria provide the clue as to the warp and weft directions.

*Thread density and weave characteristics of canvases by or attributed to Rembrandt*

Table A sets out, chronologically, the thread densities of the canvases that Bredius attributes to Rembrandt. The same table also shows the threadcounts of a number of canvases painted by other Dutch artists<sup>45</sup>. One notices in the first place that the thread densities of Rembrandt's canvases fit into the general picture; yet one is struck by the fact that there is a considerable variety in his canvases over a given, short period. The consistency of the threadcounts would indeed, be no greater if the paintings that we do not regard as authentic were disregarded. Remembering that probably the greater part of these were painted by artists working in Rembrandt's workshop, making such a distinction would in this connexion have no point. We have too little information on the canvases of other Dutch painters to know whether such irregularity in the threadcounts can be found in their canvases as well; this is however, as will be shown below, quite likely.

The earlier discussion of the kinds of canvas mentioned in the sources as being used by painters, and the different places of origin of the canvas used, has already made it plain that a considerable variation was to be expected. It is not immediately obvious, however, that such would be the case within the oeuvre of a single artist. One would have thought, surely, that a painter would have kept one or more bolts of canvas in his studio, from which pieces could be cut as required. Yet one does not meet any large

<sup>41</sup> In, for instance, *Methods of test for textiles*, British Standards Handbook no. 11, 1963, pp. 160–162, different methods are given for determining warp and weft on the (unstretched) fabric itself; these are of no use when trying to determine warp and weft direction from a radiograph. The methods we investigated but had to reject were the following:

1. As warp threads usually meander more strongly than weft threads (cf. for instance Knut Nicolaus, op. cit. note 4, p. 40), their imprint in the radioabsorbent ground is as a rule deeper, resulting in a darker (or, in the positive, lighter) image in the radiograph. In most radiographs the canvas imprint does show the threads running in one direction as darker than those running perpendicular to them. In the case of one bolt of canvas used for several paintings (Br. 469, Br. 497 and the Munich *Abraham's sacrifice*), the warp threads (identifiable on the basis of the direction of seams, the stripwidth encountered and a continuous weaving fault) are however found to show up markedly lighter than the weft threads, which here are finer than the warp threads. It appears from this that the extent of meandering depends on the relative fineness of the thread and not on the difference between warp and weft. This is also illustrated by the fact that the less the densities of warp and weft threads differ, the less the threads in one direction show up as a succession of dark dots in the radiograph.
2. Usually the greater number of threads/cm indicates the warp direction. See also J. A. Boot, op. cit. (note 23), p. 47, where in all cases analysed more warp than weft threads were counted. For the same reason as described under 1. this criterion cannot be used with complete confidence.
3. Assuming that deformations caused by the stretching of the canvas will extend further in the weft than in the warp direction, one might expect that measuring the depth of cusping would help in telling weft from warp. It is however something of a rarity to find a canvas that has not lost strips of unknown width along its edges.

<sup>42</sup> J. A. Boot, op. cit. (note 23), p. 30 found in the diary of Aleida Leurink that a coarser quality of less tightly-spun yarn of German origin was in some cases used for the weft threads, while a better, Dutch, quality was used for the warp.

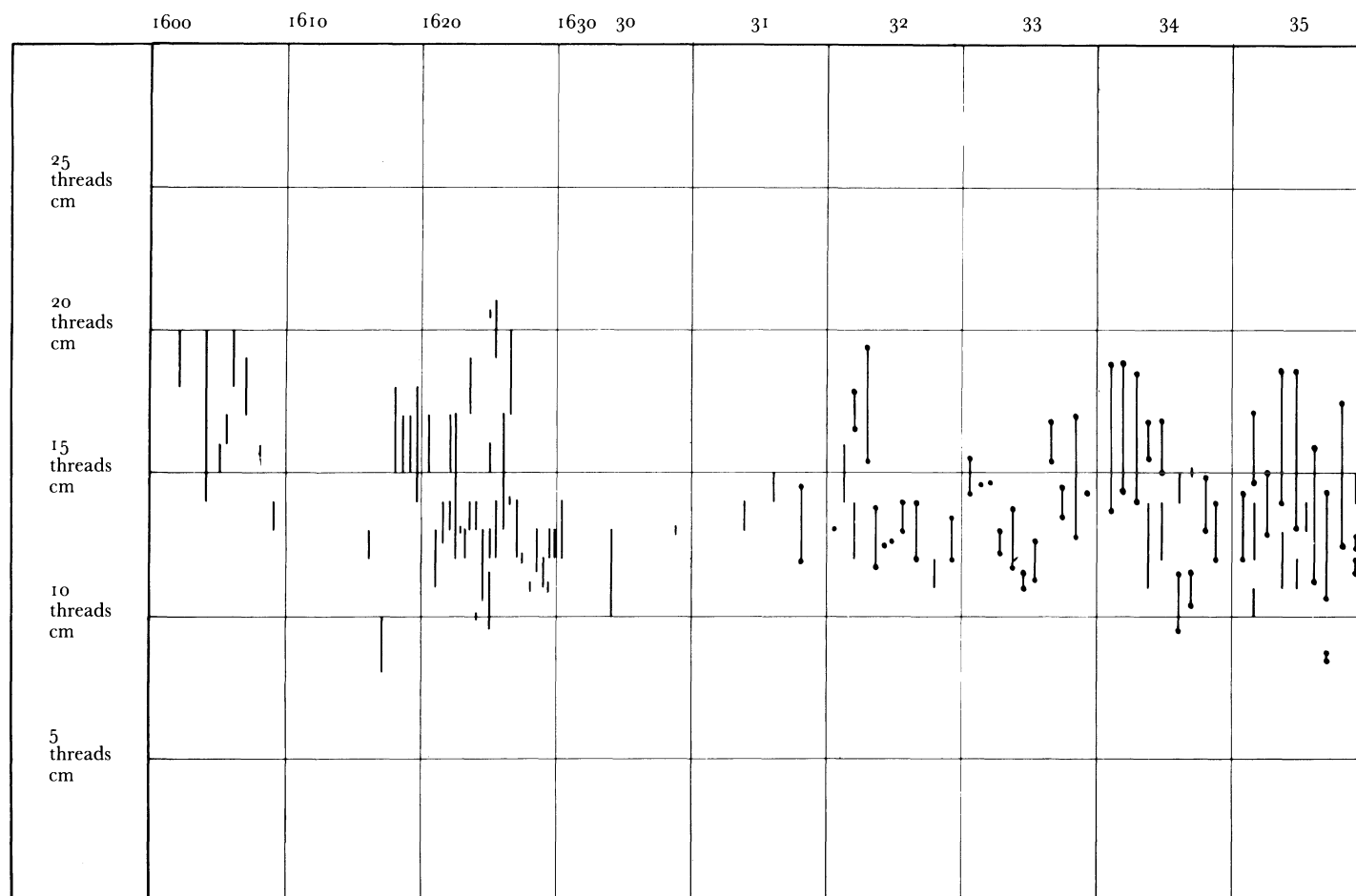
<sup>43</sup> This use of leftovers from the hackling of the flax for the production of coarser linens is frequently mentioned in the diary of Aleida Leurink, cf. J. A. Boot, op. cit. (note 23), p. 30. Hackling, according to G. H. Linton, *The modern textile dictionary*, New York 1962 (1st edn 1954) s.v. *hackle*, is 'the device used to clean bast fibres such as flax, hemp, etc. Iron teeth are set in a board so that the stock may be combed for the line fibres (the long fibres) and the tow fibres (the short fibres).'

<sup>44</sup> See note 42.

<sup>45</sup> This material is in part based on threadcounts published by Meier-Siem, op. cit. (note 2), pp. 212–297. The remaining part comes from threadcounts on radiographs of dated Dutch 17th-century paintings on canvas in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. These threadcounts were carried out by Dr J. E. Leene, Mrs R. Bolland and Mr M. Franken.

TABLE A. A survey of threadcounts of canvases used for Dutch pictures over the period 1600–1700

The average numbers of threads per cm in each direction are represented by the extremities of a line; no distinction is made between warp and weft. In the case of paintings by Rembrandt or his school, dots mark the extremities. When the number of threads is the same in each direction, it is indicated by a short line or a single dot respectively.



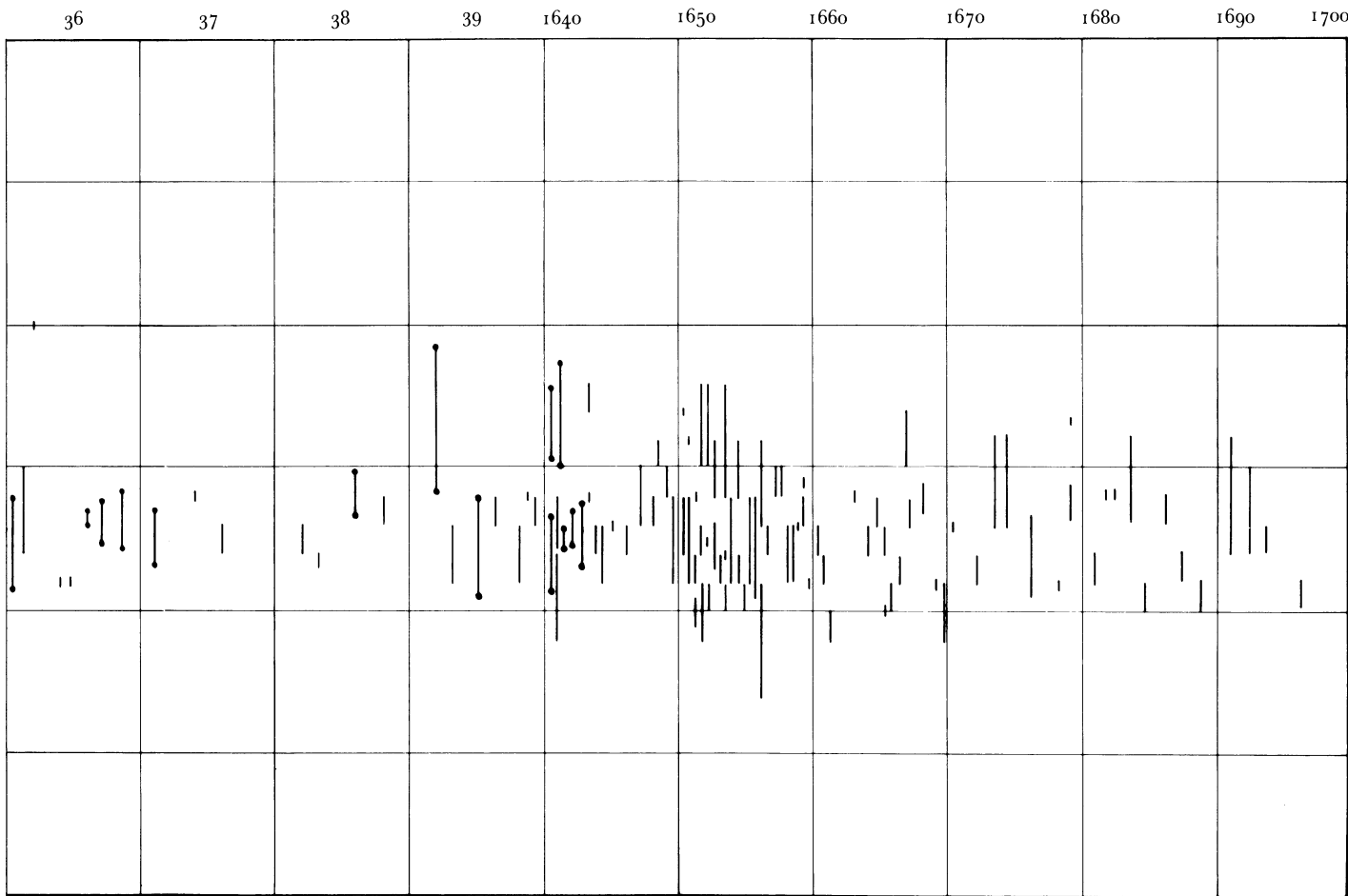
- | Thread density of canvases used by Rembrandt and his workshop, the dots indicating the average numbers of warp and weft threads respectively  
 • Idem in cases where the numbers of warp and weft threads are equal

number of canvases coming from the same bolt<sup>46</sup>. One can say that the canvases of works by Rembrandt and his workshop companions over, for example, the period 1632–1634 came from certainly 25 different bolts. One does however come across quite small groups of canvases coming from the same bolt. Within the period 1631–1642 one finds pairs of canvases a few times, and once a group of three and one of four; to the group of four may be added two small fragments incorporated in other paintings to which we shall come back later (see table B).

<sup>46</sup> In all likelihood the situation was quite different with painters from the 19th century. As a rule they used to buy large rolls of already prepared canvas. A pilot project of threadcounts applied to paintings by Vincent van Gogh revealed that of the ten canvases investigated five come from one bolt and four from another – all nine paintings having been produced in Arles. The canvas used for the tenth painting, produced in Paris, comes from yet another bolt. These counts were carried out and analysed by Brigitte Blauwhoff. Cf. *Verzamelde brieven van Vincent van Gogh*, ed. J. van Gogh-Bonger, Amsterdam-Antwerp 1953, 3rd edn, III pp. 453, 467, 473, 483 and 505.

Such groups of canvases cannot be identified on the ground of matching threadcounts alone – there have to be sufficient similarities in other properties of the fabric as well. One characteristic of canvas may be seen as occasional thickenings in the threads. These are, admittedly, not uniform in length, nor do they occur at regular intervals from each other; yet for all the irregularity, they form a pattern that is typical of each fabric, and within one strip of cloth they usually display a certain degree of constancy provided that – as one has to assume – the threads used come from one and the same batch of yarn<sup>47</sup>. This pattern is hard to quantify – the dimension of both the length and the width of the thicken-

<sup>47</sup> A. van Schendel, op. cit. (note 11), p. 41, noted however that at a certain point in the central strip of the *Claudius Civilis* (which is painted on a support consisting of three vertical strips) the weft threads become considerably finer, apparently due to shifting to another batch of yarn. Something similar may be observed in the righthand half of the lower strip of the canvas used for the *Portrait of Susanna van Collen* (no. C66), where a significant coarsening of the weft threads is seen.



Thread density of canvases used by 17th-century Dutch painters other than Rembrandt, the extremities indicating the average numbers of warp and weft threads respectively  
Idem in cases where the numbers of warp and weft threads are equal

ings in the thread is irregular<sup>48</sup>. Yet after a long time spent comparing a great many canvas structures one does develop a kind of expertise, an ability to recognize with a fair measure of certainty the similarities and differences in canvases that because of a similar thread density are candidates for closer comparison. Characteristic differences in nature between the warp and weft threads play an important part in this. Properties that are harder to put into words – such as the impression of ‘fluffiness’ or ‘smoothness’ one gets from the threads – also play a role. A feeling develops for the ‘style’ of spinning and weaving, irrespective of whether these styles were dictated by material or technical circumstances or, indeed, by the individual spinners’ and weavers’ working habits. What must appear to be a

rather subjective method of grouping or distinguishing canvases will probably inspire little confidence in the reader – yet there are checks that can be made.

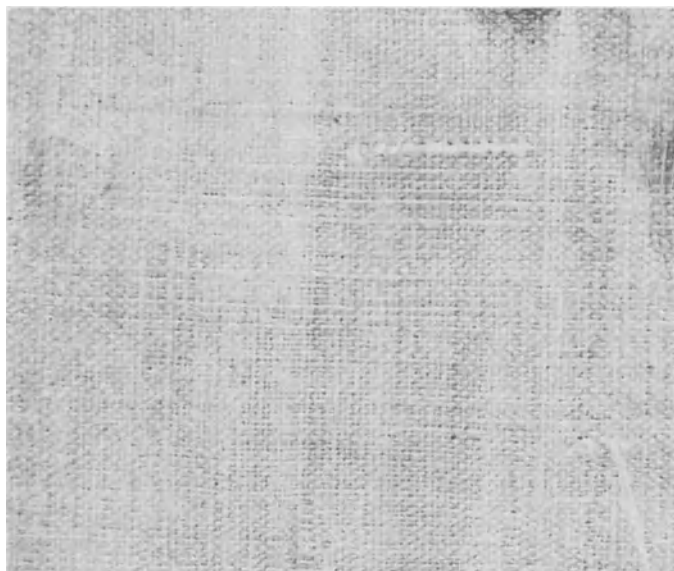
In most cases where two canvases have been identified as coming from the same bolt, the paintings concerned are companion-pieces<sup>49</sup>. It may be assumed, of the canvases on which these are painted, that they were as a rule stretched and prepared in one and the same procedure. Only in the case of the Pellicorne portraits (nos. C 65 and C 66) are the canvases found to be of different origin.

In the case of one group of three paintings there is another opportunity for checking that can be used; in all the strips incorporated in these three

48 A quantitative comparison is made difficult by the differences in the exposure data and reproduction techniques involved in producing the radiographic material used, and a statistical approach is virtually impossible. I am indebted to Mr F. Dijkhuizen, University of Groningen, for the conversations we had on the subject.

49 Nos. A 78 and A 79, nos. A 98 and A 99, nos. C 68 and C 69, Br. 218 and Br. 360. In the case of nos. A 54 and A 55 the similarity between the respective canvases confirmed the already existing suspicion that these paintings were originally companion-pieces.

Fig. 7. Detail (1:1) X-ray of *Abraham's sacrifice* (Munich, Alte Pinakothek) showing a sudden increase in the number of the vertical warp threads near the centre. (Positive print)

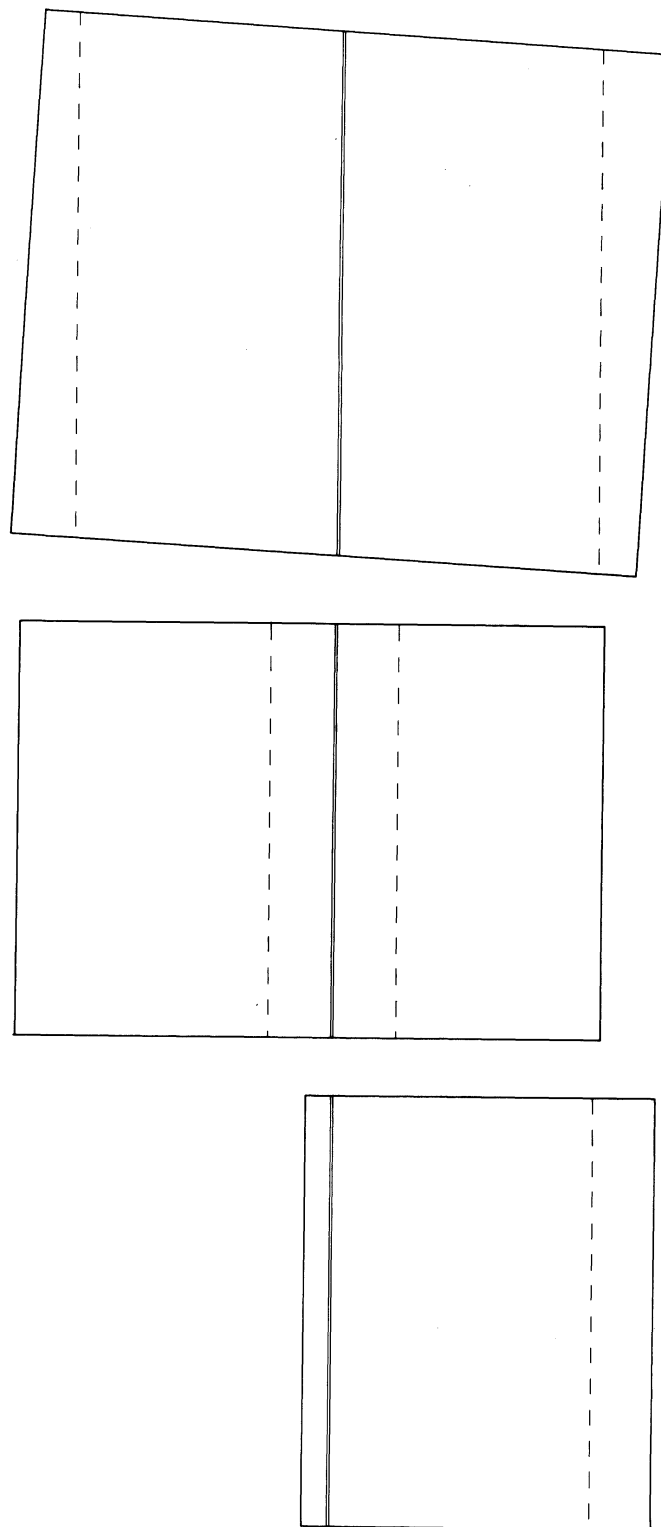


large canvases there is a weaving fault at about 20 cm from the edge (fig. 7). The paintings in question are the *Belshazzar's feast* (Br. 497), the *Minerva* (Br. 469) and the *Abraham's sacrifice* in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich (inv. no. 438) (fig. 8).

When a threadcount that canvases have in common is moreover well outside the average range of densities encountered, there is more certainty that the shared characteristic is significant; this is, for instance, so with the Leningrad *Flora* (no. A 93) and the *Descent from the Cross* also in Leningrad (no. C 49), both of which are on a remarkably coarse canvas. A further example of this kind is provided by a group of paintings – the Munich *Holy family* (no. A 80), the *Cupid* (no. A 91), the Vienna *Apostle Paul* (Br. 603) and the Berlin *Samson threatening his father-in-law* (Br. 499), together with the two fragments already referred to – in which one can find an unusual difference between the number of warp and weft threads (figs. 9 and 10)<sup>50</sup>. When the threadcount and weave characteristics suggest that two canvases may come from the same bolt, format and strip-width can provide supporting evidence: this is

<sup>50</sup> The Berlin grisaille of *S. John the Baptist preaching* (Br. 555) was enlarged twice. The first enlargement consists of a narrow strip of canvas coming from a canvas that had already been stretched and primed before, as it shows cusping that is unrelated to the process of enlargement; this strip comes from the same bolt as the canvases of nos. A 80, A 91, Br. 499 and Br. 603. From that bolt also comes the canvas on which the pieces into which Rembrandt cut the London grisaille on paper of the *Lamentation* (Br. 565) were stuck. This piece, too, was a fragment of a canvas that had already been stretched and primed, as it shows cusping along only two sides. From the radiographic image of the canvas structure one gets the impression that the paper was stuck to the unprimed side of the canvas (see also note 19). The hypothesis may be put forward (see below) that these fragments come from the same piece of primed canvas on which the *Cupid* (no. A 91) was painted. Taking into account the warp direction and the cusping in these three pieces, the canvas of the *Cupid* comes from the top part of this piece, that of the *Lamentation* from the bottom left corner and that of the *S. John preaching* from the righthand edge near the bottom.

Fig. 8. Diagram of the canvases used for *Belshazzar's feast* (London, National Gallery), *Abraham's sacrifice* (Munich, Alte Pinakothek) and *Minerva* (whereabouts unknown)

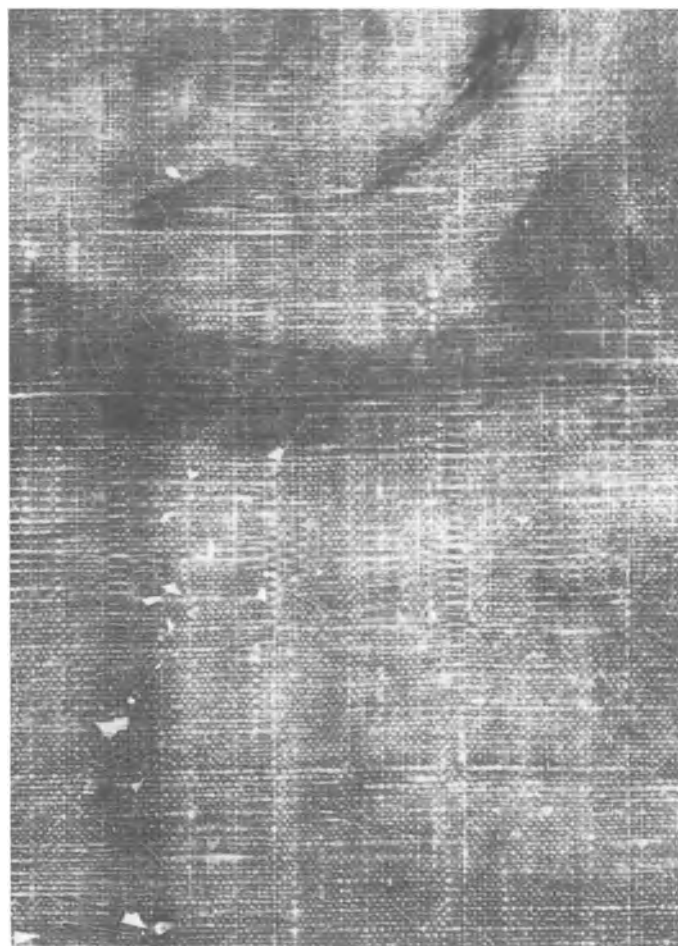
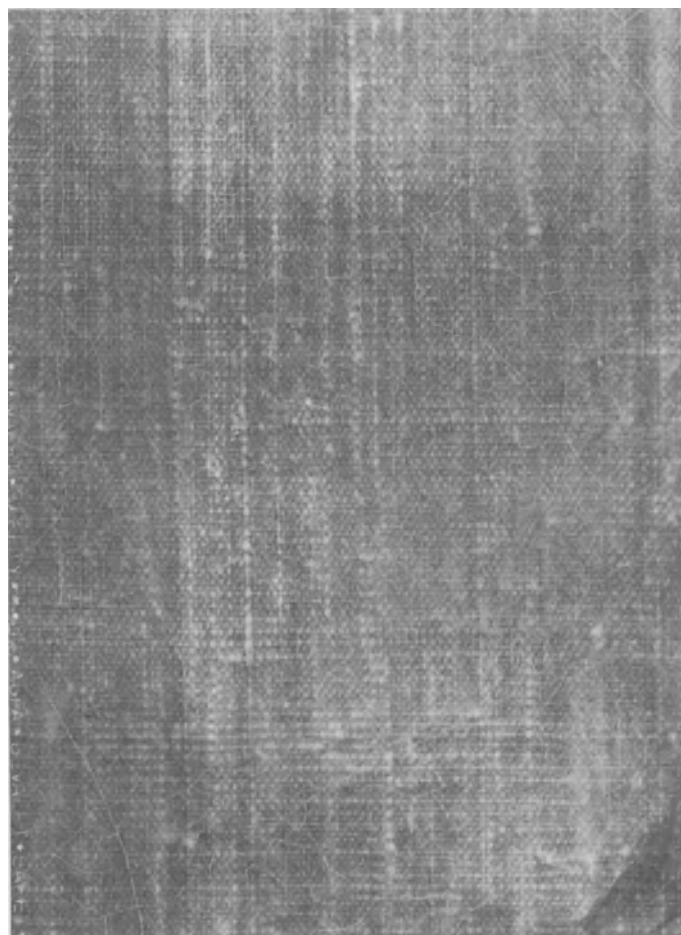


← stripwidth (c. 107 cm)  
 ——— seam  
 - - - - weaving fault

true in the case of the *Danaë* (Br. 474) and the *Blinding of Samson* (Br. 501) (see table C and figs. 24 and 25)<sup>51</sup>. It is striking – and in itself argues for the supposed common origin of the clusters of canvases

<sup>51</sup> The reconstruction of the original size of the *Danaë* is discussed in: E. v. d. Wetering, 'Het formaat van Rembrandts "Danaë"', *Met eigen ogen. Opstellen aangeboden door leerlingen en medewerkers aan Hans. L. C. Jaffé*, Amsterdam 1984, pp. 67–72.

Figs. 9–10. Details (1:1) X-rays of the *Holy Family* (Munich, Alte Pinakothek; no. A 80) and *Cupid* (Ascona, coll. Baroness Bentinck-Thyssen; no. A 91) showing canvases coming from the same bolt. (Positive prints)



indicated as such in table B – that the pairs or groups concerned have invariably been (or can be regarded as having been) painted during the same period.

The fact that these groups are so small disproves that the canvases used in Rembrandt's workshop came from a limited number of bolts stored in his studio. Written sources, such as 17th-century inventories and depictions of artists' workshops, also provide no grounds for this supposition – bolts of canvas are rarely mentioned and never portrayed in such documents<sup>52</sup>. It is far more probable that the painters bought their canvases as a rule already prepared, or had them supplied by the person commissioning a painting. There are a number of sources that show that the latter must not infrequently have been the case<sup>53</sup>. We have evidence suggesting that artists bought their canvases already prepared from craftsmen who specialized in pre-

paring them. A Leiden document of 1676 mentioned earlier<sup>54</sup> suggests that at that time painters were at all events totally dependent on such craftsmen, who could at the same time be frame-makers or cabinet-makers. Other, some much earlier documents mention the existence of craftsmen referred to as primers<sup>55</sup>. Inventories of studios show the fre-

54 Cf. Vol. I, Introduction, Chapter II, p. 20, note 28.

55 Among the creditors mentioned in connexion with the estates of painters, 'plumuyrers' (primers) are mentioned more than once; cf. A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* II, p. 53 (1662), IV, p. 1392 (1665). They are also explicitly mentioned among the members of the Haarlem Guild of S. Luke (see H. Miedema, *De archiefbescheiden van het St.-Lucasgilde te Haarlem*, Alphen a.d. Rijn 1980, pp. 94, 95 (in 1631), 422 (in 1634), 334 (in 1702), 337 (in 1715). Other craftsmen listed among the creditors of painters may also have provided them with primed canvases, such as 'lijstemakers' (frame-makers) (cf. Vol. I, Introduction, Chapter II, p. 20, note 28) or cabinet-makers; in one inventory a cabinet-maker is mentioned as having provided a painter with panels and canvases over several years (*Künstler-Inventare* V, p. 1504). Even art dealers sold primed canvases; cf. Vol. I, Chapter II, p. 16, note 11, where the art dealer Leendert Hendriksz. Volmarijn mentions canvases among the painting materials he intends to sell. His relative, the Rotterdam art dealer Crijn Hendriksz. Volmarijn, apparently also sold canvases as the painter Willem Buytewech owed him 'aen doeck (for canvas) 8 gld. 10 st. 14 penn.', of which one canvas – which Buytewech returned – is referred to as costing 3 guilders (P. Haverkorn van Rijsewijk in: *O.H.* 12, 1894, p. 149). But not all painters relied on being able to purchase already-primed canvases. In one apprentice contract priming canvases is mentioned among the tasks the apprentice is to carry out (A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* V, p. 1482).

52 An exceptional case is the mention in the estate of the Amsterdam painter Johannes Croon, who died in 1664, of '60 penneelen met 2 rollen doeck' (60 panels with two bolts of canvas); see: A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* III, The Hague 1917, p. 845. Bredius presumed, in view of the nature of the inventory, that Croon was an art dealer as well and he could thus well have dealt in painters' supplies.

53 See Chapter IV, note 2, and J. M. Montias, *Artists and artisans in Delft*, Princeton 1982, p. 163.

TABLE B. *A survey of threadcounts of canvases used by Rembrandt or in his workshop over the period 1631–1642*

The order is roughly chronological, based on reliable dates inscribed on the paintings, presumed ones in [ ] and approximate ones preceded by *c.*

Pictures to be included in Vol. III are indicated by Bredius numbers.

Threadcounts are given in two columns with numbers of threads per cm, the average number followed by the smallest and biggest number encountered in ( ). The first column contains the number of vertical threads (reckoning from the subject for which the canvas was used), the right column that of horizontal ones.

Underlined numbers refer to threads that can be identified with a reasonable amount of probability as representing the warp.

In the graph, closed dots represent the average number of warp threads, open ones the average number of weft threads, strokes the average of undetermined threads, the lines extending on either side of these represent the spread of numbers encountered. The symbol representing vertical threads appears above that of horizontal ones.

In cases where several canvases may be taken to come from one bolt, they are placed together, sometimes infringing on the chronological order, and their numbers are preceded by a square brace or, in the case of companion-pieces, by a brace.

			<div> <div> <div>canvases presumably from one bolt</div> <div> <div>companion pieces with canvases presumably from one bolt</div> </div> </div> <div> <div>Threadcount</div> <div>upper :vertical threads</div> <div>lower :horizontal threads</div> <div>(min.–max. found)</div> </div> </div>	<div> <div>upper symbol: vertical threads</div> <div>lower symbol: horizontal threads</div> <div> <div>• ○ + : average number of threads/cm</div> <div>• : presumed warp threads</div> <div>— : spread of threadcounts</div> <div>○ : presumed weft threads</div> <div>+ : warp/weft direction undetermined</div> </div> <div>number of threads</div> <div>6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20</div> </div>
1631	A 44	<i>Portrait of a man at a writing-desk</i> , Leningrad	12 (10–14) 14 (13–15)	
1632	A 46	<i>The apostle Peter</i> , Stockholm	13.1 (12–13.2) 13 (12–14.5)	
1632	A 48	<i>Man in oriental dress</i> , New York	17.7 (17–18.5) 16.5 (15–17.5)	
1632	A 51	<i>Anatomy Lesson</i> , The Hague	15.3 (13.5–17.5) 19.3 (19–19.5)	
1632	A 53	<i>Portrait of Joris de Caullery</i> , San Francisco	11.7 (11–12) 13.8 (13.5–14)	
1632	A 54	<i>Man trimming his quill</i> , Kassel	12.5 (11.5–14) 12.4 (12–13)	
1632	A 55	<i>Portrait of a young woman seated</i> , Vienna, Akademie	12.7 (12–13.5) 12.5 (12–13)	
1632	C 68	<i>Portrait of a man</i> , New York	13 (11.5–15) 14 (13.5–15)	
1632	C 69	<i>Portrait of a woman</i> , New York	12 (11–13.5) 14.1 (14–14.5)	
[1632/33]	A 64	<i>Young woman at her toilet</i> , Ottawa	13.4 (13–14) 12 (11.5–12.5)	
1633	A 68	<i>Christ in the storm</i> , Boston, Stewart Gardner Museum	upper strip 14.3 (13.7–15.5) 15.5 (15.2–15.7)	
			lower strip 14.8 (14.2–15.5) 15.4 (15.2–15.5)	
[1633]	A 69	<i>The Raising of the Cross</i> , Munich	14.7 (14.5–15) 14.6 (13.5–16)	
1633	A 80	<i>Portrait of Johannes Wtenbogaert</i> , South Queensferry, coll. Earl of Rosebery	14.8 (14–15.5) 14.6 (13.5–15.2)	
1633	A 70	<i>Bellona</i> , New York	13 (12.5–13.2) 12.2 (11.5–13)	
1633	A 77	<i>Jan Rijcksen and his wife</i> , London, Buckingham Palace	10.7 (10–11.5) 12.7 (12–13.5)	

			<div><div>canvases presumably from one bolt</div><div>companion pieces with canvases presumably from one bolt</div></div>	<div>Threadcount upper :vertical threads lower :horizontal threads (min.–max. found)</div>	<div>upper symbol: vertical threads lower symbol : horizontal threads</div> <div>• ○ + : average number of threads/cm — : spread of threadcounts • : presumed warp threads ○ : presumed weft threads + : warp/weft direction undetermined</div> <div>number of threads</div> <div><div>6</div><div>7</div><div>8</div><div>9</div><div>10</div><div>11</div><div>12</div><div>13</div><div>14</div><div>15</div><div>16</div><div>17</div><div>18</div><div>19</div><div>20</div></div>
1633	A 78	<i>Man rising from his chair,</i> Cincinnati, Taft Museum	{	<div>11 (10.4-11.5) 11.5 (11-12)</div>	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></di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Table B (continued)

A survey of threadcounts of canvases used by Rembrandt or in his workshop over the period 1631–1642

			<div><div><div>canvases presumably from one bolt</div><div>companion pieces with canvases presumably from one bolt</div></div></div>	<div>Threadcount upper :vertical threads lower :horizontal threads (min.–max. found)</div>	<div>upper symbol: vertical threads lower symbol: horizontal threads</div> <div>• ○ + : average number of threads/cm — : spread of threadcounts • : presumed warp threads ○ : presumed weft threads + : warp/weft direction undetermined</div> <div>number of threads</div> <div><div>6</div><div>7</div><div>8</div><div>9</div><div>10</div><div>11</div><div>12</div><div>13</div><div>14</div><div>15</div><div>16</div><div>17</div><div>18</div><div>19</div><div>20</div></div>
1634	A 93	<i>Flora</i> , Leningrad	[	<div><div>11.5 (11-12)</div><div>9.5 (9-10)</div></div>	<div><div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div><div></div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			canvases presumably from one bolt	companion pieces with canvases presumably from one bolt	Threadcount upper :vertical threads lower :horizontal threads (min.-max. found)	upper symbol: vertical threads lower symbol: horizontal threads		• ○ + : average number of threads/cm — : spread of threadcounts • : presumed warp threads ○ : presumed weft threads + : warp/weft direction undetermined	number of threads 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
1636	Br. 557	<i>The Ascension</i> , Munich			14.2 (13.5-15) 12.1 (11.5-12.5)			+	
[1637]	Br. 213	<i>The minister Swalmius</i> , Antwerp			13.5 (13-14) 11.6 (10.5-13.5)			○	
1638	Br. 507	<i>The wedding of Samson</i> , Dresden			13.4 (13-14.2) 14.9 (14.5-15)			+	
[c. 1635-39]	Br. 560	<i>The Entombment</i> , Munich			8.7 (8-10) 8.5 (8-9)			○	
[c. 1635-39]	Br. 561	<i>The Resurrection</i> , Munich			12.4 (11.5-13.5) 12.8 (12.5-13)			○	
1642	Br. 410	<i>The 'Night-watch'</i> , Amsterdam		upper strip	12.2 (11.5-12.5) 12.9 (12-13.5)			○	
				middle strip	12.5 (12-13) 12.4 (11.5-13.5)			○	
				lower strip	12.1 (11-13.5) 12.8 (12-13.5)			○	
1639	Br. 216	<i>Portrait of a man standing</i> , Kassel			19.3 (17.5-20) 14.1 (13.5-14.5)			+	
[c. 1640]	Br. 439	<i>The baptism of the eunuch</i> , Hannover			10.8 (10-11.5) 13.4 (13-14.2)			○	
[c. 1639]	Br. 456	<i>Dead peacocks</i> , Amsterdam		upper strip	10.5 (9-11.5) 13.9 (13-14.5)			○	
				lower strip	10 (9-11.5) 13.5 (13-14)			○	
[?]	Br. 33	<i>Portrait of Rembrandt</i> , Ottawa			13.8 (13-16.5) 14.7 (14-16.5)			○	
1640	Br. 34	<i>Self-portrait</i> , London			15.4 (15-18) 17.9 (17-19)			○	
1641	Br. 409	<i>Portrait of Anslo and his wife</i> , Berlin			15 (13.5-16.5) 18.8 (17.5-20)			○	
1641	Br. 218	<i>Portrait of Nicolaes van Bambeeck</i> , Brussels			12.3 (10.5-13.7) 13.5 (12.5-14.5)			○	
1641	Br. 360	<i>Portrait of Agatha Bas</i> , London, Buckingham Palace			11.5 (10-13) 13.7 (13-14.2)			○	

quent occurrence of loose, i.e. unstretched canvases<sup>56</sup>. From a number of sources relating to Rembrandt one finds the cost of the canvas (and frame) charged separately to the customer<sup>57</sup>, as an amount paid out in advance by the artist. This is in line with the supposition that those commissioning paintings often provided the support. They then themselves dealt with the expenditure involved, and were moreover able to decide the format and quality of the support and the nature of the frame.

If such a situation existed, it would be worth bringing into the investigation canvases used by other Amsterdam painters of the period; this could result in more, and larger clusters of canvases from the same bolt but used in different studios.

When Von Sonnenburg examined the canvas of a number of Murillo's, the total absence of any connexion between the fabrics led him to say that investigating the weave of painters' canvases had hardly anything useful to offer<sup>58</sup>. To a certain extent the facts reviewed above do prove him right; yet the very comprehensiveness of the material examined here makes it possible to attach informative value to the negative results obtained. There are, however, also positive results that, sparse though they are, demonstrate the usefulness of studying the fabric. The first negative result is that the possibility of dating canvases on the basis of thread density used as statistical data can be largely discounted. A second negative result is that there is no question of there being a weave typical of a particular studio (in our case, that of Rembrandt).

One positive result is that the outcome of this investigation seems to confirm suppositions, prompted by written sources, as to how support material was supplied to studios. In this respect, the study can help in building up a picture of how the

17th-century artist obtained his materials – one that is still comparatively vague from many points of view<sup>59</sup>.

Study of the canvas also sheds new light on more specific Rembrandt problems. The clusters that have been noted contribute to the certainty that the paintings in question did in fact originate in one and the same workshop. This seems at odds with the assumption just made that Rembrandt's Amsterdam contemporaries were also painting on pieces of canvas coming from the same bolts of cloth that provided the canvases Rembrandt was using; it must however be regarded as very improbable that, particularly in Rembrandt's first few years in Amsterdam, paintings were produced outside his studio that are stylistically so close to his work that they can still today be looked on as being from his hand. This means that the Munich version of the *Abraham's sacrifice*, for instance, must at all events have been done in Rembrandt's workshop.

The fact that clusters of canvases were (so far as can be ascertained on the basis of style and inscriptions) produced in the same period provides an opportunity, when faced with dating problems, of cautiously assuming that canvases from the same bolt will have been painted during the same period. One naturally cannot rule out the possibility of a canvas remaining unused for a longish period, or being completed and signed only at a later stage. In a case like the Leningrad *Descent from the Cross* a good deal of weight has to be given to the fact that the canvas is taken from the same bolt as that of the Leningrad *Flora* (no. A 93), making the assumption of a later date for the *Descent from the Cross* far less likely. With the cluster of four canvases (the *Holy family*, the *Cupid*, the *S. Paul* and the *Samson threatening his father-in-law*) can, as already mentioned, be included two small fragments of canvas that may have been trimmed from the canvas on which the *Cupid* was then painted<sup>60</sup>. A discovery like this prompts rethinking of the dates of these two grisailles certainly so in the case of the *Lamentation*, the dating of which has up to now varied between 1637 and the mid-40s; a date soon after 1634 now cannot be ruled out and is in fact borne out by stylistic features.

In certain instances investigation of the fabric can

<sup>56</sup> In Bredius' *Künstler-Inventare* one finds mention of 'leeg doecken' (empty canvases), 'doecken ongeschildert' (unpainted canvases), 'doecken om op te schilderen op raemen' (canvases to paint on, on strainers), 'doecken zonder raemen' (canvases without strainers), 'doecken mede gespannen en begonnen te schilderen' (canvases stretched and begun to be painted), 'doecken geplumeerd' (or: 'geplumert', 'geprumiert', 'geplumeert': primed canvases), 'doecken bereyt' (prepared canvases). Those canvases where the priming is not explicitly mentioned were probably primed as they are mentioned in the plural, having already been cut from a bolt. Where strainers are not mentioned the canvases may or may not have been stretched. In Peter Lely's inventory many loose, i.e. unstretched, canvases are listed as well as stretched ones; 'straining frames' without canvases are mentioned there as well (cf. M. K. Talley, op. cit. note 25).

<sup>57</sup> A document from 1659 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1659/18) mentions a double portrait by Rembrandt painted around 1642, the sitter for which, Abraham van Wilmerdonx, states that he paid 500 guilders for the painting and a further 60 guilders for the canvas and frame ('heeft betaelt gehad, de somme van vijfhondert gulden wegen het schilderen en noch de somme van tsestigh gulden daerenboven voor t doek en lijst').

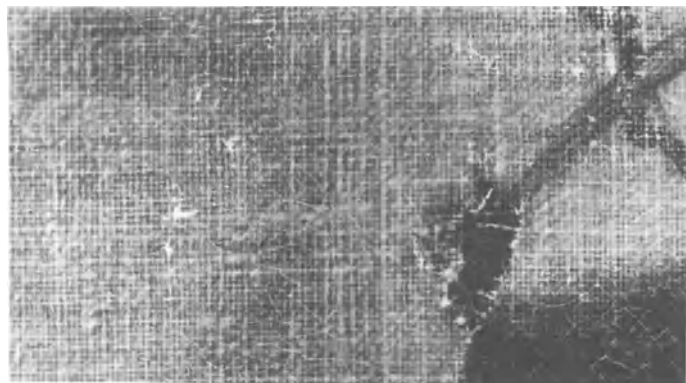
The invoice dated 30 July 1661 for the *Alexander* sent to Antonio Ruffio contained as a separate item 'per la tela di d' Alessandro ed Homero F 18' (for the canvas of the said Alexander and Homer) (Strauss *Doc.*, 1661/5).

<sup>58</sup> H. von Sonnenburg, op. cit. (note 7), p. 159 and p. 176 note 6.

<sup>59</sup> Leendert Hendricx Volmarijn's request of 1643 to the Leyden Municipality, mentioned earlier (Vol. I, Chapter II, p. 16, note 11), gives the impression that much more of the preparation of painting materials was done outside the painter's studio than is generally thought. He intended to sell 'various prepared and unprepared paints, panels, canvases, brushes and all other utensils useful and necessary for the art of painting' ('allerley geprepareerde en ongeprepareerde verwen, panelen, doucken, pincelen ende alle andere gereetschappen tot de schilderconste dienstig ende van noden'). Mrs K. Levy intends to publish shortly some information on the production and trading of painters' supplies in Holland during the 17th century.

<sup>60</sup> See note 50.

Fig. 11. Detail (1:1) X-ray of *Portrait of a young woman* (Vienna, Akademie der bildenden Künste; no. A 55), showing canvas coming from the same bolt as the presumed companion-piece (no. A 54). Right of centre a whole in the canvas; top right radioabsorbent paint on back of canvas. (Positive print)



be useful in identifying pendants; thus, the great similarity in thread density and weave characteristics between the canvases of the *Portrait of a young woman* in the Vienna Akademie der bildenden Künste (no. A 55) and the Kassel *Portrait of a man trimming his quill* (no. A 54) confirms the suspicion that they were originally companion-pieces (figs. 11 and 12).

#### Interpreting cusping

When unprepared canvas is stretched, the fabric is appreciably distorted by the locally greater stresses set up at points where the canvas is attached to the stretcher (fig. 13). There is extra stretching at these places. The nature of this distortion – ‘cusping’ – and its presence or, indeed, absence can provide an insight into trade practices and contribute to our knowledge of the physical history of a painting.

In radiographs that cover the edges of a painting, cusping is very frequently seen. The pitch often varies somewhat, the cusping extends to a varying extent into the body of the canvas, and it may be more or less marked at the edges. In certain cases there may be breaks in the regular succession of curves in the threads. In other cases again cusping may be absent, or as in one instance discussed later, it may become more and more marked from one corner of a painting to the other.

To understand these phenomena it is essential to have some idea of 17th-century practices where stretching painters’ canvases was concerned. There are various sources that tell us about 17th-century methods. First, there is a relatively small group of paintings on canvas where the original method of stretching can still be seen<sup>61</sup>; and secondly there is a

<sup>61</sup> Six paintings in the Gouda Stedelijk Museum ‘Het Catharina-Gasthuis’ (on loan from the Oud-Katholieke Kerk in Gouda); Pieter Claesz. Soutman’s *Officers of the Cloveniersdoelen*, Haarlem, Frans Halsmuseum (inv. no. 3.13); Gerard van Honthorst’s *King David playing the harp*, Utrecht, Centraal Museum, cat. no. 149, Honthorst’s scene with a paintress at work, *Margaretha de Roodere* (16. . – 1666), wife of Reynier van Heemskerk, and an elderly woman, State-owned Art Collections Department, no. C 313, currently in the Centraal Museum, Utrecht. Probably the paintings on canvas in the Oranjezaal at Huis ten Bosch are mostly still in their original condition (kind communication from drs B. Brenninkmeyer-de Rooij; see also note 71).

Fig. 12. Detail (1:1) X-ray of *Portrait of a man trimming his quill* (Kassel, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen; no. A 54), part of which (hidden behind the stretcher) shows the weave of the original canvas coming from the same bolt as the presumed companion-piece (no. A 55). The top left area shows the weave of the lining canvas covered with radioabsorbent paint. (Positive print)



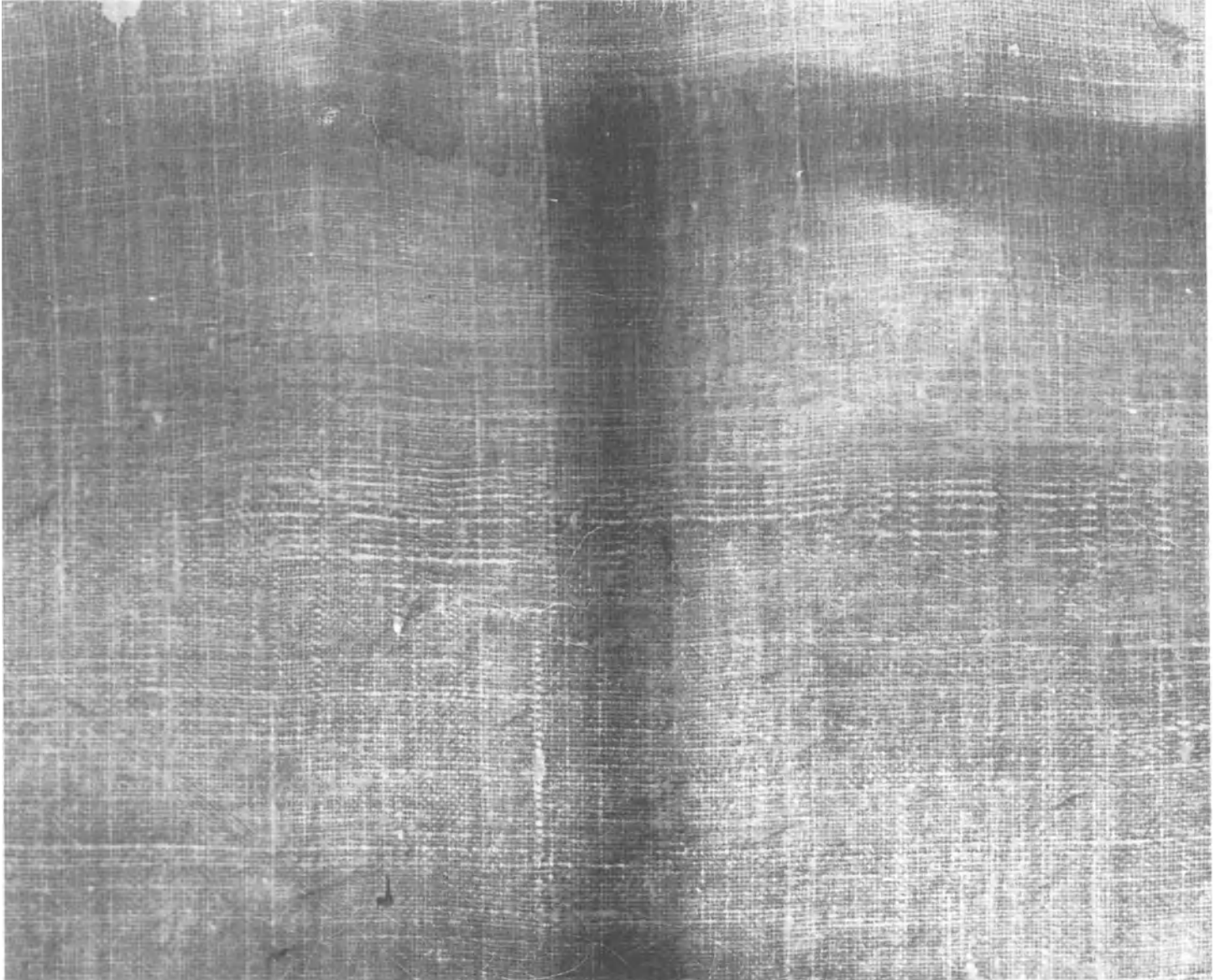
considerable number of depictions of studios in which it is possible to make out, less or more clearly, how a canvas has been stretched<sup>62</sup>. Thirdly, written sources do, though seldom, provide instructions for stretching<sup>63</sup>. And finally the X-rays provide information which, though it is generally interpretable only in the light of what we know from the other sources just mentioned, does, when all added together, give deeper insights.

The presence of cusping as a rule indicates that

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Studio scenes by Dou and his school, Gabriel Metsu, Jan Miense Molenae, Jan Steen, Jacob van Spreeuwen, Joost Cornelisz. Droochsloot, Hendrik Pot, Vincent van der Vinne and others show canvases stretched in various ways. Cf. W. Martin, *Gerard Dou*, Stuttgart–Berlin, 1913 (Kl. d. K.), pp. 12, 13, 57, 58, 59, 83; W. Martin, ‘The life of a Dutch artist in the seventeenth century’, *Burl. Mag.* 7 (1905), p. 129; 8 (1905–06), pp. 19, 22; ‘How a Dutch picture was painted’, *Burl. Mag.* 10 (1906–07), p. 151; Knut Nicolaus, op. cit. note 4, fig. 45; W. Martin, ‘De Jan Steen-tentoonstelling te Londen’, *Onze Kunst* 16 (1909), p. 140; H. E. van G(elder), ‘Een schilder aan de arbeid’, *Mededelingen van de dienst voor kunsten en wetenschappen der Gemeente ’s-Gravenhage* 4 (1937), pp. 71, 72; *Städtisches Kunstinstitut. Verzeichnis der Gemälde aus dem Besitz des Städtischen Kunstinstituts und der Stadt Frankfurt*, Frankfurt a.M. 1966, fig. 57; G. Muller, ‘The Perseus and Andromeda on Rubens’s house’, *Simiolus* 12 (1981–82), pp. 131–146, esp. figs. 1, 4, 22 and 23.

<sup>63</sup> As far as we know, no Dutch written source describes the stretching of canvas. The earliest known text on the subject is by Cennino Cennini, *The Craftsman’s Handbook*, Dover reprint of D. V. Thompson’s translation of 1933, p. 103. The exact interpretation of the original text is however not without problems, as Mr B. Skans and Mr B. Lindberg from the University of Lund, kindly pointed out in a letter dated 21 June 1983. In the same letter they drew our attention to an early Swedish source, a text dealing with block-printing that was either written or translated from an unknown Italian text by the monk Peder Månsson, who died in 1534 as bishop of Västerås (cf. R. Geete, *Peder Månssons skrifter på Svenska*, Stockholm 1913–15 p. 545; John Granlund ‘Peder Månssons skrifter’, *Kulturhistoriskt lexikon för nordisk medeltid*, 13, Malmö 1968, col. 156). It describes the stretching of banners to be block-printed and painted. De Mayerne Ms. p. 141, ed. Berger op. cit. (note 19), p. 312, mentions a device to stretch canvases to be restored, and (Ms. p. 99, edn. Berger p. 276) one for the stretching of textiles to be painted on other than canvas. H. von Sonnenburg, op. cit. (note 7), p. 176 note 5 mentions a detailed description of the stretching of canvas in Antonio Palomino, *El Museo Pictorico y Escala Optica*, Madrid 1715–24, ed. Aguilar, Madrid 1947, p. 482.

Fig. 13. Detail (1:1) X-ray of *Portrait of a couple* (Boston, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum; no. C67) showing distortion along the edge of a stretched canvas, consisting of both primary and secondary cusping. The former extends further inwards than the latter. (Positive print)



the canvas concerned was stretched in an unprepared state and then prepared. With this treatment, any distortions occurring through tensioning of the canvas that was still stretchable in its unprepared state became fixed in the fabric when glue and priming were applied. Such distortion can be termed 'primary' cusping; it can extend up to c. 25 cm from the point of stress<sup>64</sup>.

When primary cusping is lacking on one or more sides there is a good chance that the painting has been reduced in size by later hands. This is sometimes confirmed by the existence of copies or other documents that provide information about the original appearance of the painting, as in the case of the *Portrait of the shipbuilder and his wife* (no. A 77). In other cases peculiarities in the composition

strengthen the suspicion that the painting has been reduced in size on the side where primary cusping is missing, as in the case of the *Danaë* (Br. 474; cf. fig. 24).

In a good many cases this kind of evidence does not convincingly explain the absence of primary cusping. It is however essential to appreciate that primary cusping occurs at the edges of the canvas only *at the format in which it was primed*. This need not mean, therefore, that these edges have to coincide with the edges of the picture painted on the canvas.

A fair proportion of the radiographic material known to us shows that in most cases a canvas, primed in a wooden framework that will be discussed below, was indeed used in its entirety for a single painting (because it displays primary cusping all round the edges). Allowance has however to be made for the possibility that in certain cases several canvases were cut from a single primed piece of canvas – something that nowadays, with the mech-

<sup>64</sup> In the case of primary cusping, the deformation decreases so gradually that it is impossible to tell exactly where it is no longer visible. The measurements given here and in the catalogue entries have to be seen as approximate.

anically-primed factory-made canvas, goes without saying. In the frequent case where cusping is missing along one or two opposite sides<sup>65</sup> one can imagine that the canvas was originally part of a much larger primed canvas that was cut into two or more pieces, which were subsequently restretched to be painted. The canvas of the *Portrait of Johannes Wtenbogaert* (no. A 80) provides a clue to such a practice. With that canvas the deformation of the fabric along the bottom takes the shape of a single long cusp running from one corner to the other, while there is no cusping at the top. This points to the existence of a method according to which long strips of canvas were primed and subsequently cut to the desired formats. A stretching method apparently used in such cases was already described in a 16th-century source as a way of producing banners<sup>66</sup>. The method involves stretching the canvas strip between two poles, the short sides being attached only at the corners. This results in the kind of weave deformation described above. Several paintings by Rembrandt, where cusping in the canvas fabric is missing at top and bottom or both sides, may thus have been taken from long strips of ready-prepared canvas and subsequently put on other stretchers.

A slight amount of fresh cusping might occur as a primed canvas was restretched for painting; when this was done within a shortish period, fresh distortion could occur, albeit extending only a few centimetres into the canvas. Obviously, the material used in preparing the canvas did not harden fully for some time. Distortion of this kind can be termed 'secondary' cusping (see fig. 13). In many cases the traces of secondary cusping may have been lost when, during lining, the edges of the canvas were trimmed away.

The stretcher as we know it today with wedge-shaped keys did not exist in the 17th century<sup>67</sup>. Prior to 1750, there were other ways of applying and adjusting the tension on a canvas during and after its preparation. Many 17th-century pictures show paintings in a studio with the canvas laced by a long

Fig. 14. G. Dou, *A painter in his studio*. Private collection. Detail showing a canvas stretched in an oversize framework



cord to a wooden framework with an opening larger than the canvas itself (figs. 14, 15, 17). One meets examples of this way of stretching canvas in depictions of painters at work done by artists from Rembrandt's circle, both from the early period in works by Dou and in the work of one of Rembrandt's late pupils, Aert de Gelder. There are a number of variants on this method of stretching the canvas; in most cases the cord was merely wrapped round the battens of the framework, in others it was passed over nails or through holes bored in the battens of the strainer (cf. fig. 15).

These strainers (or 'strainer frames') could naturally have only a temporary purpose; a painting that was stretched in this fashion obviously needed, if it was to be framed, to be attached to another, correctly-sized strainer or frame. The function of these oversize frameworks must have been to provide a simple and effective way of stretching or restretching a canvas during work. For priming

65 In a number of paintings produced between 1631 and 1634 primary cusping is missing without there being sufficient reason to assume a later reduction, or there is only what can be with reasonable probability considered to be secondary cusping. This is for instance the case along one long side of the *Portrait of a man at a writing-desk*, Leningrad (no. A 44), the *Portrait of Joris de Caullery*, San Francisco (no. A 53), *A young woman at her toilet*, Ottawa (no. A 64); along both long sides of the *Portrait of a man* (no. C 68), the *Portrait of a woman* (no. C 69), both in New York; along one short side of the *Portrait of a man rising from his chair*, Cincinnati, Taft Museum (no. A 78), the *Portrait of a woman in an armchair*, New York (no. A 79), the *Portrait of a man*, Kassel (no. A 81) (which may also have been reduced later), the *Portrait of the minister Johannes Wtenbogaert*, Dalmeny House (no. A 80) and the *Flora*, Leningrad (no. A 93).

66 Peder Månsson, ed. R. Geete, op. cit. (note 63), p. 545.

67 According to Brachert, op. cit. (note 5), p. 34, the stretcher with wedge-shaped keys was introduced between 1753 and 1757.



Fig. 15. G. Dou, *A painter in his studio*, 1637. Private collection. Detail showing a canvas restretched in an oversize framework



such a device was essential, as the canvas had to stay free of the stretcher bars so that the necessary manipulations could be carried out safely. For the same reason, similar devices are used by restorers to the present day.

It has to be assumed that this oversize framework served in the first place for preparing the canvas in a stretched state<sup>68</sup>, but the depictions of artists at work that have been mentioned make it plain that painters did also frequently execute their painting while the canvas was still – or, more likely, again – stretched in such an oversize frame. In a depiction of a painter at work ascribed to Gerard Dou one can plainly see that the cusping in the canvas does not match the holes bored in the frame (fig. 15). This example may provide further support for the supposition that painters often did not prepare their own canvases, but bought them ‘loose’ from a primer and only temporarily restretched them in oversize strainers.

The artist is not however seen working with his

<sup>68</sup> When applying the ground to a canvas stretched in such a way that it rests on the battens of the stretcher, defects in the ground layer or even damage to the canvas could be caused by the pressure of the priming knife.

Fig. 16. G. Dou, *A painter in his studio*. Private collection. Detail showing a canvas nailed to a stretcher



canvas in this type of strainer in all depictions of studios; often the canvas would seem already to be attached to its final strainer, though the way this is done is usually not very clearly apparent. In a studio scene done by the young Dou one can see distinctly how the canvas is wrapped round the strainer by the way the canvas stands up in a small fold at the corners. The pegs or nails used to fasten the canvas are shown by small dots of black (fig. 16). This method of pulling the canvas round the edge of the strainer and holding it with pegs or nails, still in common use today, must therefore have existed already in the 17th century<sup>69</sup>, though it was certainly not the only way of fixing a canvas to its final stretcher. In an etching by Rembrandt himself, the ‘Pygmalion’ (B. 192), one can see on an easel in the background a large canvas on which another stretching method has been used (fig. 18). cursory though the sketched lines are, it is plain that the painting in the background is on canvas from the way cusping has been indicated, and the way one corner of the canvas is curling forward as a small loose flap. At first sight it seems to be attached to the usual oversize framework, but closer inspection reveals that the outer edge of the strainer is only a little wider than the limits of the canvas itself. It seems as if the canvas is fixed against the front surface of the strainer, without there being either a wrapped-round edge or a space between the inner

<sup>69</sup> Besides iron nails, wooden pegs were also used to attach the canvas to the stretcher (information kindly provided by Mr Hans Böhm, Berlin, based on a work by Emanuel de Witte; see also K. Nicolaus, op. cit., note 4, p. 39).



Fig. 17. V. van der Vinne, *A painter in his studio* (etching)

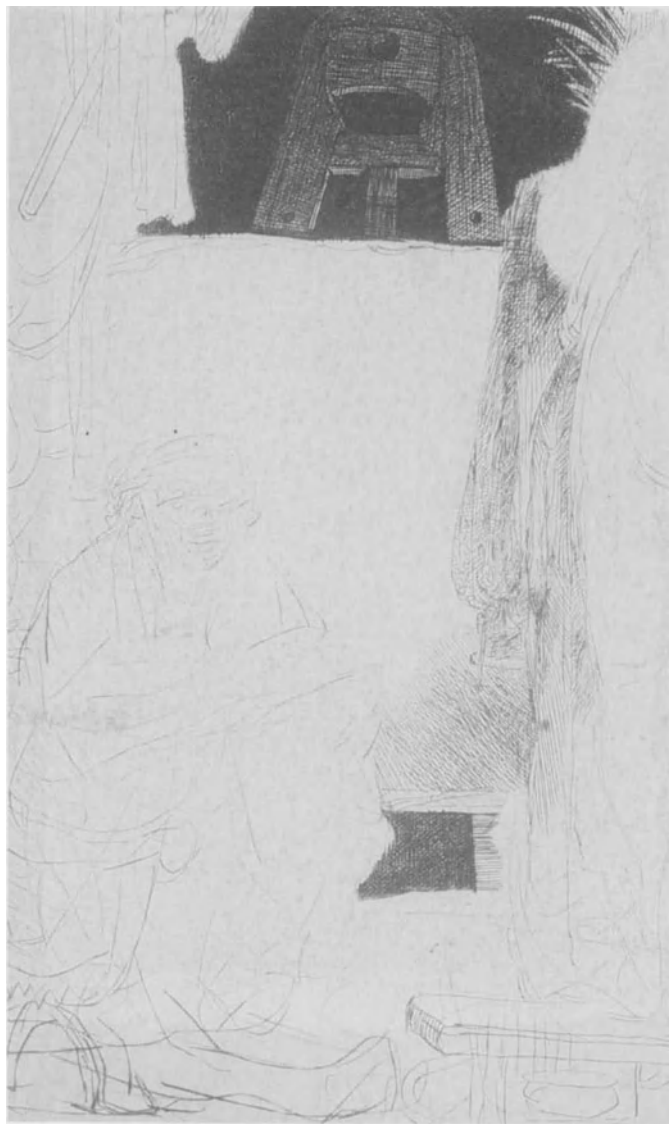


edge of the stretcher and the canvas. This method may have been frequently used in the 17th century. In the museum at Gouda, and one or two other collections<sup>70</sup>, there are paintings from the first half of the 17th century that have been preserved still attached to their old strainers (figs. 19, 20). With most of these paintings one finds that, just as can be seen with that on Rembrandt's *'Pygmalion'* etching, the canvas is held against the strainer bars. In the preserved instances this was done by means of one or more lacing strings<sup>71</sup>. Most of the canvases are stretched by a system where the lacing is passed, from back to front, through holes drilled in the frame, threaded through the edge of the canvas and then back through the same hole in the frame; the string then runs to the next drilled hole, is passed through from back to front, and so on (fig. 20). Had this method made the use of an oversize framework for preparing the canvas superfluous, and if all the work on the canvas – from the initial preparation with glue size to the completed painting – could have been done on a strainer like those at Gouda, then this would mean that the canvas would not have needed to be transferred at any stage, and that the absence of cusping would in such cases always point to it having been trimmed at some later time.

<sup>70</sup> See note 61.

<sup>71</sup> This appears to have been common practice during the 17th century. One may conclude this from a document, dated 4 December 1647, concerning the supply of 30 prepared canvases for the Huis ten Bosch, together with their stretchers, 'met gem. doecken daer op gespannen en vast gemaect naer behooren' (the canvases mentioned stretched thereon and attached in the proper way; see J. G. van Gelder in: *N.K.J.* 1948–49, pp. 121–122). When one of these canvases was removed from the Huis ten Bosch to be shown at the exhibition *Zo wijd de wereld strekt*, The Hague 1979/80 (no. 271), it turned out to have been attached by means of the lacing system under discussion. Here, however, the canvas was pulled around the battens of the stretcher and the laces are consequently at the back of the battens.

Fig. 18. Rembrandt, *An artist drawing*, etching (B.192). Detail showing a canvas attached to a slightly larger framework



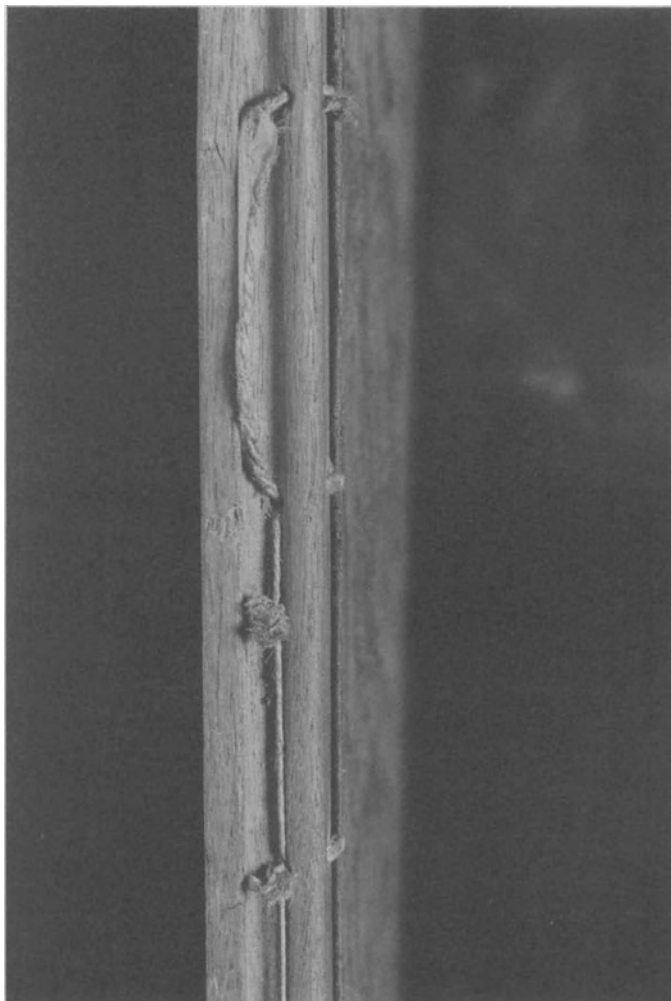
From examination of the Gouda paintings it was however certain in all cases that canvases fastened in this way had first been stretched on another frame, probably the larger priming strainer. The certainty that they were being stretched for the second time comes from noticing that at some places alongside the present lacing holes there are other holes – some with the paint-smeared remains of string in them – and that the cusping that extends furthest into the body of the canvas is related to these holes. When new lacing holes were made in the canvas to fasten it to its final stretcher, this produced secondary cusping, which spreads only a few centimetres into the fabric<sup>72</sup>. Here, therefore, we see both primary and secondary cusping, one alongside the other. The phenomenon was already familiar to us, for it

<sup>72</sup> The depth of these deformations is presumably related to the type of preparation applied to the canvas and the period of time that elapsed between priming and restretching. Even when the weave deformation does not extend far inwards, the deformation along the edge may be just as prominent as that near the primary stretching holes, or even more so (cf. figs. 19 and 23).

Fig. 19. Wouter Crabeth II, *Assumption of the Virgin*, 1628. Gouda, Stedelijk Museum 'Het Catharina-gasthuis'. Detail showing a canvas attached to its original stretcher with a partly original lacing string. Note primary stretching holes and deformations just above present holes



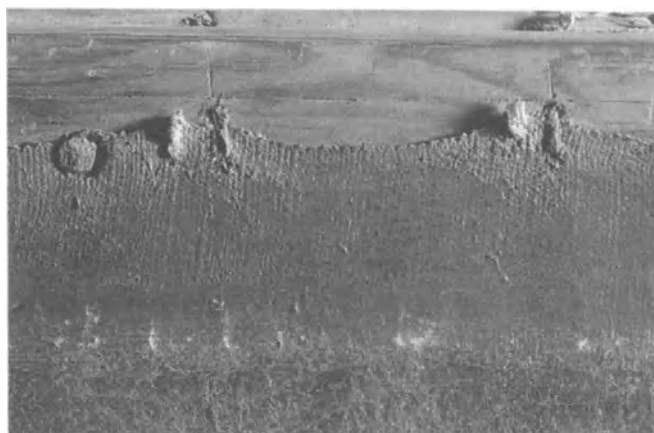
Fig. 20. Side-view



had been seen a number of times on radiographs of Rembrandt paintings without it being possible to find any satisfactory explanation for it (fig. 13).

The Gouda paintings make it possible for us to reconstruct the process by which the canvases were transferred. One finds that the places where the holes were drilled through the bars depended on the holes already in the canvas<sup>73</sup>. A number of times one still sees the marks that obviously served to ensure that the holes made in the frame matched correctly (fig. 21). Secondary cusping is thus found to occur in these cases only incidentally, when during the lacing-up of the canvas there was an offset at one or two edges, compared to the holes already drilled. On two Rembrandt paintings one may still note that the edges were not originally wrapped round

Fig. 21. Anonymous, *The Annunciation*, about 1630. Gouda, Stedelijk Museum 'Het Catharina-gasthuis'. Detail showing scores in the stretcher bar marking the places where holes were to be drilled corresponding to the original lacing holes of the canvas. (The nail is not original)



<sup>73</sup> The distances between the holes in the canvas differ from painting to painting, and are not even uniform in one and the same canvas. The lacing threads were obviously basted at only approximately equal distances.

Fig. 22. Detail (1:1) X-ray of *Jacob blessing the sons of Joseph* (Kassel, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen) showing the selvedge of a canvas that was never folded over a stretcher (Positive print)



the edge of the strainer bar (fig. 22)<sup>74</sup>. The 'Pygmalion' etching does seem, on this point, to illustrate what actually happened in Rembrandt's workshop. In most cases (especially after the invention of the key-wedge stretcher) these 'flat' edges will, during a subsequent restretching, have had to be pulled round the bars of a slightly smaller frame.

Apart from the method described above of attaching the canvas to its final stretcher, there was also a method that made no use of a separate stretcher. So far we know of four instances of the canvas, after it was painted, being stretched in the frame itself<sup>75</sup>. In this method small holes were drilled in a profile at the back of the frame, and the lacing strings were tensioned through these (fig. 23). With one of these paintings, which is entirely undisturbed, it is clear from the presence of secondary cusping that the canvas had first been tensioned in a different frame for application of the ground and during the painting (probably the usual oversize framework). One can in fact see from this painting that for the purpose of protection – perhaps primarily as a barrier against damp – an oak panel was affixed to the back of the frame, with wood of the same quality as was used for a normal panel. With the Gouda paintings, too, one can see at the back of the frame provision for attaching a wooden moisture barrier, and in one case the latter was still present.

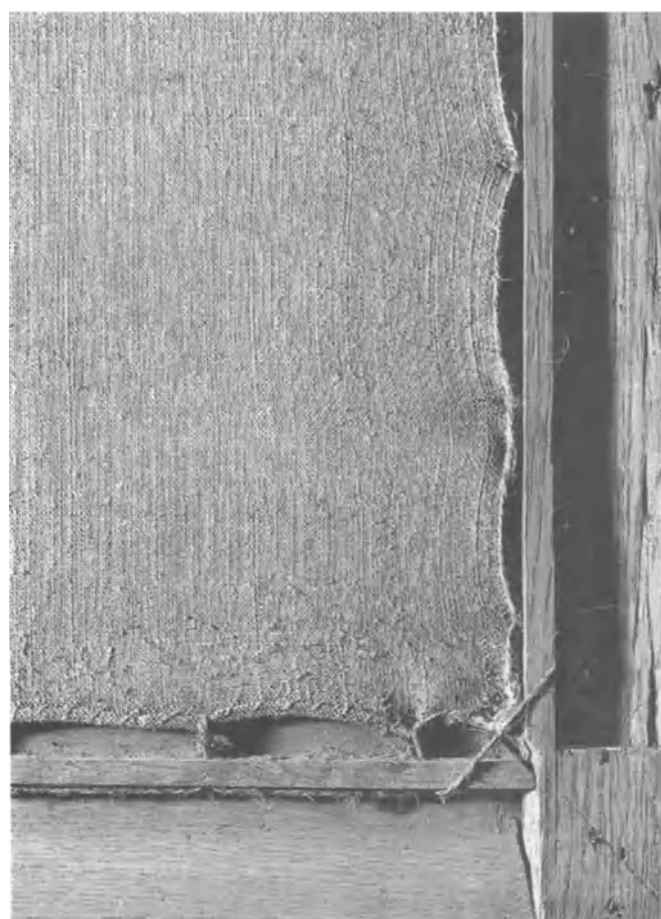
#### *Strip-widths and painting formats*

In discussing the formats of paintings on canvas and

the strip-widths that were worked on, one has once again to make allowance for the fact that almost no painting on canvas still has its original edges, since it has long been the custom to trim away the edges of a painting wrapped round the stretcher when the painting is being lined. So when talking about the original format of a canvas as it was used by a painter, one must as a rule add on a few centimetres to the present-day dimensions.

This means that selvedges recognizable as such are extremely rare. One might find them on either side of seams, when these came about by stitching

Fig. 23. Northern Netherlandish school, *Portrait of Dirck Hendricksz. van Swieten*, 1626. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum. Detail showing a canvas stretched in its frame without using a separate stretcher



<sup>74</sup> Along the top edge of the *Portrait of a man*, Kassel (no. A 81) the original edge of the canvas has been well preserved, and is at present only slightly folded, together with the lining canvas, over the stretching bar. In the case of the Kassel *Jacob blessing the sons of Joseph* (Br. 525) the top and bottom edges are in their original condition (fixed to a lining canvas) without showing traces of ever having been pulled around stretcher bars.

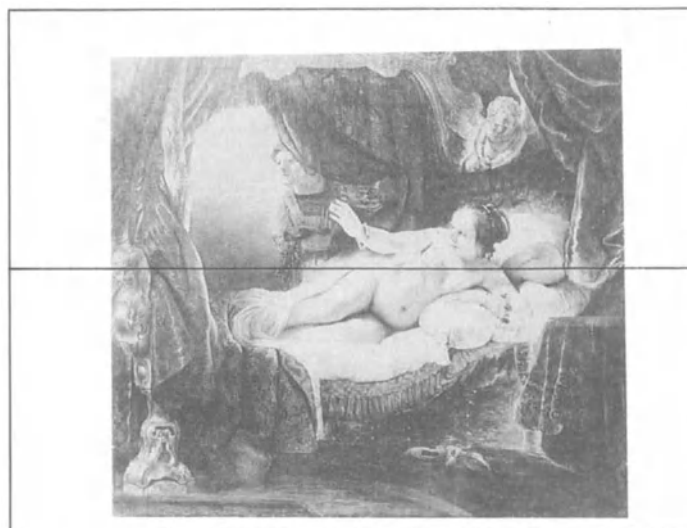
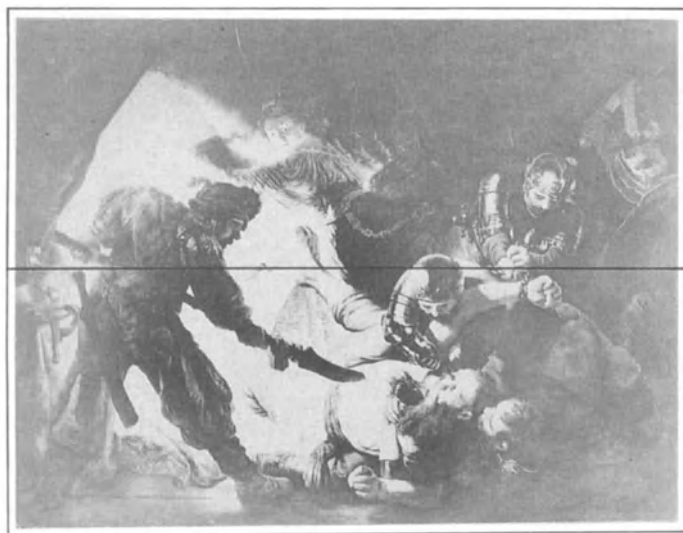
<sup>75</sup> Of these four only one is still in its original state – the anonymous *Portrait of Dirck Hendricksz. van Swieten* of 1626 in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (inv. no. C 1528, on loan from the Koninklijk Oudheidkundig Genootschap). The other three, where a modern stretcher has replaced the original lacing system though the holes in the frames still survive, are Hendrick Goltzius' *Hercules and Cacus*, *Mercury* and *Minerva* in the Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem (nos. 470–472, on loan from the Mauritshuis, The Hague). All four are illustrated in exhib. cat. *Prijs de lijst*, Amsterdam 1984, nos. 11 and 6.

TABLE C. *A survey of canvases used for paintings by or attributed to Rembrandt 1631–42, arranged according to strip-width*

Included are only canvases where the weft direction can be established with a reasonable amount of certainty and where at least one strip has kept its original width (or nearly so). Small losses along the edges including selvages are normal and detract from the reliability of the information given. Where external evidence points to a substantial loss of part of the original width, the estimated loss is given in brackets. Measurements in the warp direction are given in order to indicate the entire picture's size.

Presumed standard strip-width		Measurements in centimetres		
		Per strip in weft direction (in case of more than one strip the first number refers to the more intact one)		In warp direction
c. 70 cm (‘1 ell’)	A 98 <i>Portrait of Joh. Elison</i> , Boston A 99 <i>Portrait of Maria Bockenolle</i> , Boston A 46 <i>The Apostle Peter</i> , Stockholm	61.5 61.5 66.2	61.5 61.5	200 200 81.3
c. 85 cm (‘1¼ ell’)	A 68 <i>Christ in the storm</i> , Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston	80	80	128
c. 107 cm (‘½ ell’)	A 70 <i>Bellona</i> , New York A 78 <i>Man rising from his chair</i> , Taft Museum, Cincinnati A 79 <i>Woman in an armchair</i> , New York Br. 456 <i>Dead peacocks</i> , Amsterdam C 66 <i>Susanna van Collen and her daughter</i> , Wallace Coll., London A 53 <i>Portrait of Joris de Caullery</i> , San Francisco Br. 501 <i>The blinding of Samson</i> , Frankfurt Br. 497 <i>Belshazzar's feast</i> , London A 80 <i>Portrait of Joh. Wtenbogaert</i> , Dalmeny House, Coll. Earl of Rosebery Br. 474 <i>Danaë</i> , Leningrad A 54 <i>Man trimming his quill</i> , Kassel A 55 <i>Portrait of a young woman seated</i> , Akademie, Vienna Br. 498 (copy) <i>Abraham's sacrifice</i> , Munich C 67 <i>Portrait of a couple</i> , Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston Br. 469 <i>Minerva</i> , whereabouts unknown Br. 498 <i>Abraham's sacrifice</i> , Leningrad A 64 <i>Young woman at her toilet</i> , Ottawa Br. 218 <i>Portrait of Nicolaes van Bambeeck</i> , Brussels Br. 360 <i>Portrait of Agatha Bas</i> , Buckingham Palace, London Br. 213 <i>Portrait of the minister Swalmius</i> , Antwerp C 68 <i>Portrait of a man</i> , New York C 69 <i>Portrait of a woman</i> , New York	96 98.5 100.5 101 101.7 102.5 103 104.5 105 100 (+ c. 5) 101.5 (+ c. 4) 92 (+ c. 14) 106 106.5 107 108 108.5 108.8 104 (+ . . .) 111.4 112 112	41.5 53.3 85 (+ c. 20) 103 104.5 3 9 85.5 115.5 (+ 24.5) 107 (+ 33)	126 124 126.2 134.8 123 (+ . . .) 83.8 276 167 123 203 81.5 (+ c. 4) 71 (+ c. 14) 132.3 132.2 137 132.8 92.5 83.3 82 (+ . . .) 135.7 89.3 88.8
c. 140 cm (‘2 ell’)	C 65 <i>Jean Pellicorne and his son</i> , Wallace Coll., London A 88 <i>The Holy Family</i> , Munich A 48 <i>Man in oriental dress</i> , New York A 77 <i>Portrait of Jan Rijcksen and Griet Jans</i> , Buckingham Palace, London Br. 499 <i>Samson threatening his father-in-law</i> , Berlin Br. 410 <i>The Night-Watch</i> , Amsterdam	122.5 (+ . . .) 123.5 124 111 (+ 17) 131 (+ 2) 140		155 183.5 152.5 166 159 (+ 2) 438
c. 175 cm (‘2½ ell’)	A 51 <i>Anatomy lesson</i> , The Hague Br. 409 <i>Portrait of Anslo and his wife</i> , Berlin	169.5 173.5		216.5 207.5
c. 210 cm (‘3 ell’)	Br. 522 <i>Haman before Esther and Ahasuerus</i> , Bucharest	187.5 (+ . . .)		234.8

Figs. 24–25. Reconstruction of the original height of the *Danaë* (Leningrad, Hermitage) based on the conclusion that the two strips of canvas come from the same bolt as those of the *Blinding of Samson* (Frankfurt, Städelches Kunstinstitut)



original edges to each other ‘butted’<sup>76</sup>. Probably, however, the edges of strips of canvas were mostly folded back when they were being stitched together, so that the selvages are no longer visible in the radiograph. Consequently, one can be only approximate in talking about the strip-widths used in making the canvases.

When arranging the material in order, as in table C, clear groups become apparent. By far the largest group shows that strips of canvas of around and somewhat over one metre in width are common. This dimension could very well match an original strip-width of *c.* 107 cm, i.e. 1½ ell. This width is found to occur very often in 17th- and 18th-century bedsheets, and must therefore have been a common one<sup>77</sup>. The ell was the measurement normally used for fabrics<sup>78</sup>.

Surveying the painting formats shown in table C, one finds that this strip-width was apparently often employed either singly or doubled. This would indicate that the canvas-primers preferred, when deciding on the size of canvases, to be guided by the full strip-width available (used either single or double). Looked at from the economic viewpoint, such a choice is understandable, because a loss of material would then be avoided as much as possible. It is something of a surprise that the dimensions of a painting were governed partly by the width of a weaver’s loom.

<sup>76</sup> In the greater part of the Gouda paintings mentioned in note 65 the seams are made by sewing the selvages of the canvases together without turning the fabric back. This method has, according to Von Sonnenburg, *op. cit.* (note 7), p. 176 note 5, been described by Antonio Palomino, *op. cit.* (note 63), p. 482.

<sup>77</sup> We owe this information to Mr C. A. Burgers, Rijksmuseum. The fact that such a standard strip was current throughout Europe is documented by the fact that with paintings by Tintoretto and many other Venetian paintings as well as a painting by Murillo the same stripwidth was encountered; cf. J. Plesters and L. Lazzarini, *op. cit.* (note 7), p. 154; H. von Sonnenburg, *op. cit.* (note 7), p. 159.

<sup>78</sup> See note 30.

The way the strip of cloth was made into the painting support could vary (see table C). The latter’s length or width could correspond to the width of the original strip, and the warp could accordingly run widthwise or lengthwise. With large paintings one often finds two full strip-widths sewn together, with the seam lengthwise or widthwise (nos. A 68, A 98, A 99, Br. 474, 497, 501). There is a further group of paintings where a full strip-width and a narrower strip of the same kind of canvas have been stitched together (nos. C 65, C 66, Br. 456). Here, therefore, there has been a loss of material unless the remainder of the strip was utilized elsewhere.

There is a small group of paintings where it may be assumed that the supports were cut from bolts of canvas with a width of *c.* 140 cm (table C). From examination of the ‘*Night watch*’ (Br. 410), of which one horizontal strip is still intact, we know that the strip-width of 140 cm, or 2 ells, was also used. In its original format the ‘*Night watch*’ probably consisted of three strips 140 cm wide. Here, too, therefore the format corresponded to a multiple of full strip-widths.

Much narrower strips are also encountered. In the portraits of Johannes Elison and Maria Bockenolle (nos. A 98 and A 99), both of which have a vertical seam through the middle, strips of canvas have been used that cannot be much wider than 70 cm, or 1 ell. In the *Christ in the storm* (no. A 68), with a horizontal seam through the middle, the strips of canvas cannot have been much broader than 85 cm, which amounts to ¾ ell or 3 Amsterdam feet. This corresponds to a strip-width that was called ‘breeddoek’ (wide cloth) and was commonly used in sailmaking<sup>79</sup>.

Occasionally one meets very wide strips of canvas

<sup>79</sup> See note 31.

with a plain weave. In the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* (no. A 51) and the *Portrait of Cornelis Anslo and his wife* (Br. 409) the present width of the strips of canvas used is 169.5 and 172 cm respectively. Possibly strips measuring  $2\frac{1}{2}$  ells (i.e. about 175 cm) were employed. The widest strip of canvas found in a painting from Rembrandt's workshop measures 190 cm, and occurs in the Bucharest *Haman before Esther and Ahasuerus* (Br. 522). In view of the composition of the painting and the nature of the cusping, this canvas must have been even wider, perhaps 210 cm (= 3 ells), a strip-width that was also employed in the *Claudius Civilis* (Br. 482), which is on a twill cloth (see note 40).

The use of knowing about standard strip-widths is that in cases where there is a suspicion that a painting no longer has its original format it becomes possible, because of the presumed strip-widths, to hazard a guess at the width of the missing fragment. On the basis of the position of the seam in the canvas of the *Danaë* (Br. 474), for instance, an accurate estimate could be made of the width of the parts of the canvas missing at the top and bottom (figs. 24, 25)<sup>80</sup>. In making such a reconstruction there are, of course other items of evidence that play a role. Knowing the strip-widths employed can also give an idea of whether, in Rembrandt's studio, formats as they came from the canvas-primer were adapted to the artist's requirements. In the case of the *Minerva* (Br. 469), which has a vertical seam at about 10 cm from the lefthand edge, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the canvas originally, like the two other canvases from the same bolt (the *Belshazzar's feast*, Br. 497, and the Munich *Abraham's sacrifice*), was made up of two full strip-widths of c. 107 cm, but that on the lefthand side a large piece measuring 137 by 96 cm was removed before the painting was begun; the composition virtually precludes an extension to the left. In the Munich *Abraham's sacrifice* the upper horizontal strip is about 20 cm narrower than the lower, and the nature of the cusping along the top edge forces the assumption that the canvas, when it was stretched for priming, was some 20 cm higher at the top, thus reaching the double strip-width (cf. fig. 8). The assumption that comes naturally to mind is that this strip was removed by a later hand – but against this there is the fact that the support of the painting from which it has been copied, the Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* (Br. 498), has exactly the same format. Yet this latter painting, too, has the seam c. 10 cm above the middle. The impossibility of making legible radiographs of the latter painting (owing to the radioabsorbency of the lining material used)

prevents a study of the cusping. It is however highly probable that with the Leningrad painting as well a narrow band had been removed. The close similarity in format with the Munich version suggests that Rembrandt had himself, just as with the *Minerva*, adapted the given format to his wishes before or during work on the painting.

With the London *Belshazzar's feast*, the cuspings become shallower from one corner to the other along all the sides, while the widths of the two canvases incorporated in the support differ at top and bottom and the seam is slightly oblique (fig. 8). It is obvious that wedge-shaped strips have been trimmed off all the way round, so that the whole composition is tilted by several degrees. When reconstructing the original position of the canvas one finds that the table depicted is found to come to a horizontal position and the wine pours vertically from the beaker of the woman on the right (fig. 26).

If the paintings are grouped by format there is then every indication that – just as with the panels – there were standard sizes of canvas. A frequently-encountered format measures about 125 cm by about 100 cm (probably originally c. 107 cm). Another group measures c. 100 cm (probably originally 107 cm) × c. 80 cm. And then there is a small group measuring c. 210 cm by 135 cm (probably originally c. 140 cm), and another of c. 155 cm × c. 130 cm. (cf. table C).

Speculations about standard sizes of canvas are more problematical than in the case of panels, where the traces of work on the back can often provide the answer to the question of whether the panel is still its original size. The groups of sizes assembled here are thus hardly more than an attempt to demonstrate the clustering of sizes. We know from Southern Netherlandish sources that there standard sizes for canvases were used, but in the Northern Netherlands one finds scant information relating expressly to canvases in this respect<sup>81</sup>.

Though the foregoing does suggest that there is a direct connexion between standard strip-widths and standard canvas sizes, one finds that canvases were sometimes not taken from what would be the natural choice of strip-width. There are canvases that could have been taken quite simply from a single

80 See note 51.

81 In Antwerp inventories published by J. Denucé, *Kunstuitvoer in de 17de eeuw te Antwerpen. De firma Forchoudt*, Antwerpen 1931, frequent use is made of terms such as 'cartierdoecken', 'halfdoecken', 'enkeldoecken', 'dobbeldoecken' etc. (see pp. 28, 29, 51, 76, 79, 98). Some of these correspond to those found in a sketch by George Vertue from c. 1730/34; see Talley, op. cit. (note 32), fig. 20. In the Northern Netherlands the terms used for canvases of a number of standard sizes were identical with those used for panels, and mostly referred to coins or amounts of money; cf. A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare*, esp. I pp. 334–343, V p. 1656).



Fig. 26. *Belshazzar's feast* (London, National Gallery) reproduced in its original position and format.



strip, but have instead been assembled from two narrower strips. In the case of the *Christ in the storm* the 128 cm wide, vertical canvas is made up of two 80 cm strips joined together with a horizontal seam. Most remarkable in this respect are the portraits of the Elison couple, where both supports, 123 cm wide, are assembled from two narrow vertical strips sewn together. In this connexion one has to realize that prices of wider strips of canvas were progressively higher<sup>82</sup>. The supports of the Elison portraits must therefore have been considerably cheaper than those used, for instance, for the portraits of Marten Soolmans and Oopjen Coppit (nos. A 100 and A 101). It occurs only rarely that a canvas was taken from a wider strip. One may deduce this from cases where a support has been taken from a bolt of

canvas, identified by examination of the weave, that has also provided one or more wider canvases<sup>83</sup>.

Using relatively narrow strips in the large canvases made up from several such strips (cf. table C) entails the presence of seams in the paintings. Not infrequently these seams run through the heads of the subjects of the portraits or through main figures in history paintings, indicating that the artist must have been hardly aware of the existence of the seams as he worked. The way the canvases were primed probably made seams quite invisible.

As chance has it, what is probably the only written 17th-century evidence concerning seams in paintings on canvas relates to Rembrandt himself. When Antonio Ruffo complained that the *Alexander* that he had commissioned had pieces added on all

82 Boot, op. cit. (note 23), p. 37.

83 In the case of the *Flora* (no. A 93) and the *Cupid* (no. A 91) the width of the paintings does not match that of the bolts from which these canvases were taken.



sides, so that there were obtrusive seams, Rembrandt replied that there was no need at all for the seams to spoil the effect if the painting was hung in the proper light<sup>84</sup>. In that case it is obvious that enlargements during the course of the work were involved, the seams of which were impossible to conceal entirely. Where canvases were joined together before being primed, the seam is – with well-preserved, unlined or very carefully lined canvases – still after hundreds of years scarcely visible at the front surface. And yet it is plain, from the fact that with obviously important portrait commissions (such as the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp*, no. A 51, and the *Portrait of Cornelis Anslo and his wife*, Br. 409) exceptionally large canvases were taken from a single piece, that importance was attached to having a canvas without a join. In advertisements from the period in which full-width paintings on canvas were used to cover the walls of a room, one finds strips of canvas of extraordinary widths being boasted of<sup>85</sup>. But then, in the early 18th century, the technique of painting on canvas had been practised long enough for it to be realised that a seam can eventually, through a combination of factors connected with ageing, be very obtrusive.

Investigations into the properties of painted canvases – thread density, weave characteristics, cusping, strip-width and painting formats – open up unexpected possibilities of obtaining new and sometimes significant information. They may even result in surprising insights into the genesis and history of a picture. This kind of research requires however painstaking and time-consuming analysis of numerous radiographs, an investment that will not always be rewarding. One can only hope that such art historian's 'geology' may, as is already the case with dendrochronology, eventually become accepted practice, even if it only once in a while reveals a mine of information.

#### *Some remarks on ground and underpainting*

It is remarkable that Rembrandt (like, probably, many of his contemporaries) worked, when painting on panel, with a yellowish ground, whereas when he was using a canvas support the ground was as a rule a grey colour. Since the ground plays an important

part during work on the monochrome preparatory phase of the painting, dead-coloured paintings on the two types of support must have been quite different in appearance. Recent research on the Rembrandts in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, has also made it clear that the paint used for the underpainting on a canvas generally contained a good deal of black, unlike the translucent brownish paint used on a panel<sup>86</sup>. One has therefore to suppose that the dead-coloured painting tended, in the case of canvases, to a grey range, while with panels the monochrome image had a brownish range. The explanation why a different ground colour was used for canvases compared to the traditional panels may lie in the fact that together with the introduction of painting on canvas into the Netherlands, recipes for grounds developed elsewhere, especially in Italy, were imported at the same time<sup>87</sup>. When preparing panels, on the other hand, the Netherlands had developed the custom of using 'carnation-toned', i.e. warm-tinted, grounds<sup>88</sup>.

Equally noteworthy is the fact that most (if not all) grounds on canvas, as analysed from the first ten years of Rembrandt's activity in Amsterdam, were built up from two layers of different colours both with an oil medium – the lower always comprising a red ochre, the upper a mixture of white lead with a black pigment; a grey surface thus resulted (fig. 27)<sup>89</sup>. The first idea that comes to mind is that this combination of layers was intended to achieve a certain colour effect, with a warm tint showing through a cooler one. Yet it can be seen, from paintings that are in a sound condition, that the grey top layer is applied so opaquely that an effect of this kind just cannot occur. One possible explanation for this procedure is that a cheap ochre as the principal component of the material used for closing up the structure of the canvas brought a substantial

84 Strauss *Doc.*, 1662/11 and 12.

85 Cf. *Amsterdamsche Courant*, 8 September 1739 (Gemeente Archief, Amsterdam, 1032): 'Jan de Vries maeckt bekend, dat bij hem te bekomen is allerley soorten van geplemeert solder en schilderdoeck, van 1 tot 6 el breed zonder naet daer in uyt een stuck' (Jan de Vries offers for sale various kinds of primed ceiling or painting canvas, 1 to 6 ells wide without any seam in one piece). Kind communication from Mrs K. Levy.

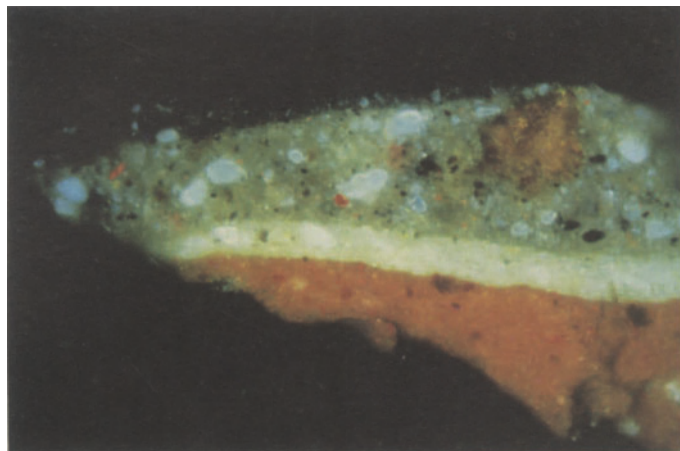
86 See M. W. Ainsworth, J. Brealey, E. Haverkamp-Begemann, P. Meyers, 'Paintings by Van Dyck, Vermeer, and Rembrandt reconsidered through autoradiography', in: *Art and autoradiography: insights into the genesis of paintings by Rembrandt, Van Dyck, and Vermeer*, New York (The Metropolitan Museum of Art) 1982, esp. p. 27 and note 34.

87 J. Plesters, 'Photomicrographs of cross-sections of paint and ground samples' in 'The ground in pictures', *Museum* 21 (1968), pp. 245–276.

88 Cf. Karel van Mander in his life of Jheronimus Bosch (*Het Schilder-Boeck*, Haarlem 1604, fol. 216 vo): 'Hy hadde oock als meer ander oude Meesters de maniere, zijn dinghen te teekenen en trecken op het wit der Pennelen, en daer over een doorschijnigh carnatiachtigh primuersel te legghen en liet oock dickwils de gronden mede wercken' (Like other old masters, it was his manner to design and draw on the white of the panels and to lay over this a translucent, carnation-toned 'primuersel' and he often let the grounds show through).

89 The description of cross-sections including the ground layers will be found in the relevant catalogue entries under *Ground*, SCIENTIFIC DATA. See also the Table of technical reference material (pp. 859–864).

Fig. 27. Cross-section of a sample taken in the background (near the right-hand edge) of the *Bellona* (New York, Metropolitan Museum), described as no. 4 under no. A 70, *Ground and Paint layer*. Of the two ground layers, the lower is reddish and is seen to fill the relief of the fabric. The top layer appears whitish but is actually grey.



saving in cost, as white lead was a great deal more expensive<sup>90</sup>.

Before the ground was applied the canvas had been treated so as to close the structure of the weave. We know that this was usual, from a number of recipes given by De Mayerne in which it is said that the canvas was treated with glue and rubbed with a pumice stone while damp. The purpose of this is given as flattening as far as possible any unevenness in the canvas. This treatment stuck the warp and weft threads so firmly together that the canvas became virtually impenetrable by the priming, which was laid on with a wide priming-knife<sup>91</sup>.

As we have said, the underpainting involved application of paint containing black, though this does not necessarily mean that the underpainting was opaque at all points. In a painting by Rubens that has remained almost entirely in this preparatory stage<sup>92</sup> one can see quite well how this paint has remained for the most part translucent, through being brushed onto the canvas quite thinly. One can also see how, in certain places, some areas have been heightened with a light paint. It is noteworthy that colour is additionally used at some places, although one does not get the impression, from the way this colour is used, that it prepares the colouristic effect being aimed at; the colour is rather being used to bring some clarity to the quite chaotic initial lay-in. The little that we know of Rembrandt's way of

underpainting, in the case of paintings on canvas, does not conflict with the method seen in Rubens. Rembrandt, too, made use of light highlights. As a rule these were whitish, though occasionally colour can also be found in them. In the *'Night Watch'*, for example, a flesh-coloured underpainting is found in an incarnate area, just as happens in the Rubens we have mentioned. If the Washington *Man in oriental dress* (no. B8) is in fact an only partially completed painting by Rembrandt, it would show clearly how, in an early stage of the work, colour was used at some points in combination with a monochrome treatment.

Whereas in the completed paintings on panel the colour of the ground plays a not unimportant role – it shows through in many places, and is thus easy to make out – this is not so with paintings on canvas. Often it is impossible to point with assurance to places where the ground is exposed, or shows through. This problem is explicable not only by the fact that the colour of the ground was left uncovered only now and then, as an intermediate tint, but also by the fact that, unlike the luminous ground on a panel, the ground on canvas looks like a normal layer of oil-paint (which it indeed is), and is thus much more integrated into the paint layer.

Yet it cannot be said that the ground plays no part in the appearance of a painting on canvas. The coolness of Rembrandt's canvases from his first ten years in Amsterdam, which causes surprise each time varnish is removed, was at some points undoubtedly due to the grey colour of the ground, and to the underpainting tending towards a grey. This is in contrast to the panels, where the yellowish ground, acting together locally with the warm brownish underpainting where this is present, helps to create a contrast with areas of cooler, opaque paint. In a much later painting on canvas, the Kassel *Jacob's blessing* (Br. 525), also on a double-layered, red-grey ground, it is possible to see how Rembrandt, in making a substantial pentimento, covered the passage he was going to alter with a grey layer that is hardly distinguishable from the colour of the ground.

E. v. d. W.

<sup>90</sup> The difference in price that existed between white lead and ochres is illustrated by valuations found in inventories. In the estate of Trijntge Pieters described on 12 March 1648 (Municipal Archives, Rotterdam, Weeskamer boedel 430) 246 pound of brown ochre is valued at 8 guilders 12 stuivers, 28 pound of white lead at 4 guilders. In an estate at Dordrecht in 1667 (Municipal Archives, Dordrecht, not. A. de Haen, N. A. no. 20/224, fol. 114), yellow ochre is described as costing 5 guilders per 100 pound, white lead 14 $\frac{3}{4}$  guilders per 100 pound. Kind communication from Mrs K. Levy.

<sup>91</sup> See note 37.

<sup>92</sup> *The battle of Henri IV for the suburbs of Paris*, canvas stuck on panel, 174 × 260 cm, Antwerp, Rubenshuis. Formerly in the Neuerburg and Bührle collections. Cf. G. Glück in: *Jb. d. Kunsth. Samml. Wien*, new series 11 (1937), p. 176, pl. XIX; I. Jost in: *N.K.J.* 15 (1964), pp. 185–187, fig. 8; J. Müller Hofstede in: *Pantheon* 27 (1969), p. 460, fig. 1.

## Chapter III

### Problems of apprenticeship and studio collaboration\*

#### *The population of Rembrandt's workshop*

Since Bredius published his critical catalogue in 1935, almost every fresh definition of Rembrandt's painted oeuvre has brought a further reduction in the number of paintings attributed to him. This has meant a corresponding increase in the number of works that while displaying Rembrandtesque features must be assumed to have been done by other hands. The number of later imitations or forgeries included among this category (which has grown again through our research) is in all probability only small. Technically and materially such paintings mostly do not differ significantly from what one finds in works accepted as authentic Rembrandts<sup>1</sup>. Assuming that the rejections (about many of which there has in fact been general agreement for quite some time) are warranted, one is led to conclude that these paintings were as a rule produced in Rembrandt's circle.

The attribution of these works to other hands does, however, raise considerable problems. If one takes seriously the principle formulated during discussion at one of the symposia at the time of the Rembrandt tercentenary in 1969 – i.e. that no painting should be rejected unless a new attribution is possible –, then many of the rejections by Bauch, Gerson and the Rembrandt Research Project cannot be justified. For example there is, apart from Flinck, scarcely any other painter in the Rembrandt literature who can be suggested as the author of works being rejected from the earliest Amsterdam years<sup>2</sup>.

The demand that an alternative attribution should be produced when rejecting a work seems justifiable at first sight. When one looks at the long list of over 50 names found in the Rembrandt literature of young painters who are said to have worked in Rembrandt's studio during his career, there does in fact seem to be ample choice. However, one-half of these more than 50 names will, as Broos has shown, drop out of the lists of Rembrandt pupils published in various quarters when one looks criti-

cally at how these lists were compiled<sup>3</sup>. There is, conversely, every reason to doubt whether the total of names of painters accepted as being his pupils does in fact match the number of pupils and assistants he actually had. There may have been many more. As we shall see below, the names of pupils have come down to us only more or less by chance; others may have fallen into oblivion. No contemporaneous rollcall of the 'population' of Rembrandt's workshop has survived<sup>4</sup>.

Something must be said here about the term 'pupil' as it is commonly used. Young painters who had done their apprenticeship elsewhere and are known to have worked in Rembrandt's studio, such as Bol and Flinck, are usually referred to in the literature as his pupils; strictly speaking they probably were not, though there can be no doubt that they came to work with Rembrandt in order to learn from him. Their status would however have been more that of a journeyman or studio assistant. The word 'pupil', in the way it will be repeatedly used in what follows, must therefore be understood in the widest sense<sup>5</sup>.

Seventeenth-century written documents of various kinds provide direct or indirect evidence – of greatly varying weight – of a stay with Rembrandt of, at most, nine persons: Leendert van Beyeren<sup>6</sup>,

3 For the following quantitative discussion of the population of Rembrandt's workshop I rely largely on Broos' extremely useful analysis of the sources and scholarly tradition concerning Rembrandt's pupils in: B. Broos, 'Fame shared is fame doubled', in: cat. exh. *The impact of a genius. Rembrandt, his pupils and followers in the seventeenth century*, Amsterdam (K. & V. Waterman) 1983, pp. 35–58, esp. 44–54.

4 Books in which apprentices and assistants were listed by the guild authorities must however have existed; see, for instance, J. M. Montias, *Artists and artisans in Delft. A socio-economic study of the seventeenth century*, Princeton 1982, pp. 97, 106, 351 no. 7. I. H. van Eeghen, *De gilden. Theorie en praktijk*, Bussum 1974 (first edn. 1965), p. 20, mentions the obligation for apprentices to be enrolled in apprentice books, of which some, e.g. of the Amsterdam masons' guild, have been preserved. The regulation of the Amsterdam S. Luke's Guild of 1626 stipulates that a master who omits to have a pupil registered within a month will have to pay a fine of 30 stuyvers (Obreen's *Archief voor Nederlandsche Kunstgeschiedenis* III, 1880–81, p. 149).

5 It may well be that the word 'disciple' had a similar broad meaning during the 17th century.

6 Leendert Cornelisz. van Beyeren is mentioned among the buyers at the auction of the estate of Jan Basse, Amsterdam 9–30 March 1637: 'Leendert Cornelisz disipel van Rembrandt' (Strauss *Doc.*, 1637/2). Rembrandt himself obviously referred to him when he wrote on the back of the Berlin drawing of *Susannah and the elders* (Ben. 447): 'Leenderts floorae is verhandelt tegen 5g' (Leendert's *Flora* has been sold for 5 guilders; Strauss *Doc.*, pp. 594–95). In the estate of Leendert's father, the timber merchant Cornelis Aertsz. van Beyeren, four copies after Rembrandt are described on 7 May 1638 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1638/5). Leendert van Beyeren may be reckoned among the best-documented Rembrandt pupils. No work from his hand is known with any certainty (cf. however Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 77).

1 Dendrochronological examination provided the clearest evidence on this point. None of the panels carrying paintings of doubtful or unacceptable authenticity that could be examined turned out to be of a demonstrably later date than the purported one.

2 K. Bauch (*Rembrandt Gemälde*, Berlin 1966, pp. 47–49) suggested an attribution to Flinck in three cases and in one considered an attribution to J. A. Backer. H. Gerson in his revised edition of A. Bredius, *Rembrandt*, London 1935/1969 mentions G. Flinck as the (possible) author of twelve paintings.

\* While preparing this chapter I received valuable advice and assistance from various people to all of whom I want to express my gratitude. I am especially indebted to Greet van Duyn and Brigitte Blauwhoff, who worked temporarily at the Central Research Laboratory, Amsterdam, to B. V. Leverland and S. A. C. Dudok van Heel of the Leiden and Amsterdam Municipal Archives respectively, and to Jacques Vis, who unearthed much useful information. I have to thank Karin van Nes, of the Central Research Laboratory, Amsterdam, for the care she spent on my text.

Heijman Dullaert<sup>7</sup>, Jan van Glabbeeck<sup>8</sup>, Isack Jouderville<sup>9</sup>, Jacob or Philips Koninck<sup>10</sup>, Jacobus Levecq<sup>11</sup>, Constantijn van Renesse<sup>12</sup>, and Ferdinand Bol<sup>13</sup>. With far less certainty the following names can be added on the basis of similar documents: Jacob van Dorsten<sup>14</sup>, Hendrick Heerschop<sup>15</sup>, Dirck Santvoort<sup>16</sup>, and J. G. van Vliet<sup>17</sup>. From publications by 17th-century authors (who in all prob-

ability had their information at first hand) we know the names of another eight pupils: Orlers in 1641 discusses Gerard Dou<sup>18</sup>, Hoogstraaten in 1678 mentions Fabritius (certainly Carel), Abraham Furnerius and himself<sup>19</sup>, and Sandrart in 1675 names Govaert Flinck, Johann Ulrich Mayr, Christoph Paudiss and Gerard Dou<sup>20</sup>, and Baldinucci in 1686 gives the names of Bernhard Keil, Govaert Flinck and Gerard Dou<sup>21</sup>. It is striking that there is not a single written document about any of the pupils mentioned in printed sources that confirms the relationship with Rembrandt and vice versa.

Houbraken, in 1718, says of 17 artists that they had studied with Rembrandt<sup>22</sup>. Of the twenty or so artists listed above who, on the grounds of contemporaneous sources, can with a varying degree of certainty be classed as Rembrandt pupils, there are ten who are not mentioned by Houbraken, while he names nine who so far as is known do not appear in any earlier source. The scant correlation between the various sources just quoted is already an indication that the chance of these various 'nets' having trawled out of the murky depths of the past the names of all Rembrandt's pupils is a very slim one indeed. Of the names that occur in the 17th-century sources and Houbraken taken together there are some, such as Dou and Flinck, who are mentioned more than once; this could well stem from the reputation these artists acquired during their lifetime. The remaining names have come down to us through a variety of chance circumstances – making all the greater the likelihood that just as fortuitously the names of others, and perhaps many others, have been lost.

Most of the well over twenty further names of possible Rembrandt pupils that have been added in the Rembrandt literature from c. 1850 onwards are regarded as being such on less or more convincing

7 Heijman Dullaert acted as a witness to an authorization given by Rembrandt on 28 March 1653 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1653/14). That he was a pupil of his appears only from a posthumous biographical note by David van Hoogstraten, published in H. Dullaerts *Gedichten*, Rotterdam 1719 (HdG *Urk.*, no. 410), from which Houbraken took his information (ibidem no. 427).

8 Johannes Glabbeeck, and Jacobus 'Labeecq' are mentioned as Rembrandt's disciples ('sijn getuijgens dissipelen als getuijgen') when they act as witnesses to the authentication by Rembrandt of a painting by Paulus Brill on 16 September 1653 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1653/16). Levecq ('Labeecq') was to become a painter (and teacher of Houbraken) in Dordrecht, Van Glabbeeck a merchant.

9 Isack Jouderville is the only artist whose apprenticeship with Rembrandt is fully documented, as a consequence of his being an orphan and the administrative requirements this involved; see below, pp. 76 ff., and E. van de Wetering, 'Isaac Jouderville, a pupil of Rembrandt', in: cat. exh. *The impact of a genius. Rembrandt, his pupils and followers in the seventeenth century*, Amsterdam (K. & V. Waterman) 1983, pp. 59–69.

10 In 1639 the estate of the jeweller Aert (de) Coninx, father of the painters Jacob and Philips Koning, comprised, besides a woman's *tronie* by Philips (then 19 years old) and an unfinished *tronie* by Jacob, four paintings 'nae Rembrant' (Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/9 and A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare I*, The Hague 1915, pp. 150–152). That Philips was a pupil of Rembrandt, is mentioned only in the second volume of Houbraken's *Groote Schouburgh* of 1719, p. 53 (HdG *Urk.*, no. 414).

11 See note 8.

12 Two inscriptions on a drawing of *Daniel in the lion's den* in the Museum Boymans-van Beuningen, Rotterdam, yield apparently contradictory evidence (Strauss *Doc.*, 1649/5). One, on the recto, runs: 'C Renesse inventor et fecit 1652', the other, on the verso: 'De eerste tijkeninge getoont by Rem Brant in het jaer 1649 den 1 October het waert voor de twee mael dat ick bij Rembrandt geweest bin'. The authenticity of the latter inscription has been disputed.

13 On the back of the drawing cited in note 6, containing notes from Rembrandt's hand, he wrote: '[f]ardynandus van sijn werck verhandelt/aen n ander werck van syn voorneemen/den abraham een floorae' (sold of Ferdinand's work, and another of his design, the Abraham one Flora); see Strauss *Doc.*, pp. 594–95. There can be little doubt that 'fardynandus' refers to Ferdinand Bol, who signed an early picture (Blankert *Bol*, no. 35) 'ferdenandus b . . .' and who is mentioned as 'Sr. Ferdinandus Bol' in August 1640 when he acts as a witness to an authorization given by Rembrandt (Strauss *Doc.*, 1640/7).

14 The estate of Matthys van Dorsten, brother of the painter Jacobus van Dorsten, who had died in 1678, comprised in 1694 numerous pictures and painting utensils that had obviously belonged to his brother. Among the paintings is 'een tronie na Rembrant' (A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare II*, The Hague 1916, p. 713). A Rembrandtesque drawing with two poor sketches of the *Dismissal of Hagar* in the Rijksprentenkabinet (M. D. Henkel, *Catalogus . . . I, Teekeningen van Rembrandt en zijn school*, The Hague 1942, p. 73 and pl. 132) is inscribed 'Jakobus van Dorsten'. The only signed painting known is in Dresden (Sumowski *Gemälde I*, no. 241).

15 A portrait drawing that is no longer known, purportedly done after a painting dated 1649, bore an inscription to the effect that the sitter was the Haarlem painter Hendrik Heerschop and a pupil of Rembrandt (Strauss *Doc.*, 1649/11).

16 Dirck Dircksz. van Santvoort is known to have painted 'een Tronij na Rembrant', described as such on the authority of Hendrick Uylenburgh in 1647 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1647/4).

17 J. G. van Vliet's relation with Rembrandt appears to have been that of a printmaker employed by him (see Vol. I, Introduction, Chapter III) rather than of a pupil.

18 I. I. Orlers, *Beschrijvinge der Stadt Leyden*, 2nd edn Leiden 1641, p. 375; cf. Strauss *Doc.*, 1641/9.

19 S. van Hoogstraten, *Inleyding tot de Hooge Schoole der Schilderconst*, Rotterdam 1678, pp. 11, 95 and 181; cf. HdG *Urk.*, no. 337.

20 Joachim von Sandrart's *Academie der Bau-, Bild-, und Mahlerey-Künste*, ed. A. R. Peltzer, Munich 1925, pp. 194, 195, 206 and 349.

21 F. Baldinucci, *Cominciamento, e progresso dell'arte dell'intagliare in rame . . .*, Florence 1686, pp. 78 ff; cf. HdG *Urk.*, no. 360.

22 A. Houbraken, *Groote Schouburgh der Nederlantsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen*, 3 vols., Amsterdam 1718–1721: Bol (I, p. 301), Paudiss, Franz Wulfhagen and Jürgen Ovens (I, p. 273), Dou (II, p. 2), Flinck (II, p. 20), Philips Koning (II, p. 53), Gerbrand van den Eeckhout (II, p. 100), Levecq (II, p. 153), Samuel van Hoogstraten (II, p. 155), Michael Willemans (II, p. 233), Nicolaes Maes (II, p. 273), Willem Drost (III, p. 61), Dullaert (III, p. 79), Aert de Gelder (III, p. 206), Godfrey Kneller (III, p. 233), Cornelis Brouwer (III, p. 392). Houbraken (II, p. 57) states disbelief in the tradition that Adriaen Verdoel was a pupil of Rembrandt.

stylistic grounds<sup>23</sup>; the approach to this has been relatively uncritical and rather expansionist. After critical sifting of this group Broos was left with seven, though even some of these can be argued against<sup>24</sup>. From the disproportion between the small number of pupils or collaborators known to us from the first few years in Amsterdam and the large number of rejected paintings that bear the marks of Rembrandt's style from that period, one suspects that a relatively large number of workshop collaborators from these years are still unknown to us. An examination of the rejected works gives the impression that more hands than we know of by name were involved in their production. The only young painter we do know with certainty to have worked with Rembrandt at this time is, as said above, Govaert Flinck.

One can of course think of many reasons why the name of a Rembrandt pupil or assistant has not come down to us. Early death, a change of occupation or never having achieved independent status are already grounds enough for such figures having sunk into oblivion. The extent to which chance plays a part here can be demonstrated by what is known of the workshops of two of Rembrandt's pupils who did become independent masters – Govaert Flinck and Ferdinand Bol. In Flinck's case the literature mentions the name of only one pupil of his, Johannes Spilberg, which we owe to Houbraken<sup>25</sup>. One thus has the image of Flinck as a solitary painter; yet from a document to which attention has recently again been drawn by Dudok van Heel it is apparent that this was not so<sup>26</sup>. In this document, dealing with the conduct of one of Flinck's models, a person living in the same house as Govaert Flinck talks about 'de knechts en de jongens de welke op zijn Sr Flinks winkel schilderden' (the assistants and apprentices who painted in Mr Flinck's shop); they were obviously doing so at one and the same time, since these workshop collaborators were mentioned in connexion with one particular incident that took place in about 1649. Instead of a painter working in isolation we therefore

have, from this document, a picture of Flinck's workshop as peopled by a sizeable band of pupils and assistants also painting. But these studio companions of Flinck remain nameless. In the case of Bol there are two painters who are said by later biographers to have done their training with Bol (C. Bisschop and G. Kneller)<sup>27</sup>. But from the fact that one assistant in Bol's workshop, Frans van Ommeren, left it without having fulfilled the agreed conditions in 1662, we know that Bol's workshop was more heavily populated than it seemed<sup>28</sup>. A document like this again came about because of an out-of-the-ordinary event, and thus lifts no more than a tiny corner of the veil that hides from us the situation in Bol's studio. It is noteworthy that not a single work by Frans van Ommeren is known, which makes it possible that some of his paintings are hidden among the oeuvre of Bol, just as Flinck's oeuvre may contain works by pupils and assistants we are not aware of.

Evidence that in Rembrandt's workshop too there were more hands at work than the limited number of preserved names suggests, is provided by a frequently quoted passage from Joachim von Sandrart, who lived in Amsterdam from 1637 to 1644 or 1645<sup>29</sup>. On the most optimistic estimates one can name ten Rembrandt pupils from the first half of this period, of whom perhaps five have survived Broos's critical assessment. From the second period we have the names of nine possible pupils, of whom no more than six probably did in fact work with Rembrandt<sup>30</sup>. So while the sources show no more than five or six young painters in his studio at the same time, Sandrart recalls them as 'fast unzählbaren' (almost countless)<sup>31</sup>. The high sum that Sandrart mentions as the annual proceeds from the sale of paintings and prints done by pupils – 2000 to

23 J. A. Backer, A. van Borssom, L. Doomer, Abraham van Dyck, A. Erkelens, J. Esselens, B. Fabritius, A. Furnerius, R. van Gherwen, G. W. Horst, H. Jansen, J. Leupenius, C. van der Pluym, W. de Poorter, R. Roghman, J. des Rousseaux, J. Ruischer, J. van Spreuw, G. Uylenburgh, J. Victors, J. de Wet, P. de With; cf. Broos, op. cit. (note 3), pp. 49–54.

24 Abraham van Dijck, Reinier van Gherwen, Gerrit Willemsz. Horst, Carel van der Pluym, Willem de Poorter, Jan Victors, Jacob de Wet; cf. Broos, op. cit. (note 3), pp. 49–54.

25 Houbraken, op. cit. (note 22), III p. 43.

26 S. A. C. Dudok van Heel, 'Het "schilderhuys" van Govert Flinck en de kunsthandel van Uylenburgh aan de Lauriergracht te Amsterdam', *Jaarboek . . . Amstelodamum* 74 (1982), pp. 70–90, esp. 73–75. Cf. D. C. Meijer Jr., 'De Amsterdamsche Schutters-stukken in en buiten het nieuwe Rijks-Museum', *O.H.* 7 (1889), pp. 45–60, esp. 55 note 3.

27 Houbraken, op. cit. (note 22), II p. 220 and III p. 233.

28 Blankert *Bol*, pp. 22, 74–75.

29 According to A. R. Peltzer, op. cit. (note 20), Sandrart's name was mentioned last in Amsterdam in April 1642 and then, according to H. Vollmer in: *Thieme-Becker* XXIX, p. 397, in Munich in August 1647.

30 Cf. Broos, op. cit. (note 3), pp. 46–47.

31 The relevant passage (Peltzer edn., p. 203) runs as follows: '... dass er ein sehr fleissiger unverdrossener Mann gewesen, dannenhero ihm das Glück grosse baare Mittel zugetheilt und seine Behausung in Amsterdam mit fast unzählbaren fürnehmen Kindern zur Instruction und Lehre erfüllet . . .' (that he was a very industrious and indefatigable man, whence Fortune allotted him great wealth in ready money and filled his house in Amsterdam with almost countless notable children for instruction and learning). E. Haverkamp-Begemann, 'Rembrandt as teacher', in: cat. exh. *Rembrandt after three hundred years*, Chicago 1969, p. 21 observes that Sandrart was perfectly capable of counting the 24 or 25 'fürnehmer Leute Kindern' (children of notable people) that were apprenticed with Honthorst, and suggests that Rembrandt had even more pupils. It should however be remembered that Sandrart had himself been a pupil of Honthorst and could therefore be more specific on the situation in Honthorst's workshop than on that in Rembrandt's (cf. Sandrart op. cit., note 20, p. 173).



2500 guilders – makes it indeed very probable that at that time there were more pupils who worked with Rembrandt than are known from the sources<sup>32</sup>.

The role of the art dealer and painter Hendrick Uylenburgh and the hazy picture we have of his business, with which Rembrandt must have been closely linked during the early Amsterdam years, complicate matters further still. We know, of a number of young artists, that they painted for Uylenburgh at one time or another (see note 104). Since precisely in the period just before Rembrandt moved in with Uylenburgh the latter had evidently expanded his business by means of a sizeable investment of capital, it is quite possible that already in Rembrandt's early years in Amsterdam he had a pool of labour available to him in Uylenburgh's workshop. The relationship between Rembrandt and Uylenburgh will be examined more closely later<sup>33</sup>.

In the light of these facts and suppositions, the viewpoint that works said to be by Rembrandt may be rejected only if a convincing fresh attribution is possible cannot be upheld. We have to accept that the authors of works that, because of painting style and quality, cannot be regarded as autograph Rembrandts include an appreciable number of anonymous painters. If this is not to be seen as an isolated phenomenon, it is important to have some insight into 17th-century studio organization in general, and into notions of the nature of workshop productions in particular. That quite early on there were numerous paintings in circulation linked with Rembrandt's name but done by other hands now unknown to us, is quite certain.

#### *Copies and paintings 'after Rembrandt'*

In the countless mentions of paintings that one finds in 17th-century archives (lists of inventories, estates, paintings to be auctioned or disposed of by lot, etc.)<sup>34</sup> there are not infrequently indications relating to the autograph nature of these works by 17th-century artists. There is regularly mention of copies. Sometimes the autograph status is stressed by speaking of 'principael' (original), or the names are given of two painters who have worked on one painting.

32 If the prices of works by pupils or assistants mentioned in Rembrandt's notes on the back of a drawing in Berlin (Ben. 448) as marketed for 15, 6 and 5 guilders respectively give a fair idea of the average proceeds of such works, hundreds of items would have had to be sold to reach a total of 2000 or 2500 guilders. We know however of drawn as well as painted workshop copies, and it is not clear to which Rembrandt's notes refer.

33 See below, *Rembrandt and Hendrick Uylenburgh*.

34 See especially *Archief voor Nederlandsche Kunstgeschiedenis*, edited by F. D. O. Obreen, 7 vols., Rotterdam 1877–90; A. Bredius, *Kunstler-Inventare* 8 vols, The Hague 1915–1922; J. M. Montias, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 220–271.

Occasionally uncertainty as to whether a work is autograph is explicitly stated. A study of sources of this kind in which Rembrandt's name appears brings to light tendencies that wholly warrant a critical attitude today to paintings that are usually looked on as being by Rembrandt. One is struck, first of all, by the increase over the years in the numbers of paintings that are listed unconditionally as works by Rembrandt, compared to the diminishing number of works described as copies or paintings 'naer (after) Rembrandt'<sup>35</sup>.

Between 1630 and 1640 there are nine paintings listed as being by Rembrandt himself<sup>36</sup>, as against fifteen that are described as 'copie' or 'naer Rembrandt'<sup>37</sup>. The difficult question of whether this means solely faithful copies, or whether paintings in the style of Rembrandt are also included, will be discussed later. When the term 'Rembrandtesque' paintings is used here, it covers both these categories.

In the years 1640–50 there is a considerable change in the ratio of paintings 'van' (by) and 'naer' (after) Rembrandt. In this period 27 paintings are listed as works by Rembrandt<sup>38</sup>, and only five as 'after' him<sup>39</sup>. From 1650 onwards there is hardly any further mention of paintings 'after' Rembrandt<sup>40</sup>.

This drastic decrease in the number of works listed as non-autograph can hardly be thought to mean that the actual proportion of paintings by Rembrandt himself to non-autograph works also changed as radically. One notices, for example, that as soon as anyone who was closely familiar with Rembrandt's workshop was involved in drawing up the inventories, paintings connected with Rembrandt are more frequently described as being *after* him. This happened when Hendrick Uylenburgh described two estates in 1640 and 1647 respectively<sup>41</sup>, and when Bol in 1656 and Eeckhout in 1659

35 We consider here only documents in which others express opinions on Rembrandtesque paintings; paintings mentioned by Rembrandt himself in his letters are disregarded in this connexion, as well as the paintings described in his inventory of 1656. Paintings of which the authorship is not explicitly indicated, e.g. 'twee efigien van den constrijcken schilder Rembrandt met zijn vrouw' (Strauss *Doc.*, 1648/7) are also disregarded.

36 See Strauss *Doc.*, 1632/3, 1636/4, 1637/4, 1638/6, 1639/10, 1639/11.

37 See *ibidem*, 1634/1, 1637/4, 1638/5, 1639/9.

38 *Ibidem*, 1640/1, 1640/4, 1640/15, 1641/1, 1641/2, 1644/2, 1644/4, 1646/4, 1646/7, 1647/1, 1647/4, 1648/4, 1649/2, 1649/10.

39 *Ibidem*, 1640/10, 1647/2, 1647/4.

40 In the 1650s, 38 paintings are mentioned as by Rembrandt and only two as being after him (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/23, 1659/1). In the course of the 1660s, 23 paintings are mentioned as being by Rembrandt and four as being after him. From 1670 to 1703, 65 paintings are listed as by Rembrandt and only two as after him (HdG *Urk.*, nos. 321 and 332). An evidently English copy in watercolour (*ibidem*, 363) and the copies by Rigaud (*ibidem* 387) are disregarded.

41 Strauss *Doc.*, 1640/10, 1647/4.

took part in the valuation of two others<sup>42</sup>. The phenomenon of insiders from Rembrandt's workshop clearly making a sharper distinction between autograph and non-autograph works was already apparent in the 1630s. In the case of certainly 10 out of 15 copies or works 'after' Rembrandt, the inventories are based on the knowledge of persons who must, directly or indirectly, have had some idea of how matters were arranged in Rembrandt's workshop – they deal with the estates of the art dealer and painter Lambert Jacobsz.<sup>43</sup>, and of the fathers of two of Rembrandt's pupils, Leendert van Beyeren and Philips Koninck<sup>44</sup>.

As the numbers of paintings in circulation by or after Rembrandt and his followers grew over the years, so too of course did the number of people who were unaware of how these paintings had come into being. Similar to what has happened since, right down to the present century, there was apparently an increasing likelihood that a Rembrandtesque painting would unquestioningly be taken for a Rembrandt, especially as it must be assumed that many works not by Rembrandt nevertheless bore a Rembrandt signature appended by himself, by an assistant or by some other hand. One can take it that, just as nowadays, the financial aspect had a part to play in such a tendency to overgenerous Rembrandt attributions<sup>45</sup>.

From about 1650, when the number of paintings named in inventories as being 'after' Rembrandt shrank almost to nil, one begins to find – alongside this ready acceptance – occasional expressions of uncertainty as to authenticity. In 1660 two *tronies* were included in a list of paintings with the addition of the words 'by or after Rembrandt'<sup>46</sup>. In 1657 a painting was described as 'een tronij, geseijt van Rembrant' (a *tronie* said to be by Rembrandt)<sup>47</sup>. The most interesting case in this respect dates from 1647, when in a sale catalogue a painting was listed as 'een prin[cipael] [i.e. an autograph work]

Fig. 1. Handwritten list of paintings sold at auction in The Hague from 8 April 1647 onwards, mentioning originally a 'prin[cipael: original by] Rembrant' which was crossed out and replaced by naer [after] Rembrant'. The Hague, Municipal Archives



van Rembrandt'; its authenticity was thus being stressed – yet this description was later crossed out by another hand, and replaced by the words 'een nae Rembrandt'<sup>48</sup>. In that instance, already during Rembrandt's lifetime, there must have been a discussion about the authenticity of one of his paintings of just the same kind as we have today (fig. 1).

An incident like this shows that in the cases where a painting is quite simply listed as being a work by Rembrandt himself we do have cause to wonder whether an autograph work is in fact involved. This can hardly ever be checked, as the usually very skimpy descriptions of the paintings in question make identification impossible. In the very detailed inventory made in 1637/9 of the paintings owned

42 See HdG *Urk.*, no. 175 (cf. Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/23, where no mention is however made of the fact that Bol carried out the valuation) and Strauss *Doc.*, 1659/1.

43 Strauss *Doc.*, 1637/4.

44 Ibidem, 1638/5 and 1639/9.

45 Another clue for understanding this tendency may be found in the observation that the attention of collectors shifted from a painting's subject to the artist who produced it (cf. Montias, *op. cit.*, note 4, p. 227 and elsewhere). It remains for future investigation to verify whether this tendency caused a collapse of the market for copies and studio products (see also below: *Separating hands involved in Rembrandt's workshop production*). This may have resulted in a stronger urge to label paintings as favourably as possible. Analysis of the prices mentioned in contemporary sources seem to bear out the idea of overgenerous attributions which were looked upon sceptically. The fact that the prices for paintings listed in the estate of Johannes de Renialme as being by Rembrandt fluctuate between 1500 and 12 guilders may serve as an example (Strauss *Doc.*, 1657/2).

46 Strauss *Doc.*, 1660/5.

47 Ibidem, 1657/4.

48 This state of affairs is correctly described in HdG *Urk.*, no. 111 (cf. Strauss *Doc.*, 1647/2, where the fact that the item concerned in its first version was crossed out by a later hand has been ignored). Montias (*op. cit.*, note 4, p. 233) refers to the fact that such hesitations as to the correctness of attributions are found more than once in the Delft inventories he examined.



by Charles I of England, such identification is however possible. Of the three paintings listed as Rembrandts, probably only one is definitely by him<sup>49</sup>.

What Houbraken relates, in discussing some of Rembrandt's pupils, about the uncertainty that could arise about whether a painting was in fact done by Rembrandt or by the pupil concerned, provides a striking illustration of the facts just described<sup>50</sup>. His reports may, it is true, give the impression that he is dealing with exceptions, occasional examples of the capacity for imitation. The scarce sources that throw light on 17th-century studio practices do however suggest that it was a rule to use the style of the master in such a way that confusion could result. This applied not only to pupils, but also to assistants<sup>51</sup>.

As one might expect, the similarities between the work of Rembrandt himself and that of his workshop collaborators and pupils include, besides stylistic and thematic features, aspects of technique. This is equally true of the faithful copies. It is noticeable that the technical structure of copies that can be assumed with some certainty to have been produced in Rembrandt's workshop have been done using procedures similar to those employed for what are regarded as originals. The manner of underpainting with a very free use of paint is, in the copies we know of, generally identical to that of Rembrandt, as is the way the painting is 'worked up'<sup>52</sup>. The modern notion that a copy painstakingly mimics only the surface appearance of a painting does not generally

apply to contemporary copies after Rembrandt<sup>53</sup>. One gets the impression that such copies were like any other painting done freehand, with all the discrepancies from the prototype this could involve.

However, not all works 'after Rembrandt' need to have been copies in the proper sense. A separate category of workshop productions consists of copies in which various parts of the composition have been deliberately rendered in a way that differs from the original. The best-known example of this is the Munich *Abraham's sacrifice*. It is also found in the *Isaac and Esau* attributed to Bol, where a totally different scene is being played out in and around a bed that is copied literally from the *Danaë*. A case comparable to that of the Munich *Abraham's sacrifice* is a copy after the Paris *Departure of the angel from Tobias*, where the angel is depicted in a different position<sup>54</sup>.

Even freer treatments of Rembrandtesque themes may also perhaps have been regarded as 'after Rembrandt'. We do not know whether paintings like, for instance, the *Minerva* in Denver (no. C 9), or the many variants of the busts of 'Rembrandt's sister' (nos. C 57–59), were looked upon by contemporaries as works 'after' Rembrandt (cf. no. A 50); but there is good reason for believing this to be the case. In the inventories mentioned earlier one finds no attempt to make a distinction between the three categories we have been describing here – the faithful copy, the copy with variations and the free treatment of a Rembrandtesque theme. It may be that in those cases where the sources talk about a 'copy' they mean a faithful copy, while paintings described as works 'after' Rembrandt fall into the other two categories. It is however improbable that such a specific distinction was systematically made, especially since it may be assumed that those compiling

49 Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/11. Of the three paintings listed as done by Rembrandt, a *Young scholar by a fire* has, although the painting itself has since long been lost, been convincingly identified as work by Lievens described as such by Orlers in his *Beschrijvinge der Stadt Leyden*, Leiden 1641, p. 377. For the re-attribution of the *Bust of an old woman* at Windsor Castle (no. A 32) to Lievens, see the addendum on p. 839 of this volume. Confusion between works of Rembrandt and Lievens can be observed even earlier; cf. Strauss *Doc.*, 1632/3 and our nos. A 12, A 38 and A 39.

50 In the cases of Govaert Flinck and Heijman Dullaert, Houbraken relates that works by these painters were sold as autograph Rembrandts (Houbraken, op. cit., note 22, II p. 21 and III p. 80, see also HdG *Urk.*, no. 410). Regarding Levecq and Aert de Gelder, Houbraken states that their work came stylistically very close to that of Rembrandt and he says that those of Levecq could easily be confused with works by Rembrandt himself (Houbraken, II p. 153, III p. 206).

51 For the 17th century, see for instance W. Martin, 'The life of a Dutch artist in the seventeenth century, Part II – Instruction in painting', *Burl. Mag.* 7 (1905), pp. 416–427, esp. 427. According to a guild regulation issued in Utrecht in 1644, it was expressly forbidden for painters in a workshop to work in a style other than that of the master (cf. S. Muller Fz., *Schildersverenigingen te Utrecht, bescheiden uit het Gemeentearchief*, Utrecht 1880, p. 76 no. III). The unity of style practised by all workshop members remained perfectly natural and essential for purposes of training as well as trade (cf. for instance B. Cole, *The Renaissance artist at work*, London 1983, pp. 31–32; Ludwig Richter (1803–1884) *Lebenserinnerungen eines deutschen Malers*, Leipzig n.d., pp. 1–2).

52 For a description of this working method, see Vol. I, Introduction Chapter II, esp. pp. 20–31.

53 A current notion on the subject is put into words for instance by M. J. Friedländer, *On art and connoisseurship*, Oxford 1942, 4th edn. 1946, where in a discussion of 'Artistic Quality: Original and Copy' (pp. 209–223) it is stated that 'copies often are slower in coming into being than originals' (p. 217) and 'directness and spontaneity are indissolubly linked with originality' (p. 213). Such preconceptions made it difficult for some art historians to accept for instance the authenticity of the Amsterdam version of Rembrandt's earliest *Self-portrait* (no. A 14) instead of the Kassel one. The latter appears to be more spontaneous and quick in its execution, showing moreover basically the same working system.

54 The Munich *Abraham's sacrifice* (Alte Pinakothek, inv. no. 438, Bauch A 10) is based on Rembrandt's painting of the subject in Leningrad (Hermitage Museum cat. no. 792; Bredius 498). Rembrandt's Leningrad *Danaë* (Hermitage Museum, cat. no. 723; Br. 474) provided Ferdinand Bol with a setting for at least two different scenes, not only an *Isaac and Esau* in a private collection (cf. E. van de Wetering, 'Het formaat van Rembrandts "Danaë"', *Met eigen ogen. Opstellen aangeboden door leerlingen en medewerkers aan Hans L. C. Jaffé*, Amsterdam 1984, pp. 67–72) but also the Dublin *David's dying charge to Solomon* (National Gallery of Ireland, cat. no. 47; cf. J. Bruyn in: *O.H.* 97, 1983, pp. 211–213). Rembrandt's *The angel Raphael leaving Tobit and his family* in Paris (Musée du Louvre, inv. no. 1736; Br. 503) was copied in a picture (private collection) that is to be reproduced in Vol. III.

the inventories usually did not know the prototypes for the first two categories. The most likely situation is that the phrase 'after Rembrandt' could cover all three categories of Rembrandtesque painting. In the instance already mentioned where in an inventory two works were indicated as being 'by or after' Rembrandt<sup>55</sup>, it is in any case plain that the compiler did not know the possible prototypes, and thus could not tell whether the works he was describing were faithful copies or derivatives.

Summarizing, one can assume that there were numerous works from Rembrandt's workshop in circulation for which the distinction between autograph paintings and works by pupils was being made to a decreasing extent – a tendency that already during Rembrandt's lifetime prompted the beginnings of a critical attitude to the authenticity of works described as by Rembrandt.

#### *Masters and pupils*

Problems of authenticity cannot – as we have seen above – be divorced from certain conceptions we have about the 17th-century painter's workshop. A view like that of Martin is still commonly held: according to him, 'we have to imagine our masters, apart from those who had teaching workshops like Rembrandt, Hals and the academist artists, as quite solitary workers who – aside from contact with their family and neighbours – were in touch with only a few of their confrères'<sup>56</sup>.

The evidence that has already been cited in relation to the workshops of Flinck and Bol is enough to show that this view may be partly, or perhaps even entirely, at odds with 17th-century reality. The possible exception that Martin makes to his picture of the solitary master, with what he terms the teaching workshop, may perhaps distort the picture even more, since it is suggesting that these workshops were operating as small training institutes, where the master's own production was a separate activity. The common image of Rembrandt's studio is still strongly flavoured by this view. In the most recent publication dealing with Rembrandt's teaching, the first volume of Sumowski's book on the paintings by Rembrandt's pupils, the author comes out firmly against the suggestion sometimes made that Rembrandt looked on his pupils' activity as an integral part of his workshop production, and that with their collaboration he had a workshop that is

termed 'a smooth-running art factory'<sup>57</sup>. Despite the statement by Sandrart about the large income that Rembrandt is said to have made by selling the output of his pupils, Sumowski says emphatically 'Die Vorstellung von Rembrandt als Unternehmer und von Unterricht zugunsten der Firma wirkt absurd'. He defends the idea that Rembrandt, with a teacher's unmistakable idealism, tried to bring out the individuality of his pupils. The fact that some of his pupils, despite their training in producing history paintings, later worked as genre or landscape painters 'entsprach', Sumowski says, 'Rembrandts Ideal des Individuellen. Der Rembrandt-Imitator arbeitete nicht in seinem Sinn'<sup>58</sup>.

It is hard to challenge Sumowski on these points, since there is an absence of explicit arguments based on documents dealing with Rembrandt's teaching, though the foregoing sections do show that a deduction based on what documents do exist – and of course on the paintings themselves – offers a different picture. There is however certainly no documentary foundation for Sumowski's view.

To arrive at a picture of the 17th-century workshop, and of the way the workshop production came about, an insight into what the written sources tell us about these is a first essential. Such documents are, it must be said at once, few and far between. Much of what is today unclear to us was, at that time, so self-evident that it was never recorded. The problem is to know how far we may go in drawing general conclusions from the occasional scraps of information the sources offer us. The fact that the records of the Amsterdam Guild of S. Luke have been almost wholly lost seems, in this context, something of a disaster<sup>59</sup>. Yet when one looks at the

57 Sumowski *Gemälde I*, p. 14.

Blankert (op. cit., note 28, pp. 18 and 19) has strongly supported the idea put forward earlier by W. Martin ('Rembrandt-Rätsel', *Der Kunstwanderer*, 1921–22, pp. 6–8 and 30–34, esp. 34) and E. H. Gombrich ('Rembrandt now', *The New York Review of Books*, March 1970, pp. 6–15) that Rembrandt's studio had the nature of a collective body of artists working under the supervision of the master'.

58 Sumowski, loc. cit.

59 According to I. H. van Eeghen ('Het Amsterdamse Sint Lucasgilde in de 17de eeuw', *Jaarboek . . . Amstelodamum* 61 (1969), pp. 65–102, esp. 65) the archives of the Guild from before 1750 must have been discarded in the beginning of the 19th century. The guild regulations from 1553 onwards have however been preserved in printed form in *Extract van de willekeuren en ordonnantien den Gilde van St. Lucas verleent*, Amsterdam 1720, and *Ordonnantien en willekeuren van het Lucas Gilde binnen Amstelodam*, 1766. A later printed version of the *Ordonnantien en willekeuren van het Lucas-Gilde, binnen Amstelodam*, Amsterdam 1789 has been reprinted in: F. D. O. Obreen's *Archief voor de Nederlandsche Kunstgeschiedenis III* (1880–1881), pp. 89–196. Van Eeghen (op. cit. p. 66) discovered one handwritten copy of the guild regulations from the middle of the 17th century in the archives of the booksellers, who seceded from the Guild of Saint Luke in 1662. To get an impression of what invaluable information may have been lost, one may compare the wealth of documents concerning the Haarlem Guild still preserved and published in *extenso* by H. Miedema, *De archiefbescheiden van het St. Lucasgilde te Haarlem*, 2 vols., Alphen a.d. Rijn 1980.

55 Strauss *Doc.*, 1660/5.

56 W. Martin, *De Hollandsche schilderkunst in de zeventiende eeuw I*, Amsterdam 1935, p. 16.

material that can still give some direct idea of how things were in Amsterdam, and one realizes that this material displays many similarities to documents that relate to the situation in other Dutch cities, then it does seem justifiable – with a certain amount of caution – to draw conclusions in respect of Amsterdam on points where Amsterdam documents are lacking but where relevant documents from the guilds of other towns have survived. From research into those of the archives of the various Guilds of S. Luke that are still quite complete it becomes clear that not infrequently the city guilds informed each other of the answers they had found to problems that were evidently general, and that in drafting their ordinances they used those of other towns as a model<sup>60</sup>. When fragmentary information keeps recurring, in different but related contexts, it becomes possible to build up a picture of workshop organization in the 17th century in Holland, and thus also in Amsterdam, and to get an idea of the social and economic structure on which this form of workshop organization depended<sup>61</sup>.

The documents that can, for the purposes of this research, lead to a clearer view are the ordinances of the Guilds of S. Luke and of the painters' confraternities, together with apprenticeship contracts and other incidental notary's papers such as, for example, claims for compensation like the document already mentioned in connexion with Ferdinand Bol and Frans van Ommeren (see note 28). The guild ordinances must of course not be seen unconditionally as a direct and faithful mirror of how life actually was in a particular occupation. In some cities the hold the guilds had over events was, certainly in the 17th century, a limited one, though not so limited that they should be described as a 'paper

tiger'<sup>62</sup>. At all events, the Guild in Amsterdam was an evident fact-of-life, and Rembrandt was a member of it<sup>63</sup>. Aside from the question of how strong a hold the guild exerted, it may be said that on certain points one can get an idea of how things worked by seeing how the guild reacted to everyday practice. The additions and modifications made to the guild ordinances do, directly or indirectly, reflect a dynamic reality.

One essential fact one needs to appreciate in looking at the organization of the workshop and the place that training had within it is that the relationship between master and pupil was that of a community of interests, where the rather divergent interests of the two parties had to be brought into balance. Everything one finds said, explicitly or implicitly, in apprenticeship contracts and guild rules about this relation underlines this viewpoint. It is clear that a watch was kept to ensure that neither party lost out in his relationship with the other. This was, after all, the only way such a system of training could work, and the only way its continuity could be ensured. Precisely because, on this point of community of interest, there must have been economic and social aspects that were routine and self-evident, various components of the actual agreement between pupil and master have obviously often been left unexpressed in so many words, and

60 In the archives of the Haarlem S. Luke Guild, for instance, copies were kept of the regulations of the S. Luke Guilds of Gouda (Miedema, op. cit., note 59, pp. 44–48) and Delft (ibidem pp. 239–246). The Delft regulations were, according to Montias, op. cit. (note 4), p. 74, 'patterned on Rotterdam's, except for the jurisdiction and ambit of the guild, which were defined in line with the Utrecht guild letter'; see also G. J. Hoogewerff, *De geschiedenis van de St. Lucasgilden in Nederland*, Amsterdam 1947, pp. 104, 162–64.

61 I. H. van Eeghen, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 6–7, warns on the one hand against generalizing on the basis of the variegated material concerning the guilds in Holland; on the other hand she feels justified in basing on her analysis of a limited number of Amsterdam guilds an image of the guild system in general as it existed in the other towns as well. She also points out that one has to be careful in taking for granted that all regulations of the Guild of S. Luke applied fully to the painters, as this guild comprised a number of different crafts (op. cit., note 59, p. 66).

62 H. Miedema, op. cit. (note 59), pp. 1–14 convincingly takes a firm stand against the notion of the artists' emancipation in its practical consequences, as elaborated on by many authors including Floerke, Hoogewerff, Wittkower, Hauser and Emmens, which would have resulted in a loosening of the grip of the guild on the painters. Although there are contemporary statements which suggest that the painters considered their art too noble to be bridled by a system designed to organize the 'lower' crafts, Miedema found no indication that the painters in general were exempt from the guild's control. As for Amsterdam, there was a practical reason why it was more difficult there than in other towns to maintain the grip of the guild on its members – the sheer size of the city. In the regulations issued on October 17, 1630, it is stated, for instance, that it was difficult to raise the contribution as 'the city is large, and the guild brothers live far apart', which made it difficult to press more than once for payment of contribution and fines (Obreen, op. cit., note 59, p. 112). For remarks on guild control see Montias (op. cit., note 4, p. 6), who considers it quite strong for a town the size of Delft. His reference to the fact that in Amsterdam many painters failed to register as masters of the guild – which would be evidence of the feeble grip of the guild in that town – is based on a misunderstanding, as I. H. van Eeghen pointed out. According to a document discovered by Scheltema nine painters, including Govaert Flinck and Ferdinand Bol, bought their burghership only in 1652 although all of them had since long lived in Amsterdam (P. Scheltema, *Rembrandt, redevoering over het leven en de verdiensten van Rembrandt van Rijn*, 1853, pp. 68–71). From this it has usually been concluded that they were not guild members. Van Eeghen (op. cit., note 59, p. 67) convincingly showed however that this fact has to be explained from an occasional check made by the municipality among guild members – as to whether they had ever paid their 'poortersrecht' –, and that the document published by Scheltema thus proves on the contrary that these painters were already members of the guild.

63 The different reasons speculated on by various authors for Rembrandt entering the Guild in 1634 are discussed in Strauss *Doc.*, 1634/10.

were by no means always set out in the contract<sup>64</sup>. The fact that this was nevertheless done at all (it is impossible to tell in what percentage of cases) can be taken as an indication that there were – as one might expect – occasional abuses of the system<sup>65</sup>.

If one, so to speak, conflates the apprenticeship contracts that have survived<sup>66</sup>, one gets a fairly detailed picture of all the various aspects that were covered, explicitly or otherwise, in the agreement being entered into; from this comes the image of a balance of reciprocal interests. Within this balance, the interests of the apprentice were the more clearly spelt out. The parents or guardians placing the 'infant' with the master expected that after the apprenticeship the pupil 'zijn cost eerlijck sal kennen verdienen' (would be able honourably to earn his living)<sup>67</sup>. To this end the master was required to teach him the art ('de const te onderwijzen') and

everything connected therewith<sup>68</sup>. In various apprentices' contracts it is added that the master is expected not to hold back anything of what he knows<sup>69</sup>. Besides the duty to teach the pupil well, there are various other obligations laid on the master. In some – though certainly not all – cases there was an agreement that the pupil would receive board and lodging from his master<sup>70</sup>. In addition to this, providing the material to be used by the pupil must have been a far from unimportant factor – evidence for this can be found in the account settled by the guardians of Isack Jouderville which includes, for the whole of his period of apprenticeship with Rembrandt, only once the relatively small amount of 3 guilders for the purchase of material (a panel and implements); this was evidently in connexion with work Jouderville was producing, exceptionally, outside Rembrandt's studio. Soon after he had completed his apprenticeship with Rembrandt, on the other hand, he received from his guardians the far larger sum of 28 guilders 5 stuivers in order to buy paint and other items ('veruw ende anders te copen'). The size of this sum gives an indication that the use of materials by the apprentice in the workshop entailed an

64 The number of apprenticeship contracts that have come down to us through the archives of notaries is very limited. In view of the relative completeness of these archives this would mean that only in a minority of cases these contracts were drawn up before a notary. Van Eeghen (op. cit., note 4, p. 20) presumed that this scarcity could be explained by the fact that such contracts were costly. She takes it that they were usually concluded by the parties among themselves. Such an informal contract is the subject of an anecdote on Jan van Scorel as related by Karel van Mander in his biography of the artist (Karel van Mander, *Het schilderboek*, Haarlem 1603–1604, *Levens*, fol. 234).

65 In the privileges of the painters' confraternity in The Hague from 1656 there is, for instance, an allusion to the possibility of abuses at one point where it is laid down that 'pupils who complain that their masters are not fulfilling their obligations to them must address their complaints to the doyen and elders of the confraternity, etc.'. No such complaints are recorded in respect of pupil painters, but a form of breach of obligations by the master of the kind that may be intended can be found in the complaint by the father of an Amsterdam apprentice embroiderer, who claimed that the master embroiderer sent his son out on errands instead of 'keeping him diligently at work' (Van Dillen, op. cit., note 66, II no. 444). In an Utrecht regulation of 1664, the causes for 'Quaestien . . . tusschen den Meester ende discipulen' (disputes between the master and disciples) included 'aanbesteden tyt, ofte beloofde penningen' (the time agreed, or the money promised); Muller, op. cit. (note 51), p. 80.

66 17th-Century Dutch painters' apprenticeship contracts have been published, wholly or in part, in: J. G. van Dillen, *Bronnen tot de geschiedenis van het bedrijfsleven en het gildewezen van Amsterdam* II, The Hague 1933, nos. 84 (1613), 571 (1619), 799 (1622), 1009 (1625) and III, The Hague 1974, no. 264 (1636); A. Bredius, 'Gerrit Willemsz Horst', *O.H.* 50 (1933), pp. 1–8, esp. 5–6 (1638); A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* V, pp. 1481–1483 (1635), Obreen, op. cit. (note 34), I p. 157 (1629), II pp. 22–24 (1651); Montias, op. cit. (note 4), p. 161 (1618), p. 163 (1620), p. 163 (1623), pp. 164–65 (1641); Houbraken op. cit. (note 22), III p. 391 (about 1675); See also Jakob Campo Weyerman, *De Levens-beschrijvingen der Nederlandsche Konst-schilders en Konst-schilderessen*, Dordrecht 1769, IV pp. 70–71 (about 1675). H. Floerke, *Studien zur niederländischen Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte. Die Formen des Kunsthandels, das Atelier und die Sammler in den Niederlanden vom 15.–18. Jahrhundert*, Munich–Leipzig 1905, p. 132.

67 Van Dillen, op. cit. (note 66), II no. 799.

68 Van Dillen, op. cit. (note 66), II no. 84 'omme te leren het schilderen met alle den aendelevan van dyen' (to learn painting with all that pertains to it). As it is formulated in one of the more elaborate contracts, made up at Amsterdam, 15 November 1635 (Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* V, p. 1482), the master painter undertakes '... de schilderkonst metten aendeleve derselvige sulcx deselve Mr tegenwoordich exerceert, naer begryp van sijnen dienaar te leeren ende onderwijssn' (to teach and show by way of instruction the art of painting with all that pertains to it, such as it is nowadays practised by the same master, for as much as his servant can understand).

69 This stock expression is met with in, for example, the Van Dillen contracts, op. cit. (note 66), II nos. 84 and 1009, in the Bredius contract published in: *O.H.* 50 (1933), pp. 5–6, and in the contract concluded between Emmanuel de Witte and his landlord, published by Montias, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 164–165. The obligation to instruct the art of painting 'such as it is nowadays practised by the same master', quoted in note 68, may imply the same.

70 If one is to compare the amounts charged by painters in the contracts it is, naturally, important to know whether or not board and lodging were included (cf. note 97). This is not always clear, though it is in the majority (9 out of 14) of the contracts cited in note 66. 'Wasschen ende wringen' may be among the provisions stipulated, and in one case the pupil is required to bring his bed. Clothing is occasionally dealt with separately; in one case the expense is borne by the father, while board and lodging are provided by the painter (Van Dillen, op. cit., note 66, II no. 84); in another the pupil is weekly given by the master some money to be spent on clothes (Van Dillen, idem, III no. 264) and sometimes a complete set of clothes is given at the end of the pupil's apprenticeship (Van Dillen, idem, II no. 571; Bredius, *O.H.* 50 (1933), p. 6). As for Rembrandt, the 100 guilders he charged annually did not include board and lodging, as we know with certainty from the case of Isack Jouderville; cf. E. van de Wetering, op. cit. (note 9), p. 60.

appreciable outlay<sup>71</sup>. One can see, therefore, that what the master was investing in his pupil was first of all his time, needed to provide the training in a way that would benefit the learner. Then, he provided the materials that were needed for this training; and in some instances he also provided the pupil's board and lodging. Finally, the master usually had to pay a small due to the guild for each apprentice at the time of registration.

There were only two ways a master could derive benefit from his apprentice – through the apprenticeship premium he received, and through the work the pupil did for him. The combined profit from these two sources had to be set against the time and money he was investing in his apprentice. An important consideration in this equation was the fact that some considerable time would elapse before the pupil's work became saleable, and this is probably why the premium that had to be paid when apprenticing a youth to a painter was often comparatively high. From his research into the Delft archives, Montias came to the conclusion that training as a painter was, compared to other crafts, an expensive business; the total cost was, he estimates, in the region of 600 to 700 guilders – roughly the price of a small house<sup>72</sup>.

The fact that it would be some considerable time before an apprentice could bring a profit to his master is reflected in the sources in various ways. In one Amsterdam apprentice's contract the implications are quite plain: the contract was concluded for the remarkably long period of seven years, but if the apprentice served out – this was the significant term that was used in such contracts – these seven years, then no premium needed to be paid. If he did not serve the full seven years, the parents would have to pay 50 guilders, and if he died within the first three,

they had to pay 150 guilders<sup>73</sup>. This arrangement suggests that it was expected that by the end of seven years the apprentice would have produced enough work to allow the master, by selling it, to recoup the investment he was making in his pupil. If this final, productive period of the training was lost then the master would be out of pocket, and the parents would need to pay him a sum in compensation. One sees something of the same sort in a contract with an apprentice who was evidently already quite well advanced; the tuition fee payable in his first year was 45 guilders, while in the next two years it was to be only 20 guilders – but if the apprentice should leave during this period then compensation would have to be paid<sup>74</sup>. Here, again, it is evident that it was in the latter part of the apprenticeship that the master expected to be making most of the profit from his pupil. This contract does in fact say that the apprentice is required 'te soeken sijns meesters . . . profijt' (to seek his master's . . . profit).

The question can be asked at this point whether the apprentice's share in the workshop's activities would consist solely of producing saleable paintings (leaving aside for the moment the further question of whether this would involve paintings done entirely by himself or whether he took a part in producing paintings in which the master, or perhaps other members of the workshop, also had a hand). There is only one surviving apprenticeship contract, from 1635, that states that the pupil is expected to prime canvases and panels and to grind paint<sup>75</sup>. It may be that this was not included in the other contracts because it was so self-evident; but one must be careful about making this assumption. So long as we do not know in detail how the materials used in the workshop were supplied, and in what form they were delivered, it is hard to gauge how much time and effort had to be put into preparations for the actual work of painting. We do know that in the 17th century there were specialist primers, from whom prepared supports could be purchased<sup>76</sup>. So far, the impression one gets is that the mixing of the dry pigments and binding medium

71 A. Bredius, 'Inventare der Eltern und Abrechnung der Vormünder von Isaack Jouderville', *Künstler-Inventare* VI, pp. 1940–1973, esp. 1949. In a Delft contract dating from 1618 (Montias, op. cit., note 4, p. 161), by which the master painter undertakes to teach his pupil for the duration of one year, 'and in particular in the making of portraits', it is stated that the master will provide all the colours 'with the exception of a few costly ashes' and of the panels, which will be paid for by the guardians of the pupil who, like Jouderville, was an orphan. In return for teaching the painter would be paid fifty guilders, but the paintings made would be the pupil's property. A similar correlation between expenditure on painting material and the ownership of the production is encountered in an Antwerp contract of 1644 mentioned by Floerke (op. cit., note 66, p. 133), where the pupil pays for all the materials and in return is the proprietor of all he makes. It seems a fair supposition that in this case the remarkably high price of 800 guilders, charged for three years tuition, board and lodging had to do with the fact that the painter had to forego profits he could have made from his pupil's work.

72 Montias, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 118–119. The amount mentioned consists of direct costs, accrued in six years as a training period of average length, and indirect costs – the earnings, now foregone, the apprentice would have brought in if a lower-status occupation with a shorter training period had been chosen.

73 Van Dillen, op. cit. (note 66), II no. 799; with this contract, drawn up in Amsterdam in 1622, the youthful age of the pupil – twelve years – seems to explain the long term of his apprenticeship.

74 Van Dillen, op. cit. (note 66), II no. 1009.

75 The contract, published by Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* V, pp. 1481–83, stipulates that the pupil is required 'verwen te vrijven voor hem ende zijn meester, item doecken te plumuyren naer zijn vermogen' (to grind paints for himself and for his master, item to ground canvases to the best of his ability).

76 Cf. Vol. I, Introduction Chapter II, p. 20, note 28, and Chapter II of the present volume.

on a grinding-stone was done in the studio itself<sup>77</sup>. Yet it is not a foregone conclusion that this would have been done by the apprentices – in depictions of artists' workshops one sees older men working at the grinding-stone as well as younger men and youths<sup>78</sup>. One can certainly assume that the pupils would have learned these techniques, but it cannot be taken for granted that this would have been one of their daily tasks. Hoogewerff mentions the existence of regulations, probably earlier ones, where – for quality control reasons – it was forbidden to leave the daily grinding of paint to apprentices<sup>79</sup>.

From the apprentice's contract mentioned earlier as being for a period of seven years it is already clear that the length of the apprenticeship agreed upon is not a reliable indication of its actual duration. Part of this period was in fact intended to be given over to more or less full production. To judge from the majority of guild ordinances, two years of teaching was seen as the absolute minimum, and pupils were not allowed to leave their master within that time<sup>80</sup>. This is not to say that two years was a sufficiently long period of training – most apprenticeship contracts are for a longer length of time<sup>81</sup>. We know of

a number of cases where a pupil was successively apprenticed to more than one master, and Montias has even concluded this to be the rule rather than the exception<sup>82</sup>.

As for Rembrandt, we know that he charged an apprentice premium and that he sold pupils' work for his own benefit. As seen above this was in itself perfectly normal; nonetheless Sandrart explicitly mentions the fact and elaborates on the amounts involved when discussing Rembrandt's large income. Haverkamp-Begemann even detects 'outrage' in this passage<sup>83</sup>. As appears from the Jouderville documents, Rembrandt charged an annual premium of 100 guilders – Sandrart's information is in line with this – and he did so up to the very end of the training period when, according to Sandrart, he drew also additional income from the sales of students' works. A premium of 100 guilders ranked among the highest known to us<sup>84</sup>. From the Jouderville documents we can deduce that Rembrandt supplied the material but not board and lodging. The profit he pocketed from the sale of his pupils' work, an annual 2000 to 2500 guilders according to Sandrart, was apparently a sum high enough to draw the attention of his contemporaries. The scales of the balance of interests between master and pupil were in Rembrandt's case evidently tipping over to the advantage of the master.

Hofstede de Groot, in his article of 1915 on Rembrandt's teaching, made the assumption that he also gave drawing lessons to the children of good families who were not intending to become painters<sup>85</sup>. This interpretation of Sandrart's comment about 'fast unzählbaren fürnehmen Kindern' (almost countless notable children) was adopted by later authors<sup>86</sup>;

77 When Leendert Hendrick Volmareyn in 1643 requested the Leyden Municipality for permission to start a shop for selling artist's supplies, he announced that among other articles he planned to sell 'allerleij geprepareerde en ongeprepareerde verwen' (various prepared and unprepared paints). This suggests that it was also possible to buy paint ready for use. Cf. W. Martin, 'Een "Kunsthandel" in een klappermanswachthuis', *O.H.* 19 (1901), pp. 86–88, esp. 86.

78 Middle-aged or even elderly men at the grinding stone are frequently depicted in mainly Flemish representations of studios from the 16th and 17th centuries (M. de Vos, *S. Luke*, Antwerp Museum, cat. 1948, no. 88; Frans Floris, *S. Luke*, Ghent, S. Bavo's; P. Galle after J. Stradanus, *The discovery of oil painting* in the series *Nova reperta*; D. Rijckaert III, Dijon Musée, cat. 1933, p. 250 and Paris, Louvre, cat. 1979, *Écoles flamande et hollandaise*, inv. no. M.I. 146; M. Sweerts, Amsterdam Rijksmuseum, inv. no. A 1957). In comparable Dutch works the person grinding colours is less frequently represented. In a painting by J. van Swieten (Leiden, cat. 1949, no. 564) he is a young man, in one by A. van Ostade (Amsterdam, inv. no. A 298) a boy. Painters who cared particularly for the quality and consistency of the paint used evidently to grind their paint themselves, as Sandrart relates with regard to Dou (Sandrart, op. cit., note 29, p. 196) and Hoogstraten makes one think with regard to Jan Lievens (Hoogstraten, op. cit., note 19, p. 238; see also E. v. d. Wetering, 'Leidse schilders achter de ezels', in: *Geschildert tot Leyden Anno 1626*, cat. exh. Leiden 1976–1977, pp. 21–31, esp. 28–30).

79 Hoogewerff, op. cit. (note 60), p. 27.

80 As for the Amsterdam Guild of S. Luke, this was stipulated in 1553 (Obreen, op. cit., note 34, III pp. 97, 148) and 1579 (Obreen III, p. 102). Although it was not repeated in later ordinances, this regulation apparently remained in force until the end of the 18th century. One may deduce this from the fact that it was included in the printed regulations published in 1789 (cf. note 59). This regulation had no bearing on a second training period, as appears already from the six months Rembrandt spent with Lastman.

81 Of the 14 contracts referred to in note 66, one was concluded for seven years, five for six years, one for five years, one for three years, two for two years and three (all drawn up in Delft) for one year. In one contract no period of time is mentioned, as the apprentice was to join his master on a journey of uncertain duration to Italy.

82 Cf. Montias, op. cit. (note 4), p. 160: 'the only money outlays their family [i.e. the fathers of apprentices that were painters or engravers themselves and had their sons learn the same trade] might have to sustain were the "finishing costs" of sending the boy to another master for his last two years of apprenticeship' (cf. also p. 162).

83 Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit. (note 31), p. 23.

84 Floerke, op. cit. (note 66), p. 133, noted that Dou and Honthorst charged as much. In Dou's case this appears from a receipt written for the guardian of Matthijs Naiveu, who, like Jouderville, was an orphan (dated 3 May 1668; published by W. Martin in: *O.H.* 20, 1902, p. 64). In the case of Honthorst, it is mentioned by Sandrart in his biography of the painter (op. cit., note 20, pp. 172–174, esp. 173). It must be said that a fee of 100 guilders can be considered exceptional only if, as can be surmised in the case of Rembrandt, board and lodging were not included; if they were, the amount is fairly common (cf. Montias, op. cit., note 4, p. 118).

85 C. Hofstede de Groot, 'Rembrandts onderwijs aan zijn leerlingen', *Feestbundel Dr. A. Bredius* . . . Amsterdam 1915, pp. 79–94, esp. 80.

86 See for instance H. Gerson, 'Rembrandt's workshop and assistants', in: *Rembrandt after three hundred years: A Symposium – Rembrandt and his followers* (Oct. 22–24, 1969), Chicago 1973, pp. 19–31, esp. 21.



but neither Hofstede de Groot nor any of the other writers gives convincing arguments for it. One knows that it was by no means uncommon in the first half of the 17th century for young people in well-off families to take drawing lessons<sup>87</sup>, and that during the second half of the century drawing-schools developed and were attended by children destined for occupations other than that of painting<sup>88</sup>. There is no evidence, however, that Rembrandt's pupils included students of drawing of this kind. On the contrary, Sandrart explicitly identifies the 'notable children' as the very pupils ('diese seine Lehrlinge') whose paintings and prints were marketed by Rembrandt. One does, surveying what is known about his pupils, get the impression that the apprentices who came to Rembrandt had usually already had a first period of training, and were coming to Rembrandt to continue to learn their craft. If, when with him, they had to pay the full fee of 100 guilders a year, they must have had wealthy parents indeed; so far as we can tell, that was usually the case<sup>89</sup>. This accounts for Sandrart's description of these pupils as 'fürnehme Kinder'.

#### *Rembrandt and Hendrick Uylenburgh*

The career of a young painter can be read, in greatly condensed form, between the lines of two inventories from Friesland. In one of these, drawn up in 1637 after the death of Lambert Jacobsz., there is a landscape 'van Heere Innes L(ambert) J(acobs) discipel geschildert' (painted by Heere Innes LJ's disciple)<sup>90</sup>. The other inventory from

1654 mentions 'een stuck van Lambert Jacobs begonnen ende door zijn knecht Here Jinnes opgemaect' (a piece begun by Lambert Jacobs and worked up by his assistant Here Jinnus)<sup>91</sup>. The same inventory lists 'Een stuckie door Here Innes'. This example illustrates that when a pupil had finished his apprenticeship he might remain in service with the same master, as an assistant. Many, however, must at the end of their training have gone off looking for work with another master, often in another town. This was obviously so commonplace that the guild ordinances usually include rules about 'foreign' journeymen, i.e. young painters coming from other towns looking for work<sup>92</sup>.

While the Guilds of S. Luke had long guarded against the incursion of masters from other towns, foreign journeymen were evidently always welcome. Masters from elsewhere could as a rule settle only after they had acquired citizenship of the city and membership of the guild, whereas foreign journeymen were helped in their search for employment. An Amsterdam regulation from 1579 sets out the procedure to be followed when a foreign journeyman came to an Amsterdam master asking for work: if the master in question had no place for him, he was required to take him to the Guild Servant, who would then accompany the journeyman on a round of all the masters in his craft to find out if they had any work. If this was not the case, the Guild gave the journeyman a certain amount of 'provision money' with which to travel further<sup>93</sup>; if work was available, the journeyman had to undertake to work for a certain time for this master and no other<sup>94</sup>. The fact that this rule was not included in the next, supplementary set of ordinances does not necessarily mean that it had become out-of-date; the old rules, from those of 1579 onwards, remained in force into the 18th century, unless they were modified<sup>95</sup>.

87 In his autobiography Constantijn Huygens gives several reasons why drawing formed part of his education: firstly because a trained hand would be of use when dealing with mathematics, secondly because it would sharpen the opinion when judging paintings and finally because it would provide a means of reportage, to depict noteworthy things seen when travelling; J. A. Worp ed., *Bijdragen en Mededeelingen van het Historisch Genootschap* 18 (1897), pp. 1–121, esp. 63.

88 An elaborate plan for such a school was for instance submitted by Romeyn de Hooghe in Haarlem in 1688 (cf. Miedema, op. cit., note 59, pp. 310–312, see also 313–314 and 318–320). Montias (op. cit., note 4, pp. 174–176) mentions the case of the painter Cornelis Daemen Rietwijck who had a drawing school in Delft around 1650 where boys, destined to learn other crafts, had drawing lessons. See also Houbraken, op. cit. (note 22), III, p. 241, on a school in Utrecht founded in 1697.

89 Leendert van Beyerens's father, for instance, was a wealthy timber merchant, Heyman Dullaert's father a corn-merchant in Rotterdam, Isack Jouderville's parents owned an inn in Leyden of such good reputation that Prince Maurits stayed there during a visit to Leyden, Philips Koning's father was a jeweller, Ferdinand Bol's a well-to-do master surgeon, and Govaert Flink's a merchant and bailiff of the town of Cleves. See also note 31 where Sandrart is quoted on the 'fürnehmer Leute Kindern' (children of notable people) who were trained in Honthorst's workshop.

90 H. L. Straat, 'Lambert Jacobsz., schilder', *De Vrije Fries* 28 (1925), p. 76 no. 51. Straat's transcription of the name of this pupil of Lambert Jacobsz. as Heere Junes or Jiunes, has been corrected by R. Visscher (cf. H. F. Wijnman, 'Nieuwe gegevens omtrent den schilder Lambert Jacobsz. II', *O.H.* 51, 1934, pp. 241–255, esp. 250). Both Heere and Inne are Frisian Christian names.

91 H. L. Straat, op. cit. (note 90), p. 90.

92 See for Amsterdam guild regulations on this point Obreen, op. cit. (note 59), III, p. 98 (1553), p. 102 (1579). See also note 93.

93 Obreen, op. cit. (note 34), III, pp. 106–107; see also note 95.

94 Obreen, op. cit. (note 34), III, p. 98 (the 1553 guild regulations of the Amsterdam glassmakers) and p. 102 (the 1579 regulations of the Amsterdam Guild of S. Luke). From these regulations it becomes clear that it was up to the master to decide on the basis of a written or oral agreement at what moment the assistant was free to leave or to change masters. The Bol-Van Ommeren case (cf. note 28) shows that this remained common practice until well into the 17th century.

95 The fact that by the end of the 18th century selections of Amsterdam Guild regulations from 1553 onwards were reprinted several times (cf. note 59) indicates that for the greater part they remained valid for over two centuries. In some cases – as in the 1630 regulations – explicit reference is made to earlier regulations; cf. Obreen, op. cit. (note 34), III, p. 112. The procedures for receiving foreign assistants as described in the 1579 Amsterdam regulations of the Guild of S. Luke (cf. note 93) must have been quite common over a longer period; this is borne out by the fact that a similar provision is found in the 1624 regulations of the Guild of S. Luke in The Hague (The Hague, Municipal Archives, Archives of the Confrérie Pictura, inv. no. 376).

Govaert Flinck, who after completing his training (likewise with Lambert Jacobsz.) came from Leeuwarden to Amsterdam, must have been one such foreign journeyman, and found a place in Rembrandt's workshop. As can be seen from Houbraken's account of Flinck, the journeyman period was regarded in part as a period of training<sup>96</sup>. Some guild ordinances demanded a journeyman period of one or two years before a young painter could establish himself as a master of the guild<sup>97</sup>. Flinck's stay with Rembrandt may be viewed in this light.

The possibility of employing journeymen was of course dependent on the proceeds from the master's business<sup>98</sup>. It could happen that a master managed to sell so few of his own paintings that he was obliged to hire himself out to another master. There are various contracts between masters that provide evidence of this; one of them explicitly lays down that the master entering the employment was to paint everything the other master required of him<sup>99</sup>. There were also other forms of collaboration between two masters, symbiotic relationships in which each of them kept his own independence. A regulation from Utrecht in 1641 gives an idea of how such a symbiosis worked; but it also casts an interesting light on what was obviously the normal form of collaboration within a workshop. It stipulates that 'die gene, die als gepermitteerde Meesters schilderen, niet zullen vermogen eenige vreemde, of ook inwoonende personen, op tytels als discipulen, ofte voor haar schilderende, en echter van haar handelinge niet zynde, ende haar eygen naam tekenende, aan te houden, ofte in het werk te stellen' (those who are painting as admitted Masters shall not be allowed to keep or employ any outside or resident persons, as disciples or painting for them and yet not being of their [i.e. the masters'] manner and signing

with their own name)<sup>100</sup>. It implies on the one hand that it was looked on as normal that those working with a master, whether as pupils or as journeymen, worked in the manner (i.e. the style) of that master, and furthermore were not allowed to sign their output with their own name. And on the other it means that it did happen that a painter moved in with another master and there produced works done in his own 'manner' and signed with his own name. This situation probably comes closest to what we must imagine to be the relationship between Rembrandt and Hendrick Uylenburgh.

Rembrandt's first few years in Amsterdam cannot be seen apart from the figure of the art-dealer and painter Hendrick Uylenburgh. During those years, and probably up to 1635<sup>101</sup>, Rembrandt not only lodged with Uylenburgh. For a long time this episode was in fact seen merely as a convenient living arrangement that culminated in Rembrandt's meeting Uylenburgh's niece Saskia and marrying her. There is however reason to believe there was a day-to-day business relationship as well. Six was the first to investigate the figure of Uylenburgh rather more deeply<sup>102</sup>; but he did not attempt to fathom out the relationship between the two men. Six concentrated mainly on the activities of Uylenburgh himself, basing himself particularly on the picture we get from statements by the Danish painter Keil about Uylenburgh's business. Keil

<sup>96</sup> Houbraken, op. cit. (note 22), II, p. 20.

<sup>97</sup> Cf. the ordinances of the Guild of S. Luke in The Hague from 1624 referred to in note 95, where a period of two years is mentioned. It is not clear, however, whether this regulation applied to all crafts included in the guild, since it is stipulated 'ten waer hij een weduwe van een goutsleger trouwde' (unless he marries the widow of a gold-beater); see also note 61. According to a (not effectuated) draft of new ordinances for the Haarlem painters from 1631 (Miedema op. cit., note 59, p. 96) a year had to pass before one could become a master; this year could but did not have to be spent in a master's workshop.

<sup>98</sup> A well-documented and notorious case is that of the Amsterdam hatter Hans Lenarts, who managed to get permission to have 24 assistants while other hatters were allowed to have only six (Van Dillen, op. cit., note 66, II, no. 1024). In fact, he pushed other master hatters out of business and then hired them as assistants (Van Dillen, op. cit., II, pp. 532-533). As for the painters, the number of assistants seems usually to have been limited. Workshops such as those of Uylenburgh and Rembrandt may however at times have reached unusual proportions similar to that of Hans Lenarts.

<sup>99</sup> Van Dillen, op. cit. (note 66), III, no. 1057.

<sup>100</sup> S. Muller, op. cit. (note 51), p. 76. For another regulation against a pupil or assistant signing with his own name, cf. the 1656 regulations of the 'schilders-confreterie' in The Hague, Obreen, op. cit. (note 34), IV, p. 51. A case of illegal working together by two independent painters, Isaack van Ruisdael and Jan van Goyen, under one roof in 1634 is discussed by Hoogewerff, op. cit. (note 60), p. 26. The documents concerned are published in: Miedema, op. cit. (note 59), pp. 159, 166, 167.

<sup>101</sup> The earliest evidence of Rembrandt's stay with Uylenburgh dates from 26 July 1632 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1632/2); it is then explicitly stated that he lived in Uylenburgh's house in the Brestraet ('Rembrandt . . . die ten huijse aldaer logeerde'). In June 1634 Rembrandt is referred to as living 'op de Brestraet', apparently the same address (Strauss *Doc.*, 1634/2). In February 1635 there is another mention of 'Rembrant van Rijn tot Hendrick Uylenburgh' (Strauss *Doc.*, 1635/1). Van Eeghen has questioned whether this can be taken as proof that Rembrandt at that time still lived with Uylenburgh; she suggested that it might just as well indicate that Uylenburgh stood surety for Rembrandt at the sale in the catalogue of which this note was found (Van Eeghen, op. cit., note 59, p. 87). B. P. J. Broos (in: *Simiolus* 12, 1981-82, pp. 251-252) tends to disagree with Van Eeghen, and interprets the note as evidence that Rembrandt continued after his marriage to live in Uylenburgh's house. A similar note made between 9-30 March 1637 in connexion with Flinck (Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* I, p. 128), 'Govert Flinck tot Hendrick Uylenburgh', may with good reason be interpreted as evidence that Flinck actually lodged with Uylenburgh, as we know from Sandrart that Flinck dwelled for a considerable time with Uylenburgh: 'hielt sich lange Jahre auf bey dem berühmten Kunsthändler Ulenburg . . .' (Sandrart, op. cit., note 29, p. 194). See also: F. Baldinucci, *Notizie de' professori del disegno* . . . IV, Florence 1728, p. 484. The first mention of a new address for Rembrandt, in the Nieuwe Doelenstraat, dates from February 1636 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1636/1).

<sup>102</sup> J. Six, 'La famosa Accademia di Eeulenburg', *Jaarboek der Koninklijke Akademie van Wetenschappen* 1925/26, Amsterdam 1926, pp. 229-241.

gave this information to Baldinucci, who subsequently published it<sup>103</sup>.

Keil's stay with Uylenburgh – lasting from 1644 to 1647 – came long after Rembrandt had left the latter's house. To use Baldinucci's expression, Uylenburgh had at that time a 'famosa Accademia', where a large number of young painters 'copied for their own education no less than for his [i.e. Uylenburgh's] own advantage' works from Uylenburgh's collections. We know the names of other young painters who worked with Hendrick or, later still, with his son Gerrit Uylenburgh who carried on with his father's business<sup>104</sup>. Fromantou's reaction to Gerrit Uylenburgh's sending of paintings to the Elector of Brandenburg in 1671 throws a scarcely favourable light on the Uylenburgh art business. He states that copies made there were being sold in the trade as the originals; Houbraken, too, says so in so many words<sup>105</sup>.

One interesting aspect, which is not mentioned by Baldinucci, is that the production of portraits must from the very beginning have been an integral part of the Uylenburgh business. According to Sandrart, Flinck worked for Uylenburgh as a portrait painter<sup>106</sup>. (Flinck's stay with Uylenburgh is confirmed by another document, see note 103.) This throws an interesting light on the boom in Rembrandt's portrait production between 1631 and '35. In later

years there is also mention of portraits from the Uylenburgh workshop. Thus, Ameldonck Leeuw, in the inventory of his possessions drawn up in 1653, mentions a painting by 'Wlenburgs soon daerin mijn tronie gedaen van Ovens' (Wlenburg's son [probably Gerrit Uylenburgh] in which my face done by Ovens)<sup>107</sup>.

The word 'Accademia' used by Baldinucci has given rise to the impression that Uylenburgh's workshop was a training establishment; but so far as can be ascertained all the painters that we know to have worked with Uylenburgh had already been fully trained. More likely, the Uylenburghs must have offered young and as yet unestablished painters the opportunity to earn some money. Even though, in copying, they may have learned something, Houbraken's words used in connexion with Fromantou's time with Uylenburgh – 'op de galei zitten . . . gelijk men in Italië het schilderen voor de keelbeulen dus gewoon is te noemen' (to sit at the oars . . . as painting for the bloodsuckers is usually called in Italy)<sup>108</sup> probably come nearer to the truth.

It was probably around 1625 that Uylenburgh moved into the house on the corner of the Breestraat by the Antoniesluis – he was definitely in Amsterdam from 1628<sup>109</sup>. In 1631 a number of persons, including Rembrandt, invested money in his business, which he was evidently expanding at that time<sup>110</sup>. In a document from 1632 Uylenburgh is described as a painter<sup>111</sup>, but there is every reason to think that by that time dealing in art was his main activity. In the 1631 document, which states that Rembrandt was lending Uylenburgh 1000 guilders, the latter was described as an art dealer, and in 1634

103 F. Baldinucci, *Notizie de' professori del disegno* . . . IV, Florence 1728, p. 511.

104 Baldinucci (op. cit., note 103) and Houbraken (op. cit., note 22, II, p. 294; III, pp. 109–111 and 217) mention the fact that Hendrick as well as his son Gerrit (who continued the business after Hendrick's death in 1661) employed several or even many young painters; few names are however known to us. For many of them it may have been a short interlude, as it was for Gerard de Lairese of whom Houbraken relates that he stayed for only eight weeks with Gerrit Uylenburgh (op. cit. III, p. 111). Houbraken distinguishes between 'brave schilders' (good painters) and 'jonge borsten . . . die anderszins niet konden te regt raken' (young fellows who could not find work elsewhere). From the period prior to 1661 only a few names are known; apart from Rembrandt and possibly Isack Jouderville, these are Flinck (Sandrart, op. cit., note 29, p. 194), Keil (Baldinucci, op. cit., note 103, p. 511) and Ovens (Dudok van Heel, op. cit., note 26, p. 77). Hendrik Fromantou (Houbraken II p. 295), Jan van Pée together with Anthony Claesz de Grebber, Gerard de Lairese (Houbraken III, pp. 109–111) and, possibly somewhat later, Johannes Glauber (Houbraken III, p. 217) worked with Gerrit Uylenburgh around 1665. Dudok van Heel suggested that Johannes Lingelbach also worked for Gerrit Uylenburgh (op. cit., note 26, p. 77) as a painting by Uylenburgh, probably Gerrit, is mentioned in which Lingelbach had painted the figures. There are however works by a number of other painters for whom he did the 'stoffage' (Thieme-Becker XXIII, p. 252). In the case of Glauber, Houbraken explicitly states that he lived in the house of Uylenburgh.

105 Houbraken, op. cit. (note 22), II, pp. 294–296. R. Dohme's introduction to: W. Bode and R. Dohme, 'Die Ausstellung von Gemälden älterer Meister im Berliner Privatbesitz', *Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* IV (1883), pp. 119–151, esp. 126–127. A. Bredius, 'Italiaansche schilderijen in 1672 door Amsterdamsche en Haagsche schilders beoordeeld', *O.H.* 4 (1886), pp. 41–46 and 278–280. A. Bredius 'Italiaansche schilderijen in 1672 door Haagsche en Delftsche schilders beoordeeld', *O.H.* 34 (1916), pp. 88–93.

106 Cf. note 101.

107 Dudok van Heel, op. cit. (note 26), p. 77.

108 Houbraken, op. cit. (note 22), II, pp. 294–295. See also Floerke, op. cit. (note 66), p. 96 and note 207.

109 The earliest record of Uylenburgh's residence in Amsterdam dates from 1628 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1628/2). Wijnman presumed on reasonable grounds that Uylenburgh rented the house at the Jodenbreestraat in or soon after 1625; see H. F. Wijnman, *Uit de kring van Rembrandt en Vondel*, Amsterdam 1959, p. 7. On the basis of Wijnman's assumption Broos (who believes Rembrandt's stay with Lastman must be dated in 1625) has hinted at the possibility that Rembrandt knew Uylenburgh from the time he worked with Lastman; cf. Broos, op. cit. (note 101), p. 250.

110 Strauss *Doc.*, 1631/4.

111 Strauss *Doc.*, 1632/2. See also H. F. Wijnman, 'Rembrandt als huisgenoot van Hendrick Uylenburgh te Amsterdam (1631–1635). Was Rembrandt Doopsgezind of Libertijn?', in: idem, *Uit de kring van Rembrandt en Vondel*, Amsterdam 1959, pp. 1–18, esp. 13–14. An earlier version of this article was published in: *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 43 (1956), pp. 94–103. In the 1959 version of his article Wijnman published several documents that provide evidence that Uylenburgh painted. Among the documented paintings are two portraits. Two drawings, one in the Amsterdam Printroom and the other in the British Museum (A. M. Hind, *Catalogue of Drawings by Dutch and Flemish Masters* IV, p. 71, plate XLIII), are ascribed to Hendrick Uylenburgh on the basis of none too-reliable inscriptions. The vast stylistic differences between the two make it highly unlikely that they are by the same hand.

he used the same term of himself in an autograph inscription<sup>112</sup>.

Wijnman and Broos have assumed that Govaert Flinck who according to Sandrart, as has been related above, worked for Uylenburgh painting portraits, was Rembrandt's follower in a function that Wijnman described as 'resident teacher'<sup>113</sup>. Broos too uses the term 'teacher', but supposed in addition that Rembrandt supervised the production of copies from his own works<sup>114</sup>. He based this assumption on, inter alia, the existence of a substantial number of paintings after Rembrandt that appeared in 1637 in the inventory of Uylenburgh's business contact Lambert Jacobsz<sup>115</sup>. With some caution, he voiced the opinion that Rembrandt might have been working under contract at Uylenburgh's. He explains this belief by the fact that Rembrandt's output took on a drastically different character as soon as he was working in Uylenburgh's house, with the accent on portraits and *tronies*, and detects a significant fall-off in the production of etchings and history paintings. That on several occasions the subjects of the portraits were, so far as can be discovered, members of Uylenburgh's circle strengthened Broos's suspicion that Rembrandt was carrying out work commissioned from him by, or that had come in through the agency of, Uylenburgh. This would chime with the idea that portraiture was a side of Uylenburgh's business already in the early 1630s. The fact that he acted as the publisher of Rembrandt's etching of the *Descent from the Cross* is further indication of a business relationship<sup>116</sup>.

It is important, in this context, to say that it is unlikely that all the painters who produced Rembrandtesque works during these early years had been trained by Rembrandt. The busts of a young woman (three of them dated 1632) for which Wijnman thought Hendrick Uylenburgh's wife acted as the model<sup>117</sup>, and of which we think the one in Boston is by Rembrandt, are for instance all from different hands<sup>118</sup>. But in only one case do we

believe it to be by a pupil whom Rembrandt taught in Leiden, viz. Isack Jouderville<sup>119</sup>. It is far more natural to assume that Rembrandt came into contact, in Uylenburgh's workshop, with a number – perhaps even a considerable number – of painters who after his arrival started producing this kind of painting. What is true of the *tronies* is also true of the portraits. Immediately in the first year portraits in the style of Rembrandt were being done by obviously experienced painters who it is hard to imagine were all taught by him in Leiden<sup>120</sup>. One almost has to assume that these painters were on hand at the time Rembrandt arrived and that they adapted themselves to his style. This would mean that Rembrandt's way of working set the norm in deciding the style in which work was to be done.

When in 1632 the notary Van Swieten went to Uylenburgh's house where, as he knew, Master Rembrandt, painter, was lodging, the latter had to be called from the back part of the house<sup>121</sup>. Wijnman has already suggested that the workrooms were in that part; this was a large building, with numerous windows looking onto both the courtyard on the south-east side and the water on the north-west side<sup>122</sup>. There was, at any event, room enough for a considerable number of painters.

One can speculate as to why Rembrandt did not at once set up on his own in Amsterdam, but instead moved into an existing workshop and probably even hired himself to the owner of it. From the Utrecht guild regulation prohibiting two masters from working under the same roof<sup>123</sup>, it can be deduced that such a situation would offer the two parties certain advantages, of which we are unaware. There is however another possible explanation of a more formal kind for Rembrandt's stay with Uylenburgh; this has to do with the obstacles that, as mentioned before, the guilds via the city authorities, would place in the way of masters from other towns. This is found most clearly in a regulation from The Hague dating from 1624, which laid down that a master coming from outside the town had to work for a master of the Hague guild for two years before

<sup>112</sup> Strauss *Doc.*, 1634/6; a reproduction of this document has been published by Broos, op. cit. (note 101), fig. 7.

<sup>113</sup> Wijnman, op. cit. 1959 (note 111), p. 2.

<sup>114</sup> Broos, op. cit. (note 101), p. 252. The singling-out of Rembrandt's possible duty as a teacher in the Uylenburgh business is mainly inspired by the term 'Accademia' for Uylenburgh's workshop as introduced by Baldinucci. In fact with every master who supervised the work of less experienced assistants, teaching was part of his work. For the history of the term 'Accademia' see however N. Pevsner, *Accademies of Art, past and present*, New York 1973, 2nd edn (1st edn 1940), where Uylenburgh is referred to on p. 131 (note).

<sup>115</sup> Straat, op. cit. (note 90), pp. 72–73.

<sup>116</sup> Strauss *Doc.*, 1633/4.

<sup>117</sup> Wijnman, op. cit. 1959 (note 111), pp. 12, 180.

<sup>118</sup> Nos. A 50, C 57, C 58, C 59, C 60 and C 61. As for no. C 61, it is questionable whether it was produced in the same studio.

<sup>119</sup> No. C 58.

<sup>120</sup> Nos. C 65, C 66, C 67, C 75, C 79, C 80.

<sup>121</sup> Strauss *Doc.*, 1632/2.

<sup>122</sup> When describing the studio of Gerard Dou – which he apparently considered an ideal one –, Sandrart emphasizes that it has its window on the North side and on the water of a canal. On 17th-century studios cf. W. Martin, 'The life of a Dutch artist in the 17th century; part III – the painter's studio', *Burl. Mag.* 8 (1905/06), pp. 13–24, esp. 13–14; see however also H. Miedema, 'Tekst en afbeeldingen als bronnen bij historisch onderzoek', to be published in *Wort und Bild* (report on a symposium in Cologne 1982), Cologne 1984, who warns against the risks of using studio scenes as 'snapshots'.

<sup>123</sup> S. Muller, op. cit. (note 51), p. 76.

<sup>124</sup> See note 97.

be could set up on his own account<sup>124</sup>. There is no rule of this kind in the Amsterdam ordinances, though there is the usual requirement that the painter in question be registered as a citizen before he can establish himself as an independent master<sup>125</sup>. We do not, for the moment, know how long this procedure took<sup>126</sup>. The fact that Rembrandt did not become a member of the Amsterdam Guild of S. Luke until 1634 does however chime remarkably well with the existence of formal obstacles that had to be surmounted before one could be a member of a guild. The few years that Rembrandt spent with Uylenburgh might therefore be seen in this context – i.e. as a necessary interim period that had to precede setting up on one's own account. What the true relationship between Rembrandt and Uylenburgh's workshop was during this period will probably never be known, but looked at in this light it is highly probable that it had not only a formal aspect but also a practical – enough to add to our problems of attribution.

*Separating hands involved in Rembrandt's workshop production*

Once one has come fully to realize that documents provide us with far too little information to know among how many, and which, hands we ought to share the output from Rembrandt's – and possibly Uylenburgh's – workshop, the (by no means new) question then arises of whether there is really any point, in a situation where the master supervised and bore responsibility for everything that left his workshop, in reconstructing who in fact did what. Might it not, as some art historians have indeed written – be an urge nurtured by the 19th century's cult of the genius that drives one to sift the oeuvre of a master – in our case, Rembrandt – trying to separate out at all costs the products that came about from a form of cooperation such as Rembrandt and his contemporaries evidently found perfectly normal<sup>127</sup>? The need, with an artist of this stature, to follow his personal development through study of autograph work seems a legitimate reason for trying to achieve clarity on this point. In itself, it is disturbing to realize that the amount of artistic pleasure the

viewer derives from one and the same painting seems liable to considerable variation, depending on one's ideas about the authenticity of the work in question; not to mention the changes in the painting's monetary value. Absurd though this phenomenon may appear at first sight, knowing whether a painting is a derivative product or not is, in itself, of considerable significance when assessing it.

The important question here remains, of course, whether our obsession with problems of authenticity ought not to be regarded as anachronistic. Contemporary sources are so scarce and conflicting on this point that it is hard to reach general conclusions. In the art-history literature dealing with 17th-century Dutch painting this is still almost unbroken ground. From what little we do know, it can at all events be deduced that the problem did not leave people in the 17th century totally indifferent – that is evident, for instance, where copies are concerned. There was undoubtedly a very large output of copies; they not only played a part in the training of young painters, there was a market for them as well. One can tell this from the number of copies that appear in 17th-century inventories<sup>128</sup>, and the number of old copies still in existence is consonant with this. So though the copy had a clear place, and was often frankly sold as a copy, there was still among people in the 17th century a fear that original (i.e. the work of a master) and copy might be confused with one another. The description 'apprentice work' that was used in one Amsterdam document from 1608 in connexion with copies shows that this fear had mostly to do with the possibility that one might be paying the price proper for a work by a master to buy a workshop product regarded as of lesser value<sup>129</sup>. It is this consideration that probably played the greatest part in the Gerrit Uylenburgh scandal; this involved perhaps not even Italian workshop products, as Fromantiau suggested, but Amsterdam copies after Italian originals<sup>130</sup>.

Montias, who – prompted by his research into the Delft archives – ventured further than anyone else into the terrain of 17th-century ideas about

<sup>125</sup> Obreen, op. cit. (note 34), III, p. 101 (1579), p. 109 (1621). From the regulations issued in 1630 (Obreen III, p. 109) it becomes clear that it was not unusual for craftsmen or shopkeepers to have their business over 'a year and a day' in Amsterdam without having become members of the guild. At the same time the guild announces a stricter observance of the rules concerning guild membership.

<sup>126</sup> According to J. Dirks (*De Noord-Nederlandsche gildepenningen*, Teylers Tweede Genootschap, Haarlem 1878, p. 6 with reference to H. W. Tijdeman, *Antwoord op de vraag over de inrigtingen der Gilden*, 1821) one had to be a citizen for one or two years before becoming a master in certain guilds.

<sup>127</sup> Blankert *Bol*, pp. 14, 18.

<sup>128</sup> Among the 1962 paintings with an artist's name attached to them that Montias found in Delft inventories, 505 were said to be copies after the artists cited (Montias, op. cit., note 4, p. 247).

<sup>129</sup> Van Dillen, op. cit. (note 66), I, p. 664. This document is a request submitted by the guild to the municipality to stop the sale of paintings from Antwerp in Amsterdam auctions. These paintings are described as being for the greater part 'slechte copieën . . . vodden ende slechte leer Kinderen-werck . . .' (plain copies . . . rubbish and bad apprentice work), by which the Amsterdam citizens, 'die door de banck weynich kennisse van schilderyen hebben' (who generally have little knowledge of paintings) are cheated. In 1613 the request is repeated in a slightly different wording (see *Ordonnantien en willekeuren van het Lucas Gilde binnen Amsteldam*, 1766); it is said that the citizens are 'dickwils copyen voor principalen kopende' (often buying copies for originals).

<sup>130</sup> Cf. note 104.

authenticity, thought it could be concluded from the sources he had examined that interest in the problems of attribution and authenticity began to grow about the middle of the 1600s. One of the documents he cited in this connexion indicates that what went on within the relatively closed world of the studio was, or had become, quite opaque to the buyer of paintings<sup>131</sup>. The phenomenon noted earlier in this chapter, in connexion with Rembrandt, of uncertainty as to attribution beginning to be felt in the second half of the century was also noticed by Montias in his analysis of a large number of Delft inventories<sup>132</sup>. An explanation of this phenomenon would need more research; it may have to do with the changing attitudes among buyers and collectors who – at least as Montias sees it – were becoming more interested in the artists than in the subjects of their paintings<sup>133</sup>. That what was common practice in a painter's workshop may have begun to conflict with this may perhaps be deduced from a change made in 1664 to the wording of an Utrecht guild rule from 1644. This related to the 'painters' hall', a place made available by the city authorities for the exhibiting of paintings<sup>134</sup>. The change in wording between the two versions sheds a great deal of light on the views the Utrecht guild members had about the autograph nature of paintings. In the 1644 rule it was stipulated that 'yder schilder, onder dit Collegie resorteerende' was required to provide 'een stuk werks, bij hem gemaakt' (. . . every painter belonging to this college . . . a piece of work done by him)<sup>135</sup>. The phrase 'done by him' was obviously being interpreted so broadly by the painters that an amendment to this rule was felt necessary. The new version of the same rule, twenty years later, was altered to read 'een stuk werks, by hem zelfs gedaan, principaal geheelyk opgemaakt' (a piece of work done by him himself, worked up wholly by his own hand)<sup>136</sup>. The confraternity in The Hague

made the same intention clear by describing the painting that was required as 'een stuck schilderije van ijders eijgen handt' (a painting from the own hand of each), or by a 'meesterlijke handt' (masterly hand)<sup>137</sup>. These cases demonstrate that the painters themselves obviously did not have over-strict ideas about whether products sold under their name were autograph or not<sup>138</sup>.

Apart from the fact that works by pupils and workshop collaborators could come into circulation as works by the master, there was – to judge by the 1664 Utrecht wording – also apprehension about the possibility of the master having done the work only partly himself. This concern was obviously a reflexion of what actually went on in a workshop. It was probably also true for Rembrandt's studio. It can readily be accepted that, as is explained in Chapter V, Rembrandt must have given his permission for works executed entirely by others to bear his signature. It is hard to know whether more than one hand worked on one and the same painting in his workshop; this possibility is disregarded or emphatically denied in the Rembrandt literature<sup>139</sup>. In the case of one etching, the *Ecce homo* (B. 77) of 1635/36, one gets the impression that such collaboration took place; it can scarcely be doubted that in this etching the whole of the background, as it can be seen in the first state, was done by a different hand<sup>140</sup>. The problem is how, with paintings from one workshop, one can distinguish between the various hands in anything like an objective way. As has already been said in Vol. I (pp. xiii–xvii), one has primarily to rely on features of style and the associated marks of quality.

Where the quality criteria are concerned, opponents will always be able to point to the subjective nature of such criteria, and to the phenomenon of the 'Monday painting', the painting that was produced under less favourable circumstances and therefore falls below the expected standard of excellence<sup>141</sup>. One is then glad to be able to quote Max Liebermann, who gratefully noted that an artist's oeuvre would one day be cleansed by art historians of less-successful autograph works<sup>142</sup>. But when one

131 Montias, op. cit. (note 4), p. 235. In a dispute about the authorship of a painting, which took place in 1644, bets were made on whether the painting was by Evert van Aelst, whose name was under it ('onder de schildery was staende'). It is noteworthy that the attribution was denounced by an artist who had been Van Aelst's pupil.

132 Montias, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 232–233.

133 Montias, op. cit. (note 4), pp. 218, 227.

134 Hoogewerff, op. cit. (note 60), mentions the existence of such a room in Amsterdam on the authority of J. Wagenaar, *Amsterdam in zyne opkomst* . . . II, Amsterdam 1765, pp. 25 ff.; this was however not established before the 18th century. In The Hague a room was put at the disposal of the 'Schilders-confrerie' in 1656 (Obreen, op. cit., note 34, IV, p. 52). The Utrecht 'Schilder-College' received their 'schilder-kamer' from the municipality already in 1644. According to Hoogewerff there was one also in Haarlem; the documents published by Miedema, op. cit. (note 59), do not confirm this. W. Goeree, *Inleydingh tot de practijck der Al-gemeene Schilder-Konst*, Middelburg 1670, p. 17 advocated the establishing of such exhibition rooms as they helped to stimulate interest in the art.

135 Muller, op. cit. (note 51), p. 73.

136 Muller, op. cit. (note 51), p. 81.

137 Obreen, op. cit. (note 34), IV p. 52.

138 Presentday artists whose work is in great demand – like a number of New York artists – have workshops with one or more assistants who execute works wholly or in part (personal communication Herbert Vogel, New York).

139 Cf. for instance W. R. Valentiner in the introduction to exh. cat. *Rembrandt and his pupils*, Raleigh, N.C., 1956, p. 25; Haverkamp-Begemann, op. cit. (note 31), p. 25.

140 M. Royalton-Kisch (in: *Apollo*, February 1984, pp. 130–132) has argued that this etching, and possibly also the *Descent from the Cross* B. 81 (II), was largely executed by J. G. van Vliet.

141 See for instance A. B. de Vries' contribution to the discussion following a lecture by Gerson during the Chicago 1969 symposium, op. cit. (note 86), p. 30.

142 G. Meissner, *Max Liebermann*, Wien-München 1974, p. 72.



realizes just how much, in the 17th century and in general up to the time of the Impressionists, working to a set recipe using a great many formulas that were part of tradition and changed only slowly played a role, then it becomes clear that variations in quality within the oeuvre of a trained painter could not be anything like as wide as they could with artists like Liebermann.

The art historian is obliged to look for links between complexes of similar features, explicitly extrapolated or otherwise, in order to arrive at groups of works that stylistically show such strong similarity that they can be assumed to come from one and the same hand. The larger and more homogeneous these clusters are, the more convincing the cohesiveness within the oeuvre or part of it is. When clustering occurs among the rejected works as well, this is evidence that the subgroup concerned is likewise from one hand. Especially when a subgroup ties up with works that lie outside the entire body of paintings under consideration, it is justified to attribute it to the hand that executed those. This was, for instance, the case with a number of works that were for a long time counted, with a greater or lesser amount of discussion, as part of Rembrandt's oeuvre, and that later could be quite readily incorporated in the oeuvre of Lievens (nos. C 1 and C 2). The Denver *Minerva* (no. C 9) provided the centre for a Jouderville cluster, and around the *Flight into Egypt* in Tours (no. C 5) a group of works was formed (with nos. C 10 and C 18) that was cautiously – mainly with a view to generating discussion – attributed to the very young Dou.

For the Leiden years there were already more clusters discovered than there were names to attach to them (cf. nos. C 19 and C 20; C 25 and C 25 fig. 3)<sup>143</sup>. This applies even more to the early Amsterdam years, where it is remarkably difficult to form combinations of rejected works.

With the picture provided by the preceding sections of the activity going on in a 17th-century workshop like that of Rembrandt (or Rembrandt and Uylenburgh) to serve as a background, one can now try to rearrange the paintings that have survived from Rembrandt's activity in Amsterdam. The portraits, to start with, lend themselves quite well to this; they must have been produced in large numbers; they exhibit – as we are not the first to say – a wide range, from what is indubitably auto-

graph to what is unmistakably non-autograph; and they contain a number of fixed elements that can be readily compared between one painting and the next.

Among the early Amsterdam portraits we came to detect a similar, more or less fixed working procedure just as efficient and practical as that used for the history paintings, and in principle no different from it. The steps described in Chapter II of Vol. I in the production of a painting were, it is true, noted from the Leiden history paintings; but in view of the similarity with what study of the '*Night watch*' (Br. 410) has revealed<sup>144</sup>, it is likely that this was a procedure that was current for some long time. With the portraits, too, the lay-in was done with a toned, monochrome underpainting in which the lit parts of the heads and light parts of the clothing were often heightened with a paint containing white lead. The background was probably worked up next, after which it was the turn of either the head or the costume apart from the collar, cap and cuffs. Situations are conceivable in which the head was the first to be 'worked up'. We know, from the notes made by Johannes Wtenbogaert, that he posed for Rembrandt for only one day<sup>145</sup>; this makes it likely that a start was made on working-up the head over an overall lay-in, with the remainder completed later<sup>146</sup>. One can be certain that collars and cuffs (and in women's portraits the white caps) were dealt with last; as a general rule they overlap the adjoining parts of the painting.

The model was probably not needed for painting the collar and other items of costume just listed. From a document relating to Isack Jouderville we know that in the case of the portrait it mentions the sitter, a Leiden baker, left his cambric lace collar behind in the artist's house for it to be 'uitgeschildert' (portrayed)<sup>147</sup>. With such arrangements

<sup>143</sup> Apart from these clusters, nos. C 9 and C 44 appear to be by the same hand, that of Isack Jouderville. Furthermore, no. C 42 may be added to the cluster already formed by no. C 12 and C 14 (see: Corrigenda et addenda to vol. I). Personally I think that other possible combinations are those of nos. C 16 and C 26, and nos. B 4 and C 4. The possibility that no. C 7 may be linked with the cluster consisting of nos. C 5, C 10 and C 18 may also be taken into consideration.

<sup>144</sup> E. van de Wetering, C. M. Groen and J. A. Mosk, 'Summary report on the results of the technical examination of Rembrandt's *Night Watch*', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 24 (1976), pp. 68–98.

<sup>145</sup> Strauss *Doc.*, 1633/2.

<sup>146</sup> It must have been quite common for the heads in portraits to be finished or nearly finished first, to the extent that the resemblance was accomplished. Several unfinished portraits from the 17th and early 18th centuries testify to this; cf. for instance M. K. Talley, *Portrait painting in England: Studies in the technical literature before 1700*, Guildford 1981, plates 29 and 30 (Anthony van Dyck), 31 (Peter Lely) and 37–40 (Godfrey Kneller). The unfinished portrait in Frans van Mieris's *Painter in his studio* in Dresden also shows the head finished whereas costume and background are indicated sketchily in white lines. The genesis of Rembrandt's etched *Self-Portrait* (B. 7 states I–V) may point in the same direction. In the etching *Jan Uytenbogaert 'the goldweigher'* (B. 281, states I and II), on the other hand, the face was finished last. The same is true of the painted portrait of Constantijn Huygens by Jan Lievens; as we know from Huygens' account (J. A. Worp in: *O.H.* 9, 1981, p. 129), the costume and hands were completed in winter time, whereas the face was painted during the following spring. See also Vol. I, p. 23 note 49.

<sup>147</sup> A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* VI, p. 1963.

one has to allow for the possibility that items of clothing would be painted by workshop collaborators, together with other secondary items, after the sitter had left. It is, for instance, difficult on stylistic and quality grounds to imagine that Wtenbogaert's hands were completed by Rembrandt himself (cf. no. A 80).

If there is any one feature in a painting by Rembrandt or from his studio that lends itself well to distinguishing the hands of its author(s) by Morelli's method<sup>148</sup>, it must be precisely the often complex items of costume, and this applies to lace in particular. Such passages satisfy one of the conditions for using this method, namely that the execution is largely a matter of routine. It is in executing just such parts of a painting that the characteristic traits in a hand betray themselves.

With the appearance of lace in the costumes of his sitters, the portrait painter was faced with the task of depicting its very complex yet regular structure, in all its airy translucency. At first, the most obvious method was adopted – each component of the lace was drawn in with a fine brush, using light paint. This way of working is to be found not only among the older generation of painters like Michiel Jansz. van Mierevelt and Jan Anthonisz. van Ravesteyn, but also among contemporaries of Rembrandt such as Dirck Dircksz. Santvoort and others. In this method, the interstices of the lace are suggested by the gaps the artist has left between the white lines and dots. The colour of the underlying clothing, which was first painted in its entirety, is left visible among the lace just as it would be in reality.

One wonders whether the fact that Rembrandt abandoned this laborious method for a better one had to do only with saving time. Accurate though this older-generation method might be, a glance at the originals shows that Rembrandt's method yielded far more convincing results. The result of 'lace-making with a paintbrush' tends to be dull and mechanical, and does not do justice to the lively qualities inherent in the surface of lace with its widely varying luminosity. There could, however, be another reason for giving up the old technique (in Frans Hals the two can be seen side by side) – fashion changed, and the structure of the lace became less linear. The solidly-worked parts in Flemish lace, for example, became a good deal larger, and joined together so much that there tended to be a linear pattern not of light, but of dark

lines. Rembrandt's early Amsterdam portraits were done at a time when this sort of bobbin lace came into fashion<sup>149</sup>.

A characteristic feature of Rembrandt's way of painting a lace collar (fig. 2) is that the lit parts of the collar were blocked out as large, white areas. How closely the edge of the collar area was approached by the brushstrokes was critically important; if the strokes reached or went beyond this edge, the outer contours of the lace were to be defined by the black of the costume, while if they stopped some little distance in from the extreme edge then each part of the lobes would be drawn with light paint. Only the gaps along the edge were formed by the black of the clothing remaining uncovered. All other interstices further away from the outer edge were – at least when a single-layer collar was concerned – indicated with lines and dots of black placed on top of the white. At places where there was a second layer of collar underneath, the interstices were represented with a much lighter, yellowish-brown paint. The shadow cast by one layer of collar on the other was set against the lobes of the top collar in cool greys. The upstanding lobes of lace or the lobes otherwise catching a stronger light were heightened individually with a thicker, light paint. The rough texture of these light accents makes a great contribution, through the light reflected from the paint surface, to the luminosity of this kind of passage; and there is a lively interplay between the whites such as can be observed in actual lace. With double-layered collars the paint relief of the areas laid down in white was given extra brilliance by means of roughly-applied white paint, before a start was made on working up the interstices.

It will be clear that such a manner of working left scope for personal variation. On the other hand, painting a collar and other areas of lace did call for considerable perseverance in rendering a material typified by a certain regularity, symmetry and intricate decorative structure. The way the painter achieved this entailed a balance between the necessary skill in routine execution and a certain amount of inventiveness (for which the system left scope). Comparing painted lace articles of costume thus provides an opportunity for picking out series of fairly stable characteristics, and thereby for distinguishing between different hands.

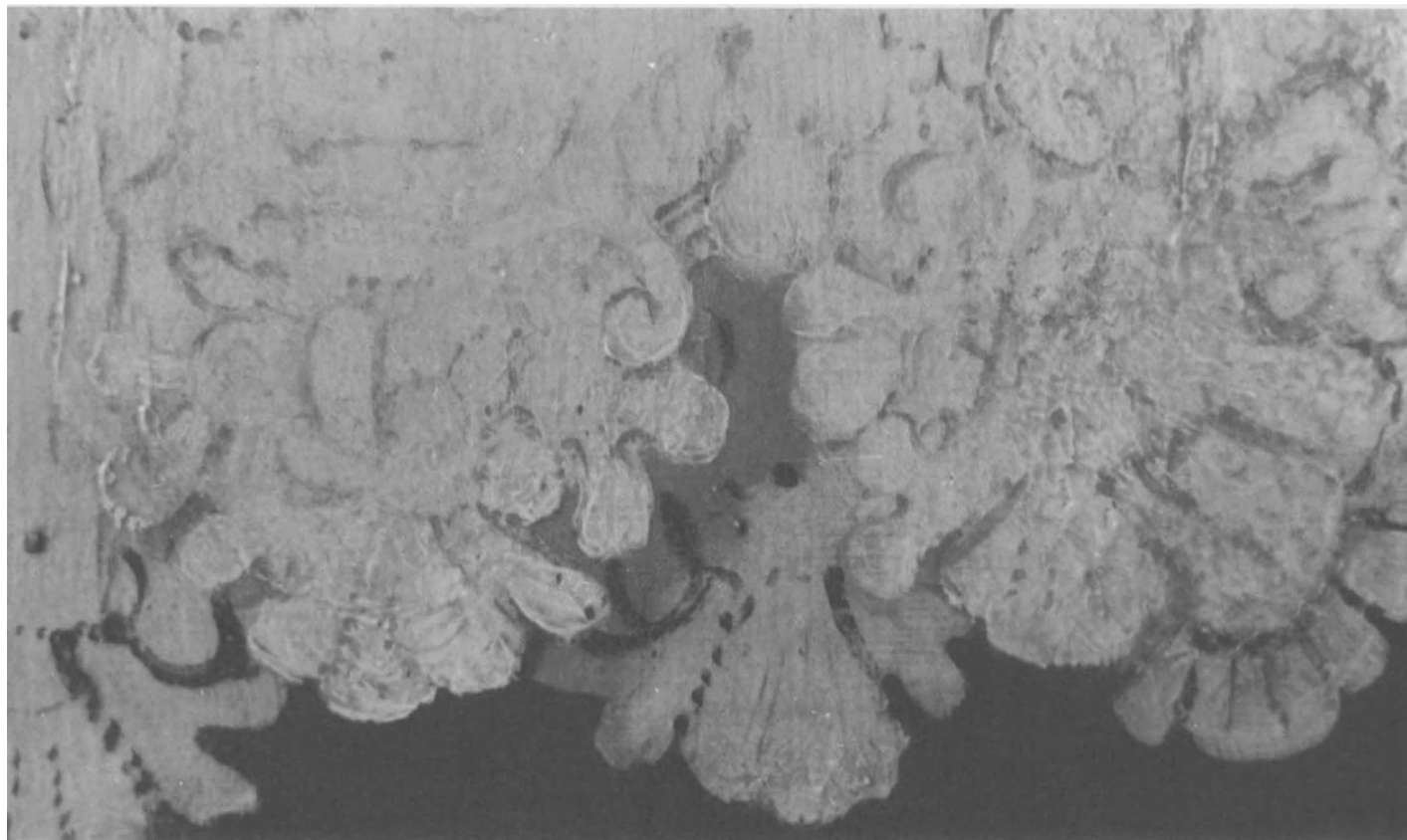
Such detailed comparison is difficult since it is in most cases impossible actually to view the paintings side-by-side; one is almost entirely dependent on descriptions noted in situ, and on photographs (with all their inherent variations in quality and arbitrary

<sup>148</sup> G. Morelli, *Kunstkritische Studien über Italienische Malerei*, vol. I, *Die Galerien Borghese und Doria Pamfili in Rom*, Leipzig 1890. For a critical reaction to Morelli's method, see for instance W. Koopman, 'Iwan Lermolieff's Experimentalmethode, ein unfehlbares Mittel zur Bestimmung von Kunstwerken', *Preussische Jahrbücher* (1890), pp. 467–474; see also U. Kultermann, *Geschichte der Kunstgeschichte*, Vienna/Düsseldorf 1966, pp. 192–199, with some further references.

<sup>149</sup> See on this subject: S. M. Levey, *Lace. A history*, London 1983.

Figs. 2-4. Three examples of the rendering of lace in Rembrandt's workshop

Fig. 2. A 84 *Portrait of a young woman*, detail. Formerly Santa Barbara, private collection

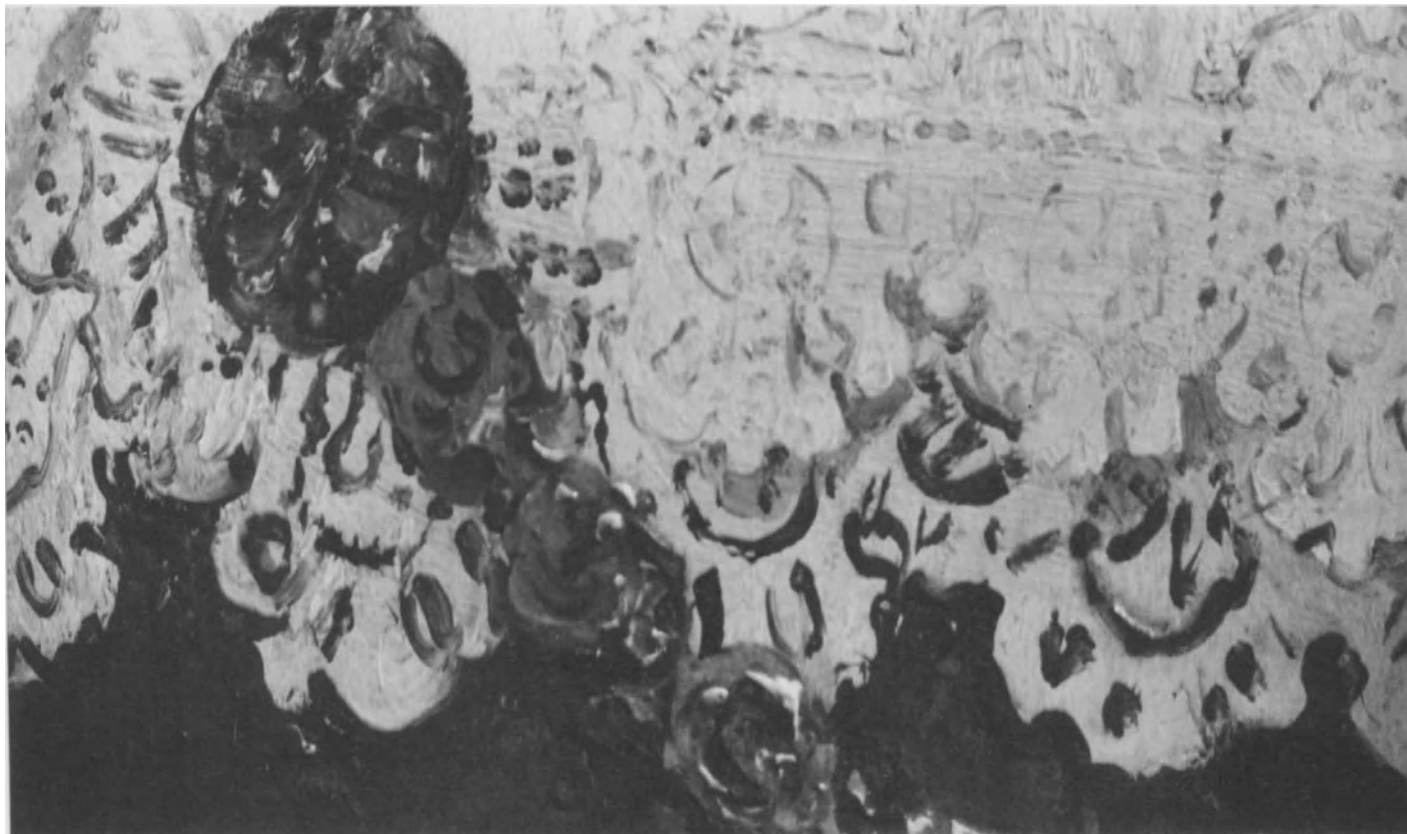


features such as the scale of reproduction and details covered). Another factor is that the condition of the paintings varies, bringing with it the chance that the black lines and dots in the lace have been worn and, to some extent, restored.

The criteria used below for distinguishing various hands give the impression of being based on the norm of naturalism. Criteria that have more to do with fine motor control, the idiosyncratic movement of the hand wielding the brush, do play some part; but most of the criteria are connected with the way the expression in paint of the appearance of lace relates to physical reality. Motor control plays a role to the extent that the degree of mastery of the brush and the effectiveness with which it is used (e.g. in the accurate setting-down of lines placed symmetrically one opposite the other) is clearly revealed. In this research the comparison covers lace items of costume in the portraits from between 1631 and 1634 accepted by Bredius. Instead of working in chronological order and starting with the earliest painting, it is better to begin at the end – i.e. in 1634 – by which time the routine skills had become entrenched.

To work out criteria for comparison, attention is first focussed on three male portraits, all from 1634 – the *Portrait of Marten Soolmans* (no. A 100), the Warsaw *Portrait of a young man* (Br. 195), and the Leningrad *Portrait of a young man* (no. C 78) (cf. figs.

5, 6 and 7). What is striking about Soolmans' collar is that for all the deftness in treatment the artist achieves a convincing degree of precision – and less by being meticulous than by having great mastery of pictorial means. Firstly, this impression of accuracy comes about through the symmetry of the complicated scallops of lace being successfully maintained, even at places where they hang in folds or are seen foreshortened. This impression of symmetry is achieved by the rosettes and three-leaved lobes, volutes and so on all apparently lying in their proper place, together convincingly reproducing the structure of the lace. Directly linked with this is the suggestion of interstices, of diaphanousness, that the lace gives in this collar. The painter has managed to create the impression that the lace in fact consists of discrete elements joined at several, separate points, and that the black of the lines and spots (that have been placed on the underlying white) are really tiny views-through to the dark garment beneath. This feeling of looking at interstices is in this instance determined to a great extent by the fact that at the outermost lobes the linking threads of the elements making them up have been drawn with tiny lines of white, and that the black spots have been given shapes characteristic of the gaps between the lobes meeting at various points. So far as one can make out, a substantial number of the lobes have been shaped directly at their edges with

Fig. 3. C 73 *Portrait of a woman*, detail (cf. fig. 12). Boston, Museum of Fine Arts

white, while others are given their contours by the black of the costume. A third feature is the way that, subtly, the artist suggests three-dimensionality, as well as the supple quality of the lace as it moulds itself to the shoulders and is subject to the accidents of curling and rucking. The latter is suggested in a highly sophisticated way in the *Soolmans*, by having the righthand, up-standing lobe catch just a little of the light that skims along the further side of the body. The way the lace lies at the contour of the shoulder is also characteristic – the uptilted scallop, with diminishing detail, disappears very convincingly ‘round the corner’, and it has all the distortions inherent in foreshortening suggested very convincingly. To the right a rather stiff scallop with a lit edging projects equally effectively. Finally, there is the quality of the brushwork as it can be seen in the local highlights and, especially, the drawing of detail in dark paint. This black detail is set down here with a relaxed rhythm and yet a great deal of formal clarity.

When the *Marten Soolmans* is compared with the Warsaw *Portrait of a young man* (Br. 195) a number of marked differences are immediately apparent (figs. 4 and 6). In the latter the structure of the scallops is chaotic and lacks any suggestion of symmetry. There is no impression of interstices; the black lines show a nervous, disjointed calligraphy and do not convey the sensation of seeing through to the cloth-

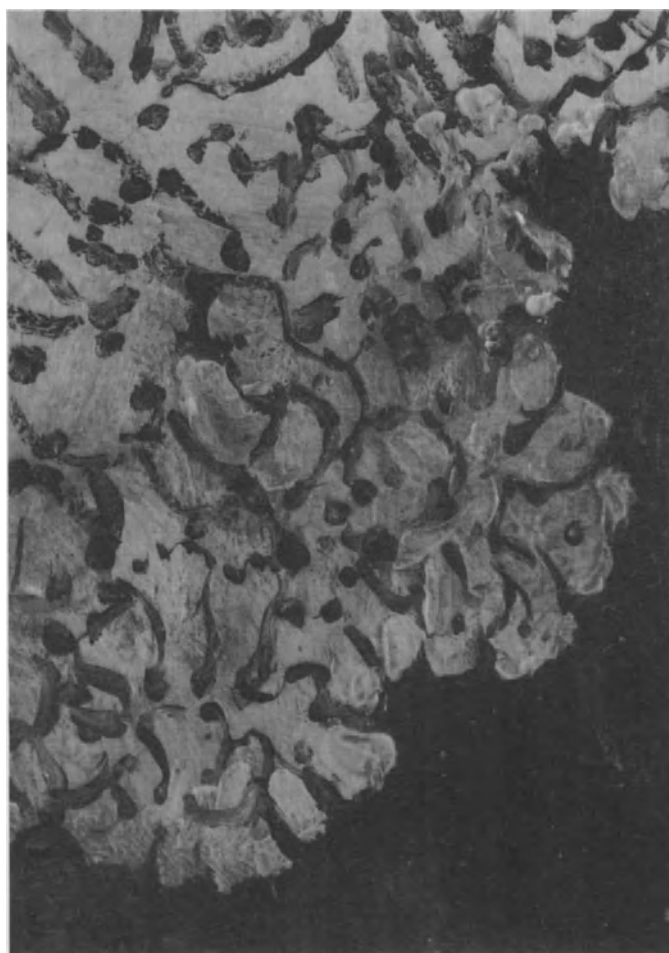
Fig. 4. *Portrait of a young man*, detail (cf. fig. 6). Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe

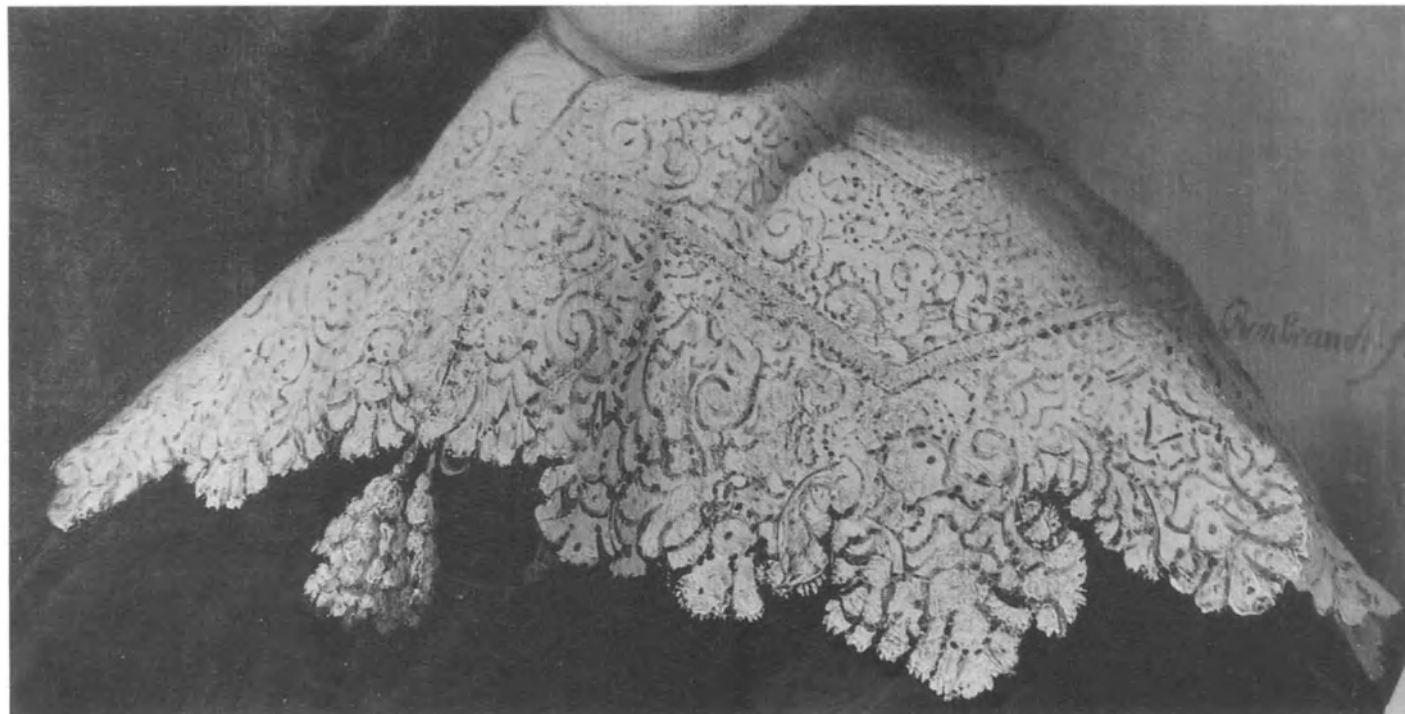
Fig. 5. A 100 *Portrait of Marten Soolmans*, detail. Paris, private collection



Fig. 6. *Portrait of a young man*, detail (cf. fig. 4). Warsaw, Muzeum Narodowe





Fig. 7. C 78 *Portrait of a young man*, detail. Leningrad, The Hermitage Museum

ing beneath. Even though, just as with the *Soolmans*, many of the lobes have been given detail with white, the painting in white lacks the subtle variation encountered there. At places where the lace lies in shadow the lobes have thick strokes of white that were covered at a later stage with a grey that was also used to 'shade' the scallops along the edge of the collar at the left. This remarkable darkening towards the bottom edge would seem to be based on a method of suggesting pictorial space by means of selective lighting that Rembrandt developed in 1632 in the *Man in oriental dress* (no. A 48) and the *Portrait of Joris de Caullery* (no. A 53), but the collar exhibits none of the cunning devices for suggesting depth that one can see in the *Marten Soolmans*. Where attempts have been made at this, such as at the point where the collar closes and at the base of the second scallop to the left, the three-dimensional effect being aimed at is not achieved. There is also no convincing relationship between the collar and the anatomy underneath it – it lies over the shoulders like a stiff, shapeless cloak. The inference from all this is that one cannot imagine this collar and that in the *Marten Soolmans* as being painted by the same hand.

In the Leningrad *Portrait of a young man* (no. C 78), also dated 1634, the collar likewise shows significant differences from that in the *Soolmans*. The structure of the lobes is a great deal less clear and convincing, and it makes a poor comparison in the impression given of the interstices. In the white areas the brushwork is thick and coarse. At the edge the white often continues through beneath the black of the clothing,

meaning that for the most part the contours of the lobes have been defined with black. There is an almost total absence of spatial interplay between the scallops, and the way the lace disappears behind the contour of the arm is lacking in any suggestion of depth; only the large pleat to the right of the neck contributes an element of plasticity. The tasselled bandstrings represent a missed opportunity for making the collar stand out from the body by means of a well-placed cast shadow on the strings. In short, there is in this case too every reason to doubt that the painter of this collar would be the same as the author of the collar in the *Soolmans*. If he were, then that would mean that substantial divergencies in handwriting, conception and, in the end, in quality would have to be accepted within the work of a single painter.

To see just how much chance there is of such divergences, the collar in the *Soolmans* can be compared to the collar and cuffs in the companion-piece, the *Portrait of Oopjen Coppit* (fig. 8; no. A 101). Comparison of the two collars is complicated by that of the woman having two layers, so that in an appreciable part of the lace it is not the black dress that shows through, but the underlying layer of lace. There, the interstices are consequently rendered with brown-yellow lines and dots. This results in a less contrasty pattern. Moreover, the lobes of lace in the Oopjen collar are much larger than the very fine lobes in the man's collar, which must have posed different requirements in its execution. Account taken of the different types of lace, there is still no doubt that both collars were painted by the same



Fig. 8. A 101 *Portrait of Oopjen Coppit*, detail. Paris, private collection



Fig. 9. A 84 *Portrait of a young woman*, detail (cf. fig. 2). Formerly Santa Barbara, private collection

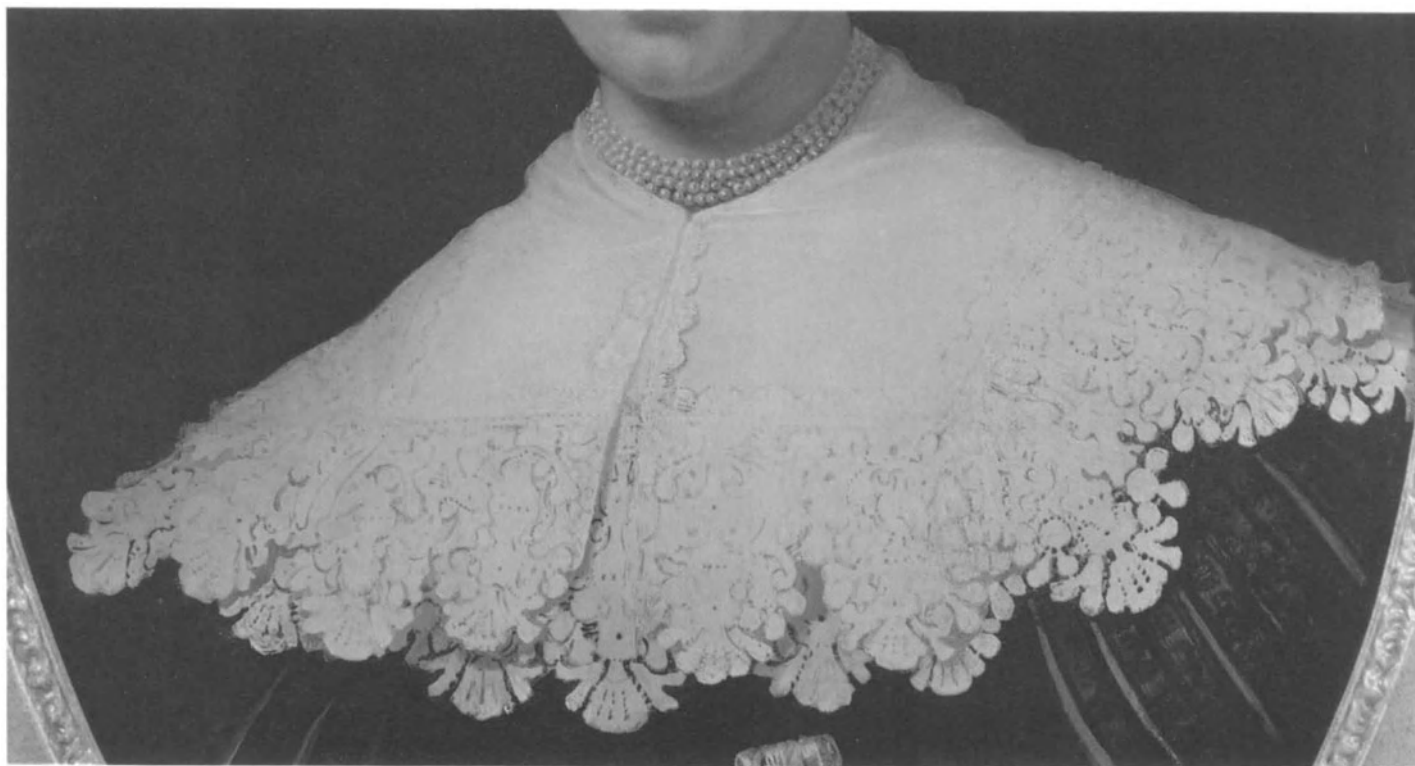


Fig. 10. A 101 *Portrait of Oopjen Coppit*, detail. Paris, private collection

hand; in the female portrait the structure of the lace is treated just as obviously with an understanding of its decorative pattern, and with a convincing suggestion of the symmetry of the individual scallops. The suggestion of apertures through the lace and the tricks like the curled front lobe and the lobe on the extreme right just catching the light contribute, in the collar and to an even greater extent in the cuffs to a highly convincing rendering of the lace (just as they do in the companion-piece). The way the layers of lace respond to the underlying shape of the body is also similar in the two paintings. The paint surface of the woman's collar does, it is true, seem far rougher than in the man's portrait, but this is linked rather to the need to suggest the special surface quality of the double-layered collar. One ought perhaps to see the intensive use of fat white highlights, particularly in the top layer of the collar, in the same light. These highlights appear especially in the part facing the viewer, but they are also seen in the area close to the transition from light to shade on the right shoulder. The lobes of lace have to a great extent been given their final form when the white paint was applied, though the shapes do seem in part also to result from the black of the clothing, placed against the bottom outline. The brush used for the thin black lines is wielded freely, but is totally controlled and functional. Because of these similari-

Fig. 11. A 79 *Portrait of a woman in an armchair*, detail. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

ties, one can well assume the two collars to have been painted by one and the same artist.

The collar in the 1633 *Portrait of a woman* formerly in a private collection, Santa Barbara (fig. 9; no. A 84) corresponds remarkably closely to the description just given of the collar of Oopjen Coppit. The paint surface is rather smoother, apart from the very similar way use has been made of tiny highlights. Likewise, the collar in the 1633 *Portrait of a man rising from his chair* in the Taft Museum, Cincinnati (no. A 78) exhibits characteristics that are so close to those of the Soolmans couple that it is natural to attribute it to the same hand. The companion-piece, the *Portrait of a woman in an armchair* in the Metropolitan Museum, New York (no. A 79), is, where the dark elements are concerned, hard to compare with the other because one evidently has here a collar the two layers of which cover one another almost exactly, so that there are virtually no layers with black interstices. This probably also explains the relative coarseness of the paint surface, comparable with that of the double-layered areas of Oopjen's collar. In other respects, however, the collar of the *Woman in an armchair* satisfies the criteria derived from the paintings of the Soolmans couple; in particular, the way three-dimensionality is suggested, and the collar wraps lightly over the upper arm, is both simple and highly effective (see no.

Fig. 12. C 73 *Portrait of a woman*, detail. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts

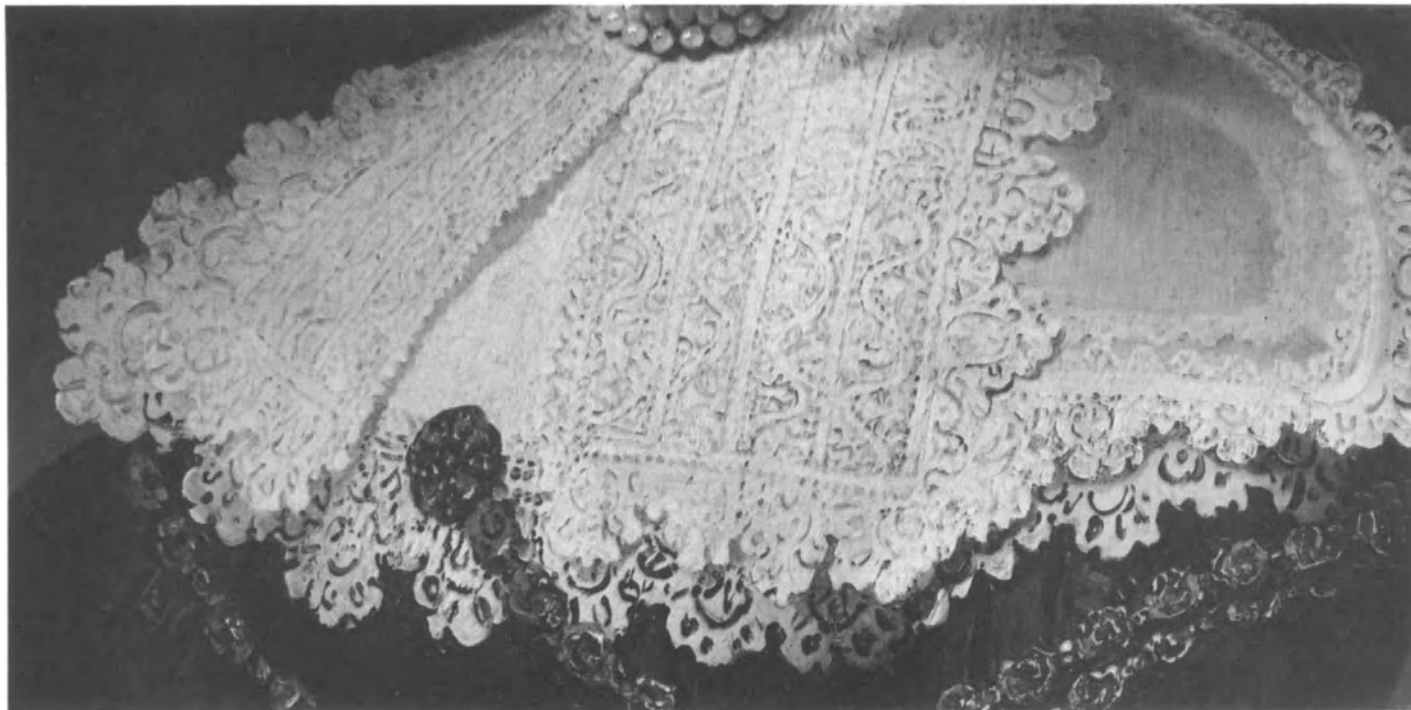
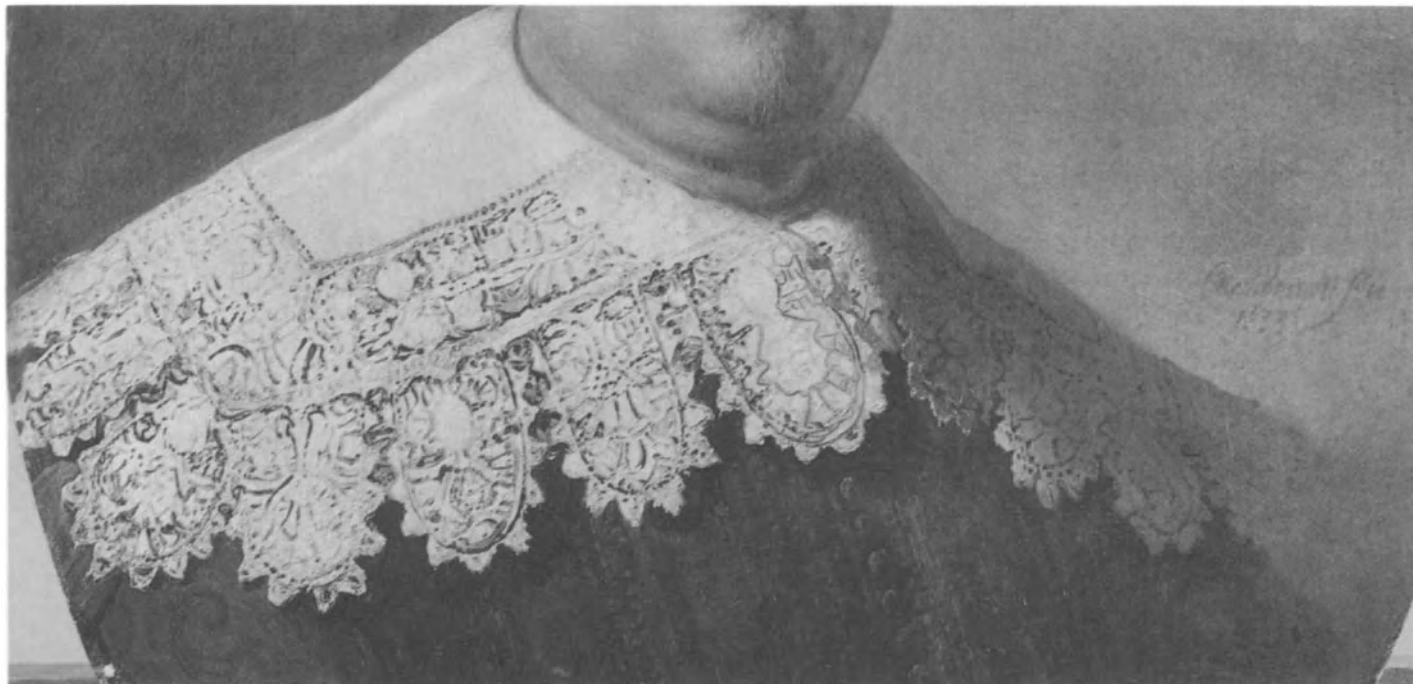


Fig. 13. C 82 *Portrait of a woman*, detail. Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland (on loan from the Duke of Sutherland)



Fig. 14. C 77 *Portrait of a man*, detail. Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden

A 79 fig. 1). The treatment of the lefthand shoulder outline shows a striking similarity to that in the former Santa Barbara portrait (fig. 9), and the cuffs consisting of a single layer of lace are alike in every respect to those of Oopjen Coppit, particularly in the case of the dangling arm (figs. 10 and 11).

In this way one arrives at a group – group ‘A’ – of collars and cuffs that occur in five paintings bearing the dates 1633 and 1634, a group that is remarkably consistent and can without the slightest difficulty be attributed to one and the same hand. On grounds of style and quality there can be hardly any doubt that this group was in fact done by Rembrandt himself. All the areas of lace belonging to this group show a rhythm in execution that is typical of him. The balance between the independent quality of the handling of paint and the illusion achieved is closely akin to what one finds in other areas of paintings from these years that are, in this respect, acceptable as being works by Rembrandt. The same can be said of the treatment of contours, with their wealth of variation in plastic and three-dimensional effect. The luminosity, obtained by an interplay in the way impasto has been used and the suggestion of light reflecting into the shadows, is characteristic of his perception; and in spite of the formula ‘sameness’ that such a use of pictorial means can so easily produce, it remains wholly individual in the result achieved. The fact that the connexion just demonstrated embraces a group of five paintings heightens the significance of the similarities that have been pointed out, and makes it reasonable to compare the collars in other paintings from the same years, 1633–34, to this group.

Reference has been made to the differences between the collar in the Leningrad *Portrait of a young man* and that in the *Marten Soolmans*. In view of the remarkable consistency there is in the group just described, it does indeed seem justifiable to think this is from a different hand. The collars of the Boston *Portrait of a woman* (no. C 73) and the Edinburgh *Portrait of a woman* (no. C 82), both dated 1634, are equally ill-at-ease among our first group (figs. 12 and 13, cf. fig. 3). Arguments can be offered for attributing the lace collars in these two female portraits to the same hand; the structure of the scallops is not particularly firm in either; they lack symmetry and display poor contours; and the dark lines do not bring about any convincing suggestion of interstices in the lace. With both collars the fact that they are double-layered has prompted the artist to provide a complex of cast shadows from the upper onto the lower layer: but the suggestion of depth he was aiming at lacks the inspired feeling there is in every collar from our group A. Neither of these collars bears a believable relationship to the body beneath. Both the Edinburgh and the Boston collars display the same phenomenon as in the Leningrad young man’s collar – the exaggerated use of black of the clothing in defining the outlines of the scallops of lace. The most telling similarity between the two paintings is however offered by the brushwork in the interstices, which is undisciplined and produces a far from effective result. These two collars might for the time being be looked on as forming the nucleus for a second group (group ‘B’).

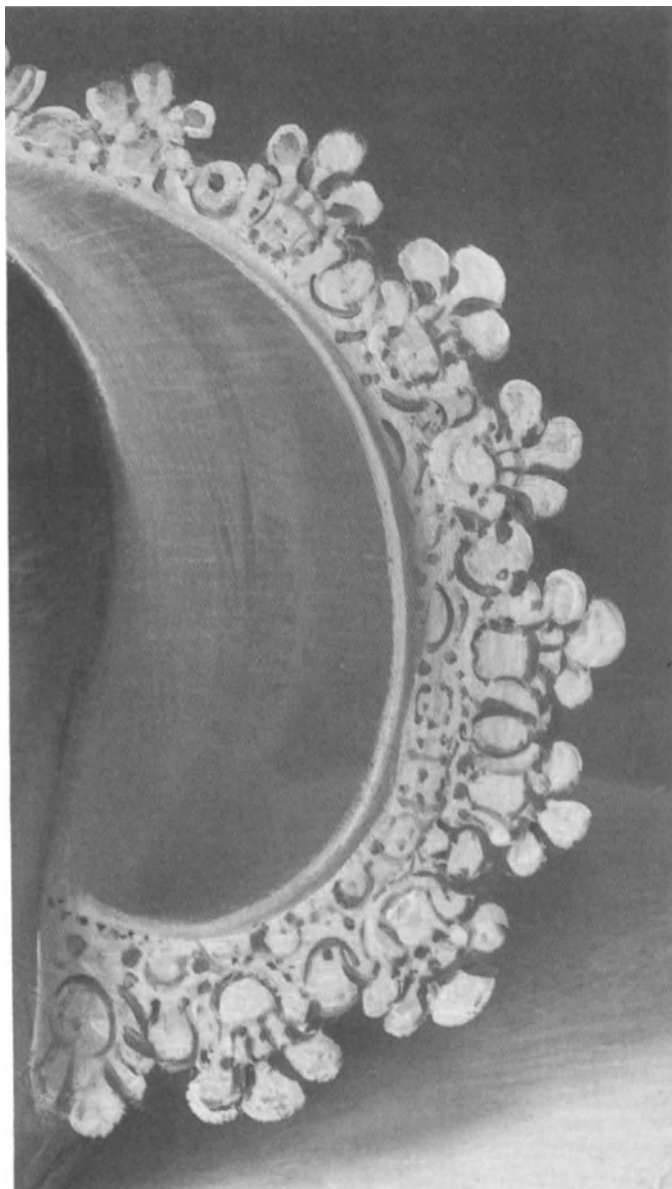
The characteristics listed correspond to a certain extent to those in the collar of the Leningrad *Young*

Fig. 15. C 81 *Portrait of a young woman*, detail. U.S.A., private collection



*man* (fig. 7), even though this is not all that obvious. The same may be said for the collar in the Dresden *Portrait of a man* dated 1633 (fig. 14; no. C 77). The collar in this portrait, too, displays a treatment of the lace that at all events falls outside that of group A. The structure of the tongues of lace is lacking in clarity and firmness; the diaphanous nature of the lace is not suggested convincingly; the familiar ways of suggesting three-dimensionality are absent; and the device that has been used of allowing the right-hand half of the collar, left in shadow, to catch a little of the light has rather an unfortunate result. The black of the costume plays an important role in mapping out the contours of the lobes, and the strokes that provide the detail are chaotic and ineffectual. The use in this painting of scratchmarks in the lace below the chin is unusual; it obviously suggests that one tongue of lace overlaps the

Fig. 16. C 71 *Portrait of a woman*, detail. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum



other, so that no black could be used to indicate the interstices. Rembrandt never employed scratchmarks for this purpose. The treatment of the collars in the Leningrad and the Dresden male portraits exhibits a number of similarities. These are to be found first of all in the rough and rather uncontrolled use of coarse white paint and the lack of discipline in applying the black paint, whose tonal value varies widely. Strokes of grey have often had to be strengthened with black at various places. The lack of control is greater in the Dresden painting, but this could if one likes be seen in relation to the earlier date. In group B discussed here the similarities between the depictions of lace listed so far are not decisive, so the possibility of several hands having been at work in this group certainly cannot be ruled out. The lace of the cap in the *Portrait of a young woman* in a private collection (no. C 81) can



also be included in this group (fig. 15); its rather chaotic and uncontrolled execution, with the frequent use of the dark paint of the background to provide the outline of the lobes, is a good match for that of the lace passages that have been cited in group B.

The lace of the cap in the Braunschweig *Portrait of a woman* (no. C 71) comes – when one looks at the whole of the group of paintings from 1633/34 – remarkably close to that in group A (fig. 16). In treatment and rendering, it falls reasonably well between the lace in, for instance, the Cincinnati *Portrait of a man rising from his chair* (no. A 78 fig. 1) and that in the *Portrait of a young woman* formerly in a private collection at Santa Barbara (figs. 2 and 9; no. A 84). It shares with the former the outlining of lobes at some places with thick strokes of white paint, a procedure that is also found in paintings from 1632. It is so much closer to the A- than to the B-group that, for this and other reasons, the present author does not want to rule out the possibility of the picture being autograph.

The earliest depictions of lace, those in portraits from 1632, do not yet display the uniformity of approach within a single group that can be found in group A from 1633/34. The nature of the portraits in which lace plays a role gives rise to some extent to such differences; the two dated 1632 in which it has a part to play are diametrically opposed – the *Portrait of Maurits Huygens* (no. A 57) and the *Portrait of Amalia of Solms* (no. A 61). The former (fig. 17) is a portrait on a small scale in which the sitter wears a softly folding and relatively simple collar. The interstices are indicated with freely-placed lines and spots, helping the impression of gentle undulations. The feeling of depth gains extra support from the way one upcurling scallop catches the light, and from thick highlights on the scallop beside the join in the collar and edgings of lights along the shadow half of it. Despite the quite different scale and degree of detail the collar in the *Maurits Huygens*, with its spirited three-dimensionality and effective shorthand in showing the interstices, matches up to the characteristics of group A even though (understandably, in view of its small size) the emphasis falls more on the three-dimensional aspect than on the structure of the lace. This somewhat casual, sketch-like manner of representing the black interstices appears again, at a larger scale, in the lace edging on the cuffs (fig. 18) in the *Portrait of a young woman seated* in the Vienna Akademie also dated 1632 (no. A 55).

The other extreme is seen in the collar of the *Portrait of Amalia of Solms* (fig. 19), where the very fine and rich triple-layered lace collar plays a leading role. The relatively closely-detailed rendering of

this collar has resulted in a convincing definition of the lace. The three-dimensionality of the layers of lace lying one over the other is remarkable; it is brought about partly by the intelligent way the shapes of the cast shadows of the uppermost lobes counterpoint the lobes themselves. The small curling lobes that catch the light at the very edge of the shoulder on the right contribute to this feeling of depth, and to the impression of lightness, just as the way the lefthand contour, on the breast, suggests it, summarily but animatedly, in the greatly foreshortened view of the lace. The manner in which the scallops on the shoulder on the right lie crosswise over each other renders the shape of the shoulder almost tangible. Despite the fineness of the lace, the 'handwriting' has the same, effective deftness that one finds in the collars of group A. Everything – the places where and the way in which light accents are employed, the rough surface in passages where the collar has two layers, the occurrence of highlights close by the transition to areas of shadow where one or two of the lobes have been given a highlight indicating the thickness of the material – is familiar from the collars of group A, among which this painting too can unhesitatingly be included.

Radically different is the way the lace of the cuffs and rich pleated collar in the *Portrait of a woman* in the Metropolitan Museum, also dated 1632, (no. C 69) is characterized (fig. 20). Predominant in the cuffs is an open pattern of lines and touches that differs in every respect from that seen in the lace of group A. This results in a flat pattern of rather chaotic scallops of lace that owe their shape mainly to the agitated movement of a brush loaded with light paint. The small interstices in the lace stem to a large extent from the underlying dark paint. Where the interstices cannot be rendered by means of black reserves, they are suggested with rather chaotic spots of dark paint, just as happens in the cuffs in the companion-piece (no. C 68). Both variants occur side-by-side in the lace running across the woman's breast below the collar. Spots of dark paint, lacking any suggestive power, are abundantly used in the ruff. Because of this nervous and chaotic way of working the lace does not at any point offer a persuasive clarity of structure. Apart from a curling scallop in the righthand cuff, no convincing impression of three-dimensionality is achieved, partly because the foreshortening is ineffective. Even taking into account that the type of lace depicted here seems more linear in style than most of the lace dealt with in this chapter, it cannot conceivably be from the hand that produced the A-group. One has only to look at the crisp and luminous treatment of the lower layer of lace in the *Portrait of Amalia of Solms* (fig. 19) to appreciate this.



Fig. 17. A 57 *Portrait of Maurits Huygens*, detail. Hamburg, Hamburger Kunsthalle



Fig. 18. A 55 *Portrait of a young woman seated*, detail. Vienna, Akademie der bildenden Künste

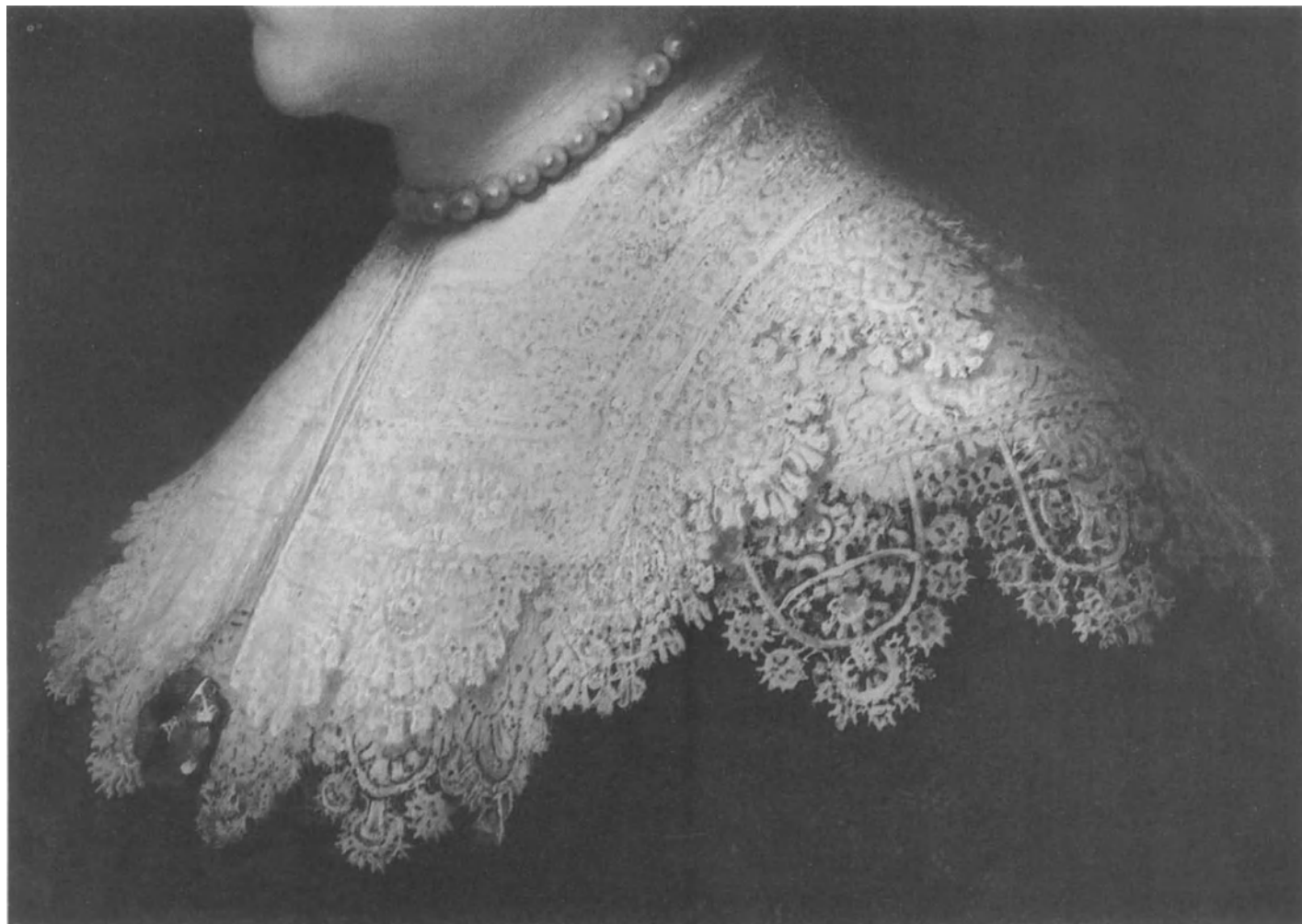


In the portraits of the Pellicornes and their children (nos. C 65 and C 66), which may be placed early in 1632, the lace has to some extent the same characteristics as that in the New York portraits; this is most clearly so in the lace of the cuffs and collar of the girl (fig. 21). It is tempting to sense the same hand in the execution of the lace in these four paintings. The remarkable similarity in form between the two right hands in the female portraits in New York and in the Wallace Collection may already give reason to wonder whether these two paintings might not be from the same hand (figs. 20 and 22). When the heads are compared this idea seems to be groundless, though it may be that one has here instances of work being shared among various hands during the production of a single painting.

Cases that stand alone are found in the lace in the caps in the Frankfurt *Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq* (no. A 82) and the Vienna *Portrait of a woman seated* (no. C 80). Where the latter is concerned (fig. 23) one sees in the lace a treatment with, as it were, a calligraphic nature of its own. The separate threads and contours of the lace appear to have

been drawn emphatically with impasto. The thickness of these lines has an imitative character – akin to the traditional draughtsmanlike approach – rather than playing a role in suggesting the material such as one sees in the equally detailed lace of the *Amalia of Solms*. The lace on the cap in the *Maertgen van Bilderbeecq*, on the other hand (fig. 24), exhibits a treatment that is remarkably casual and chaotic. The structure of the lace is not made clear; the hurried manner in which the dark lines and dots have been set down creates neither an impression of symmetry nor a convincing feeling of interstices in the lace. It is hard to imagine including the cap depicted in this painting among group A. Neither the Vienna woman's portrait nor the *Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq* can, where the handling of lace is concerned, be likened to any of the paintings discussed so far. Something similar can be said, to a lesser degree, about the lace cuffs of the woman in the *Portrait of a couple* (no. C 67), where the suggestion of the structure of the lace comes close to that of group A, but where the impression of bulk and the refinement in the handling of light that one finds there is totally absent (fig. 25). This might be

Fig. 19. A 61 *Portrait of Amalia of Solms*, detail. Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André



thought to be due to the relatively small scale of the lace parts compared to those in most other paintings mentioned, but one has only to see how that problem was solved in the *Maurits Huygens* to feel that another hand is at work here.

The foregoing is no more than an attempt to demonstrate how, if one focuses attention on certain comparable details within a group of paintings, certain patterns emerge that can be significant for distinguishing between one artist's hand and another. This procedure may, it must be conceded, make a somewhat mechanical impression; it does not leave much room for shifts or liberties in an artist's way of working, leave alone for experiments. There is however, as has been said, some justification for this in the considerable importance of the set recipes in 17th-century studio practice, and the limited freedom they left for personal variations other than involuntary idiosyncracies. Close comparison of corresponding details may thus reveal unexpected correspondences and differences between paintings, and lead to a reconsideration of their acceptance or rejection. The results of these

'Morellian' comparisons then take their place within the broader context of stylistic features, and help in forming the basis for attributing them.

The ultimate question that presents itself is whether the collars and cuffs have been done by hands different from those responsible for the other parts of the paintings – in particular, the heads. In general, one can say that in most cases where one can point to clear differences in style, execution and quality in the costume-components we have been discussing, the same is then true of the heads and other parts of the painting as well. With only one or two exceptions one has to conclude that as a rule one and the same hand did produce the whole of the painting. It may be assumed that the paintings mentioned in the A-groups were – with one notable exception – done wholly or very largely by Rembrandt.

The exception among the works that have been discussed here is the *Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderveecq*. The execution of the lace in this painting differs noticeably from that of other lace items and certainly from those in the A-group, whereas there can be no doubt about the authenticity of the head.

Fig. 20. C 69 *Portrait of a woman*, detail. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art



Fig. 21. C66 *Portrait of Susanna van Collen and her daughter*, detail. London, The Wallace Collection



Similar problems are posed by the Pellicorne portraits in the Wallace Collection (nos. C 65 and C 66), where as has already been said the possibility of several hands, in this case those of assistants, being involved merits consideration.

Until further research shows otherwise, we would however take it that assistants taking a part in executing paintings from Rembrandt's hand, and Rembrandt taking a part in works done by the assistants, was an exception rather than the rule.

*Isack Jouderville and Govaert Flinck among Rembrandt's workshop assistants*

By no means all the components of the portraits examined can be compared with each other using Morelli's method; it is even very likely that only details like the lace and, for instance the ruffs, in the works from the early Amsterdam years offer an opportunity of distinguishing between various artists' hands in this way. In all other respects a wider approach will have to be taken. This applies also to the *tronies* from the early Amsterdam years, where one will have to work on the basis of more general

observations on brushwork and treatment of form, and with criteria that for the most part can be put only in terms of style and quality of execution.

In the catalogue entries it is explained as explicitly as possible and case-by-case, for the C-numbers, just why these paintings have been excluded from what we regard as the autograph oeuvre of Rembrandt. It is noticeable how seldom the rejected paintings can be linked one with another. One cannot, of course, expect a homogeneous style from a young painter who is still learning, or who (as in the case of Flinck) has come from another master and is trying to acquire the manner of Rembrandt. A combination of internal and external factors makes it likely that the development of a young painter like this will be complicated; stylistic unevenness can be expected far more than with a master, who will take his own path and whose development is governed much more by an internal logic. Apparently abrupt changes of style are, indeed, to be found in the very young Rembrandt himself; a comparison of works from 1625, 1627 and 1629/30 demonstrates this, even though one can trace a consistent evolution in the production from the years 1625 to 1630. The

Fig. 22. C.66 *Portrait of Susanna van Collen and her daughter*, detail. London, The Wallace Collection



lack of homogeneity in the production of a pupil or assistant can, one may assume, be so great that it becomes impossible, or at least very difficult, to reconstruct the oeuvre from his time as an apprentice or assistant. Certain idiosyncracies in the handling of the brush or in perception, or persistent defects or peculiarities in a talent can tell a great deal more than what we are used to calling stylistic characteristics. It is tempting to try, on the grounds of such characteristics, to widen the oeuvre of the only pupil on whom we happen to be relatively well-informed, i.e. Isack Jouderville<sup>150</sup>. There is reason to believe that after his apprenticeship he followed Rembrandt to Amsterdam, and worked with him there as an assistant. This belief is prompted first of all by the relationship that can be noted between one of the few clusters of rejected *tronies* – the *Bust of a young man in a turban* in Windsor

Castle (no. C 54) and the *Bust of a young woman* in Chapel Hill (no. C 58) – and a number of works already attributed to Jouderville. There are also facts relating to the biography of Jouderville that can be interpreted as evidence of a longer sojourn in Amsterdam. Moreover, the existence of an etching probably done by Jouderville after Rembrandt's *Cupid blowing a soap bubble* from 1634 (no. A 91 fig. 8) may be evidence that following Jouderville's apprenticeship during Rembrandt's Leiden period the contact between the two painters continued in the early Amsterdam years.

In 1919, when Bredius published numerous documents relating to Isack Jouderville<sup>151</sup>, very few works by this painter were known, and he remained a shadowy figure. Now that the number of works

<sup>150</sup> The name of this painter has been spelled in a wide variety of ways; the decision to use the present variant 'Isack Jouderville' is based on the fact that Jouderville signed documents in that way, as two facsimiles reproduced by Bredius, op. cit. (note 71), pp. 1949 and 1962 illustrate. The version introduced by Hofstede de Groot and generally used in art history literature, 'Isaac de Jouderville', does not occur in contemporary documents.

<sup>151</sup> A. Bredius, op. cit. (note 71). An addition to this material was published by Bredius in Vol. VII of the *Künstler-Inventare (Nachträge)*, pp. 126–128. The major file on Jouderville – assembled by his guardians – is kept in the Leiden Municipal Archives under Zonderville, Weeskamerarchief no. 3793. For the greater part this material was transcribed and published by Bredius, but the reader of Bredius's publication should be aware that the transcription of the most important document, the final account of the guardians from 1638 (Bredius, op. cit., note 71, pp. 1948–49), has serious lacunae.

attributed to him has grown, a fresh study of these documents seems to be called for. The archive material is so extensive that Bredius evidently had to forego publishing all of it, and a number of details of some importance thus went unremarked.

The documents on Isack Jouderville are so plentiful because he was an orphan. For a period of eight years when he was fostered, his guardians were accountable in close detail to the Leiden court of chancery. This included a detailed survey of all the expenditure by them on behalf of Isack (born in 1612/13), of his sister Magdalena who was a year older, and of his brother Jacob who was seven years younger. When this account was compiled in 1638, dozens of receipts were appended; they included the five written by Rembrandt when he had received the apprenticeship premiums, and a sixth later confirming receipt of the whole sum. These are the only documents that actually testify directly to Rembrandt having, as he phrased it, 'taught in the art of painting'<sup>152</sup>. The receipts are for payments made over a period of exactly two years, from November 1629 to November 1631, mostly in half-yearly instalments. The payment periods ran, as was common with many 17th-century contracts, from May to November and November to May<sup>153</sup>. Bredius, and everyone subsequently, concluded from the dates and from the amounts mentioned in the receipts that the apprenticeship did not last any longer than the two years mentioned. It may well have started earlier, however – the receipts relate in fact only to the money disbursed by Jouderville's guardians for him, after his mother's death in December 1629. At the start of the first period, during which 50 guilders were paid, Isack's mother and probably also his father were still alive<sup>154</sup>; so it is entirely possible that his parents might have paid

premiums during earlier periods, for which no receipts were written or for which they have been lost.

Bredius also found two items in these accounts relating to travel to Amsterdam, and from these concluded that Isack followed Rembrandt to Amsterdam during his apprenticeship<sup>155</sup>. This conclusion seems an obvious one to make, as it is usually – though without any cogent argument for it – assumed that Rembrandt moved to Amsterdam in the summer of 1631<sup>156</sup>. Bredius's conclusion was, however, unjustified. We can even say with certainty that Jouderville made no trip to Amsterdam until the end of November, as this would have been recorded<sup>157</sup>; but the assumed date on which Rembrandt moved house should perhaps also be shifted to after 19 November<sup>158</sup>. The journeys by Jouderville to Amsterdam took place after the completion of his apprenticeship, for in the accounts these items follow the last payment to Rembrandt.

His journeys to Amsterdam provide not unimportant evidence that Isack had professional business in that city. It is certain that after his apprenticeship finished he provided a large part of his own upkeep; following the end of his indentures, money was paid out for him only occasionally, and these few disbursements include the cost of the two trips to Amsterdam from Leiden<sup>159</sup>. The modest sums involved can only relate to a one-way journey by

152 Facsimile reproductions of all six receipts are published by Bredius, op. cit. (note 71), pp. 1952–1956. Transcriptions and translations of these receipts can be found in Strauss *Doc.*, 1630/2, 1630/4, 1631/3, 1631/7, 1631/9, 1631/10.

153 Occasionally one finds due dates indicated as 'Michaëlis' (8 May), and 'Allerheiligen' (All Saints, 1 November). Cf. for instance sources quoted in A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* VI, p. 1961 and C. Hofstede de Groot, 'Isaac de Jouderville, leerling van Rembrandt?', *O.H.* 17 (1899), pp. 228–235, esp. 231.

154 Isack's mother, Magdalena Jansdochter, died between 13 December 1629, when her will was drawn up, and 21 December 1629, when two guardians were appointed to foster the three orphans. His father Isack, host of the inn 'Schilt van Vranckryck', must have died shortly before, as the sale of his estate – which took place on 29 January 1630 – was held at the request of his wife; cf. Bredius, op. cit. (note 71), p. 1946. As a receipt dated 12 October 1630 testifies to the delivery of a considerable length of black cloth to the Jouderville family on 17 November 1629, the father may well have died shortly before that date.

155 'Aen hem tot syn reyse naer Amsterdam 1: 10', 'Aen hem voor syn reyse naer Amsterdam 1: 5' (To him [Isack Jouderville] for his journeys to Amsterdam 1 guilder 10 stuivers and 1 guilder 5 stuivers respectively). Bredius, op. cit. (note 71), p. 1949.

156 Cf. C. White, *Rembrandt*, Den Haag 1964 with notes by H. F. Wijnman, note 12 (pp. 141–142). See also, for instance, H. Gerson, *Rembrandt paintings*, Amsterdam 1968, p. 42.

157 The account book, made up in 1638 by Isack's guardians, is as far as this could be ascertained arranged chronologically. The most important proof of this is provided by a rough draft listing expenditure over the first year of their guardianship. These items (which were crossed out) also contain the references to the first two payments made to Rembrandt: 'Rembrandt 50' and 'Rembrant gegvn (given to Rembrant) 50'.

158 The supposition that Rembrandt moved to Amsterdam after 19 November 1631 was expressed for the first time in Strauss *Doc.*, 1631/9.

159 The expenditure on behalf of Isack between the end of his apprenticeship on 19 November 1631 and February 1636, when he married Maria le Fevre, a girl from Amsterdam, consists of 16 disbursements, while in the previous three months 23 disbursements were made. The first eight of these 16 payments may well be largely connected with the preparations for his moving to Amsterdam. They consist of payments for shoes and clothing, food for the trip ('provisie'), painting materials, a relatively large amount of ready cash (18 gld.), evidently to support himself during the first period, and the money for the fare to Amsterdam. From the sudden drop in expenditure one may deduce that Jouderville was wholly dependent on money supplied by his guardians until November 1631. Bredius (op. cit. note 151, *Nachträge*, p. 127) suggested that he already had an income of his own from May 1631 onwards, as the guardians were ordered by the court of chancery on 23 April 1631 to move him to 'een goet burgerhuijs . . . houdende . . . zyn eygen cost' (a good decent house . . . supporting himself). This may be taken to mean, however, that he was supposed to become not a boarder but a lodger, doing his own cooking etc.; this is borne out by the pattern of expenditure which includes the frequent purchase of food but also, for instance, of peat.



Fig. 23. C80 *Portrait of a woman seated*, detail. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

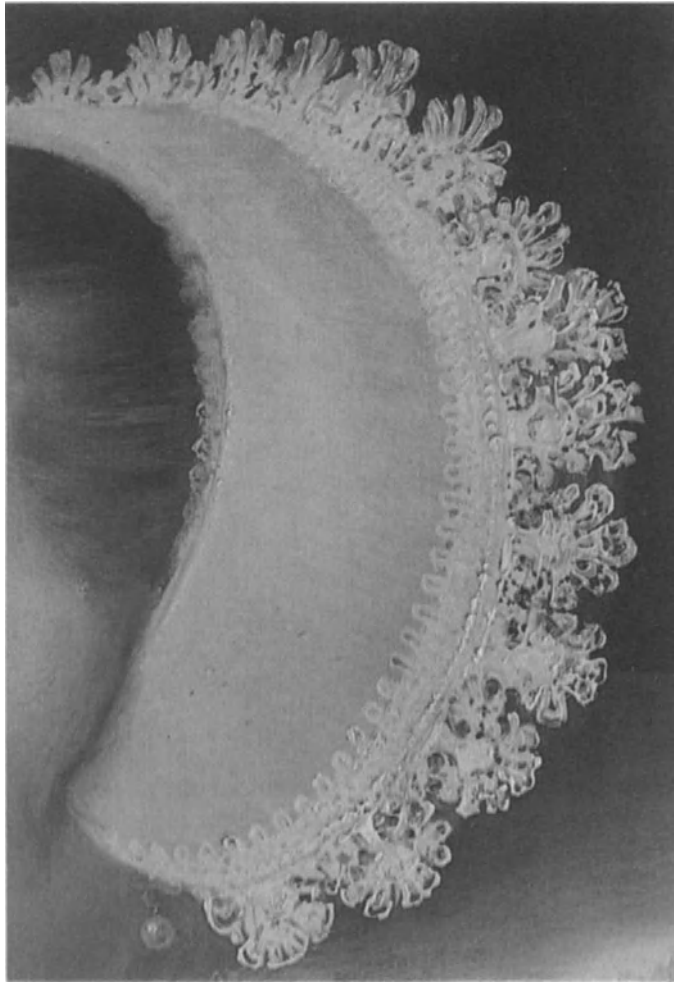


Fig. 24. A82 *Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq*, detail. Frankfurt am Main, Städelches Kunstinstitut

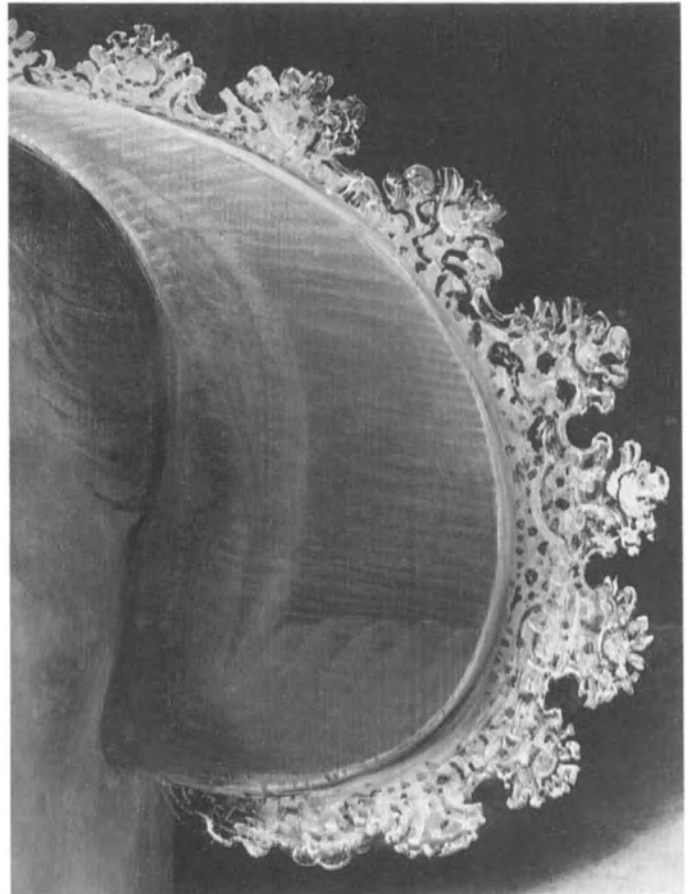
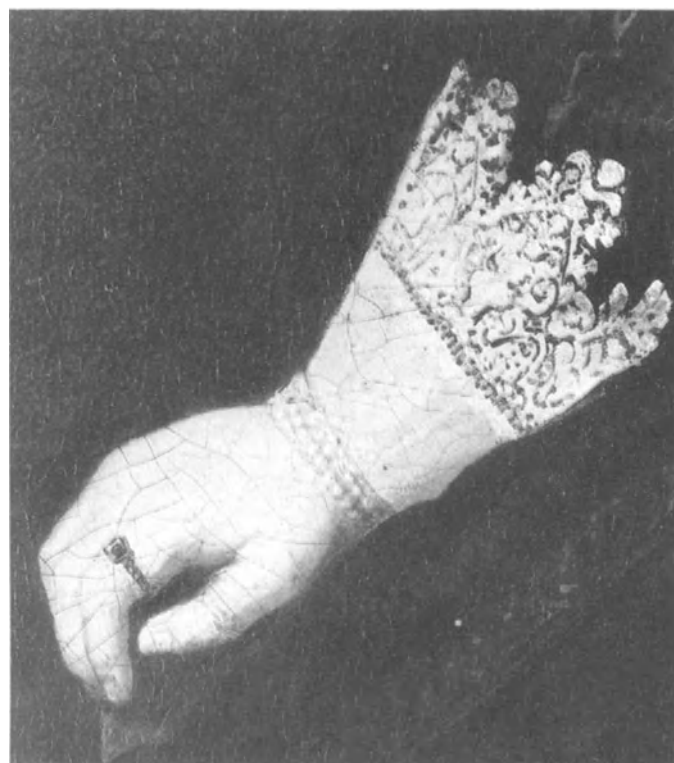


Fig. 25. C67 *Portrait of a couple*, detail. Boston, The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum



boat<sup>160</sup>. The fact that he evidently paid for the necessary return journeys from Amsterdam to Leiden himself can, trivial though the argument may seem, be regarded as evidence that he had income in Amsterdam. Against this it might be mentioned that in April 1632 Isack enrolled in

<sup>160</sup> Passengers from Leiden to Amsterdam usually travelled by crossing the Haarlemmer Meer by boat (the traffic by towboat was introduced in the course of the 1630s, from Leiden to Amsterdam only after 1640). Prices were low because of heavy competition between the shippers. Prices fluctuated, partly depending on the number of passengers. For this information I relied on J. de Vries, 'Barges and capitalism, passenger transportation in the Dutch economy, 1632-1839', *A.A.G. Bijdragen* 21 (Afdeling Agrarische Geschiedenis, Landbouwhogeschool Wageningen 1978), pp. 33-398. That the amounts disbursed on behalf of Isack for the fares to Amsterdam were for one way only can be deduced from the account on behalf of his brother Jacob who later moved to Amsterdam. Jacob evidently did not have an income in Amsterdam, as numerous payments were forwarded on his behalf to Amsterdam addresses. When he left for Amsterdam around May 1635 the guardians payed 1 guilder for his fare to Amsterdam. For an earlier short trip to Amsterdam in 1634 from which he evidently soon returned to continue his apprenticeship with the bookbinder Frans Hacke in Leiden, he received 4 guilders. It may have been during one of these stays in Amsterdam that Jacob borrowed 20 guilders 16 stuyvers from his brother Isack, as testified by an undated receipt.



Fig. 26. I. Jouderville, *Minerva* (no. C9), detail. Denver, The Denver Art Museum



Fig. 27. I. Jouderville, *Man in oriental costume*, detail. Private collection



Leiden University<sup>161</sup>. For Bredius this was sufficient reason to assume that Jouderville settled in Leiden once his apprenticeship was completed. Just as in Rembrandt's case this enrolment can however be interpreted as a formality, gone through because of the attendant tax advantages<sup>162</sup>. The part of the accounts that Bredius did not publish seems in fact to offer even stronger ground for the assumption that Jouderville stayed in Leiden – substantial amounts were paid by his guardians on Isack's behalf to Leiden burghers for the rent of lodgings,

enough for probably three to four years<sup>163</sup>. At first sight this would seem to suggest even more strongly that Jouderville remained in Leiden from the end of 1631 until early in 1636, when he married in Leiden a girl from Amsterdam, but it is important to make the point here that Jouderville had strong financial ties to Leiden. His assets, in the form of a share in a house – the parents' house that was not sold until 1637 – and of capital managed by his guardians, were there. Under the citizenship regulations of 1545, 1583 and 1658, a Leiden citizen who was away from the town for longer than a year and six

<sup>161</sup> When Isack enrolled on 26 April 1632, he stated that he lived in the house of Janneken Joosten and was 20 years old (see C. Hofstede de Groot, op. cit., note 153, p. 230). He must then have temporarily been back from Amsterdam and staying in his room, for which the rent was probably paid in May, as can be deduced from the account book. A bill from Anna Hackins, who had a food shop in Leiden and evidently supplied Isack with food on credit, was paid later by the guardians. This is one of the few times that this is explicitly mentioned in the list of disbursements on behalf of Isack, which suggests that by then he had left Leiden again.

<sup>162</sup> W. N. du Rieu, 'Kunstenaars voorkomende in het Album studiosorum der Academie te Leiden', in Obreen, op. cit. (note 34), V, pp. 268–284, esp. 268–269, with reference to G. D. J. Schotel, *De Academie te Leiden in de 16de, 17de en 18de eeuw*, Haarlem 1875, pp. 14, 15, 273.

<sup>163</sup> When around May 1631 Isack left his parental home, where he had continued to live with his sister and brother after his parents had died, he moved to a room in the house of one Jannetgen Joosten (cf. note 161). In November an amount of 18 guilders, apparently a half-year's rent, was paid for the first time. The next payment of 18 guilders to Jannetgen Joosten that was recorded in the account can be dated to May 1632. Then, surprisingly, 60 guilders are paid to Jannetgen Joosten; this has probably to be explained in part as payment of the room rent in advance. It seems puzzling at first sight that this amount is not a multiple of 18 guilders. From the account for Jacob it appears however that Jannetgen Joosten also provided other services to the orphans, like sewing and mending for which amounts like 2 and 6 guilders were paid. Such costs may have been included in the total of 60 guilders. In 1639, one Pieter Scherpenbrant, tailor at the Breestraat in Leiden, confirmed that he had received rent on behalf of the Jouderville children over the year 1634 or 1635. The account book contains evidence that half of this amount was spent on behalf of Isack, the other half for his sister Magdalena. This implies that Isack had moved his Leiden pied-à-terre to his sister's home.

Fig. 28. I. Jouderville, possibly after a *Self-portrait* by Rembrandt (fragment). Whereabouts unknown



Fig. 29. I. Jouderville, *Bust of a young girl* (no. C 44), detail. Helsinki, Sinebrychoff Art Museum



weeks lost his citizenship and was obliged to make over 10% of his wealth to the town<sup>164</sup>. For this reason alone, therefore, Jouderville must have been obliged to keep a pied-à-terre in Leiden, of which he made occasional use (since under this regulation he had to return to Leiden at regular intervals). The existence of items in the accounts for the cost of travel to Amsterdam could be seen to indicate that by the end of these stays he did not always have enough money left to pay for the journey back to Amsterdam.

This laborious reconstruction of events to support the view that Jouderville had income in Amsterdam, and thus worked there for longish periods, is necessary to explain how it is possible for the Rembrandtesque works from the early Amsterdam period to include paintings displaying characteristics that can be linked to Isack Jouderville. The existence of these paintings can be accounted for by assuming that Jouderville worked as a journeyman or assistant with Rembrandt. A further argument for a prolonged contact between

Rembrandt and Jouderville can, as has been mentioned, be found in the '1jo . . . ille' signature on an etching after Rembrandt's *Cupid* from 1634 (no. A 91)<sup>165</sup>.

Hofstede de Groot, who was the first to publish on Jouderville, did so on the grounds of the discovery that beneath the signature on the painting of a young man, now in Dublin, signed 'G. Dou' there was the signature 'Jovdervill' (fig. 32)<sup>166</sup>. A modest oeuvre subsequently built up around this painting. Hofstede de Groot recognized, in a *Bust of a man laughing* in the Bredius collection (fig. 33), the same

<sup>164</sup> *De Middeleeuwse Keurboeken van de Stad Leiden*, ed. H. G. Hamaker, Leiden 1873, p. 358; *Keuren der Stadt Leyden des Graeffschaps van Holland*, 1583, p. 21; *Keuren der Stad Leyden*, 1658, p. 79. The expression used in 1583 and 1658 for keeping a pied-à-terre while being out of town is: 'vyer ende licht houden' (to keep fire and light).

<sup>165</sup> C. White and K. G. Boon, *Hollstein's Dutch and Flemish etchings, engravings and woodcuts*, XVIII, B. 132, p. 177 were the first to interpret the inscription as a Jouderville signature. Thanks are due to Mrs Gisela van Rossum of the Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam, for her help in providing macrophotographs of the inscription. Although the reading given by White and Boon is rather optimistic, there are reasons why their interpretation may well be right. What can be interpreted as a row of mostly blurred letters is placed in a 'box'; this was a device sometimes used in Rembrandt's studio to isolate the signature (cf. B. 44 from 1634, B. 253 (165?)). The length of the inscription fits the length of Jouderville's name and the location of the letters 'ille' fits the place where these letters occur in the word *Jouderville*. The first three characters could with some optimism be read as 'JJO'.

<sup>166</sup> C. Hofstede de Groot, op. cit., note 153, pp. 228-29.

Fig. 30. I. Jouderville, *Bust of young woman*. Augsburg, Städtische Kunstsammlungen



Fig. 31. Attributed to I. Jouderville, *Bust of a young man* (no. A 23), detail. Cleveland, The Cleveland Museum of Art



hand that was responsible for the Dublin painting<sup>167</sup>. Martin attempted to widen the oeuvre with a number of paintings that up to then had been attributed to Rembrandt, including the Cleveland *Bust of a young man* (cf. fig. 31; no. A 23)<sup>168</sup>; this attempt found no acceptance, even though there is much that can be said for the attribution of the Cleveland work to Jouderville (see Corrigenda et Addenda in the present volume). Much later, Bauch added to Jouderville's oeuvre two works attributed to Rembrandt, the Helsinki *Bust of a young girl* (fig. 29; no. C 44) and a somewhat similar painting in Augsburg (fig. 30)<sup>169</sup>. Jouderville's hand has been recognized by D. Cevat in a *Flora* in his collection (fig. 35)<sup>170</sup>; and a weaker version of a head, surviving as a fragment, in a private collection (fig. 28) – which could very well be by Jouderville – was exhibited in the Alfred Brod Gallery in London in 1963 as such<sup>171</sup>. When a *Half-length figure of a woman*, closely

resembling the Dublin painting in all kinds of ways, came to light in a private collection (fig. 34)<sup>172</sup> the link was made with two paintings we recognized as the work of a single hand when preparing our first volume – the Denver *Minerva* previously attributed to Rembrandt (fig. 26; no. C 9) and a *Man in oriental costume* in a private collection (cf. fig. 27). The works mentioned so far are all more or less closely akin to the Leiden Rembrandt, though this does not mean that they were all produced in his workshop there<sup>173</sup>.

Separate from these there is a quite different group of paintings, recognized as belonging to Jouderville's oeuvre on the grounds of the signatures. These are interiors done at a small scale, and more or less in the Leiden Dou tradition. They must be assumed to come from a later phase, when Jouderville had evidently moved away from Rembrandt's sphere of influence (the reason why we shall not concern ourselves further with them)<sup>174</sup>. Inventories and other documents show moreover that Jouderville dealt with quite different subject

<sup>167</sup> Hofstede de Groot in: *Thieme Becker XIX*, 1926, p. 190; A. Blankert, *Museum Bredius. Catalogus van de schilderijen en tekeningen*, The Hague 1978, no. 80. A 17th-century copy or second version of lesser quality is in the North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh (N.C.), inv. no. G.57.27.1.

<sup>168</sup> W. Martin, 'Rembrandt-Rätsel', *Der Kunstwanderer*, 1921–22, pp. 30–34, esp. 30 (where it is suggested that Br. 188 is by Jouderville) and 34.

<sup>169</sup> K. Bauch, *Der frühe Rembrandt und seine Zeit*, Berlin 1960, p. 267 (note 191).

<sup>170</sup> Exh. Cat. *Rondom Rembrandt; de verzameling Daan Cevat*, Leiden 1968, no. 20.

<sup>171</sup> B. N[icolson] in a review of an exhibition at the Alfred Brod Gallery, *Burl. Mag.* 105 (1963), p. 227, fig. 42. See also no. A 58.

<sup>172</sup> Cf. Vol. I, no. C 9 fig. 5; cat. exh., op. cit. (note 3), no. 44a.

<sup>173</sup> See also: E. v. d. Wetering, 'Isaac Jouderville, a pupil of Rembrandt', in: exh. cat. *The impact of a genius. Rembrandt, his pupils and followers in the seventeenth century*, Amsterdam (K. & V. Waterman) 1983, pp. 59–69, esp. 66.

<sup>174</sup> See for instance a *Kitchen interior*, coll. E.W., New York; cat. exhib. *Rembrandt and his pupils*, Montreal/Toronto 1969, no. 76 (with illustration).

Fig. 32. I. Jouderville, *Bust of a young man* (signed). Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland



Fig. 33. I. Jouderville, *Bust of a laughing man*. The Hague, Museum Bredius



Fig. 35. I. Jouderville, *Flora*. S. Peter Port, Guernsey, coll. D. H. Cevat

Fig. 34. I. Jouderville, *Half-length figure of a woman*. Private collection



Fig. 36. Attributed to I. Jouderville, *Bust of a young man in a turban* (no. C 54), detail. Windsor Castle, H.M. Queen Elizabeth II



Fig. 37. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait* (no. A 21), detail. The Hague, Koninklijk Kabinet van schilderijen, Mauritshuis



matter as well; he must also have painted still-lives, animals and portraits<sup>175</sup>. None of these have survived, unless they are still not recognized as being by him.

<sup>175</sup> Hofstede de Groot, op. cit. (note 153), pp. 234–235: 'een groenmart gedaen by Isacq Souderville; een freuytje van Souderville; een marykel (mirakel?) van Souderville; een naeckte van Souderville; een Carsnaght van Souderville' (a vegetable market done by Isacq Souderville; a fruit-piece by Souderville; a miracle by Souderville; a nude by Souderville; a Nativity by Souderville). These paintings are mentioned in 1641 in the inventory of Julius Lefevre, probably a relative of Maria Le Febre, Isack's wife, which lends the attributions credibility. The same can be said of the descriptions of paintings by Jouderville in the inventory of the art dealer Pieter Meldert, whom Maria Le Febre married after her first husband's death which took place between 1645 and 1648. In this inventory are listed, apart from a 'Tronitge van Souderville', 'Een stuck van Souderville van een groote kan en roomer in een ebbelijst' (a piece by Souderville of a large jug and a rummer in an ebony frame), 'een lantschapen van dito Souderville' (a landscape by the same Souderville) and 'een paert van Souderville in een slechte lijst' (a horse by Souderville, in a plain frame); see also A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* VI, pp. 1969–1972. There are various documents which testify that Jouderville painted portraits; see *Künstler-Inventare* VI, pp. 1963–1964; Hofstede de Groot, op. cit. (note 153), pp. 230–231.

The works that can be related to the Leiden Rembrandt do not form any clearly coherent whole. They include paintings with such strongly Rembrandtesque features that they have, for longer or shorter periods, been counted among his oeuvre.

All these works show a number of features that seem partly to be explained by lack of experience, if not by a lack of talent on Jouderville's part; they seem also to stem from the force with which certain impressions from his time as an apprentice had stamped themselves on his memory. Jouderville must, for instance, have been greatly impressed by Rembrandt's *Self-portrait* of c. 1629 in the Mauritshuis (cf. fig. 37), and by the *Artist in oriental costume* of 1631 in the Petit Palais, Paris (no. A 40).

An important individual mark of his work might perhaps best be described as the development of a peculiar stylization in the rendering of light and shade in the heads, with the borderline between the two taking on a somewhat independent course that



Fig. 38. Rembrandt, *Bust of a young woman* (no. A 50), detail. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, on loan from Mrs Richard C. Paine



Fig. 39. Attributed to I. Jouderville, *Bust of a young woman* (no. C 58), detail. Chapel Hill, Morehead Planetarium, University of North Carolina



simplifies the plastic rendering in a quite individual way. A second characteristic is his inability to drape the clothing convincingly round the figures depicted; the way the edges and folds run close to the outlines of the figure mar the suggestion of plasticity, and the contour of the body, too, does little to help this. The clothing at these places seems, at one and the same time, to be both flat and clinging to the body. A third feature is Jouderville's liking for a plethora of highlights that are scattered over certain parts of the costume in such a way as to create an effect that differs characteristically from the way Rembrandt dealt with his highlights in comparable passages. In Rembrandt these highlights invariably have a clear hierarchy in importance and function, and they are employed shrewdly and economically to serve an effective handling of light. In Jouderville the random distribution of highlights undermines the opportunity for creating a concentrated play of light and fails to convey satisfactorily the material

being rendered. A further characteristic feature is the tendency towards a cramped brush-movement, and to a use of impasto that does not flow organically from its function as part of the treatment of light. In Jouderville, impasto is frequently applied as what looks like artificial islands, so that the transitions from impasto passages to thinner painted areas are more abrupt than they are in Rembrandt. And finally, one notices a certain penchant for a ruddy, copperish light brown in parts of the clothing that in Rembrandt is to be found only in his *Artist in oriental costume* in the Petit Palais, Paris.

One does not always meet these features to the same degree in all the paintings mentioned. The theory that the group described above are works by Jouderville is however also based on recognition of the characteristic features of an artistic personality that is unmistakable, though it can manifest itself in various ways under the influence of various impressions.



Fig. 40. Rembrandt workshop, *Young man in a gorget and plumed cap* (no. C 55), detail. San Diego, San Diego Museum of Art

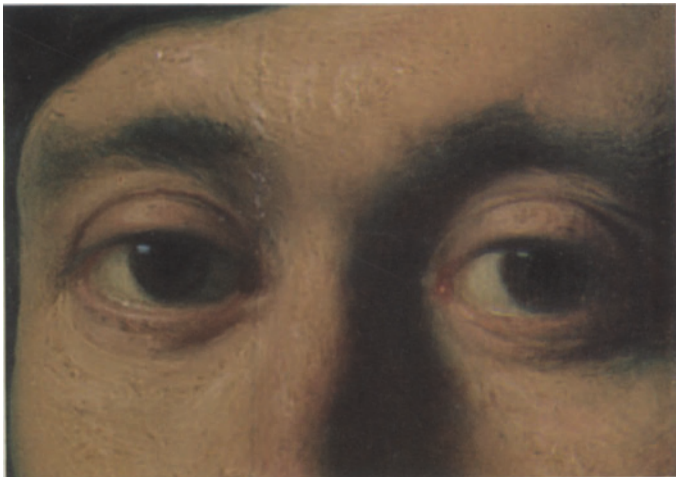


Fig. 41. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a young man* (no. A 60), detail. Sweden, private collection



It is not easy to arrive at the sequence in which these works were produced, especially where one moreover has to fit into the sequence other works that Jouderville would have done in Rembrandt's Amsterdam workshop. Though the works attributed to Jouderville so far can be linked to the Leiden Rembrandt in a number of ways, it seems difficult to believe that they were all painted during his apprenticeship in Leiden; possibly some of the works attributed to him ought to be placed in or even after the period of activity in Amsterdam that we are assuming.

An attempt to attribute to Jouderville works from the early years in Amsterdam appears justifiable particularly in the case of the *Young man in a turban* in Windsor Castle (cf. fig. 36) and the Chapel Hill *Young woman* (cf. fig. 39). In these paintings, that have so far been attributed to Rembrandt, there are a number of characteristics that are not only common to them both but they share with the works mentioned above and attributed to Jouderville. One can, for instance, see in the treatment of decorative elements in the costume components on the shoulder facing the light a handling of paint and lighting that resembles the (admittedly much poorer) execution of similar passages in the earlier *Minerva* and in the undergarment of the *Man in oriental costume*. Compared to this there is no essential difference in the treatment of the shoulder in the signed Dublin painting of a young man (fig. 32).

The singular and somewhat mannered approach to the light and shade parts of the heads and the gently merging transitions between them, with the autonomous and continuous line they follow, are very alike in the Chapel Hill and Windsor Castle paintings, and on this point akin to the painting in Denver and the circular *tronie* of a man (fig. 28). They also share with the lastnamed the rather indeterminate dabbing brushwork in part of the lit area of the face. As in the first group of works attributed to Jouderville, the contours are indifferent and play hardly any role in suggesting plasticity in the way one finds in Rembrandt<sup>176</sup>.

Related to the two works just described, which can be attributed more or less firmly to Jouderville, there is a third – the Cleveland *Bust of a young man* (fig. 31) that in Volume I we accepted as being a Rembrandt original from 1629 (no. A 23; Corrigenda, p. 838). On closer examination it appears that the reasons put forward at the time for doing so – a certain similarity to Rembrandt's *Self-portrait*, datable in 1629, in The Hague (no. A 21) – have to be interpreted differently. The impression that painting seems to have made on Jouderville is also clearly

<sup>176</sup> Questions concerning the attribution to Jouderville of a drawing in Berlin (cf. Sumowski *Drawings* VI, no. 1285), the Prague copy after Rembrandt's *Judas repentant* (no. A 15) and the copy in a private collection after Rembrandt's *Self-portrait in Oriental Costume* (no. A 40) are disregarded here, as these works are faithful copies and as such contribute little stylistic evidence; cf. Van de Wetering, op. cit. (note 9).

Fig. 42. Rembrandt workshop, *Young man in a gorget and plumed cap* (no. C 55), detail. San Diego, San Diego Museum of Art



Fig. 43. Rembrandt workshop, *Portrait of a woman* (no. C 69), detail. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art



apparent in the Windsor Castle *Young man in a turban* and the Chapel Hill *Bust of a young woman*, and it is precisely to these works that the Cleveland painting is similar in some respects – in the brushwork, which shows both fine hatching and isolated patches of impasto, and in the rendering of form, where one notices the strange forward-projecting upper lip and the hesitant body contours.

It is tempting to use the list of characteristic features listed above as typical of Jouderville's style to search further through the paintings rejected as being by Rembrandt; especially so when one allows for the supposition that fresh influences – in particular those of Rembrandt's early portrait style – could have produced sudden changes in Jouderville's approach. One might consider the *Bust of a man in a cap* in San Diego dated 1631 (cf. figs. 40 and 42; no. C 55) which shows Jouderville-type features in a number of respects while devices have been followed in treating parts of the head that are very close to those in a painting such as Rembrandt's *Portrait of a young man* of 1632 (cf. fig. 41; no. A 60). The possibility of the San Diego *tronie* being attributable to Jouderville should be looked on as no more than a cautious suggestion, and a further possibility is offered with even more hesitation – the *Portrait of a woman* in New York (no. C 69) already rejected by Gerson shows a number of similarities in the handling of form and light with the San Diego *tronie*, and for that reason could also be brought into

the picture (cf. figs. 42 and 43). Bearing in mind that the male companion-piece of this painting seems to be from the same hand as the female portrait, even that painting, too, might be investigated with the idea of a possible Jouderville attribution; but it will be obvious that this is getting away from work that is attributed to him with a firmer degree of conviction. It may be remembered here that Jouderville did in later years paint portraits, though as we have said none of these portraits is known<sup>177</sup>.

These explorations of Jouderville's activities in Leiden and Amsterdam demonstrate how difficult it is to trace the path followed by a pupil and workshop collaborator working in Rembrandt's shadow. It may be expected that this will be even harder for the other assistants in Rembrandt's Amsterdam studio who had not necessarily learned their craft from him. Nevertheless it is worth investigating whether there are further groups of works that can be distinguished among the output of the Amsterdam workshop; in doing so, the results from our Morellian analysis of costume items must be taken into account.

Two small clusters have been tentatively formed while examining the paintings dealt with in this volume. The works belonging to these two clusters have, where they contain lace passages, been in-

<sup>177</sup> See note 175.

Fig. 44. Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man* (no. A 81), detail. Kassel, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Kassel

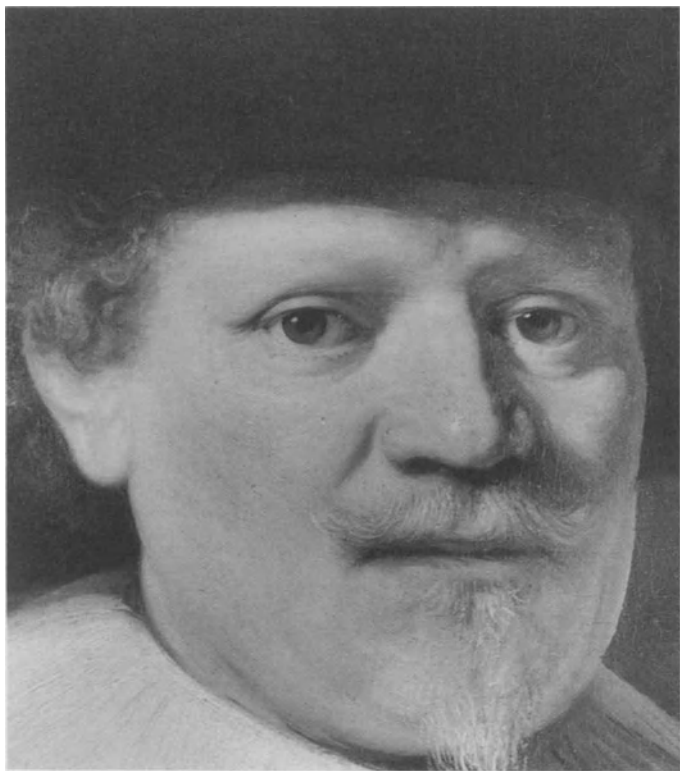
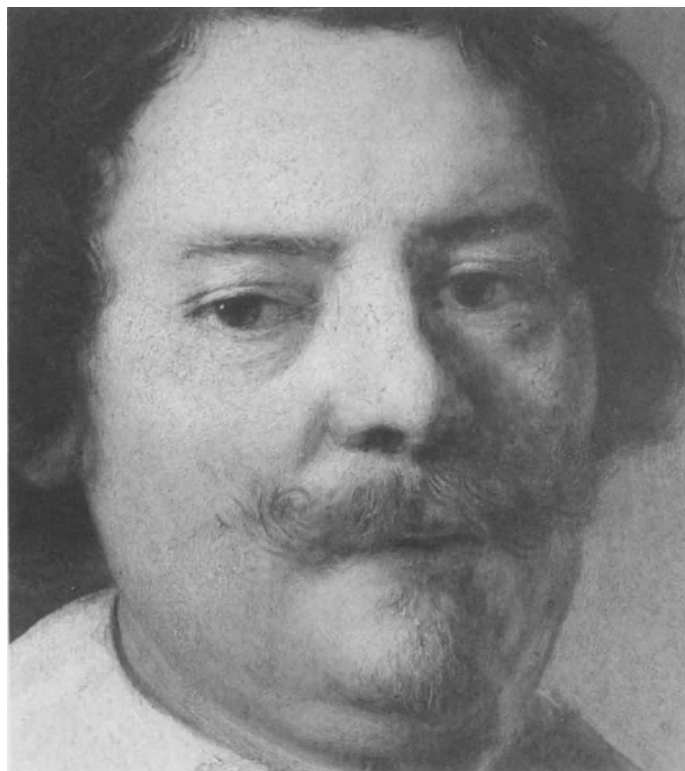


Fig. 45. Rembrandt workshop (Govaert Flinck?), *Portrait of a man* (no. C 77), detail. Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden



cluded in the B-group; this is not directly to say that these works must all be attributed to a single hand. The first group takes in the Dresden *Portrait of a man* (cf. fig. 45; no. C 77) and the Berlin *Bust of Rembrandt* (cf. fig. 46; no. C 56). When discussing these two paintings, the name of Govaert Flinck was cautiously advanced as a possible author. The reason for thinking they were from a single hand was 'the somewhat primitive bravura of the brushwork, which does not always help to create clarity in the shape of the head or an effect of depth in the figure and background, and the slightly flat or even linear treatment of the eye and nose area and (most of all) the hair'. A comparison with Rembrandt's *Portrait of a man* in Kassel, also dated 1633 (cf. fig. 44; no. A 81), illustrates the individual character of the author of the Dresden and Berlin pictures. While using an almost identical distribution of light and shade in the face, he by no means achieves a comparable structural cohesiveness or differentiated plasticity. The idea of Flinck arose from the fact that in the shadows and half-shadows of the face in the Dresden portrait use is made, to a degree unusual in Rembrandt, of the device of leaving the translucent underpainting on the ground visible. This feature, together with the bold brushwork and weak construction of the head, is also found in several of the

earliest signed works by Flinck known to us (cf. fig. 47).

Whereas with Jouderville one can speak only with a measure of probability about his having a share in the output of Rembrandt's Amsterdam studio, we can be certain that Flinck worked in Rembrandt's studio during his early Amsterdam period; we know this from Houbraken, who seems to have been acquainted with Govaert's son Nicolaas Antony Flinck<sup>178</sup>. What is more, one need only look at Flinck's signed works to see that they could not conceivably have been produced without an intimate knowledge of Rembrandt's style and manner of working. As Houbraken tells us, Flinck worked in the first place with Rembrandt in order to absorb the latter's style, and apparently succeeded so well that his work could be confused with Rembrandt's<sup>179</sup>. Consequently, it is wholly reasonable to search through the rejected Rembrandtesque paintings from the early Amsterdam years looking for works by Flinck that may have been submerged among them. It will certainly not be the first time this has been done – Flinck has long served as a repository for rejected Rembrandts from the 1630s.

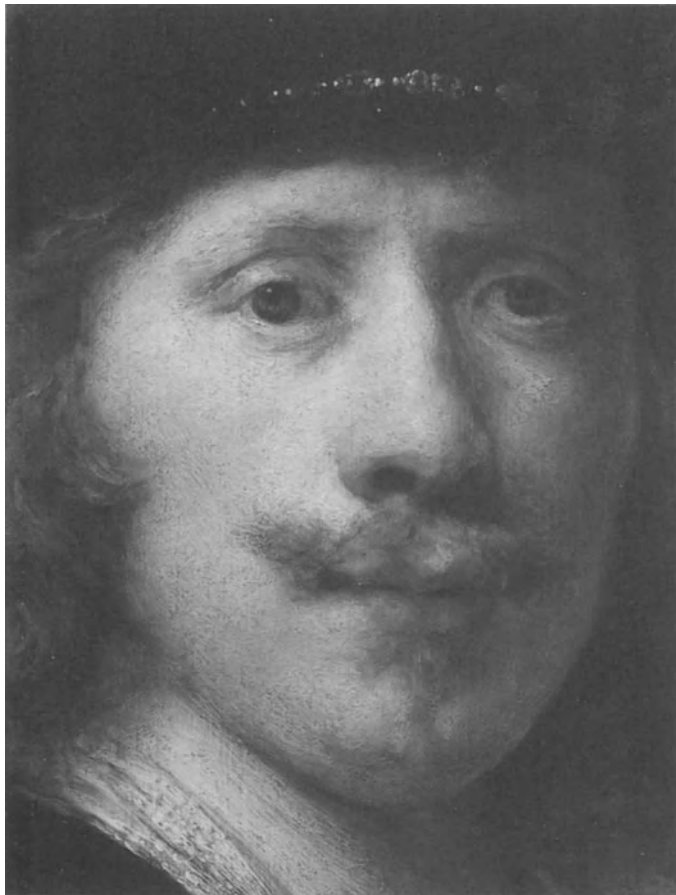
<sup>178</sup> Houbraken, op. cit. (note 22), II, pp. 20–21 and 26–27.

<sup>179</sup> See note 50.

Fig. 46. Rembrandt workshop (Govaert Flinck ?), *Bust of Rembrandt* (no. C 56), detail. Berlin (West), Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz



Fig. 47. Govaert Flinck, *Self-portrait*, detail. London, The National Gallery



It would be impossible to be more positive in suggesting that these two works are by Flinck, since there is no unbroken link with the later work. The gap of three years between a Flinck working in Rembrandt's early Amsterdam studio and the artist Flinck who was signing his own name on work from 1636 is hard to bridge at this stage of our research.

Arguments similar to those used for the cautious attribution of the two works just described to Flinck can in fact also be employed in the case of another cluster mentioned in the catalogue and described as part of the B-group in the preceding section – that composed of the Edinburgh *Portrait of a woman* (cf. fig. 13; no. C 82), the Boston *Portrait of a woman* (cf. fig. 12; no. C 73) and the associated *Portrait of a man* (no. C 72). Noticeable in these paintings is also a remarkably free brushwork in some passages and an excessive use of the device of leaving exposed the underpainting with the ground showing through it. Moreover these portraits – or at least the two female ones – display a characteristic that could well explain why, according to Sandrart, Flinck was more highly regarded as a portrait painter than Rembrandt, because of the likeness he achieved and the 'pleasantness' of his portraits<sup>180</sup>. There is a strik-

<sup>180</sup> 'Er folgte in der Manier viel seinem Lehrmeister, wurde aber in Gleichheit und Annehmlichkeit der Contrafäßen glücklicher geschätzt'. Sandrart, op. cit. (note 29), p. 194.

ing use (compared to Rembrandt's autograph portraits) of flattering features such as a smiling mouth, dimples in the cheeks and relatively large catch-lights in the eyes.

For the time being, however, such ideas must remain purely speculative. Only when the portraits to be discussed in volume III are examined in depth will it perhaps become possible to define more closely the part Flinck played in the output from Rembrandt's workshop, and to narrow the gap with his later work. It may then also be possible to venture an opinion as to whether a painting like the Leningrad *Portrait of a young man* (cf. fig. 7; no. C 78), which when discussing it in this catalogue has already been, cautiously, linked to the Cleveland *Portrait of a woman* of 1635 (Br. 350), can be added to the lastnamed cluster.

Writing on the various aspects of Rembrandt's studio production makes one feel as if one is trying to put together a jigsaw puzzle of which just a few pieces have survived. One has only to read, for instance, Gottfried Keller's detailed and colourful account of his training as an artist in the early 19th century, his years in Master Habersaat's crowded workshop and his final training with Römer<sup>181</sup>, to

<sup>181</sup> Gottfried Keller, *Der grüne Heinrich*, Berlin 1st edn 1855.

realize how pathetic the art historian's efforts to arrive at an image of Rembrandt's workshop are with so few pieces of the puzzle available. He can only turn the same few scraps of evidence over and over and hesitatingly try to fit them into the blurred image we have of 17th-century reality, a reality which no doubt was as lively and colourful as Keller's account. The effort made in this chapter was mainly prompted by the results of a close study of the paintings themselves. It may demonstrate that they represent more prolific sources of information than we are usually aware of.

E.v.d.W.



## Chapter IV

### Patrons and early owners\*

Relatively little is known about commissions given to painters in the Northern Netherlands during the 17th century. What documentary evidence we do have relates almost entirely to commissions given by Prince Frederik Hendrik of Orange, and by various authorities and public bodies. One can assume that portraits were usually done to order: but how the innumerable private owners came by other kinds of painting can be deduced only from what we know in general of the various forms of the art trade as carried on by dealers (who may or may not have also been artists) and at annual fairs. These limitations also apply to our knowledge of the way Rembrandt's work came into the possession of his customers. We know, from his letters to Constantijn Huygens over the years 1636–1639<sup>1</sup> that he worked on a series of scenes from the Passion for Prince Frederik Hendrik. From the later years of his life – which we shall otherwise not take into consideration here – there is evidence to show that he received a commission from the Amsterdam city authorities and (something that can be termed exceptional) two commissions from abroad, from the Sicilian nobleman Antonio Ruffo. For the rest, commissions form an essential condition only for the portraits (including the group portraits); but what about Rembrandt's *tronies*, landscapes and, especially, his history paintings? Though our study has so far extended hardly beyond the early Amsterdam years, the documentation now available does already give us an opportunity to say something about the early owners of Rembrandt's paintings, and about the little that can be deduced from this as to whether Rembrandt himself or a patron was responsible for the initiative and choice of subject. We shall limit ourselves, in considering this, to the years before his bankruptcy in 1656, at which date Rembrandt's financial and legal circumstances underwent a change.

To begin with the simplest, let us look first at the portraits. In one documented case Rembrandt appears to have provided the canvas himself and subsequently charged his client for it<sup>2</sup>. It must however have been also quite customary (as it was with 15th- and 16th-century altar-pieces) for the client to buy the panel or canvas, and then commission the artist to paint it. There are not many documented cases of this happening in the 17th century, and the few cases there are concern not Rembrandt but

other artists<sup>3</sup>. If one assumes that these examples were not purely incidental but reflected a common usage, this could explain why a set of companion pieces in which the man's portrait (no. A 45) was done by Rembrandt and the woman's (no. C 80) by another artist should be painted on identically worked panels made from the same unusual kind of wood. It also then becomes less surprising that in 1632, at a time when he was still painting all his other busts on panel, Rembrandt should have painted the *Portrait of Amalia of Solms* (no. A 61) on canvas to match the pendant Honthorst had already done in 1631<sup>4</sup>.

In many instances the sitter will also have been the person commissioning the portrait, but sometimes this was demonstrably not the case. Rembrandt's portraits of the clergyman Johannes Elison of Norwich and his wife (nos. A 98 and A 99) were most probably commissioned by their son who lived in Amsterdam, and those of Philips Lucaszoon and his wife (Br. 202 and 349) were the property of their brother-in-law Jacques Specx. Rembrandt's portrait of the Remonstrant leader Johannes Wtenbogaert of 1633 (no. A 80) was ordered not by a member of the family of this much-admired preacher, but by a wealthy Remonstrant merchant<sup>5</sup>.

The question of the religious belief of Rembrandt's sitters has often been discussed in con-

<sup>1</sup> See no. A 65, 5. *Documents and sources*.

<sup>2</sup> Abraham van Wilmerdonx paid Rembrandt 500 guilders for painting the portrait of himself and his wife about 1642, plus 60 guilders for the canvas and the frame. See Strauss *Doc.*, 1659/18; cf. note 7.

<sup>3</sup> The canvas for the *Four Governesses of the Amsterdam city orphanage* by Jacob Adriaansz. Backer was paid for by the orphanage on 7 December 1633 (F. D. O. Obreen ed., *Archief voor Nederlandsche Kunstgeschiedenis* 7 (1890), p. 279). From correspondence between Pieter de Graeff in Amsterdam and his brother-in-law Jan de Witt in The Hague in 1663–1664 concerning portraits of their deceased parents-in-law named Bicker, we find that De Graeff had canvases made up to dimensions provided by De Witt, and that the first portrait had already been painted by Jan Lievens when a painter was being sought for the second ([P. Leupe] in: *De Nederlandsche Spectator*, 1874, pp. 122–123). Both examples are taken from A. Blankert, *Amsterdams Historisch Museum. Schilderijen daterend van voor 1800. Voorlopige catalogus*, Amsterdam 1975/1979, pp. 24 and 187–189. A third case is mentioned in J. M. Montias, *Artists and artisans in Delft*, Princeton 1982, p. 163. One Jan Joppens van Waterwijck left at his death in 1619 'a large panel with a frame in which his portrait was to have been painted'.

<sup>4</sup> One gets the impression that a male portrait was usually painted before the associated female portrait; cf. nos. A 86 and A 87, dated 1633 and 1634 respectively.

<sup>5</sup> For less wealthy supporters of political, religious or military leaders, engravings or painted copies were the usual way of giving expression to their admiration. In the case of Wtenbogaert, for instance, Michiel van Mierevelt took the initiative, in 1631, of painting his portrait, and then had numerous copies made in his workshop; when Van Mierevelt died in 1641 there were still two of these in stock, cf. B. Tideman Jzn., 'Portretten van Johannes Wtenbogaert', *O.H.* 21 (1903), pp. 125–128. There are also a few copies of Rembrandt's painting. It is not impossible that Abraham Anthonisz. Recht, who commissioned the painting, also gave Rembrandt the order for producing etching B. 279 of 1635, and had a poem by Hugo de Groot inscribed on it.

\* In general the documents that are mentioned in the catalogue entries to which reference is made in this chapter are not mentioned individually in these notes.



nexion with that of his own faith. This connexion certainly cannot be called an entirely imaginary one; it will be no coincidence, for example, that a leading Mennonite merchant like Ameldonck Leeuw – who owned a history painting by Rembrandt (see below) – had his portrait and that of his wife painted by the Mennonite Govaert Flinck<sup>6</sup>. A number of portraits of Mennonites by Rembrandt are also known – of Jan Pietersz. Bruyningh and his wife Hillegont Pieters Moutmaker (together in a single painting), her father Pieter Jansz. Moutmaker (both paintings now unknown; cf. note 7), Marten Looten (no. A 52), the pastor Cornelis Claesz. Anslo and his wife (Br. 409), Lieven Willemsz. van Coppenol (cf. no. A 54) and Catharina Hoogsaet (Br. 391). There may have been others – one gets the impression, from a number of portraits of anonymous women from the years 1632–1634, that the modesty of their dress could well point to their being Mennonites (cf. nos. A 55, A 62 and A 63). Yet neither Flinck's nor Rembrandt's clientele was limited to one religious persuasion; in the same years Rembrandt painted the Roman Catholic Jan Rijcksen and his wife (no. A 77) and the Remonstrant Johannes Wtenbogaert. Insofar as the identity of his sitters has remained known<sup>7</sup>, they

appear to have included members of the Dutch Reformed Church, Roman Catholics, Mennonites and Remonstrants. Among the latter were the Rotterdam brewer Dirck Jansz. Pesser and his wife, whom we believe we can recognize in two previously unidentified portraits (nos. A 102 and A 103).

The subsequent fate of Rembrandt's portraits naturally differed little, as a rule, from that of other 17th-century portraits. Some stayed in the sitter's family for several generations, even though they may have been inherited through the female line<sup>8</sup>, and account must be taken here of copies having been painted for heirs who did not receive the original<sup>9</sup>. Others left the possession of the family in the 18th or even in the 17th century, and mostly passed from hand to hand as anonymous portraits. An extreme example of this is probably that of the Amsterdam merchant Adriaen Banck who, in 1660, sold a number of paintings including his own portrait by Rembrandt<sup>10</sup>; it is noteworthy that the painting fetched the fairly large sum of *f.* 150 – only a little less than it must have cost him when he commissioned it. To all appearances portraits by Rembrandt could, from quite early on, have a considerable value as a collector's item. This high regard will have encouraged families to part with portraits. As early as 1722 there was a man's por-

6 According to a list made in 1653 for the division of his estate; cf. P. van Eeghen in: *O.H.* 68 (1953), p. 173; Strauss *Doc.*, 1653/8. The two portraits naturally went to the eldest son.

7 Besides anonymous sitters there are other, documented sitters whose portraits can no longer be traced, or traced with certainty. These include: – Salomon Walens, who settled in Amsterdam in 1632 (I. H. v[an] E[eghen] in: *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 43 (1956), p. 113; Strauss *Doc.*, 1650/2). – Koert Kooper and his wife, the portraits 'in black frames' (HdG *Urk.*, no. 228; Strauss *Doc.*, 1660/4). – Balthasdr Bol, the father of Ferdinand Bol (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 28 (1910), p. 235). – Harder Rijcksen, the son (who died, unmarried, in 1637) of the ship-builder Jan Rijcksen and his wife Griet Jans whose portrait was painted by Rembrandt (cf. no. A 77; I. H. v[an] E[eghen] in: *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 57 (1970), pp. 124–125; Strauss *Doc.*, 1659/10). – Johan de Caullery, son of Joris de Caullery, also painted by Rembrandt (cf. no. A 53); mentioned in the latter's will dated 30 August 1661 (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 11 (1893), p. 128; Strauss *Doc.*, 1661/7); perhaps identical with no. A 60. – the Mennonite draper Jan Pietersz. Bruyningh (1599–1646) and his wife Hillegont Pieters Moutmaker (1599–1640), whom he married in 1623, in a single painting described in the inventory of his estate drawn up on 30 January 1647 (I. H. van Eeghen in: *Jaarboek . . . Amstelodamum* 69 (1977), p. 67; Strauss *Doc.*, 1648/1 and p. 669, 1647/1a). – the presumed Mennonite Pieter Jansz. Moutmaker (c. 1570/75–1632/35), a brewer until 1612, whose portrait is described in the same inventory as the abovementioned double portrait of his daughter and son-in-law. – before 1642, Andries de Graeff, from a wellknown patrician family (HdG *Urk.*, no. 208; Strauss *Doc.*, 1659/21; cf. S. A. C. Dudok van Heel in: *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 56 (1969), pp. 150–155, where the portrait is tentatively identified with Br. 216). – Abraham van Wilmerdonx, director of the West Indies Company, and his wife, painted around 1642 (HdG *Urk.*, no. 209; Strauss *Doc.*, 1659/18), probably in a double portrait (I. H. v[an] E[eghen] in: *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 56 (1969), p. 179).

– the merchant Adriaen Banck, who in 1660 sold his portrait done by Rembrandt (HdG *Urk.*, no. 232; Strauss *Doc.*, 1660/13); he stated in a deposition made in 1658/59 that he was about 46 years of age (HdG *Urk.*, no. 207; Strauss *Doc.*, 1659/17). – the merchant Herman Auxbrebis and his wife Maria van Sinnigh, married in 1642 (P. van Eeghen in: *O.H.* 59 (1942), p. 101). – twice, 'in his young as in his older years', the art dealer and artist Pieter de la Tombe, according to his will of 1671 (I. H. v[an] E[eghen] in: *O.H.* 71 (1956), p. 43). – the painter Jan van de Cappelle, as appears from a mention in the inventory of his estate drawn up in 1680 (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 10 (1892), p. 33 no. 31). – Hendrick van Domselaer (1580/81–1652), whose portrait was valued at 42 guilders in 1660 (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 26 (1908), p. 222; Strauss *Doc.*, 1660/15). – Anna Huybrechts, widow of Jan van Loo, who with her husband was a close acquaintance of Rembrandt and Saskia (cf. HdG *Urk.*, no. 203; Strauss *Doc.*, 1659/13) and later became the mother-in-law of Rembrandt's son Titus; the portrait was mentioned in her will of 6 February 1666 (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 28 (1910), p. 6; I. H. v[an] E[eghen] in: *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 64 (1977), p. 30; Strauss *Doc.*, 1666/1). – Evert van der Eycke, whose portrait is mentioned in his estate in 1694 (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 28 (1910), p. 11).

8 The portrait of Haesje van Cleyburgh (no. A 103), wife of Dirck Jansz. Pesser, carries a wax seal of Salomon Johan, Baron Gersdorff, dating from c. 1780, and had at that time been inherited twice through the female line. If I. H. van Eeghen's identification of the sitter in a woman's portrait in Amsterdam (Br. 356) as Maria Trip is correct, the portrait must have been inherited through the female line three times.

9 An unusually well documented case of the copying of Rembrandt portraits is those of Herman Doomer and his wife, left by the wife in her will of 1662 to their son Lambert Doomer the painter, on condition that he provide copies to his brothers and sisters (Strauss *Doc.*, 1662/3).

10 See note 7.

trait in the Elector's collection in Dresden (no. C 77), and even earlier, by c. 1710, a pair of portraits considered to be by Rembrandt had entered the Duke of Brunswick's collection, where they occupied a place of honour in the 'Sancta sanctorum' (nos. C 70 and C 71). They were perhaps the first of the numerous portraits that came into the collections of German princes during the 18th century (especially that of Wilhelm VIII of Hesse-Kassel). Others found their way into private collections in Paris, and turned up there in sales catalogues in which the descriptions often make a reliable identification possible<sup>11</sup> – unlike the London sales catalogues, which usually give neither description nor dimensions and thus provide no clear idea of the work in question. The low opinion of Rembrandt sometimes assumed to have been held in the 18th century obviously did not in fact exist, even in respect of his portraits; these too were already, quite independently of their original social function as an individual record and family symbol, being collected and exhibited as works of art.

The fact that many portraits were, as early as the 18th century, reduced to the status of pictures of anonymous persons will have contributed towards the early blurring of the borderline between portraits in the true sense of the word and anonymous *tronies* – which may or may not have been done from a live model, but were not intended to represent that model as an individual<sup>12</sup>. Yet the latter did, on the evidence of 17th-century inventories that mention many *tronies* by or after Rembrandt<sup>13</sup>, from a distinct category. Paintings of this kind must have been a popular wall-decoration<sup>14</sup>, and they invariably fetched modest prices. Many of

what the 19th century taught us to look on as 'portraits' of Rembrandt himself and of his relatives probably belonged to this class of painting. For Rembrandt, as for numerous other painters, they must have been a readily marketable article, not painted to order but done to suit the prevalent taste and forming a regular part of his stock-in-trade.

We can get a fairly good idea of what this stock looked like, where Rembrandt is concerned, from the inventory drawn up in 1656 in connexion with his '*cessio bonorum*'<sup>15</sup>. Although the works of art, naturalia and antiques he owned already had the features of a collection<sup>16</sup>, part of this, and certainly some of the paintings by himself and other artists, must have been for sale. Every painter who did not work entirely or partly for payment for an art dealer operated as a dealer himself<sup>17</sup>, and kept a stock of paintings on hand. Rembrandt must have been among those who dealt not only in their own works but in the work of other, often earlier artists as well; this is most clearly evident from the fact that he had hanging on his walls two paintings carrying the names of Palma Vecchio [no. 34] and Giorgione [no. 109], a half-share in which belonged to the art

11 Not only was, of course, knowledge of the identity of the sitters lost – sometimes there was no understanding of the clothes they wore. Portraits of men in the dress of the 1630s were twice described in 1786 as 'Portrait d'artiste' – two small paintings probably identical with nos. A 56 and A 57 in the Aubert sale, Paris 2ff March 1786 (Lugt 3993), no. 17, and a *Portrait of a man holding a hat in front of him*, Los Angeles, the Armand Hammer Foundation (Bauch 379), in the Watelet sale, Paris 12ff June 1786 (Lugt 4061), no. 44.

12 For the concept of the '*tronie*', cf. Vol. I, Introduction, Chapter III, note 8. It is evident, from a description in 1658, that 'self-portraits' could also be meant by this term: 'een schilderij sijnde een tronie door Rembrant nae hem selven geschildert' (a painting being a *tronie* by Rembrant painted of himself) (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 28 (1910), p. 7; Strauss *Doc.*, 1658/22). More often, however, they were called a '*conterfeytsel*' (likeness) (cf. note 19).

13 The earliest example is probably a mention in the inventory of a Leiden estate in 1629 (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 28 (1910), p. 1; Strauss *Doc.*, 1629/1). Other early mentions are in the inventories of the painter Lambert Jacobsz. of 1637 (see H. L. Straat in: *De Vrije Fries* 28 (1925), pp. 71–76; Strauss *Doc.*, 1637/4) and of the jeweller Aert Coninx (father of Philips Koning) of 1639 (A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* I, The Hague 1915, pp. 151–152; Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/9).

14 Cf. for example Vol. I, no. B 4, fig. 4.

15 Quoted here from the transcription in Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12. References in the text to this inventory are given as numbers inside [ ]. The dates of the sales of Rembrandt's property that followed the drawing up of this inventory have only recently been determined by I. H. van Eeghen ('Het Amsterdamse Sint Lucasgilde in de 17de eeuw', *Jaarboek . . . Amstelodamum* 61 (1969), pp. 65–102, esp. p. 77): the first took place in September 1656, and the subsequent auctions on 21 November 1657, 18 April 1658 (furniture and household effects, to a value of 432 guilders 5 stuivers), 5 July 1658 (a few paintings, fetching 95 guilders 15 stuivers), 29 October 1658, and 20 December 1658 (prints and drawings). The total proceeds from these sales amounted to 4964 guilders 4 stuivers (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/15; 1656/22; 1657/7; 1658/5; 1658/10; 1658/12; 1658/15; 1658/16; 1658/21; 1658/29; 1658/30). One may compare this sum with the estimates of Rembrandt's property given between 1640 and 1650 by Lodewyck van Ludick and Adriaen de Wees – at least 11000 guilders for the 'papiere consten, rareyten, antiquiteyten, medalien ende seegewassen' (prints and drawings, rarities, antiques, medals and shells), and at least 6400 guilders for the paintings (HdG *Urk.*, no. 212; Strauss *Doc.*, 1659/14). One must conclude that either these estimates were very optimistic (which would be quite explicable, as they were given to stress the value of Titus's inheritance from Saskia), or that Rembrandt had got rid of a considerable part of his belongings between 1650 and 1656. Probably there is some truth in both these explanations. I. H. van Eeghen (loc. cit. p. 83, and "'De Keizers kroon". Een optisch bedrog', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 56 (1969), pp. 162–168, esp. 167; Strauss *Doc.*, 1655/7) discovered that even before the inventory of July 1656 was drawn up there had been seven auctions of Rembrandt's property, from 25 December 1655 to, probably, somewhere in January 1656. The proceeds of these sales are unknown, but one has in any case to assume that shortly before the inventory was compiled on the instructions of the Chamber of Desolate Estates Rembrandt had already sold off part of his belongings.

16 See R. W. Scheller, 'Rembrandt en de encyclopedische kunstkamer', *O.H.* 84 (1969), pp. 81–147.

17 See, inter alia, H. Floerke, *Studien zur Niederländischen Kunst- und Kulturgeschichte*, Munich-Leipzig 1905, pp. 89–90 et passim; G. Thieme, *Der Kunsthandel in den Niederlanden im siebzehnten Jahrhundert*, Cologne 1959.

dealer and artist Pieter de la Tombe and which were clearly a joint investment<sup>18</sup>.

Surveying Rembrandt's store of paintings, we find that besides 55 works by other artists he owned 78 that he had painted himself or – in eight cases – had retouched, or that – in two cases – had been copied after his works. They included not a single portrait of either himself or a member of his family<sup>19</sup>. For twelve of the paintings [listed under nos. 338 and 349] the subject is not specified; among the remaining 66 there are eleven *tronies*, one of which is described as that of an old man [no. 103], and one of a woman [no. 105]. There were also two heads of Christ referred to as *tronies* [nos. 115 and 118]. The inventory gives no valuations, but one may assume that because of their generally modest size and their subject they were among the least valuable objects. The same applies to the 11 landscapes, almost all – to judge by the diminutives used – small in size; one of them is described as 'An eventide' [125], and another, only overpainted by Rembrandt, as 'A little moonlight scene' [301]. Groups of paintings of probably comparable price and interest are formed by five paintings of isolated figures [3, 12, 26, 39, 344], of which only 'two Moors, in one piece' can still be recognized with reasonable certainty as a painting in The Hague (Br. 310); by two paintings showing an interior and

an exterior of a house [35, 68]; seven paintings of animals [15, 16, 21, 36, 108, 305, 348] including a 'Lion fight' (or lion-hunt?); and six still-lives retouched or overpainted by Rembrandt, five of which are listed as 'Vanitas' or 'A death's-head' [25, 27, 28, 120, 123, 295]<sup>20</sup>. Some of these pictures may have been meant to record motifs which could be used later in larger compositions. This was evidently the case with another group of works that, to judge from the description, were connected with preparatory stages of composition, either as studies from a model, sometimes specifically indicated as being a female nude [59, 80, 297, 303], or as composition sketches in grisaille. The latter category includes, insofar as the subject is mentioned – and this is not the case for one sketch and one copy after a sketch [88, 89] –, a *Crucifixion* [79]<sup>21</sup>, a *Dedication of Solomon's Temple* [91]<sup>22</sup>, an *Entombment* [111]<sup>23</sup> and an *Ecce homo* [121]<sup>24</sup>. 'The concord of the land' [106], which with the Rotterdam painting (Br. 476) in mind one might be inclined to include in this category, was not expressly described as a grisaille, nor indeed as a 'begun' painting<sup>25</sup>.

Compared to the groups of paintings just listed – a total of 55 works – the number of history paintings that Rembrandt had in stock in 1656 is remarkably small. Apart from a *Mary with a little child* [78], which may have been a Holy Family, there are no

18 For Rembrandt's portraits of Pieter de la Tombe, cf. note 7. Rembrandt's activities as an art dealer can also be seen for instance, from the fact that around 1644 he sold to Lodewyck van Ludick for 530 guilders (HdG *Urk.*, no. 210; Strauss *Doc.*, 1659/20) a *Hero and Leander* by Rubens that he had bought in 1637 for f 424:10:8 (HdG *Urk.*, no. 54; Strauss *Doc.*, 1637/6).

19 To the extent that they were regarded not as *tronies* but as family portraits, they were perhaps – as often happened in bankruptcy cases – excluded from the inventory. Mentions of portraits of Rembrandt and of members of his family are on the whole quite scarce in 17th-century documents. 'Een contrefeytsel van Rembrants vrouw' (a likeness of Rembrandt's wife), 't Contrefeytsel van Rembrant' and 'De minnemoer van Rembrant' (Rembrandt's nurse) were described in a list of paintings bartered by Martin van den Broeck in Amsterdam in 1647 (A. Bredius, *Kunstler-Inventare I*, The Hague 1915, p. 141; Strauss *Doc.*, 1647/1; the last-named picture may have been of Geertge Dircks, who entered Rembrandt's household in 1643/44 as a nurse for his son Titus); 'Een Contrefeytsel van Reymbrant' was mentioned in the inventory of Willem Jansz. van Onnen of Delft in 1654 (HdG *Urk.*, no. 150; Strauss *Doc.*, 1654/5); 'Rembrants Contrefeytsel antijcks' (Rembrandt's likeness antick) was described in the inventory of the estate of the art dealer Johannes de Renialme in Amsterdam in 1657 (Bredius, op. cit., p. 231; Strauss *Doc.*, 1657/2). Expressly described as self-portraits are only two – 'een schildere-rije van Rembrandt van Rijn, sijnde zijn contereitsel' in the estate of the cloth manufacturer Pieter le Moine in 1674 (I. H. v[an] E[eghen] in: *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 43 (1956), p. 113), and 'Het contrefeytsel van Rembrandt door hemself gedaen', valued at 80 guilders, in that of the wealthy merchant Joseph Deutz of Amsterdam in 1685 (I. H. v[an] E[eghen] in: *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 56 (1969), p. 211). A portrait of Saskia van Uylenburgh, Rembrandt's wife ('sijns huysvrouw contere-itsel') was sold by Rembrandt (in 1652?) to Jan Six (HdG *Urk.*, no. 195; Strauss *Doc.*, 1658/18), and was in 1702 in the sale of the latter's estate, where it was bought for the considerable sum of 510 guilders by the son Jan Six. One must assume that it was the same as the painting now in Kassel (no. A 85).

20 Some idea of how we must imagine a *Vanitas* 'retouched' by Rembrandt can perhaps be gained from a painting in Boston attributed to Gerard Dou or Hendrick Pot (see no. A 76, fig. 4) in which a figure based on Rembrandt's *Bust of a young woman smiling* of 1633 in Dresden (no. A 76) is portrayed (apparently by another hand).

21 In contrast to the other grisailles, which were referred to as 'in 't graeuw' (in the grey) or 'schets' (sketch), this *Crucifixion* is described as 'gemodelt' (modelled).

22 Probably the subject of this grisaille was *Solomon's idolatry*. This traditional theme was treated by Rembrandt in a large drawing in red chalk, now in the Louvre (Ben. 136). There may also have been a major painting by him with the same subject; cf. 'Een overheerlijk en zeer Capitael stuk met veertien beelden levensgrooten op de voorgrond, behalven een menigte beelden, 200 van Priesteren als singende Personaien op de achtergrond, met verder Extra ordinaer schoon bijwerk verbeeldende Salomon met de moabitische vrouwen derzelver afgoderij volgende: door den wereld beroemde Rembrant van Rijn, zijnde dit het Capitaelste stuk, dat ooit door hem geschildert is, en mag met regt een vorstelijk stuk genoemd worden. Hoog 7 voet 4 duym, breed 10½ voet [= 228.8 × 313.5 cm]'. (A superb and very capital work, with fourteen figures lifesize in the foreground, and besides a crowd of people, of priests as well as persons singing in the background, with further extraordinarily fine accessories, showing Solomon with the Moabite women following their idolatry: by the world-famous Rembrant van Rijn, this being the most capital work ever to have been painted by him, it may with justice be called a princely piece), in the coll. Van Kinschot, sale Rotterdam 20 September 1756 (Lugt 931), no. 1. It is not certain that this description should be taken at its face value – a painting like this has never been described elsewhere, and in the copy of the sale catalogue in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, there is a handwritten note (by J. van der Marck Ezn) that most of the paintings were withdrawn.

23 Probably the grisaille on panel in Glasgow (Br. 554), which can perhaps be seen as a preparation for the painting of the same subject in Munich (Br. 560).

24 No doubt identical with the grisaille in London (no. A 89).

25 Cf. 'Een begonne lantschappie' (A small begun landscape) [no. 304].

more than ten, and two of those were copied after Rembrandt – a *Circumcision* [92]<sup>26</sup> and a *Flagellation* [302] – while another, a *Good Samaritan* [33], had only been ‘retouched’ by him. There are thus only seven that are described as originals from his own hand: a *S. Jerome* [14], twice a *Descent from the Cross*, one described as ‘large’ [37, 293], a *Raising of Lazarus* [38], a *Flagellation* [62], a *Resurrection* [113]<sup>27</sup> and ‘a large piece, being Danae’ [347] which can hardly be other than the painting now in Leningrad (Br. 474). Whatever estimate one may put on the number of history paintings that Rembrandt produced up to the year 1656, the conclusion must be that he no longer had the bulk of them in stock, and had evidently sold them. The question of how far he had been painting them to order, or had been selling from a stock of works built up on his own initiative, has thus not yet been answered; yet one can already get the feeling that commissions were the exception rather than the rule. How, otherwise, would two works expressly described as ‘large’ – a *Descent from the Cross* and the *Danaë* – be in the artist’s studio as his own property, and be subsequently sold at auction? Further evidence for the assumption that even large history paintings were done by Rembrandt on his own initiative is provided by the fact that in 1639 he made a gift of a painting measuring 8 × 10 ‘feet’ [= c. 206 × 283 cm] to Constantijn Huygens<sup>28</sup>: this was most probably the Frankfurt *Blinding of Samson* of 1636 (Br. 501), the original canvas of which measures c. 203 × 270 cm. At all events, it was a very large work, undoubtedly a history painting, that had again been produced not in response to a commission but on the artist’s own impulse. The assumption that this was how Rembrandt would normally produce his history paintings cannot of course be proved; for the present, we shall have to be satisfied with looking at what we know – or can surmise – about the first owners of Rembrandt’s history paintings<sup>28a</sup>.

26 Perhaps copied after the original, now lost, supplied to Prince Frederik Hendrik; a presumed copy on canvas is now in Braunschweig (Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum, cat. no. 241).

27 One can only speculate about the identity of these works. The *S. Jerome* may be the lost painting reproduced in an etching by J. G. van Vliet (cf. Vol. I, Introduction, Chapter III fig. 6); the *Raising of Lazarus* could be the Los Angeles painting (no. A 30). In that case, at least two of his works that were in Rembrandt’s possession in 1656 were from his Leiden period.

28 Cf. Rembrandt’s third and fifth letters to Huygens (H. Gerson, *Seven letters by Rembrandt*, The Hague 1961, pp. 34–40 and 50–55; Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/2, 1639/4).

28a After this chapter had been written, Gary Schwartz (in his *Rembrandt. Zijn leven, zijn schilderijen*, Maarssen 1984) assumed that commissions were in many cases responsible for the production of Rembrandt’s history paintings – without, however, producing convincing evidence for this idea. Apart from the reasons given in the text, the existence of what seem to be studio copies of many of Rembrandt’s history paintings from the 1630s would seem to provide one more reason for thinking in terms of a production for the free market rather than to order.

Yet what we know on this point is very scanty. Where the works from Rembrandt’s Leiden years are concerned, the Stadtholder Prince Frederik Hendrik is the only owner who can certainly be assumed to have bought paintings directly from Rembrandt. The works described in the Prince’s inventory of 1632 – at all events the *Minerva* (no. A 38) and the *Proserpina* (no. A 39) both now in Berlin, and perhaps also a *Simeon in the Temple*<sup>29</sup> – can hardly have had a previous owner; but there is no documentary evidence for these purchases, and one can only guess that the prince’s secretary, Constantijn Huygens, acted as an intermediary in the transactions. We know nothing about the first owner of the *Judas repentant* (no. A 15) on which Huygens made extensive comments in his autobiographical manuscript – the work can be traced back only to the end of the 18th century, when it appeared in a London saleroom. Except for Jacques de Gheyn III, who in 1641 owned two Rembrandts that can safely be identified with works from 1628 and 1629 (nos. A 13 and A 17) and were perhaps bought direct from the artist, the only person who can be considered as having bought work from Rembrandt in Leiden is the scholar Petrus Scriverius (Haarlem 1576 – Oudewater 1660). In the sale of his library in Amsterdam on 8 August 1663 there were 24 paintings including ‘two brave, large pieces by Rembrant’<sup>30</sup>. One can no longer tell which paintings these were, but if Scriverius had bought them from Rembrandt himself this would mean that the artist was, presumably during his time in Leiden, in contact with one of the leading spirits of Dutch Humanism, who was moreover a firm partisan of the Remonstrants.

Among the early owners of Rembrandt’s history paintings from his years in Amsterdam one must again mention, first and foremost, the Stadtholder, who in 1646 had him paid the exceedingly high sum of 2400 guilders for the last two of a total of seven pictures of the life of Christ<sup>31</sup>. One gets the impression that the *Descent from the Cross* (no. A 65), the only one in the series to be done on a panel – and that of an exotic kind of wood –, was the first to be painted and was perhaps not intended at all to form part of a series. If this were so, this painting would have merely prompted the commissioning of the later works – the *Raising of the Cross*, which can be dated 1633 (no. A 69); the three ‘passijstucken’

29 S. W. A. Drossaers and Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer, *Inventarissen van de inboedels . . . van de Oranjes I*, The Hague 1974, pp. 181–237, nos. 82, 89 (both as Jan Lievens), 111 (as Rembrandt or Jan Lievens); Strauss *Doc.*, 1632/3.

30 J. G. Frederiks in: *O.H.* 12 (1894), p. 62. Cf. S. A. C. Dudok van Heel in: *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 56 (1969), p. 252; Strauss *Doc.*, 1663/7.

31 HdG *Urk.*, no. 107; Strauss *Doc.*, 1646/6.

about which Rembrandt wrote to Huygens in early 1636 (the *Entombment*, the *Resurrection* and the *Ascension*, the first two completed only in January 1639); and the *Nativity* and *Circumcision* of 1646.

However little one knows for certain about the exact content of the Stadtholder's commission, we do know that he made direct purchases from the artist; for the period prior to 1656 the same can be said of only one other buyer – the Amsterdam merchant Adriaen Banck, the same who in 1660 sold his own portrait painted by Rembrandt<sup>32</sup> together with a number of other paintings which included 'A piece by Rembrandt, the history of Susanna', for the large sum of 560 guilders. Not long before this Banck had made a deposition – one of a number elicited by the guardian of Rembrandt's son Titus in order to show the extent of the inheritance due to the latter from Saskia – relating to the purchase of this very painting. According to this deposition, Banck had in 1647 bought from Rembrandt, for the sum of 500 guilders<sup>33</sup>, 'een stuck schilderije van Susannah'. In interpreting this statement, Hofstede de Groot rightly assumed that this must have related to a painting dating from before Saskia's death, i.e. prior to 1642; he therefore did not even consider the possibility of it being the painting dated 1647, now in Berlin, of *Susannah and the elders*. If, however, Kaufmann<sup>34</sup> was right in thinking that the Berlin painting was admittedly completed in its present state in 1647 but dated in another version from as far back as the 1630s, there would be no obstacle left to identifying the work bought by Banck in 1647 with the painting completed in the same year; and it becomes quite possible that he became the first owner of a freshly completed painting. In any case one can conclude, from the course of events, that the painting was not the outcome of a commission: just as Rembrandt still had in his possession in 1656 a *Raising of Lazarus*<sup>35</sup> that he had probably painted 25 years earlier, as well as his *Danaë* (Br. 474) which he had painted in the 1630s and radically altered years after producing the first version<sup>36</sup>, so his *Susanna* must have been a painting begun on his own initiative, in which he made changes some ten years after the first version.

For the identity of other direct customers we have only surmise to go on. It may nevertheless be useful

to review these cases, where they relate to the Amsterdam years before 1656<sup>37</sup>.

(1) A grandson of Marten Looten, whose portrait by Rembrandt from early in 1632 has survived (no. A 52), owned a painting described as 'A Turkish prince or grand vizir' by Rembrandt. Although the son of Rembrandt's sitter went bankrupt, and it is strictly speaking unlikely that the grandson would have inherited any remnants of his grandfather's estate from his father, the thought does spring to mind that Marten Looten might have been the first owner of the *Man in oriental dress* now in New York, a work that is likewise dated 1632 (no. A 48).

(2) When he died in 1652, Jacques Specx owned three history paintings by Rembrandt – a *S. Paul* (which cannot be identified with certainty: cf. nos. A 11 and A 26); a 'S. Peter's ship' which beyond reasonable doubt can be identified with the *Christ in the storm* of 1633 (no. A 68); and a *Europa* surely identical with the 1632 *Rape of Europa* (no. A 47). When we note that Specx, after having been Governor-General of the East Indies from 1629 to 1632, returned to Holland in July 1633 and settled in Amsterdam before April 1635, then it becomes quite probable that he can be regarded as a direct customer of Rembrandt. He cannot of course be thought of as having commissioned paintings dating from 1632 and 1633, and one can see in this confirmation of the assumption that in this instance, too, Rembrandt took the initiative in choosing a theme and deciding how to treat it. According to the inventory of his estate, Specx and his wife however had their portraits painted not by Rembrandt, but by Jurriaen (Jürgen) Ovens, a pupil of Rembrandt from Holstein in the 1640s.

(3) On the death of her second husband, Oopjen Coppit, whose portrait together with that of her first husband Marten Soolmans was done by Rembrandt in 1634 (nos. A 100 and A 101), owned 'a painting of Joseph and Mary'. Although this work cannot be identified with certainty, it is tempting to think that it was the *Holy Family* now in Munich (no. A 88), which can also be dated 1634, and that the purchase of this painting was in some way connected with the commissioning of the portraits of the couple.

(4) In 1653 the estate of the widow of the Menonite merchant Ameldonck Leeuw included a painting of 'Thomas with Christ' by Rembrandt, a work that – as one of the few cases where a painting's pedigree is documented almost continuously – can be definitely identified as the *Incredulity of Thomas* dated 1634 and now in Moscow (no.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. note 7.

<sup>33</sup> HdG *Urk.*, no. 207; Strauss *Doc.*, 1659/17.

<sup>34</sup> H. Kaufmann, 'Rembrandts berliner Susanna', *Jb. d. pr. Kunsts.* 45 (1924), pp. 72–80.

<sup>35</sup> Cf. note 27.

<sup>36</sup> This fact was established by Yu. Kusnetsov (see: *O.H.* 82, 1967, pp. 225–233).

<sup>37</sup> From this year onwards Rembrandt was insolvent, and the supplying of paintings generally took on the nature of paying off debts.

A 90). The likelihood that Leeuw bought the painting direct from Rembrandt seems considerable<sup>38</sup>. According to the same inventory, however, Leeuw and his wife had their portraits done not by Rembrandt but by his pupil Govaert Flinck.

(5) A 'Paracelsus' by Rembrandt was auctioned in Rotterdam in 1676 with the estate of the daughter of the Rotterdam couple Pesser-van Cleyburgh, whose portraits Rembrandt had painted in 1634 (nos. A 102 and 103), and fetched the high sum of 200 guilders. This painting cannot be identified with certainty, but the only one among the extant works that can be considered a candidate is the *Scholar* now in Prague (no. A 95), also dated 1634. The fact that later contact between this Rotterdam family and Rembrandt is not very likely makes it reasonable to suppose that the 'Paracelsus' was bought in 1634, and that this painting is in fact identical with the one in Prague.

(6) When she died in 1660, Clara de Valaer, the widow of Eduart van Domselaer (d. 1624) and of Hendrick van Domselaer (d. 1652) left among other paintings a portrait by Rembrandt of her second husband; in addition a large number of paintings 'pledged with this estate' included 'a large painting by Rembrant van Rhyn, being a Dané', and 'a painting being two peacocks and a child by Rembrant'<sup>39</sup>. The *Danaë* must surely be the same painting that was still in Rembrandt's possession in 1656, was auctioned shortly afterwards, and is now in Leningrad. The painting showing two peacocks and a child, unmistakably the work from the late 1630s now in Amsterdam (Br. 456) must have been bought from the artist previously, perhaps by the same Hendrick van Domselaer who had his portrait done by Rembrandt<sup>40</sup>.

Summarizing, one can say that if the presumed identifications just listed are in fact correct, then in three of the six cases (the first, third and fifth) the history paintings that were bought date from the same year as the portraits of the assumed buyers. This we do not know of the portraits of Adriaen Banck and Hendrick van Domselaer – it is conceivable that the first dated from 1647, the year in which Banck bought the *Susanna*. It seems reasonable to suppose that in a number of cases the deliv-

ery of a portrait led to the purchase of a further painting, or vice versa. If one may assume there to have been any norm in this respect, it would seem that the commissioning of the portrait would have come first – the *Portrait of Marten Looten* (no. A 52) carries the date 11 January 1632, and it can hardly be assumed that the *Man in oriental dress* (no. A 48) was produced earlier than this. One can perhaps also mention in this connexion the *Portrait of Amalia of Solms* (no. A 61), which is dated 1632 and certainly preceded the *Descent from the Cross* (no. A 65), which was not completed until 1633. Yet the purchase of a history painting was not accompanied in every case by the commissioning of a portrait; the latter would seem to have formed a sometimes effective overture, but was not of course a necessary precondition.

It is quite certain that Rembrandt had a wide circle of patrons, not only varying in social and religious make-up but also extending well outside Amsterdam. One has to assume that he worked in The Hague for some time in 1632<sup>41</sup>; here besides the portrait of Amalia of Solms (no. A 61), he must have painted entirely or in part, those of Joris de Caullery, an officer of the Hague militia (no. A 53), and his eldest son (perhaps no. A 60), of Maurits Huygens (no. A 57) and of Jacques de Gheyn (no. A 56). The portraits of Dirck Pesser and his wife of 1634 (nos. A 102 and A 103) were probably painted in Rotterdam. A stay in Rotterdam in that year has in fact long been documented by a deed signed by Rembrandt in Rotterdam on 22 July 1634, in which he describes himself as a 'merchant of Amsterdam'<sup>42</sup>; what prompted him to use this unusual title is unclear, but it was probably not inaccurate. He does seem to have been active in expanding his clientele, not only for his portraits but also – and perhaps especially – for his history paintings. So long as his level of output remained high, he seems to have succeeded reasonably well in doing so; this can be seen, as we have already said, from the small number of history paintings he still had on hand in 1656. It is not impossible that one reason for the financial disaster that struck him in the 1650s was the falling rate of production that it is thought can be detected in the 1640s.

These observations – both facts and assumptions – match the picture that Scheller<sup>43</sup> gives of the place Rembrandt occupied as an artist in the society of his time, and of the ideas and ambitions one can ascribe

<sup>38</sup> It would be interesting to know whether the theme of the painting had any special significance for the Mennonites and, especially, if the alteration that Rembrandt made to the picture (in which Christ originally held Thomas's right arm in His left hand and placed his hand against the wound in His side) was connected with their religious beliefs.

<sup>39</sup> A. Bredius, 'Rembrandtiana', *O.H.* 26 (1908), pp. 219–224, esp. 222–223; Strauss *Doc.*, 1660/15.

<sup>40</sup> The painting was, with only one other (by Jan Martsen the Younger), in 1685 in the estate of the well-known Amsterdam historian Tobias van Domselaer (1611–1685) (*HdG Urk.*, no. 359). Tobias was Clara de Valaer's second son from her first marriage to Eduart van Domselaer.

<sup>41</sup> From his second letter to Constantijn Huygens in February or March 1636, it can be deduced that he knew the gallery in the Oude Hof on the Noordeinde; cf. H. Gerson, *Seven letters by Rembrandt*, The Hague 1961, pp. 26–31; Strauss *Doc.*, 1636/2.

<sup>42</sup> *HdG Urk.*, no. 38; Strauss *Doc.*, 1634/7.

<sup>43</sup> Scheller, *op. cit.* note 15, esp. pp. 128 ff and 132 ff.



to him in this respect. While the nature of his collection points to the aspirations of the gentleman-virtuoso of whose status it is the expression, the conditions for being a respected artist – honour, profit and renown – seem, through his contacts with his clientele, to have been amply fulfilled. The *virtus* of the Prince reflected liberally onto him – for though Frederik Hendrik was ‘merely’ the Stadtholder, he was nonetheless a prince – and the artist thus enjoyed all the honour that in the renaissance view of the artist derived from the contact between prince and painter. Profit, the second generally-acknowledged condition, must have come to him primarily through his portrait commissions; the link that was expressly made between profit and the painting of portraits (which of itself had a much lower standing than the creation of history paintings) is evident from the inclusion of a portrait painter on one of the outer panels of Samuel van Hoogstraten’s peepshow in London (The National Gallery, no. 3832), under the motto ‘*Lucri Causa*’. But this basic income from portraits, which must have been substantial especially in the 1630s, gave him the opportunity to produce his history paintings at liberty and to suit his own choice and ideas. By doing this, the artist was able to demonstrate his personal insight into the meaning of the subjects, and to pursue his own vocation. The fact that the connoisseurs – who seem often to have been the same people as those commissioning the portraits – paid large sums for these works was no more than a just reward for the artist. Of the three conditions mentioned, renown was – as Scheller<sup>44</sup> has made it reasonable to suppose – the most important; and from the time of Huygens’ eulogy of the *Judas repentant* (no. A 15) onwards, the texts give constant proof of how much of it came Rembrandt’s way.

J. B.

44 Scheller, op. cit., pp. 138 ff.

## Chapter V

### A selection of signatures, 1632–1634

In Rembrandt's early years in Amsterdam, the signed works become more numerous than in Leiden. Just as for the Leiden period, a critical assessment of the Rembrandt signatures of the Amsterdam period is in fact beyond our competence. In those cases where we voice our opinion that a signature is reliable, this is scarcely more than an impression – one that is moreover often influenced by our assessment of the painting. Naturally we do look at whether, physically and morphologically, the inscription matches others; but in most instances we lack precise evidence as to the physical properties – based on microscope examination, or on paint sample analysis – as well as the skills needed to judge the form of the inscription (for that, one would need to be something of a paleographer as well as a handwriting expert). Consequently, it is generally only the most blatantly spurious signatures that attract our suspicion – those placed on badly damaged or restored parts of the paint layer, and those differing obviously in form from specimens that can be regarded as normal.

In this chapter we shall, using a number of examples (chosen in part because of the availability of satisfactory photographs), describe the types of signature that occur on Rembrandt's paintings over the years 1632–1634; we shall also discuss a few of the problems connected with the autograph nature of the inscriptions. These problems concern not only inscriptions on paintings that we consider to be non-autograph (and that are important for our ideas on production within Rembrandt's workshop), but also some on unquestionably autograph works. In identifying a number of these problems we have benefitted from conversations with Prof. Dr W. Froentjes, Mrs R. ter Kuile-Haller and Ir. H. Hardy of the Forensic Laboratory of the Ministry of Justice, Rijswijk, who at the initiative of the firstnamed undertook an expert handwriting study in order to test the usability on painted signatures of the method normally employed on written texts. As they are themselves to state in a publication elsewhere, there was a substantial correlation between their results and our own. Because, however, of the aim of their study we shall here make use of their conclusions only a few times; and then with their permission; this mainly involves cases where their doubt or disagreement steered us towards considerations of a more general kind.

The year 1632 is, where the signatures on paintings are concerned, marked by a noticeable degree of homogeneity. All paintings dated 1632 bear the *RHL* monogram already known from 1630 and 1631 (once or twice it is *RH*), though now with the

Fig. 1. *The raising of Lazarus*, etching (B. 73 V)



addition (other than in one instance<sup>1</sup>) of *van Ryn* or *van Rijn*; there are variations only in the way these components are distributed in lines and in the use of abbreviation marks, and to a certain extent in the manner of writing. The picture presented by the signatures on the few etchings dated 1632 is much less uniform<sup>2</sup>; the only etching that carries a signature anything like those on the paintings is the (undated) large *Raising of Lazarus* (B. 73); this has *RHL. v. Ryn*, to which are added in the fifth state the *f* of 'fecit' – which in the paintings never occurs after *van Ryn* – and a backwards-sloping and slightly curved stroke that is similar to that repeatedly seen in the paintings from 1632, though then immediately after the monogram (fig. 1). To some extent one can use this signature, which is on an etching that has very much the character of a painting and is even probably to be seen as the reproduction of a painting<sup>3</sup>, as a starting point for a study of the signatures on paintings. Apart from the fact that in the etching the *y* of 'Ryn' appears in reverse in the print, comparison with a number of painted signatures reveals – alongside a few differences – convincing similarities. There is also a striking resem-

1 The *Portrait of Marten Looten* in Los Angeles (no. A 52), dated 11 January 1632, shows a sheet of paper signed only with the monogram *RHL* usual in 1631 (fig. 2). Furthermore the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* in The Hague (no. A 51) shows the inscription *Rembrandt. f* (followed by a vee-shaped abbreviation sign): 1632. Like De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes, we had assumed (see Vol. I, p. 379) the signature on this painting to be authentic. Now, however, we are not so sure of this; there is reason for surprise at the occurrence, comparatively early in the year 1632, of one signature that from the viewpoint of formulation and spelling would fit better among the signatures from 1633 – and the manner of writing, too, is remarkably stiff. As he has told us verbally, Prof. Dr Froentjes no longer considers the inscription to be genuine.

2 B. 121 and B. 152 display only an *RHL* monogram with the date (like the paintings from 1630 and 1631), B. 101 has the inscription *Rembrandt f* (followed by a vee-shaped abbreviation sign): with the year (like some paintings from 1633).

3 Cf. Vol. I, comments on no. A 30.

Fig. 2. A 52 *Portrait of Marten Looten*. Los Angeles County Museum



Fig. 3. A 50 *Bust of a young woman*. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts (on loan from Mrs. Richard C. Paine)

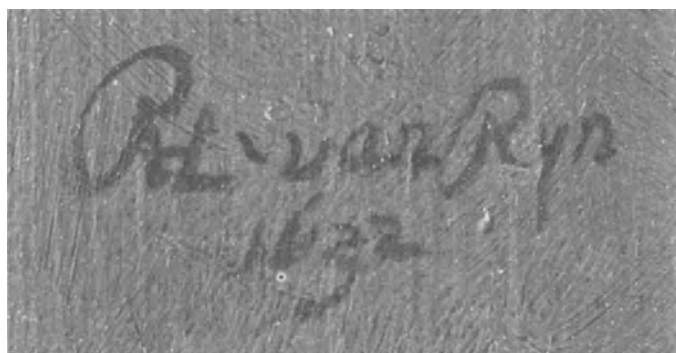


Fig. 4. A 58 *Portrait of the artist as a burgher*. Glasgow, The Burrell Collection

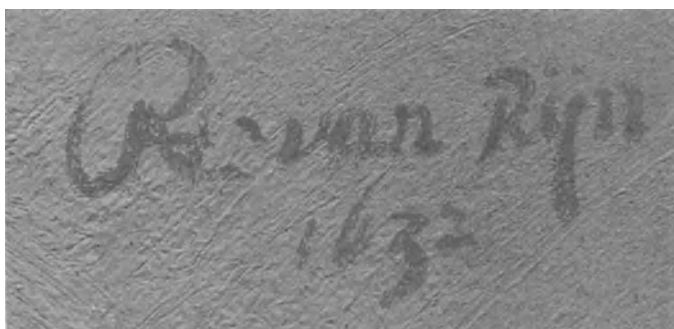
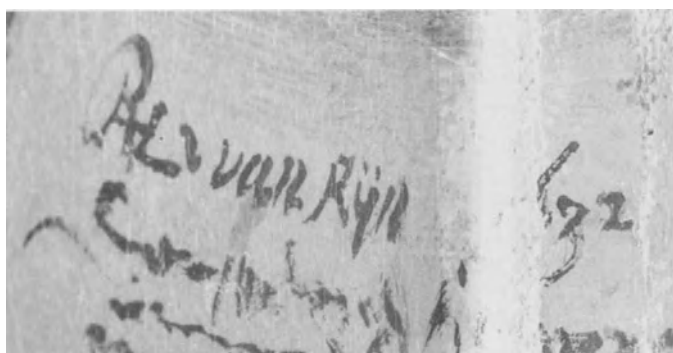


Fig. 5. A 54 *Portrait of a man trimming his quill*. Kassel, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Kassel



blance between the monogram and that appearing on a drawing dated 1631 (Ben. 20)<sup>4</sup>.

In terms of form and construction the monogram on the *Portrait of Marten Looten* in Los Angeles (no. A 52; fig. 2) comes very close to that on the etching; besides the general form, this is true also of a detail such as the relatively large loop in the middle knot of the *R*, a feature that is sometimes equally pronounced in monograms from 1630 and 1631 (fig. 3) – and is furthermore quite general in the capital *R* in signatures on etchings – but which in the monograms on other paintings from 1632 is either less marked or entirely absent (figs. 4 and 5). There is certainly some variation in these monograms – the tail of the *R* takes various shapes, sometimes having a distinct termination (figs. 2, 4 and 5) and sometimes running down and through into the *L* – but in general the form is fairly constant. On two small paintings, the portraits of Jacques de Gheyn III and Maurits Huygens (nos. A 56 and A 57), it seems to comprise only the letters *RH* (fig. 6), as had already been the case a number of times in 1626 and 1627<sup>5</sup>.

The monogram is usually followed by a backwards-sloping and slightly curved stroke, obviously to be interpreted as an abbreviation, and as such

matching a mark used in mediaeval times<sup>6</sup>. In Rembrandt signatures from 1632 it occurs only after the monogram<sup>7</sup>, and after that year it disappears together with the monogram. In a few cases the monogram is followed by a dot (e.g. in nos. A 48 and A 60; cf. also fig. 1) or, immediately, by *van Ryn* (e.g. in no. A 59).

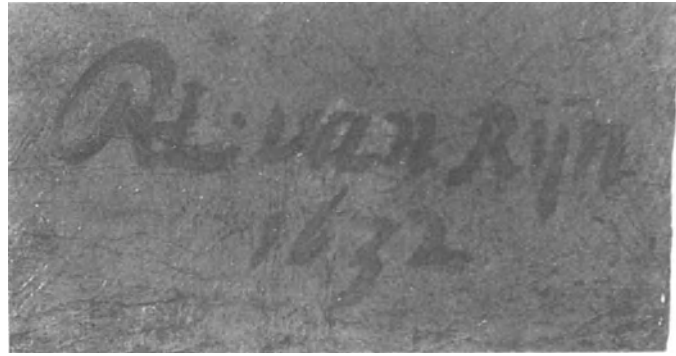
The script of the words *van Ryn* or *van Rijn* (the difference in spelling has no significance) shows, to the layman's eye, a number of constant features. The *a* and both the *n*'s have a tendency to thicken towards the bottom of the righthand stem, or even to form a serif out towards the right. This is, to an almost exaggerated degree, the case in the New York *Man in oriental dress* (no. A 48) where the stroke is, perhaps because of the format of the painting, in general, rather heavier and less supple than usual (fig. 7). The *R* (of 'Ryn') is invariably smaller than that of the monogram and almost always lacks the continuous bowl on the left that is characteristic of the first *R*. In a few cases it is however 'closed' on the left, as in the Glasgow *Portrait of the artist* (no. A 58; fig. 4) and in etching B. 73 (fig. 1). One can of course only surmise that in these cases the new

4 According to Benesch the monogram and date are 'reworked by another hand'.

5 Cf. Vol. I, Introduction Chapter IV, pp. 54–55.

6 Cf. A. Cappelli, *Dizionario di abbreviature latine ed italiane*, 6th (anastatic) edn, Milan 1961, (Manuali Hoepli), p. xii.

7 The undated etching B. 262 shows it after the monogram as well as behind the following *f*, while etching B. 73 mentioned earlier has it only after the *f* (which was added in the fifth state), and then in reverse (fig. 1).

Fig. 6. A 56 *Portrait of Jacques de Gheyn III*. London, Dulwich Picture GalleryFig. 7. A 48 *Man in oriental dress*. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

formulation was in its infancy, early in 1632. While the *v* (of 'van') seems to be sharply pointed though done in a single stroke, the *y* is always set down in two strokes, the righthand one long, quite bold and mostly somewhat curving (as it also is in the mirror-image *y* in etching B. 73, cf. fig. 1) and the lefthand one sometimes as thick, at other times less so, and not always joined to the righthand stem; once the lefthand stroke has the shape of a *v* that is intersected by the righthand stem (fig. 6). Of the numerals, the 6 is the easiest to typify – it appears to be done freely and in a single clockwise stroke, with the stem often ending in a pointed tip.

From 1633 onwards the name 'Rembrandt' – sometimes spelt without the *d* – forms the major component of Rembrandt's signature, in both his paintings and his etchings; in the latter the combination *Rembrant van Ryn* occurs once<sup>8</sup>, but the latter part of the name otherwise no longer forms part of the signature. The first name may or may not be followed by a dot. The *f* that usually follows is indicated in various ways as an abbreviation for 'fecit' – by a single dot, by three dots arranged as a triangle, by an indication of the *t* sitting more or less close to the *f*, by a vee-shaped mark, or by a loop curling back through the stem of the *f* plus (in many cases) a dot after the letter. Depending on the space available, the date either follows the *f* or is below the name<sup>9</sup>. A diagonal stroke below the date, which seems to occur just once in 1632 (on no. A 61), is to be found a few times on paintings from 1633 (nos. A 78, A 82 and A 84) and a further once in 1634 (no. A 103) – and neither earlier nor later, so far as we know at present. The character of the script remains the same as that of 1632 signatures, but because of the inscription's greater length the continuity of the script and the homogeneity of the rhythm provide clearer features. The cohesion is in part determined

by the mutual relationship between the three letters that are taller than the rest – the *R*, *b* and *d*. The *b* has in some instances an almost straight stem (as has the *d*); this is the case in a number of works from 1633 such as the *Portrait of a man rising from his chair* in the Taft Museum (no. A 78) and the *Christ in the storm* in the Stewart Gardner Museum (no. A 68; fig. 8). But as a rule the stem is, as also in most of the etchings from 1633 onwards, curved slightly in an s-shape, and also has a curl or loop at the top that, with the bowl of the *R* and the bowl or loop of the *f* lends a visual rhythm to the name otherwise written in more plainly formed letters. There are, among the signatures regarded as authentic, considerable differences in tempo. Sometimes the script seems to have been done rapidly, with no appreciable thickening at the ends of the strokes, and the *b* apparently written with two loosely-drawn strokes; perhaps not wholly by accident, a *tronie* – the Paris *Self-portrait in a cap* (no. A 72) – offers an extreme example of this (fig. 9). On portraits and history paintings the letters and numerals are drawn much more carefully, with the *b* clearly done in a single stroke (fig. 10); mostly the brush used is fine, though occasionally it is remarkably thick so that the *d* blocks up completely.

What is entirely lacking in descriptions like those just given – which are besides quite fragmentary – is the overall appearance of the inscription, as determined mainly by the rhythm of the letters and numerals – individually, in their structure, as well as in their relation one to the other. The impression, hard to describe, that one gets from this must to a great extent be seen as responsible for the opinion one forms as to the signature's authenticity. In the signatures quoted so far that we consider to be authentic, this impression could be termed one of homogeneity. This homogeneity relates to the degree to which the letters and figures slope – even if the stems are not strictly parallel the directions of various signs have something like a common resultant –, to the distance separating them, and to the continuity of the line on which they stand. It is

<sup>8</sup> In the etching *Joseph's bloodstained cloak shown to Jacob* (B. 38).

<sup>9</sup> A few times the *f*, preceding the year, is also on the second line. This is for instance the case in the signatures on the Leningrad *Flora* of 1634 (no. A 93), the Paris *Self-portrait in a cap* of 1633 (no. A 72; fig. 9) and the *Portrait of Haesje Jacobsdr. van Cleyburg*, Amsterdam (no. A 103).

Fig. 8. A 68 *Christ in the storm*. Boston, The Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum



Fig. 9. A 72 *Self-portrait in a cap*. Paris, Musée du Louvre



precisely in these respects, more often than through clearly demonstrable differences in shaping, that one feels able to distinguish the authentic signatures from those that, though reasonably correctly formed, are still not wholly convincing.

How difficult the problems are, and how many of them will have to remain unsolved, may be demonstrated here with a number of inscriptions on paintings from 1633 all of which we hold to be authentic; these inscriptions seem to differ so much one from the other that even someone unversed in the field of handwriting will wonder how many hands produced them. As a starting point one might take the signature, already mentioned, on the Paris *Self-portrait* of 1633, which is admittedly exceptional in its rapid execution but otherwise seems representative where the rhythm and character of the script are concerned (fig. 9). One could, for instance, deduce this from the extent to which other signatures from 1633 and 1634 (fig. 10) are like that on the *Self-portrait* in their main shapes and in the boldness with which they are written: the balance in the sturdy rather than slender *R*, the form and central function of the slightly s-curving stem of the *b* (with or without a closed loop to the ascender), the rela-

Fig. 10. A 87 *Portrait of a 40-year-old woman*. Louisville, J. B. Speed Art Museum

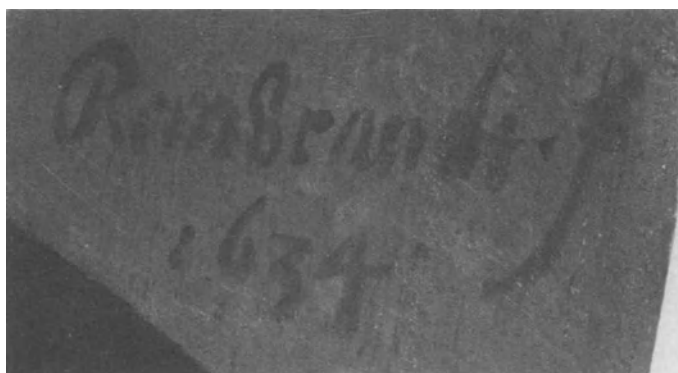


Fig. 11. A 64 *A young woman at her toilet*. Ottawa, The National Gallery of Canada (infrared photograph)



tively straightforward writing in the *em* and in the *andt*, and the characteristic *f* with (in two out of three cases) a firm cross-stroke below a loop, can it would seem be regarded as constant features that appear in both carefully and less-carefully done signatures.

Working from this type, marked by a quite firm yet animated script, one finds that there are variations – and in some cases definite differences – in two directions. One is towards even greater firmness in the script, with less liveliness of form; this is best illustrated by the signature that occurs (on the rudder of the boat!) in the *Christ in the storm* in the Stewart Gardner Museum (fig. 8), where the *b* does not have a curved stem nor a loop, where the *f* likewise has no loop, where various letters show a forceful termination – as if with a dot –, and where in general the letters and numerals seem, with their thickset and powerful form, to match the greater pressure of a firmly-wielded brush. If one takes it that this change in detail and in general character does fall within the limits of what can be expected from one and the same handwriting – and the idiosyncratic placing would certainly seem to argue for its autograph nature, as does the similarity between the script and the remarkably detailed execution of

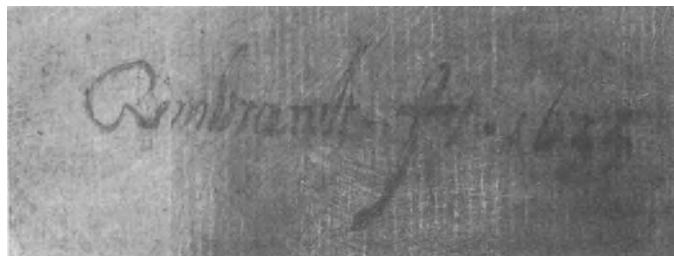
Fig. 12. A 82 *Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq*. Frankfurt am Main, Städtisches Kunstinstitut



the painting – then this means that certain variations in the shape of individual letters (such as the absence of a loop in the ascenders of the *b* or *f*) can come within the canon of Rembrandt's manner of writing. It is even possible that certain features – including precisely a freer movement in the ascenders of the *b* and the *f* and the resulting loops – took on their final form only during 1633; for they seem to be standard features by 1634 while they are missing from various 1633 signatures such as those on the Dresden *Bust of a young woman smiling* (no. A 76) and the *Portrait of a man rising from his chair* in the Taft Museum, Cincinnati (of which we do not have good photographs). It is tempting to think that such changes came to completion in this very year of 1633, in which the first name written out in full was first used as a signature. Such an assumption would perhaps even make it possible still to recognize as autograph the, at first sight, surprising signature on the Ottawa *Young woman at her toilet* (no. A 64) with its (so far as they are visible) somewhat wooden letters and strangely narrow *R* (fig. 11). These surprising features might then be explained by assuming a date early in 1633.

Variations in the other direction – that of slimmer or even spindly letters – also occur, and there it is even more difficult to decide how far they come within what can be tolerated as divergences from the norm. There are such great differences to be seen in the ways this greater slimness is reached that it becomes very hard to believe that a single hand was always at work. Sometimes the writing is even and almost over-meticulous, as in the *Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq* in Frankfurt (no. A 82) where the script does not seem very spontaneous and where certain curves (in the bowl of the *R* and the loop of the *f*), perhaps as a result, tend to be lacking in balance (fig. 12). At other times the script is a good deal more spontaneous, as is the case with the Taft Museum *Portrait of a man rising from his chair*, already mentioned where the unusual motif of a diagonal stroke below the date may reinforce the impression of a signature written early in the year

Fig. 13. A 75 *Bust of a young woman*. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum



1633, already given by the absence of a loop to the ascender of the *b*. To some degree similar to this inscription, in respect of the proportions and the general character of the letters, are a number of signatures that because of minor differences in shape (mostly the more curved stem of the *b* and sometimes also that of the *d*) one would not necessarily attribute to another hand; yet the writing in these is so different, and the confidence with which they are written and the consequent continuity of line are so much less, that it is hard to think them to be genuine. This applies, for example, to the inscription on the Amsterdam *Bust of a young woman* (no. A 75), where the letters are remarkably shaky individually and in relation to each other (fig. 13), and to that on the Kassel *Portrait of a man* (no. A 81), where extremely hesitant and thinly-painted letters are combined with thick and forcefully-written numerals, and where the shape of the *m* and *n* (with low-set, diagonal linking strokes between the stems) is most untypical (fig. 14). Not hesitant, but varying precisely in its exaggerated evenness from the differing brush pressure that we would look upon as normal with Rembrandt, is the signature on the *Portrait of Johannes Wtenbogaert* (no. A 80), which moreover offers quite unusual features again in the *m* and *n* but also in the link between the *a* and *n*, and which seems to reveal as a poorly-comprehended imitation the top of the *f* which is not closed in a loop (fig. 15).

Though we have looked here at no more than a handful of the opportunities for comparison, it becomes quite clear that the signatures one meets on paintings of undoubted authenticity present a disturbing range of variations.

Wherever one sets the borderlines between what is typical, what is barely acceptable and what is unacceptable, it is plain that a greater or lesser proportion do, on careful comparison with other specimens, fall too far outside the limits to be looked on as authentic. In a few cases this can be explained by later retouching having greatly altered the character of the script, and there is at least the



Fig. 14. A 81 *Portrait of a man*. Kassel, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Kassel

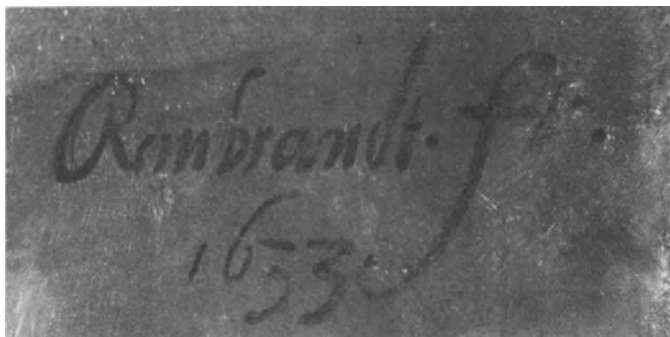

possibility that an authentic signature exists beneath the vestiges visible today<sup>10</sup>. Yet there is seldom evidence of this being the case. One cannot escape the conclusion that in the case of authentic as well as non-authentic works, later hands were not infrequently responsible for added signatures. So far, there has been too little testing of this conclusion by scientific means; finding a layer of old varnish and dirt between the paint layer and the paint of the inscription would provide welcome confirmatory evidence.

Speaking generally, one must not wonder at the occurrence of signatures that have been added subsequently – the practice is well enough known, and at all events it flourished around 1800 without it necessarily indicating any ill intent<sup>11</sup>. Many such later Rembrandt inscriptions have been recognized as such more or less recently; in some instances they have been removed, this sometimes revealing an authentic signature of a pupil<sup>12</sup>, while in others they

<sup>10</sup> This may be so with the Prague *Scholar* (no. A 95).

<sup>11</sup> The placing of signatures to lend strength to an attribution must have been seen as a bona fide practice until late in the 18th century. The Brussels painter of flowers Pieter Joseph Thys first complained, in a letter to the Rotterdam collector Gerrit van der Pot dated 18 September 1797, about colleagues who put overpainted and falsely-signed paintings on the market as the work of Cuyp, Ruisdael, Pynacker and Both, and then wrote in a letter dated 28 January 1798 about a Ruisdael that he had cleaned: 'Ik sal er den naem in Holland beter opstellen, want ik hier geen en aen de hand had' (It will be better for me to append the name in Holland, as I have no model at hand here). See E. W. Moes and E. van Biema, *De Nationale Konst-Gallery in het Koninklijk Museum*, Amsterdam 1900, p. 185.

<sup>12</sup> E.g. Govaert Flinck's *Self-portrait* in the National Gallery, London, no. 4068, or his so-called *Portrait of Manasse Ben Israel* in the Mauritshuis, The Hague, no. 866 (Von Moltke *Flinck*, nos. 228 and 213).

Fig. 15. A 80 *Portrait of the minister Johannes Wtenbogaert*. Coll. Earl of Rosebery, Dalmeny House, South Queensferry


are still present but are no longer taken seriously by anyone<sup>13</sup>. But there are still a large number of cases in which they enjoy a certain measure of confidence, and where scientific investigation would surely be worthwhile.

In the case of perfectly authentic paintings one can imagine two kinds of circumstance that might have given rise to the later addition of a signature. One was, we would assume, alteration – a reduction, or overpainting – to a painting so extensive that the original signature was lost, and was replaced by an inscription reproduced with greater or lesser skill. Among the paintings discussed in this volume, this might be the case with the Kassel *Self-portrait with helmet* of 1634 (no. A 97), where the inscription stands on an overpainted background, and with probably trimmed-down canvases such as the *Portrait of the shipbuilder Jan Rijcksen and his wife* in Buckingham Palace, of 1633 (no. A 77), and the Munich *Holy family* of c. 1634 (no. A 88); it may also apply to the Kassel *Portrait of a man* mentioned earlier (no. A 81; fig. 14), to the Madrid *Sophonisba* (no. A 94) and the Anhalt *Diana with Actaeon and Callisto* (no. A 92), both the latter from 1634. In all these cases there is no reason for doubt as to the accuracy of what the inscription says, though there is as to the authentic execution of it. In the second place one gets the impression that of a pair of companion-pieces, only one needed to be signed. One sees this from, for instance, the portraits of Marten Soolmans and Oopjen Coppit (nos. A 100 and A 101), where only the male portrait is signed and dated. One cannot conclude from this that such was the general rule – in other cases, such as the pair now split between Pasadena and Louisville (nos. A 86 and A 87), both the man's and the woman's portraits seem to carry an authentic signature.

<sup>13</sup> E.g. (until cleaning in the mid-1970s) in the *Portrait of an old woman* in the Wallace Collection, London, no. P 89, now generally attributed to Jacob Adriaensz. Backer (K. Bauch, *Jacob Adriaensz. Backer*, Berlin 1926, no. 200), or Bol's *Dismissal of Hagar* in the Hermitage, Leningrad (Blankert *Bol*, no. 3).

Fig. 16. A 98 *Portrait of the minister Johannes Elison*. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts

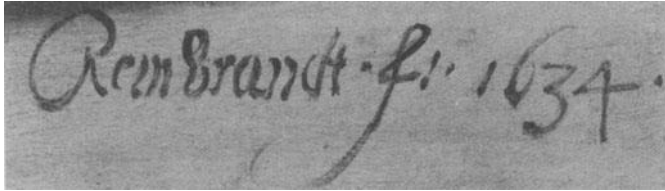
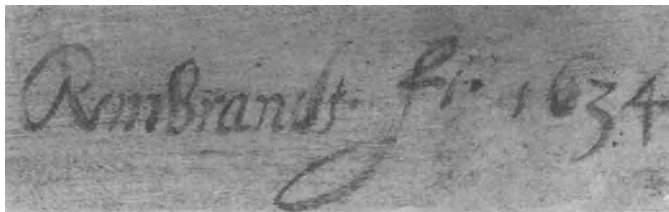


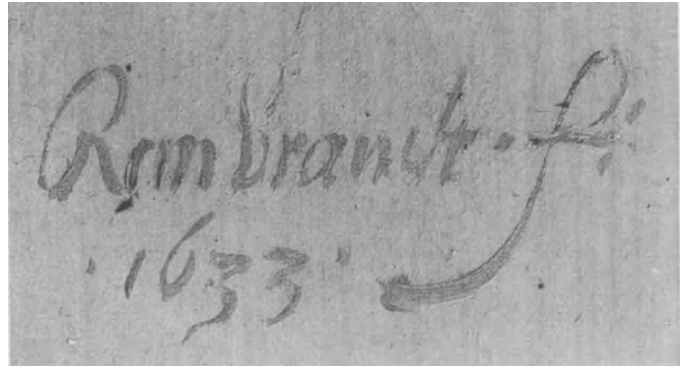
Fig. 17. A 99 *Portrait of Maria Bockenolle*. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts



However – with our attention now drawn to it by the handwriting experts Ir. H. Hardy and Mrs R. ter Kuile mentioned earlier – we believe that the addition of an inscription to one of two companion-pieces is by no means uncommon. In the case of the portraits of the minister Elison and his wife (nos. A 98 and A 99) the inscription on the woman's portrait seems to have been copied on the man's with great care (figs. 16 and 17). Something of the same kind has happened with the inscription on the *Portrait of Dirck Jansz. Pesser* (no. A 102), which appears to be by a different hand from the authentic-seeming signature on the pendant (no. A 103), and perhaps also with the inscription on the *Portrait of a woman in an armchair* in New York (no. A 79), which is already quite unusual because of the spelling ('Rembrandt'), and could very well have been copied from that on the companion-piece (no. A 78).

Up to now we have been discussing two categories of signature – on the one hand autograph signatures placed by Rembrandt on works from his own hand – or, as is also possible theoretically and perhaps did happen exceptionally<sup>14</sup>, on works by pupils – and on the other non-autograph ones added by later hands, in good faith or otherwise, to paintings that in our eyes may be authentic or non-authentic. It does seem that one should distinguish a third kind of signature – signatures not appended by Rembrandt himself, but appearing to date from the same period as the painting that carries them. This is indicated with varying degrees of clarity by the impression, confirmed by closer

Fig. 18. C 71 *Portrait of a woman*. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum



inspection in only a few instances<sup>15</sup>, that the paint of the inscription is contiguous with the rest of the paint layer. Strong evidence for a physical, and in a sense also a stylistic connexion between an inscription and the paint layer is found in the female portrait at Braunschweig (no. C 71; fig. 18). Here, the grey-brown paint used for the signature is very similar in colour to the paint employed elsewhere in the painting, and moreover likewise shows up light in the X-ray, something most unusual for authentic Rembrandt signatures in brown. In addition to this, the over-meticulous way the inscription has been done is so very like the exaggerated care in the execution of the whole painting that the idea of their being by the same hand is inescapable<sup>16</sup>. Since the woman's portrait in Braunschweig is to be seen as the work of one of the assistants who helped in Rembrandt's workshop with carrying out the portrait commissions that were flooding in in the 1630s, one would have to assume that such an assistant appended the master's name to his own work in this and other instances, and did so in the form Rembrandt was using at that particular moment. At first sight the idea seems a little farfetched, but it is not, at all events, at odds with the 17th-century regulation by the painters' guild known to us on this point, which forbade the pupil from appending his own name on work executed by him, the latter having moreover to display the 'manner' of the master<sup>17</sup>. Furthermore, the supposition that pupils could append the master's mark explains the noteworthy fact that contrasting with a number of cases where the inscription has an arrangement or spelling different from that used by Rembrandt in the

<sup>14</sup> One would consider the signature on the Leningrad *Portrait of a young man* (no. C 78), the script of which makes a confidence-inspiring impression.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. no. C 23, Vol. I p. 584.

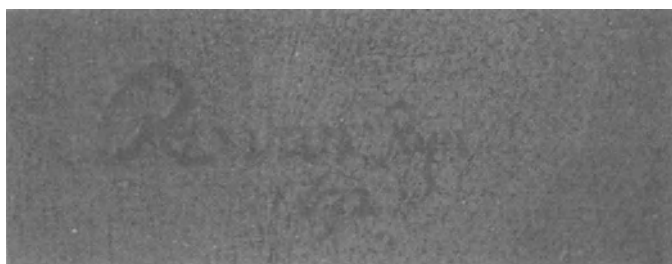
<sup>16</sup> On the problem of the double signature on the associated male portrait (no. C 70), see the comments on that painting. A comparable problem arises with the *Portrait of a couple* in the Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston (no. C 67).

<sup>17</sup> Cf. the Utrecht regulation of 1644, quoted in Chapter III, p. 57.

Fig. 19. C 68 *Portrait of a man*. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

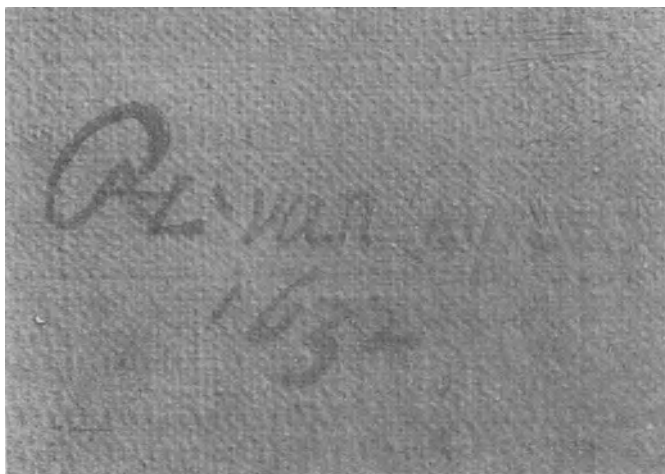


Fig. 20. C 69 *Portrait of a woman*. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art



year in question<sup>18</sup>, there are more numerous inscriptions that do not seem to be autograph yet include a date that fits in well with the style of the painting, and that in their formulation exactly match Rembrandt's habit in that year. The notion that such inscriptions were appended by the assistant doing the work could, at most, be tested by checking whether paintings that can on stylistic grounds be attributed to the same assistant also bear signatures that vary from that of Rembrandt in just the same way. In the case of a few companion-pieces this is evident enough. A pair of portraits in New York (nos. C 68 and C 69), carry very similar inscriptions (figs. 19 and 20) that moreover come quite close to genuine 'RHL van Rijn' signatures from 1632; in particular, that on the male portrait strongly resembles the signature on the *Portrait of Joris de Caullery* in San Francisco (no. A 53; cf. fig. 21) – it also shares with the latter the placing in the right background, though this here makes a somewhat floating impression. The feeling that the signatures on the two New York portraits are, despite their resemblance to true Rembrandt signatures, not by his hand stems from two things: first of all, they are both set down very carefully and with a very even and hardly spontaneous application of thin paint as a result of which, for example, the stems of the *v* (on the female portrait) and the thickening of the right-hand stems of the *d* and *n* (on both portraits) have no rhythmic link with the remainder of the letters,

Fig. 21. A 53 *Portrait of Joris de Caullery*. San Francisco, M. H. de Young Memorial Museum



and give an impression of deliberateness. And secondly – though connected with the foregoing – both these inscriptions, looked at as a whole, reveal a certain lack of cohesiveness; this is clearest in the male portrait (where the word *van* runs in a slightly rising line, following which *Rijn* is written lower down, and horizontal), but can also be seen in the female portrait where the relationship between the letters is marked by a certain indecisiveness.

To sum up, it must be said that for the moment our view tends us less than ever to place blind trust in signatures as a hallmark of authenticity. Even if it were to be plain which inscriptions can be left out of account as being later additions, what would then be left as contemporaneous is still far from free of problems. An attempt has been made above to indicate which direction one should take in seeking the answers. In the long run, only extensive handwriting investigation coupled with scientific tests will be able to bring a greater measure of certainty, and be able to lead to an interpretation that, when a painting is being assessed, can play a larger role than it does today.

J. B.

<sup>18</sup> E.g., in conjunction with the date 1632, not the 'RHL van Rijn' usual in that year, but 'Rembrant. f (three dots) 1632' on the Leningrad *Adoration of the Magi* (no. C 46) and 'Rembrant. f: 1632' on the Paris *Portrait of a 47-year-old man* (no. C 75).

## Biographical information 1632–1634

26 July 1632

Rembrandt makes in Amsterdam, in the presence of the Leiden notary Jacob van Zwieten, a deposition that he is alive and in good health. The notary went with two witnesses to the house of Hendrick Uylenburgh, painter, in the Breesstraat at the St. Anthoniesluis in Amsterdam. After he had asked a young girl who appeared ‘whether Master Rembrant Harmensz van Rijn, painter (who had taken lodgings at that house) was at home and at hand, the same young girl answered Yes and at my request called the afore-mentioned Master Rembrant Harmens van Rijn, painter, the same being in the entrance hall, I asked him whether he was Master Rembrant Harmens van Rijn, painter, and he having answered “Yes” I said to him that that was good and that it seemed to me that he was fit, sound and in good health, whereon he answered to me: “that is so, I am praise be to God of good disposition and in sound health.” [...]’<sup>1</sup>. He is still lodging with Hendrick Uylenburgh at the beginning of 1635 when he is referred to as: ‘Rembrant van Rijn, at Hendrick Uylenburgh’s’<sup>2</sup>. At the beginning of 1636 he appears however to have moved, to judge from the address in the first letter written to Constantijn Huygens in the February of that year: ‘... am living nextdoor to the city secretary Boereel in the Nieuwe Doelenstraat’<sup>3</sup>.

16 August 1632

In an inventory of the collection of Prince Frederik Hendrik on the Noordeinde made on 16 August 1632 there is mention of a portrait in profile of Amalia of Solms from the hand of Rembrandt (see no. A 61)<sup>4</sup>. In the same year Rembrandt did portraits of at least four other persons living in The Hague – the captain of the civic guard Joris de Caullery and his son Johan (see no. A 53), the artist Jacques de Gheyn III (see no. A 56) and the secretary to the Council of State Maurits Huygens (see no. A 57).

13 April 1633

Entry by Johannes Wtenbogaert in his diary: ‘April 13 Painted by Rembrandt, for Abr. Anthonissen’. Johannes Wtenbogaert (Utrecht 1557–The Hague 1644) was a leading Remonstrant preacher in The Hague, where he had settled in 1626 after returning from exile. He visited Amsterdam from 2 to 21 April 1633 (see no. A 80). Abraham Anthonisz. Recht (1588–1664), who apparently commissioned the portrait, was a wealthy Amsterdam merchant and a supporter of the Remonstrant cause<sup>5</sup>.

8 June 1633

Inscription to a silverpoint drawing of a young woman in Berlin (Ben. 427): ‘dit is naer mijn huysvrouw geconterfeyt/ do sij 21 jaer oud was den derden/dach als wij getroudt waeren/den 8 Junijus/1633’ (this is a likeness of my wife/when she was 21 years old the third/day after we were wed/on 8 June/1633). It was thought at one time that Rembrandt appended the inscription only at a later date and was being forgetful, since the marriage between him and Saskia Uylenburgh (1612–1642) did not take place until 1634<sup>6</sup>; but there is no solid evidence for this. The most common belief today is that the words ‘huysvrouw’ and ‘getroudt’ may have had the meaning of ‘betrothed’ and ‘engaged’<sup>7</sup>. It is also possible that, in accordance with Friesian marriage law, the reference was to the ‘sponsalia de praesenti’, i.e. a formal declaration whereby two persons declare (without witnesses) that they take each other as man and wife; the marriage bond was then complete, but still needed confirmation before the church congregation or a judge to have full legal force<sup>8</sup>.

1633

Privilege – the sole right of publication – is granted for the etching B. 81 (II), *The descent from the Cross*, as may be deduced from the inscription: *Rembrandt. f. cum pryl<sup>o</sup>. 1633*. In the third state, the publisher’s address added: *Amstelodami Hendrickus*

<sup>1</sup> Strauss *Doc.*, 1632/2, with further references. This *attestatio de vita* was needed in connexion with a ‘tontine’ set up in 1631 in Leiden (see also Strauss *Doc.*, 1631/2); a tontine was a mutual assurance arrangement in this case entered into by 100 persons who included Rembrandt and covering their lives. In a mutual assurance of this kind, the share of those dying passed to the survivors.

<sup>2</sup> Strauss *Doc.*, 1635/1.

<sup>3</sup> H. Gerson, *Seven letters by Rembrandt*, The Hague 1961, p. 18; Strauss *Doc.*, 1636/1.

<sup>4</sup> Strauss *Doc.*, 1632/3.

<sup>5</sup> Strauss *Doc.*, 1633/2.

<sup>6</sup> C. Vosmaer, *Rembrandt*, The Hague 1877, p. 132; C. Hofstede de Groot, *Die Handzeichnungen Rembrandts*, Haarlem 1906, p. 32, no. 99; Ben. 427.

<sup>7</sup> See inter alia HdG *Urk.*, no. 30; C. White, *Rembrandt* (notes by H. F. Wijnman), The Hague 1964, note 17; Strauss *Doc.*, 1633/3.

<sup>8</sup> J. C. de Meyere, ‘Rembrandt en het huwelijksrecht’, *Nederlands Juristenblad* 1968, part 26, pp. 660–661.

- Vlenburgensis Excudebat*. In the fourth state, publisher's address altered to: 'Amstelodami Justus Danckers Excudebat'<sup>9</sup>.
- 10 June 1634 Banns of Rembrandt and Saskia published in Amsterdam<sup>10</sup>. The bridegroom's address is given as the Breestraat, meaning no doubt the house of Hendrick Uylenburgh. Johannes Cornelisz. Sylvius appears as representative of the bride. Her address is given as: '[...] living in 't Bil (Het Bildt) at Sint Annenkerck (St Annaparochie in Friesland)'. Johannes Cornelisz. Sylvius (c. 1565–1638), who had settled in Amsterdam as a Reformed Church preacher from 1610, was married to Saskia's elder cousin Aaltje Pietersdr. van Uylenburgh (c. 1572–Amsterdam 1644)<sup>11</sup>. Rembrandt etched his portrait in the same year (B. 266)<sup>12</sup>.
- 2 July  
(22 June Old Style) 1634 Marriage of Rembrandt and Saskia in St Annaparochie in Friesland<sup>13</sup>.
- 13 July  
(3 July Old Style) 1634 Rembrandt and Saskia still in Friesland. On that date Saskia '[...] accompanied by Rembrandt van Rhyn her husband' was one of those applying for permission to sell her and her brother Idzard's share in the 'Ulenburchstate' farm<sup>14</sup>.
- 22 July 1634 Rembrandt gives power of attorney to his brother-in-law Gerrit van Loo, town clerk of Het Bildt, Friesland, in a deed made in Rotterdam in which he is named as '[...] Sr. Rembrant van Rijn, merchant of Amsterdam'<sup>15</sup>. It is noteworthy that in this deed Rembrandt had himself described as a 'coopman' (merchant). Probably during the same stay in Rotterdam he painted the portraits of Dirck Jansz. Pesser and his wife (see nos. A 102 and A 103). Dirck Jansz. Pesser (1586/7–1651) was a brewer in Rotterdam and one of the leaders of the Remonstrants in that city.
- 1634 Drawing of an old man in the album of Burchard Grossman of Weimar, who visited the Netherlands from May until halfway through July (The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, Ms 133 C 14, fol. 26) with the inscription 'Een vroom gemoet/Acht eer voor goet/Rembrandt/Amsterdam. 1634' (A pious spirit/sets honour before wealth/Rembrandt/Amsterdam. 1634). The Amsterdam entries are dated 17–21 June 1634, and that of Hendrick Uylenburgh on 18 June<sup>16</sup>.
- 1634 Funeral token of the Guild of S. Luke, engraved recto: escutcheon with three blank shields – the usual arms of the S. Luke Guild – surmounted by the date 1634, and verso: *Rembrant/Hermans/S*. This shows that in 1634 Rembrandt was a member of the Guild of S. Luke. Only those registered as citizens of Amsterdam were eligible for membership of this guild<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Hollst. XVIII, p. 45; Strauss *Doc.*, 1633/4. The etching of the *Good Samaritan* (B. 90) has in its second state, only in the Amsterdam impression, an inscription done with the pen and not in Rembrandt's handwriting: *Rembrandt. f. cum. priv. l. 1633*.

<sup>10</sup> Strauss *Doc.*, 1634/2.

<sup>11</sup> White (op. cit., note 7), p. 30 and note 38. For the relationships in the Uylenburgh family, see J. C. Kutsch Lojenga, 'De oudste generaties Ulenburch te Leeuwarden', *Jaarboek Centraal Bureau Genealogie* 36 (1982), pp. 51–73, esp. table VI.

<sup>12</sup> Hofstede de Groot published (HdG *Urk.*, no. 32) as an authentic document an inscription on the back of one impression of this etching that was in the coll. Van Lennep. He quoted 'Aan Jan Cornelius Sylvius dese vier printen', and judged the handwriting to be autograph. Hind, who had access to a photograph of the inscription, read it as 'Aen Cornelis Jansz. Sylvius dese vier printen', and regarded the handwriting, though 17th-century, as not that of Rembrandt (see A. M. Hind, *A catalogue of Rembrandt etchings*, London 1924, 2nd edn, I, p. 72 no. 111). The dedicatee is not the person portrayed, but probably a son.

<sup>13</sup> HdG *Urk.*, no. 37; Strauss *Doc.*, 1634/5. For further comment and references, see B. Broos, 'Review Walter R. Strauss and Marjon van der Meulen (with the assistance of S. A. C. Dudok van Heel and P. J. M. de Baar), *The Rembrandt Documents*', *Simiolus* 12 (1981), pp. 245–262, esp. 253. We are indebted to Drs J. F. Jacobs, Voorburg, for drawing our attention to the use of the Julian calendar in Friesland during the 17th century.

<sup>14</sup> D. J. van de Meer, 'Genealogie Ulenburg', *Genealogisk Fierboekje* no. 415 (1971), pp. 74–99, esp. 91; Broos (op. cit. note 13), p. 255.

<sup>15</sup> Strauss *Doc.*, 1634/7.

<sup>16</sup> Strauss *Doc.*, 1634/6. For arguments in favour of the date of 18 June 1634, see: B. P. J. Broos, 'Rembrandt's portrait of a Pole', *Simiolus* 7 (1974), pp. 193–218, esp. 212 note 45; Broos (op. cit. note 13), p. 254; for interpretation of the motto see R. W. Scheller, 'Rembrandt en de encyclopedische kunstkamer', *O.H.* 84 (1969), pp. 81–147, esp. 137. For a possible significance of an old man or woman as a type of piety, see our Vol. I, p. 274.

<sup>17</sup> Strauss *Doc.*, 1634/10.

# Catalogue



# Notes on the Catalogue

The catalogue is arranged in three sections, according to how, in our opinion, each of the paintings can be related to Rembrandt:

## **Nos. A 43–A 104**

Paintings by Rembrandt, arranged in chronological order year-by-year on the grounds either of a date shown on the painting or of a dating suggested by us; within each year the paintings are arranged iconographically – biblical and other history paintings are followed by busts and half-length figures without a clear thematic significance.

## **No. B 8**

A painting Rembrandt's authorship of which cannot be positively either accepted or rejected.

## **Nos. C 45–C 82**

Paintings Rembrandt's authorship of which cannot be accepted, including those that are usually associated with his work of 1631–1634 but were probably executed at a later date. The paintings are arranged in iconographical order, irrespective of their status as works by contemporary artists, school-pieces, copies, old imitations or later imitations. For convenience sake the following works are singled out for special mention:

C 54 and C 58: attributed to Isack Jouderville

C 56 and C 77: possibly to be attributed to Govaert Flinck

C 47: possibly to be attributed to Ferdinand Bol

Various pairs of portraits (nos. C 65 and C 66, C 68 and C 69, C 70 and C 71) may each be attributed to one single anonymous studio assistant. In the case of one pair (nos. C 72 and C 73) a third picture (no. C 82) may be attributed to the same hand

C 45, C 46, C 48 and C 76: copies after lost originals

Each entry has the following sections:

### **1. Summarized opinion**

### **2. Description of subject**

### **3. Observations and technical information**

*Working conditions*

*Support* – DESCRIPTION – SCIENTIFIC DATA

*Ground* – DESCRIPTION – SCIENTIFIC DATA

*Paint layer* – CONDITION (including Craquelure)

– DESCRIPTION – SCIENTIFIC DATA

*X-Rays*

*Signature*

*Varnish*

### **4. Comments**

### **5. Documents and sources**

### **6. Graphic reproductions**

### **7. Copies**

### **8. Provenance**

### **9. Summary**

The interpretative sections 1, 4 and 9 are printed in a larger type than the descriptive and documentary sections.

The following notes on the descriptive and documentary sections will be found useful:

### **3. Observations and technical information**

#### *Support*

**DESCRIPTION:** Dimensions are given in centimetres, as height followed by width. The terms 'left' and 'right' are used as they appear to a viewer looking at the painted side of the painting, even when the back of the painting is being described. In describing panels special attention has been given, wherever possible, to the thickness and the treatment of the back surface, in case these offer any indication of the manner and period in which the panel was prepared and of any change in format, possibly at a later date. Inscriptions, labels and wax seals are not discussed here, but are – when of interest – mentioned under 5. *Documents and sources* or 8. *Provenance*.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** Whenever they are available, this includes for oak panels the results of dendrochronological measurements carried out by Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Prof. Dr D. Eckstein, joined later by Dr P. Klein, of Hamburg University, who were kind enough to pass their findings on to us. In addition to the literature referred to in vol. I, one may consult J. Bauch and D. Eckstein, 'Woodbiological investigations on panels of Rembrandt paintings', *Wood Science and Technology* 15 (1981), pp. 251–263.

The number of threads per centimeter in the canvases used as a support was counted using X-ray films. For a survey of the information given on canvases, see Introduction, Chapter II of this volume.

#### *Ground*

**DESCRIPTION:** The word 'ground' has been used to describe what the eye (using a magnifying glass, and in some cases a microscope) sees in open places in the paint layer or showing through translucent areas. In some instances the more or less translucent underpainting ('dead colouring') may also be involved here.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** Where available, information coming from a variety of sources and obtained and described in a variety of ways is reproduced without comment. In a few cases it was possible to make use of cross-sections specially prepared for the purpose by the Central Research Laboratory for Objects of Art and Science, Amsterdam. For a summary of the findings, see Chapter II of the Introduction.

#### *Paint layer*

**CONDITION:** Observations we mainly made with the naked eye; information was also obtained with the help of an ultraviolet lamp and from radiographs.

Attention was paid to the craquelure, a complex phenomenon which is difficult to describe, mainly in case this could give any indication of a variant dating or of the painting being produced in a specific way.

**DESCRIPTION:** The description is based on a fairly detailed inspection which was however generally made using only a magnifying glass, plus on a number of occasions a microscope.

The authors are well aware that their description of colours, affected as this is by lighting conditions and by the state of the varnish and paint layer, is of relative value.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: The comments made under *Ground*, SCIENTIFIC DATA also apply here.

#### *X-Rays*

Since it can be assumed that the X-rays were taken in different ways from one case to the next, the results are not immediately comparable with each other. We have tried to describe and interpret the X-ray (which is a complex piece of documentary evidence) in particular from the viewpoint of how the painting came about in its various stages. Intrusive features such as part of a cradle, wax seals, painting on the back surface, etc. are mentioned.

#### *Neutron activation autoradiographs*

These are available only for nos. A 70, A 79, C 68 and C 69. For the method used, see M. W. Ainsworth, J. Brealey, E. Haverkamp-Begemann and P. Meyers, 'Paintings by Van Dyck, Vermeer, and Rembrandt reconsidered through autoradiography' in: *Art and autoradiography: insights into the genesis of paintings by Rembrandt, Van Dyck, and Vermeer*, New York (The Metropolitan Museum of Art) 1982, pp. 9-99.

#### *Signature*

The transcriptions given do not of course give a clear impression of the signature being described. Where we could obtain satisfactory photographs, they have been reproduced.

#### *Varnish*

This is mentioned only if, on the date mentioned under *Working conditions*, the varnish hindered us in studying and assessing the paint layer.

### 5. Documents and sources

Information which is significant solely in respect of the origin of the individual painting is as a rule given only under *Provenance*.

### 6. Graphic reproductions

We have tried to mention all prints from before the end of the 18th century, and to reproduce them where they are important for judging the attribution or examining any change the original has undergone; they are reproduced in the 'same direction' as the painting (and thus often in reverse compared to the print). In transcribing inscriptions on prints, words occurring some distance apart on a single line are separated by a —, and those appearing on different lines by a /.

### 7. Copies

This is taken to include drawn as well as painted copies. No attempt has been made at completeness, and we have as a rule mentioned (and sometimes reproduced) only copies that throw some light on the earlier form or significance of the original. We do not go into the provenance of copies unless it could give, or has given, rise to confusion with that of the original.

### 8. Provenance

Unless stated otherwise, pedigrees are based on those given in C. Hofstede de Groot's *Verzeichnis* (HdG). Previous owners

whom we have listed and who are not already included in HdG are marked with an asterisk. The titles and descriptions appearing in old inventories and catalogues (up to about 1800) are as far as possible reproduced in full, including the measurements they quote. The latter have been converted into centimetres on the basis of the following data, taken for the most part from *Staring's Lijst van alle Binnen- en Buitenlandsche Maten, Gewichten en Munten . . .*, 3rd edn, Schoonhoven 1885, or Theodor von Frimmel, *Gemäldekunde*, Leipzig 1904, pp. 173-174.

Amsterdam foot	= 28.31 cm; 11 inches 1 inch = 2.57 cm
Antwerp foot	= 28.68 cm; 11 inches 1 inch = 2.60 cm
Bruges foot	= 27.6 cm; 11 inches 1 inch = 2.5 cm
Brunswick foot	= 29.18 cm; 12 inches 1 inch = 2.43 cm
Brussels foot	= 27.57 cm; 11 inches 1 inch = 2.50 cm
British foot	= 30.47 cm; 12 inches 1 inch = 2.54 cm
[French] <i>pied du roi</i>	= 32.48 cm; 12 <i>pouces</i> 1 <i>pouce</i> = 2.70 cm
Nuremberg foot ( <i>Schuh</i> )	= 30.40 cm; 12 <i>Zoll</i> 1 <i>Zoll</i> = 2.53 cm
Prussian foot	= 31.38 cm; 12 inches 1 inch = 2.60 cm
Rhineland foot	= 31.39 cm; 12 inches 1 inch = 2.61 cm
Russian <i>archine</i>	= 71.10; 16 <i>verchokk</i> 1 <i>verchokk</i> = 4.44 cm
Vienna foot ( <i>Schuh</i> )	= 31.61 cm; 12 <i>Zoll</i> 1 <i>Zoll</i> = 2.63 cm

For the towns listed below, the units of measurement that follow each were either in use as indicated by the sale catalogue (when they are shown in brackets in the entry quoted) or have been assumed to be in use there prior to the introduction of the metric system:

Amsterdam	– Amsterdam foot
Antwerp	– Antwerp foot
Bruges	– Bruges foot
Brussels	– Brussels foot
Kassel	– Prussian foot
Delft	– Rhineland foot
The Hague	– Rhineland foot
London	– British foot
Het Loo	– Rhineland foot
Paris	– [French] royal foot ( <i>pied du roi</i> )
Pommersfelden	– Nuremberg foot ( <i>Schuh</i> )
St Petersburg	– Russian <i>archine</i>
Salzdahlum	– Brunswick foot
Strasbourg	– [French] royal foot ( <i>pied du roi</i> )
Vienna	– Vienna foot ( <i>Schuh</i> )

# Paintings by Rembrandt

HDG 670; BR. 145; BAUCH 348; GERSON 53

### 1. Summarized opinion

A generally well preserved and undoubtedly original painting, reliably signed and dated 1631.

### 2. Description of subject

The sitter, seen almost knee-length, has the body turned three-quarters right while the head faces the viewer almost square on and is tilted slightly to the right. A strong light, falling from the left, highlights the head, the ruff with its two rows of pleats, and both hands, and illuminates the background on either side of the figure. He wears a large fur hat and, over a black doublet, a fur-trimmed tabard with wide, drooping sleeves; the black sleeves of the doublet, with plain white cuffs, protrude through fur-trimmed slots in the tabard sleeves. His right hand rests on the backrest of a chair placed in the extreme foreground to the left, and his left hand holds in front of him a folded sheet of paper with writing on it.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 14 April 1969 (J. B., B. H.) in the frame and under strong artificial light, with the aid of X-ray and ultra-violet photographs. Prints of the X-rays were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Mahogany panel, c. 116 × 87 cm. Single plank. Splits, which are typical of this kind of wood, have caused the paint layer to crack open (see below under *Paint layer*, CONDITION). Back cradled.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Appears as a light yellow-brown, exposed in the scratches to the right in the moustache and eyebrow, and showing through in a number of places where the paint is thin – shadow areas of the collar, parts of the hat, tabard and fur, and at the bottom right in the background along the outline of the tabard.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: According to Kühn, the ground consists of a yellowish white layer containing chalk and some ochre with glue as a binding medium, and the museum catalogue of 1968 describes in addition 'a separate layer of ochre which was brushed on unevenly, leaving the lighter ground exposed in places'<sup>1</sup>.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: In general very good. There are local restorations of a number of small and larger fissures with a mainly vertical pattern (due to the splitting of the wood), at the top right above and to the left of the hat, and from just below the top edge, through the righthand side of the hat and down to the right of the sitter's left shoulder. A few less serious vertical cracks are seen at the bottom edge. The dark grey of the doublet has also been extensively restored. Craquelure: none seen.

DESCRIPTION: All over the picture the paint layer can be seen to be thicker in the lighter areas, and thinner – sometimes very thin – in dark passages.

In the light the head is painted quite thickly, with clearly visible strokes and touches of the brush, in a wide variety of flesh tints – pinkish red, pink, light yellow, orange and grey; these tints do not merge, but have been placed alongside or

over each other. In the cheek on the left, for example, a pinkish red has been laid with fine brushstrokes over a whitish pink, and in the right cheek an orange and a pinkish-red are used with broader strokes; towards the right the flesh colour gradually changes into the translucent brown of the shadow area. The latter is intersected by an area of a somewhat more opaque brown-grey running over the cheekbone, followed by a rather light zone indicating reflected light. To the right alongside this there is the opaque, cool grey of the beard, which has in it a few long, thin strokes of black. The forehead has mostly short strokes of a thick whitish and yellowish pink, becoming thinner and patchier upwards as it merges into the translucent brown of the shadow from the hat. The eyebrows are done in a cool grey, in which slightly darker strokes of grey and (on the right) a few short and very thin scratchmarks going through to the ground serve to indicate hairs. The adjoining wrinkles in the forehead are shown in brown.

The folds of skin above the upper eyelids are indicated with a firm line of brown, which above the eye on the right merges into the brown shadow of the eye socket. The dark shadows cast by the eyelids on the eyeballs link up with the black of the almost round pupils; around them is the partly translucent brown of the irises, for which a slightly overlarge space was left in the greyish white of the eye. The lower edges of the eyes are done in a pinkish red, and have a greyish-white highlight; above this, small flecks of white are used to represent the moisture in the eye.

The nose exhibits a basic pink tone, with fine pinkish-red and pinkish-white strokes. The lefthand nostril is depicted with a stroke of dark pink, along which there is a little grey that contrasts with the pinkish red of the wing of the nose. The moustache is painted with long strokes of brown and grey; there are scratchmarks in these, which on the left are very fine and for the most part filled in with paint, while on the right they are sometimes short and sometimes quite long, and go down far enough to expose the ground. The pinkish-red lips are separated by a mouth-line shown in a reddish grey. The beard is painted in lighter and darker greys with a few fine strokes of light yellow; towards the top these are placed over a pink colour, and elsewhere are over the ground. The sitter's right ear, seen in the light, is indicated in summary fashion with a little pink, while his left ear, in shadow, is done in a thin, translucent reddish brown with darker internal detail.

The ruff, in the light, is painted with sometimes quite long strokes in various shades of light grey; the ends of the pleats are picked out with small, thick edgings of white. The wide fur brim of the hat is done in translucent browns in the dark areas; along the outline the brushstrokes are sometimes (especially on the right, at points where the contour has not been restored) placed on top of the paint of the background, while at others (mainly on the left) the background paint, which in part goes beyond the contour which was originally intended to be further to the left, penetrates into the hairs of the fur. The crown of the hat is painted in a translucent dark grey.

The tabard is executed in a mostly quite opaque dark grey-brown; in the sleeve there are more translucent passages, and indications of braiding and adornment on the shoulder seam have been added in dark paint. The fur is shown with small strokes of brown and grey-brown, which is partly translucent but covers more fully in the lighter areas. The sleeve of the doublet presents a fairly translucent dark grey, given modelling with lighter grey strokes on the highlighted parts and black in the dark recesses. The black of the front of the doublet has been quite extensively restored; it is evident from the relief (and from a photograph of the painting in its cleaned state) that to the left of the folded sheet of paper there is an

Fig. 1. Panel 116 × 87 cm



area from which white has been scraped away by the artist and which he then painted over with black (only part of which is still original).

The cuff at the sitter's right wrist is in a somewhat dry white placed over a grey undertone, and casts a shadow (indicated by small strokes of grey) onto the hand. The latter is laid down in a yellowish flesh colour on top of which thin flecks and strokes of grey and grey-brown have been placed. The brown lines of shadow between the fingers are strengthened with a little black, and there are ruddy reflections of light along the middle and ring fingers. The shadowed outer phalanges of the fingers are painted in an almost opaque brown-grey. The backrest of the chair shows loose brushwork in a thin carmine red, which continues some way beneath the dark brown-grey paint of the tabard. The yellow ochre used to indicate the nailheads lies on top of this carmine red.

The lit part of the man's left hand is painted thickly in pink, with fine highlights; the shadows in the wrinkled skin are shown with small strokes of grey, reddish grey and dark red. The shadow part of this hand is in a flat, opaque reddish brown, with on the right the hint of a weak reflection of light using strokes of brown-grey.

The background starts at the bottom in a fairly light and opaque grey; it becomes darker further up, but remains opaque. The firm brushwork, using mainly straight strokes running in various directions, is everywhere visible, and along the figure often tends to follow its outline. The sharply edged outline of the tabard is bounded on the lower left by a remarkably thick grey (indicating that the tabard was originally meant to extend further to the left). On the extreme left this grey leaves exposed the rather formless, small brown knob of the chairback. At the bottom right the present contour is bordered by a band of thin and somewhat translucent grey, and parallel with this is another band of grey that appears darker and thicker through having been placed over a dark area. This probably shows that here too the outline of the tabard had a more generous reserve left for it in a darker background and was given its present state at a later stage; at the same time, the lower righthand corner was overpainted in a lighter grey.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### X-Rays

The radiographs, which are difficult to read due to the radioabsorbency of the heavy cradle, provide confirmation for the two modifications already assumed to have been made in the contour of the tabard at the lower right and left of the painting; the garment did indeed, to judge from the more ample reserves, at one time spread out wider. It is evident, too, that the letter the sitter is holding in his right hand initially extended further to the left, and was set at a more acute angle. In the initial version it showed broad scratchmarks running almost vertically.

#### Signature

At the upper right, in a dark grey: <RL (in monogram). 1631>. It is hard to tell whether the crossbar of the H originally filled in the centre to give the usual RHL monogram; the museum catalogue<sup>1</sup> comments that 'traces of paint between the R and L of the monogram suggest that the crossbar of an H may once have connected the two letters'. The inscription on the sheet of paper in the sitter's hand offers only a few recognizable features (the bottom half has a calligraphic flourish), but only the year 1631, underlined, at the top right can be read with any certainty.

#### Varnish

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

The well-planned dynamic of the composition, the handling of light and the bold brushwork make no. A 43 something of a surprise among Rembrandt's single-figure compositions from the late 1620s and early '30s. In some respects the *Old man in a gorget and black cap* in Chicago (no. A 42) offers the best comparison; the very similar pose (in reverse) and the similarity in the handling of the lighting and outline could make one see that painting as an early stage in Rembrandt's development that lead to the present portrait, one of the very first he painted in Amsterdam as a commission. At all events, the resemblance to a work as typical as no. A 42 is so striking that, coupled with the sureness of execution and the confidence-inspiring signature, it removes any doubt as to authenticity.

The manner of painting is remarkable for its great decisiveness and power. In the flesh areas widely differing colours are placed alongside and on top of each other, and the brushstrokes suggest the plastic structure of the face and hands with remarkable ease. A characteristic feature is the sureness with which scratchmarks, going down to the light ground, are used to depict the hairs of the moustache, just catching the light and standing out against the shadow side of the face. The grey background, offering a lighter area around the figure itself, lends effective support to the appearance of plasticity, and enhances the rich though limited range of colours in the man's clothing. That the artist laid great store on the contour is evident from the changes that have been made, compared to the first lay-in, at the left and bottom right; important though not (like those in no. A 45) extensive, these necessitated an at least partial reworking of the background. Instead of the pyramid effect that the original outline on either side would have produced, the artist has shifted his emphasis towards the upper left, providing a counterpoint to the tilt of the head. A third important change – the reduction in size, and a changed perspective to the letter in the left hand, through repositioning it – seems to have been made to further the three-dimensional effect the artist was aiming at. It is obvious that the working-up of the painting took some time and a great deal of thought; there is further evidence of this in the fact that the white paint of the modified part of the letter was scraped away when it had obviously already hardened.

The spatial composition is extremely complex



Fig. 2. Detail (1:1)



and subtle for a Dutch portrait of the early 1630s. On the one hand the figure owes its effect to the turn and tilt of the head, seen full-face, against the diagonally placed body, with the sitter's right shoulder turned towards the viewer. On the other, the symmetrical lighting of the background – which at the lower right lies over a darker area that was perhaps originally planned as a cast shadow – accentuates the stability of the picture plane. This takes its strongest form in the backrest of the chair, which is set in the extreme foreground on the left, parallel to the picture plane, and serving the same purpose as the stone parapet in early 16th-century Venetian portraits and also in slightly later North-Italian works such as Moroni's *Portrait of Antonio Navagero* of 1565 in Milan (Galleria di Brera), where the overall arrangement is strikingly similar. The right hand resting on the chair anchors the figure into the picture plane, and the left hand, thrust forward and holding the letter on which the full light falls, reasserts this spatial and compositional relationship.

It is not immediately clear how Rembrandt arrived at this solution. If the *Old man in a gorget and black cap* in Chicago can be regarded as a preparatory stage, then that painting provides a link with a type of composition propagated by Van Dyck. It is not however possible to point to any direct prototype. It can probably be assumed that Rembrandt himself was responsible for the specific compositional features of this painting. The means by which he has achieved this – the symmetrical lighting of the background, the very carefully-drawn outline, the strong chiaroscuro contrasts and the powerful manner of painting – are not found in the same combination and to the same extent in any of the subsequent portraits. Bode was far from wrong when he spoke<sup>2</sup> of it as 'ein Werk von einer Meisterschaft, dass selbst von den zahlreichen Bildnissen des folgenden Jahres mir keines diesem gleichzukommen scheint'.

Some surprise is prompted by the mahogany support, used by Rembrandt for this portrait in a format almost as large as that of the oak panels on which the large history paintings of 1625 and 1626 (nos. A 1 and A 6) are painted. He was never, so far as we know, to use a panel larger than this; the *Portrait of a young woman, probably Maria Trip* of 1639 in Amsterdam (Br. 356), which (in its present state) approaches it in size (107 × 82 cm), is similarly on an unusual kind of wood; the other panels from subsequent years are rather smaller, at about 90 × 70 cm (the Vienna *Portrait of a man* datable as 1632, no. A 45, and the *Marten Looten* in Los Angeles dated 1632, no. A 52), and for the larger formats Rembrandt used canvas. One should probably seek the reason for the use of mahogany for no. A 43 in

a preference expressed by the client commissioning the portrait. The choice has had its disadvantages from the viewpoint of preservation, although the vital areas of the picture have been unaffected by the splitting peculiar to this kind of wood.

The identity of the sitter is known with certainty, from the information given below under 5. *Documents and sources* and 8. *Provenance*. It remained known up to about 1800, i.e. while no. A 43 was in the possession of Ruts' descendants; it was rediscovered by Bode<sup>2</sup>. Nicolaes Ruts (or Rutgers) was born in Cologne in 1573, the son of emigrants from Antwerp<sup>3</sup>. His first marriage, to Cornelia Ranson, took place in Elberfeld in 1594, and after living in Mühlheim near Cologne – whence he fled in 1614 because of its capture by Spinola – he established himself as a merchant in Amsterdam, where he died in 1638<sup>4</sup>. It was probably only his eldest son David (b. 1595) who actually set up businesses in Archangel and Moscow, but he himself already traded with Russia. His second wife, Anna van Aperlo (b. 1585), whom he married in Solingen in 1608, did not die until 1645; there is however no evidence that there was ever a pendant to no. A 43. The earliest mention of the portrait dates from 16 March 1636, when (without a pendant) it was in the possession of his oldest daughter from his first marriage, Susannah (Cologne 1598–Lisse 1649); since 1634 she had been the widow of Jan Boddens, and was at that time on the point of remarrying (see under 8. *Provenance*). The catalogue of the Frick Collection<sup>1</sup>, and I. H. van Eeghen<sup>4</sup>, rightly consider it possible that it was Susannah who commissioned the painting.

## 5. Documents and sources

The mention, quoted under 8. *Provenance*, in the inventory of Susannah Ruts dated 16 March 1636 can safely be assumed to refer to no. A 43. Up to 1799, when the portrait was evidently still owned by her descendants, there is nothing known from family papers except for the two copy drawings mentioned under 7. *Copies*.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

1. Drawing (bust, oval) of 1738 by Frans van Mieris the Younger (according to Van Bemmelen, op. cit.<sup>3</sup> p. 61 and fig. 3) or Willem van Mieris (HdG *Urk.*, no. 49) in the 'Backer Album' (Backer Foundation, Amsterdam, Willet-Holthuysen Museum), after the original then owned by Abraham Romswinkel of Amsterdam<sup>4</sup>.
2. Drawing after the abovementioned copy (bust, oval) in the 'de Moor Album' from the mid-18th century, with the inscription: 'Nicolaes Ruts trouwt 1594 April 18 Cornelia Ranson' (see Van Bemmelen, op. cit.<sup>3</sup> p. 59 and fig. 1).
3. An almost life-size copy done as a bust in watercolours by

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



Abraham Delfos (Leiden 1731–1820) dated 1799, bought at a sale in Amsterdam on 16 May 1877, no. 56 by Dr jur. C. W. J. J. Pape of The Hague, present whereabouts unknown (cf. C. Vosmaer, *Rembrandt*, The Hague 1877, p. 495; HdG *Urk.*, no. 49); inscribed 'Het portret van Nicolaes Ruts, levensgroot door Rembrandt van Rijn 1632 (sic!), A. Delfos 1799 thans bij den heer Joost Romswinkel te Leiden' (Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts, life-size by Rembrandt van Rijn 1632, A. Delfos 1799 now with Mr Joost Romswinkel of Leiden).

4. Another almost life-size copy done as a bust in watercolours by Delfos was (according to Vosmaer, loc. cit.) in the possession of Fr. Muller in Amsterdam around 1877.

## 8. Provenance

– In the inventory, dated 16 March 1636, of Joffrou Susannah Ruts (1598–1649) drawn up before her second marriage to Pieter van der Hagen, the painting is mentioned as 't conterfeytsel van Nicolaes Ruts by Rembrant gedaen' (The likeness of N. R. done by Rembrant) (report by the notary L. Lamberti; see HdG *Urk.*, no. 49; Strauss *Doc.*, 1636/4). Susannah Ruts died on 3 March 1649 in the home of her daughter by her first marriage, Catharina Boddens; the latter had since 1644 been married to the clergyman Johannes Romswinkel of Lisse, near Leiden; in the inventory of the estate in Amsterdam drawn up by the notary Justus van de Ven on 15 April 1649 there is the description 'een conterfeyt schilderije van den ouden Nicolaes Rutz in een swartte lijst' (a painted likeness of the old Nicolaes Rutz in a black frame)<sup>4</sup>.

– Subsequently passed down in the Romswinkel family. According to the inscription on a copy drawn by Abraham Delfos (see 7. *Copies*, 3) it was in 1799 in the possession of Joost Romswinkel in Leiden. According to E. W. Moes (*Iconographia Batava*, Amsterdam 1897–1905, II, pp. 297–298) it was in 1817 still in the possession of J. Romswinkel in The Hague.

– Coll. Anthony Meynts, sale Amsterdam 15 July 1823, no. 107: 'Ryn (Rembrandt van) hoog 1 el 1 [read: 3]p[alm]7 d[uim] breed 9 p. [= 114.4 × 85.9 cm]. Paneel. Dit kunstjuweel vertoont een man gekleed in een rok met bont, met een geplooide kraag om den hals en gedekt met eene bonten muts, in de linker hand een brief houdende en met de regter op eenen stoel rustende; edelheid en deftigheid is uit zyn mannelyk gelaat te lezen, hetwelk door een zwaren baard en knevels gedeeltelyk wordt gedekt; men vindt in dit tafereel die vereeniging van kennis in ligt en bruin, dat doorkneet penseel en dien verhevene wyze van voorstelling, welke Rembrandt tot den eersten rang onder de historieschilders verheft.' (Panel. This jewel of art shows a man dressed in a coat trimmed with fur, with a ruff around his neck and wearing a fur hat, holding a letter in the left hand and resting the right hand on a chair; nobility and dignity can be seen in his manly face, which is partly covered by a heavy beard and moustaches; one finds combined in this picture the skill in light and dark, that proficiency with the brush and the sublime manner of portrayal that put Rembrandt among the first rank of history painters.) (4010 guilders to Brondgeest).

– Coll. King Willem II of The Netherlands; sale The Hague 12ff August 1850, no. 86 as 'Portrait d'un rabbin' (3400 guilders to Weimar, The Hague).

– Coll. Adrian Hope, London; sale London (Christie's) 30 June 1894, no. 57 as 'Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts' (4700 guineas to Agnew).

– Coll. Joseph Ruston, Monk's Manor, Lincoln; sale London (Christie's) 21/23 May 1898, no. 95 (5000 guineas to Colnaghi).

– Dealer E. Fischhof, Paris.

– Coll. Comte Boni de Castellane, Paris.

– Coll. J. Pierpont Morgan (bought before 1903; moved to New York in 1912).

– Dealer Knoedler, New York (1943).

## 9. Summary

Through the interpretation given to the form, placed in strong lighting, and through the boldness and – despite a few not insignificant changes – sureness of the brushwork, no. A 43 belongs among the most characteristic of Rembrandt's works from his early years in Amsterdam. On top of this there is the fact that the details known of its origin provide an almost unbroken pedigree, making this work one of the best documented of Rembrandt's paintings. The powerful execution can be seen as a manifestation of a fresh energy and ambition felt by Rembrandt as he settled in Amsterdam.

An unusual feature is the large mahogany panel, made from a single plank, on which no. A 43 is painted. Local damages caused by splitting of the wood have left the vital areas unaffected.

## REFERENCES

- 1 Kühn, p. 196; *The Frick Collection. An illustrated catalogue I, Paintings* . . . , New York 1968, pp. 252–257.
- 2 W. Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei*, Braunschweig 1883, pp. 382–383.
- 3 J. F. van Bemmelen, 'Identificatie van familie-portretten', *Jaarboek . . . Amstelodamum* 26 (1929), pp. 59–77.
- 4 I. H. v[an] E[eghen], 'Voor wie schilderde Rembrandt het portret van Nicolaas Ruts?', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 64 (1977), pp. 97–101.

HdG 775; BR. 146; BAUCH 349; GERSON 54

### 1. Summarized opinion

An authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1631. The painting is very well preserved in the essential areas, but slightly reduced in height.

### 2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen three-quarter length, with the body almost in left profile, the head turned slightly to the front and the gaze directed straight at the viewer. He is shown at a cloth-covered table and bends over his writing, which lies on a wooden writing-slope; it comprises a partly-written sheet of paper lying on an open, manuscript book. His left hand, with a ring on the ring finger, rests on the paper, while the right holds a pen. He is dressed in a black, waisted doublet, from which protrude black silk sleeves with plain white cuffs; a wide, loosely-pleated double ruff is worn round the neck. A wainscoting can be made out on the wall on the right, seen in semi-darkness, while a number of books lie and stand on the left. The light, falling from the upper left, illuminates mainly the figure, the papers and the front of the table.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 16 August 1969 (J. B., S. H. L.) in fairly good daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of six X-ray photographs by the museum (covering the head, the adjacent area with the shoulder across to the righthand edge and the area with the two hands, and the upper and lower lefthand and lower righthand corners); prints of these were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 104.4 × 91.8 cm measured along the stretcher. Single piece. Marked cusping of the threads can be seen along the bottom and lefthand side, less marked along the top and none on the right) (see below). This suggests that strips of canvas may have been lost on the right and at the top. A mid-18th century print (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*) and the measurements it gives suggest that the picture was then exactly as wide as it is now but 9 cm taller. The nature of the cusping along the bottom, which continues into the canvas in a strip c. 19 cm wide, would seem to preclude the possibility that any substantial amount of canvas is missing there, although the print does render a wider field with more details of the subject than shown in the painting in its present state. One may assume that the canvas was reduced in height only or mainly at the top, where the cusping extends over no more than c. 10 cm, between 1754 (when the print was published) and the time the painting was described with its present dimensions in the collection of Catherine II of Russia between 1773 and 1783 (see 8. *Provenance*). The engraver would then have shown more of the sitter's dress and the tablecloth at the bottom than would be seen in the original. The total lack of cusping on the righthand side does not necessarily mean that a strip of canvas is missing there (see Introduction, Chapter II, pp. 32–33).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: The six available reduced-size paper prints from radiographs yielded the following information (the conversion of measurements could be done quite accurately, thanks to the presence in the X-ray images of a lead step-wedge, used by the Hermitage): the pitch of the cusping on the left varies between 7 and 9 cm, and it extends some 19 cm into the surface of the canvas. At the top there is one full cusp

measuring c. 13 cm in length, extending c. 10 cm inwards. At the bottom the cusp length is about 11.5 cm, with a depth of 19 cm. Threadcount: 12 vertical threads/cm (10–14), 14 horizontal threads/cm (13–15). It may be assumed that the warp runs horizontally, for two reasons – the horizontal threads have a significantly more even density, and there are numerous quite short thickenings in the vertical threads compared to those in the horizontal, which are generally longer and more sporadic. The total absence of cusping on the right lends support to the supposition that the canvas was taken across the width of a woven strip. It makes it likely that the canvas was cut from a much larger horizontal format, as is often the case with portraits (cf. nos. C 68 and C 69). The width of the strip used could have been 1½ ell (c. 110 cm), and this fits neatly with the idea that there is now some 9 cm missing in the height, as could be deduced from the inscription on the print mentioned.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Not observed.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Excellent in the essential areas. Apart from a few insignificant paint losses (at top centre and left in the background) and horizontal and vertical marks caused by the cross-battens of an earlier stretcher, the major damages and restorations are to be found along the edges. On the left and right, apparently quite broad strips of canvas have previously been folded back, and there are also extensive restorations along the top and bottom edges. As can be seen from the print mentioned above, part of the outline of the man's back has been incorrectly restored. Craquelure: a fairly even network of small cracks.

DESCRIPTION: The thickest areas of paint are found in the highest lights on the forehead and beneath the eyepouches, on the ring and on the edges of the pages of the book. Over the entire background the paint layer is quite thin.

The head is for the most part painted in a lightish yellow flesh colour, on top of which there is a thin pink on the nose and along the eyebrows, with a heavier pink on the cheeks and – on the right – a little red. In the highest lights the paint is thicker than elsewhere and shows clear traces of the brushwork. A continuous band of a light flesh tone runs down the ridge of the nose. The shadow along the temple and cheek is painted in a thin, merging grey. The shadow under the nose is in a fairly thin brown, with a little red in the middle; the nostril is indicated by a touch of dark brown.

The eye-sockets and uppermost folds of the top eyelids are done in brown, and the lower edges of the latter in a subdued pink which tends towards a red more above the righthand eye than above the left. The lower edges of the eyes are modelled in a pinkish red, with thin, small strokes and dots of white for the moisture along the rim. The white of both eyes is painted in a white broken to grey, the clearly delineated iris in grey with flat, grey-white catchlights, and the round pupil (which in the eye on the left is noticeably smaller than that on the right) in black. The fairly thick grey-white lines used to depict the eyebrows lie partly over the shadow of the eye-socket, and on the left project just past the outline of the head.

The moustache, set down in grey and brown-grey, is similarly portrayed using quite long, thin strokes of broken white, some of which stray down into the black used in small strokes to indicate the opening of the mouth. Above this a small spot of pink shows the upper lip. The lower lip is in a pinkish red, with a few small, thin vertical highlights in white. Beneath this

Fig. 1. Canvas 104.4 × 91.8 cm





Fig. 2. Detail (1:1.5)



a few strokes of broken white, like those in the moustache, indicate the tuft of hair below the bottom lip; the small goatee is laid down in grey, with a few strokes of a fairly light brown. The head hair is painted in a darkish brown, with strokes of a lighter brown; the hairline is indistinct. The ear is done summarily in a little pink, flesh colour and light brown.

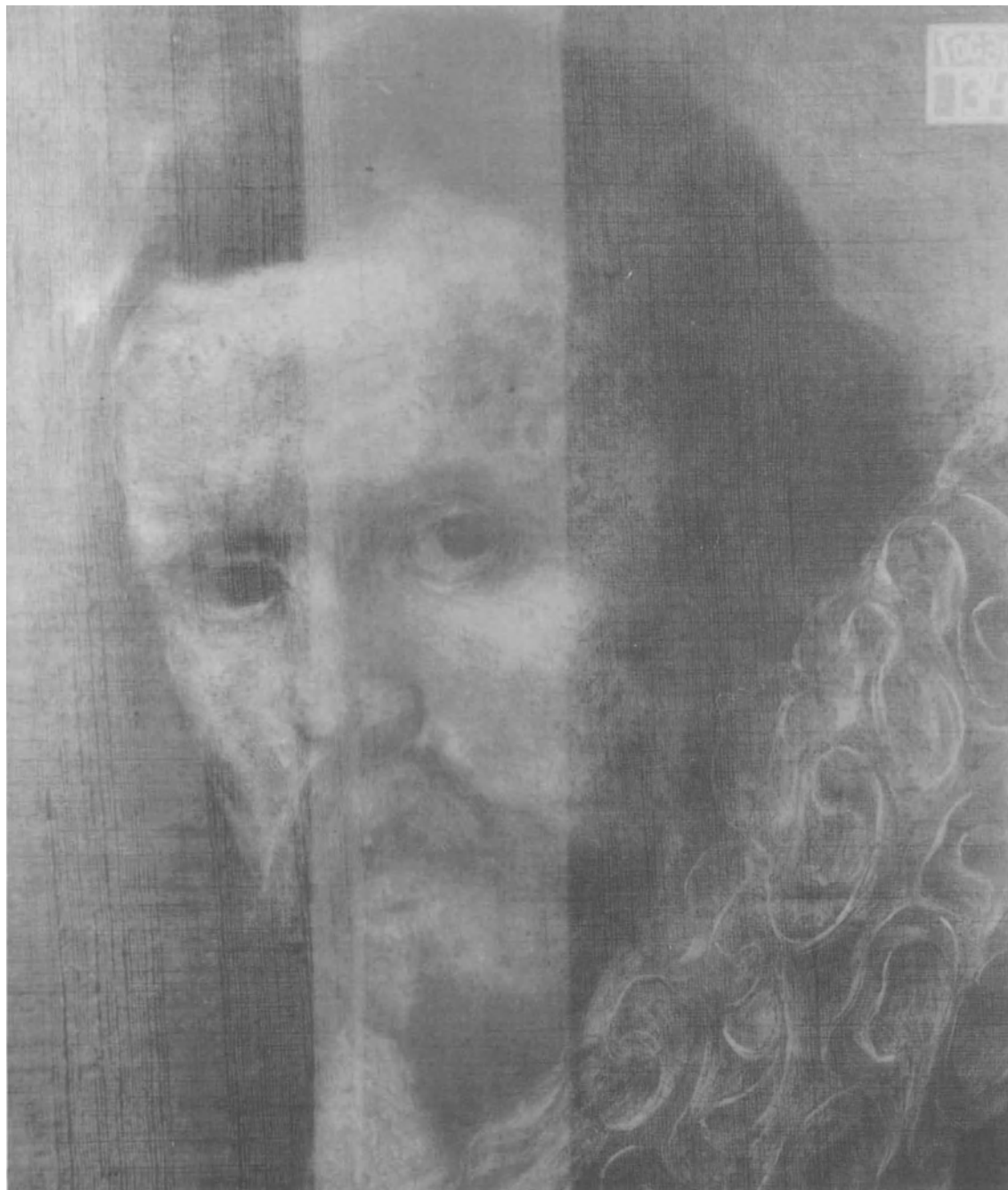
The ruff shows lively brushwork in light greys over a slightly darker grey, with fine, rather thicker white picking out the edges. Some of the shadows have been corrected at a later stage.

The sitter's left hand is modelled with firm brushstrokes in a fairly thick flesh tone which sometimes shifts to a pink (on the side of the middle finger), sometimes to a grey (at the knuckles) and sometimes to a broken white. The nails are also marked in the paint relief, and have sharp white highlights

over their whole length. The ring is shown in brown, with thick yellow edges of light along the lefthand side; the stone is depicted by a dot of dark paint set over brown, with a small yellow-white catchlight. His right hand has a somewhat darker, more thinly applied flesh colour where it is seen in the light, red and brown in the outlines of the nails (those in the light having three catchlights), and brown in the shadows. The cuffs are done in various tones of grey. The doublet is in black, and the sleeves in greys and black.

The papers are painted in off-white, done partly with very long brushstrokes, and along the edges of the pages in a variety of browns. The letters are indicated in black, with here and there a little thick white set alongside them heightening the contrast. The writing-slope is brown, the tablecloth a dark grey on its upper surface, and brown with strokes of brown

Fig. 3. X-ray



ochre to show a pattern on the part hanging down. The books standing behind the desk are shown in a brown-grey, with detail drawn with thin dark strokes.

The background is executed in a fairly thin, even brown-grey; only on the right, along the line of the shoulder, is there a slightly lighter grey, with clear brushmarks following the contour (cf. the correction visible in the X-ray). On the far right, level with the upper arm, there is the horizontal edge of a dark wainscoting, which though probably originally present has been very largely overpainted during restoration.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The available X-rays reveal a painting done with a generally sure, careful and yet quite bold brushwork. The outline of the

righthand side of the shoulder shows a broadly-shaped reserve, just within the outline of its present shape. The paint losses caused by the canvas having been folded back at the right (twice) and lefthand edges are clearly visible, partly as a result of nail holes.

#### *Signature*

In dark brown, at the bottom edge, about 15 cm from the righthand side and relatively small <RHL (in monogram): 1631>. The monogram and date make a wholly authentic impression.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

Fig. 4. Detail (1:2.5)



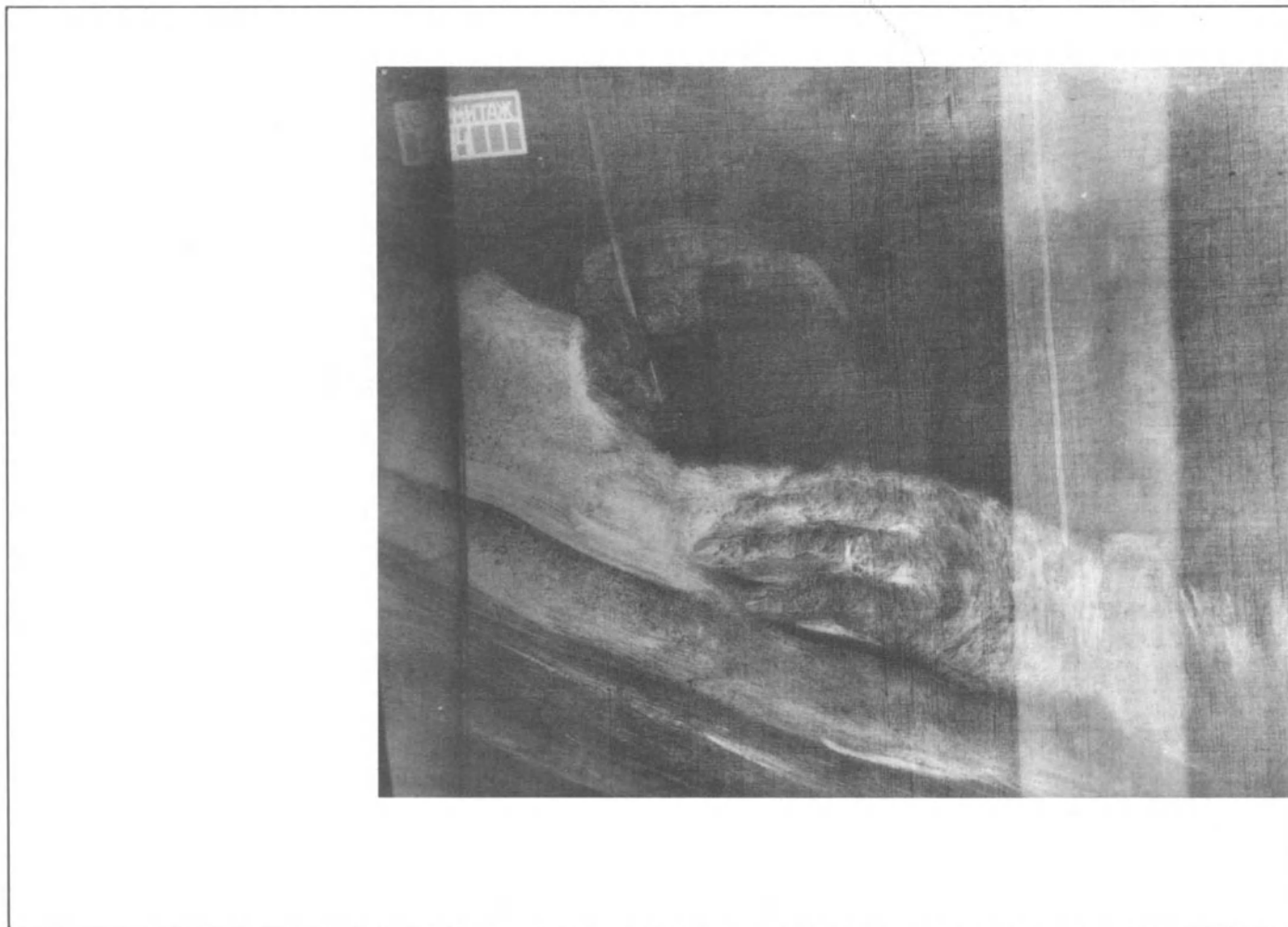
#### 4. Comments

From its dating, this painting is one of Rembrandt's first commissioned portraits, and was probably painted in Amsterdam. The resemblance in the style of painting to his Amsterdam portraits is quite decisive – no. A 44 shares with a large number of portraits from the early 1630s the way in which the brushstroke in the thicker areas helps to model a somewhat simplified shape, the economic but very effective suggestion of facial forms, the very discreet use of colour and the liveliness of boldly painted shapes such as the ruff. Since the monogram and date further make a wholly authentic impression, there can be no doubt as to its attribution or date.

It is quite amazing to see how, soon after the heads he had been painting during the years 1628–1630 – all of which bore the mark of being experiments, crowned with greater or lesser success – he has at once, and with total certainty of purpose, discovered a new approach, one which forms the starting point for his portraits and portrait groups of 1632 and the following years. The example provided by older Amsterdam portrait painters

such as Cornelis van der Voort, Nicolaes Eliasz. and Thomas de Keyser can explain only a few, general features – not the skilful and yet wholly personal use of the brush, nor the great ease with which spatial and plastic values are suggested in the head and hands, as well as in the accessory items. The perhaps rather earlier *Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts* in the Frick Collection (no. A 43) which is also dated 1631 – and in any case stands more on its own – is in some ways a more powerful painting offering more contrasts, yet it still does not (because the background to some extent competes with the figure in its tonal value) show the effortless concentration on the figure that will be the rule from now on. In assessing the composition we also have to take into account that, from the evidence of a print published in 1754 (see 6. *Graphic reproductions* 1, fig. 6), the painting was then about 9 cm taller; this print appears to show the subject standing, but does not seem to be reliable in this respect (see *Support*). The present height was already mentioned in the inventory of the Russian Imperial collection made between 1773 and 1783 (see 8. *Provenance*).

Fig. 5. X-ray



The attention is drawn not only by the manner of painting, but also by the way the theme has been interpreted. In this respect no. A 44 belongs to a group of portraits in which the suggestion is given that an activity or an otherwise fleeting posture has been interrupted. The subject looking up from his work towards the viewer lends the picture an instantaneous feeling of the kind that, among the single portraits, will be exploited most fully in the 1633 *Portrait of a young man rising from his chair* in the Taft Museum, Cincinnati (no. A 78). Examples of this occur more often in group portraits – the *Anatomy lesson* of 1632 in The Hague (no. A 51) and, in a quite extreme form, the *Shipbuilder Jan Rijcksen and his wife* of 1633 in Buckingham Palace (no. A 77) – though not only with Rembrandt. Already in older group portraits by, for instance, Cornelis van der Voort and Nicolaes Eliasz., one finds – besides the ‘speaking’ poses which are a good deal older still – poses that can be described as fleeting. The pose used in the Leningrad portrait is very similar, in reverse, to that of the figure looking up from his writing on the extreme left of the *Governors of the*

‘*Spinhuis*’ (*Women’s House of Correction*) of 1628 by Eliasz., now in the Amsterdam Historical Museum (cat. no. 139, A 7310; our fig. 7). It is thus reasonable to assume that Rembrandt added drama to some of his single portraits by incorporating motifs borrowed from the group portrait. This seems a more satisfactory explanation than assuming the influence of Flemish models, as Gerson<sup>1</sup> and Kuznetsov<sup>2</sup> have done on the evidence of Rubens’ *Portrait of Gevartzius* in Antwerp. The similarities that exist with these models are of a general kind, and can be explained by a common connexion with an iconographical type that will be described below.

The significance of the motif – the right hand held in the writing position, the writing lying on the desk, the books on the table, and the body facing the left with the head turned – is naturally closely tied up with the question of who is depicted, and in what capacity. Nothing is known of the identity of the sitter; one can assume from the taut skin on the forehead that he is still fairly young, and it is certain from the body turned towards the left that the painting is not the dexter half of a pair and that the

Fig. 6. Engraving by P. Filloeuil (reproduced in reverse)



subject was thus probably not married. The meaning of the man's pose and attributes can be guessed at only to the extent that we can assume a link with an iconographic tradition. Though that of the group portrait has been decisive for certain formal aspects, we do not in this case have the context in which the act of writing makes sense as an *ex officio* activity. Occurring in isolation, this motif traditionally indicates that the portrait is that of a scholar. The fact that the positioning of the two hands shows a remarkable similarity to that of Erasmus's hands in Holbein's portrait of 1523 of the great humanist standing at a writing-desk (versions of which are in Paris and Basle) may be a more or less coincidental result of the similar circumstances in which they are shown; nonetheless, this analogy provides strong support for the assumption that no. A 44, too, forms part of the tradition to which Holbein's portrait belongs and which persisted into the 17th century (e.g. in the portrait of the Leiden professor Josephus Justus Scaliger, painted about 1608 and attributed to Jan Cornelisz. van 't Woudt, now owned by the University of Leiden, cf. *Icones Leidenses*, Leiden 1973, no. 31). That the painting portrays a scholar is borne out by the fact that there are books on the table, and that the writing we can see (though not offering any legible text) is plainly

not, for instance, the accounts one might expect if the painting were of a merchant. Of the assumptions about the portrait listed by Kuznetsov<sup>2</sup>, the notion put forward by Michel<sup>3</sup> that the subject is a merchant can therefore be rejected (as Kuznetsov himself does). The belief, fairly widely expressed in the literature, that this is a scholar thus remains the most likely.

One is struck by the very positive judgment on the painting given in the 1773–83 catalogue of the Russian Imperial collection, and in particular by the comparison with Rubens and Van Dyck based on a text by Houbraken (*De groote Schouburgh*, Amsterdam 1718, I, p. 269) that in fact relates not to this painting but to a self-portrait (see 8. *Provenance*).

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Engraving by Pierre Filloeuil (active in Paris c. 1730–1780?) in: *Recueil d'estampes gravées d'après les tableaux de la galerie et du cabinet de S. E. Mr. le Comte de Brühl*, Dresden 1754, inscribed: *Rimbrant Pinxit – Filloeuil Sculpsit | Tableau de la Galerie de S. Ex. Mgr. le Comte de Brühl premier Ministre de S. M. le Roy de Pologne | Electeur de Saxe – N<sup>o</sup> 2 | Le Tableau est de 4. pieds de haut sur 3. pieds 3. pouces de large* (fig. 6). The print reproduces the original in reverse. The dimensions stated (c. 113.2 × 91.8 cm, taking the Saxony foot as 28.3 cm) give a height some 9 cm more than today; in agreement with this, the picture in the print shows considerably more space at the top and bottom. The fact that the subject is standing is far more clearly evident from the print than it is from the lower righthand area of the painting today, which has been considerably restored.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

– Since 1754 at the latest in the collection of Heinrich Graf von Brühl (d. 1763), minister of August III of Saxony, King of Poland, at Dresden (cf. 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 1).

– Bought by Catharine II of Russia in 1769 with the Brühl collection. Described in the *Catalogue Raisonné des Tableaux qui se trouvent dans les Galeries, Sallons et Cabinets du Palais Impérial de S.-Pétersbourg, commencé en 1773, et continué jusqu'en 1783*, incl. (ms. Leningrad, Hermitage) as no. 91: 'Paul Rembrant. Portrait d'un homme qui se met à écrire dans un Livre. La tête de cet excellent portrait est très finie et pourtant d'une grande force. La main gauche est merveilleuse et si bien achevée qu'on y voit exprimés tous les plis et tous les traits d'un homme avancé en âge. C'est de cette pièce que Houbraken dit, dans la vie de Rembrant, qu'elle surpasse les portraits de Rubens et de Van Dyck qui ne peuvent tenir contre celui-ci. Il a été gravé à Paris par Filleuil qui a mal exprimé la beauté de ce tableau. Demi figure sur toile. Haut 1. ar[chine]. 7½ V[erchokk]. Large 1. ar. 4¼ V. [= 104.4 × 92.9 cm]'.<sup>4</sup>

Fig. 7. N. Elias. Pickenoy, *The Governors of the 'Spinhuis'*. Amsterdam, Amsterdam Historical Museum



### 9. Summary

Apart from damage along all four edges and the removal of sections at the top and bottom, no. A 44 is a well-preserved painting that demonstrates the extent to which Rembrandt, soon after settling in Amsterdam in 1631, had even within the same year already found his form as a portrait painter. A characteristic feature of this and a number of slightly later portraits is the tendency to enliven the pose using a motif that can be described as a 'fleeting action' – in this instance, the subject glancing up from his writing and looking at the viewer. Rembrandt presumably borrowed this motif from group portraits, in which devices of this kind were already common. He has fitted it into the arrangement (a half-length figure seen in left profile at a writing-desk) traditionally used for the portrait of a scholar. Most probably, therefore, this portrait is of a young scholar, whose identity so far remains unknown.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 Gerson 54; Br.-Gerson 146.
- 2 Y. Kuznetsov in: *Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn. Paintings from Soviet Museums*, Leningrad [c. 1971], no. 3.
- 3 E. Michel, *Rembrandt*, Paris 1893, pp. 116–117.

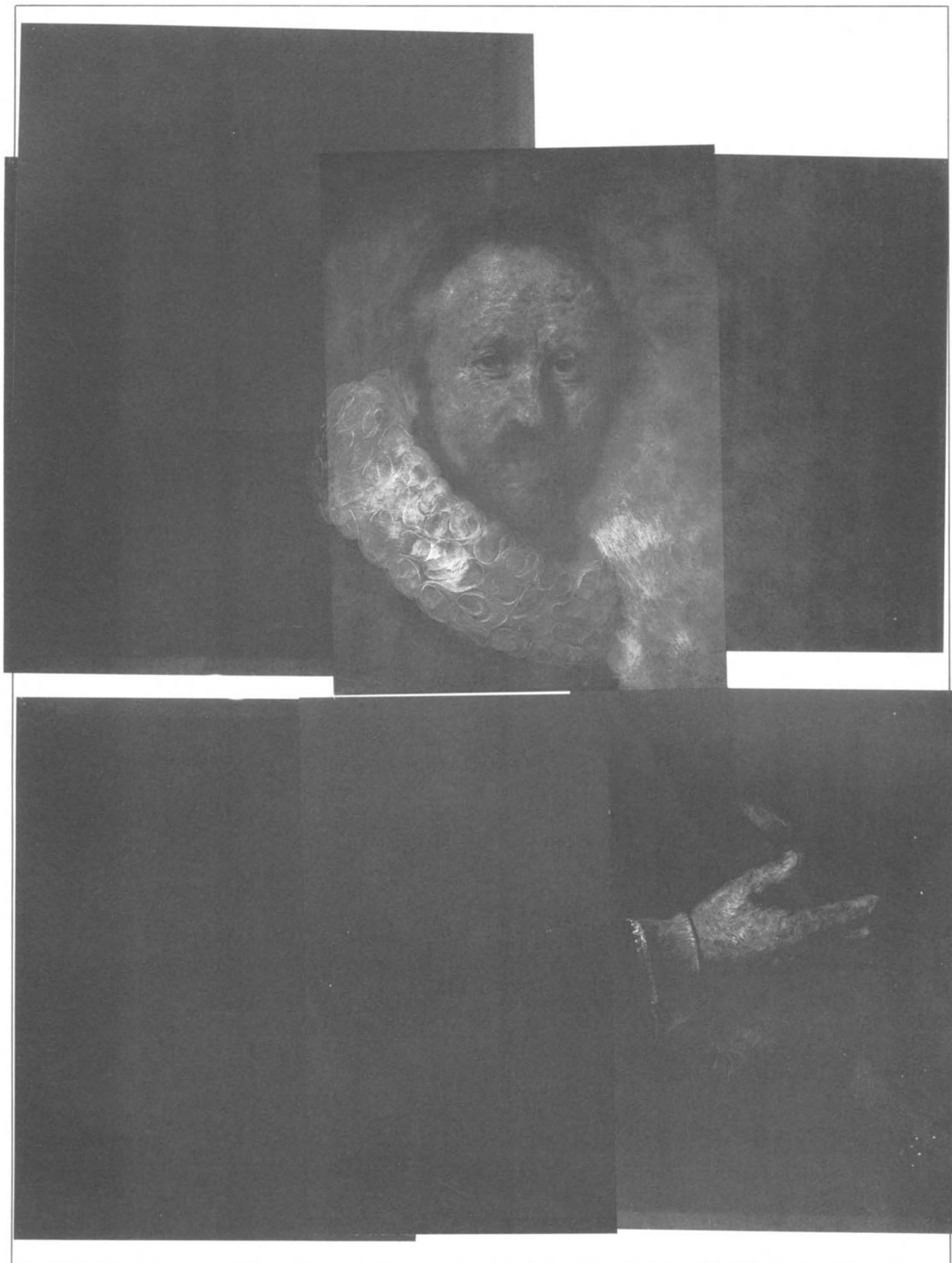


HDG 785; BR. 163; BAUCH 367; GERSON 153

Fig. 1. Panel 90.8 × 68.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved, authentic work probably painted in 1631 or 1632.

### 2. Description of subject

A man, seated in a chair, is shown almost down to the knees, with his body facing well to the right and his head and gaze directed towards the viewer. He makes a gesture towards the right with his right hand, while his gloved left hand lies on his lap, holding the other glove. Fairly strong light falls from the left.

He wears a wide ruff with three layers of loose pleats and a black doublet with shoulder caps from which project sleeves in a shiny black material with an ornamental pattern. A cloak is draped over his left shoulder, and falls down his back and, in deep folds, over his lap.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 27 May 1970 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good daylight, out of the frame, and with the aid of an ultraviolet lamp and X-rays. Six X-ray films, covering virtually the whole of the painting, were received later from the museum.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Walnut panel (*Juglans regia* L.: Prof. Dr J. Bauch, Hamburg<sup>1</sup>), grain vertical, 90.8 × 68.5 cm. Thickness c. 0.8–1 cm. Single plank. Back irregularly bevelled on all four sides; attacked by woodworm on left.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A very light yellow-brown is clearly visible in a thin area in the paint layer of the extreme lower right background. The same colour shows through in the gloves and in translucent parts of the clothing. Long, vertical brushstrokes, visible in relief, could be evidence of a roughly-brushed ground layer.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Very good. A few retouches in the background and the face, where as the ultraviolet image confirms the grey of the iris of the lefthand eye has been retouched. Craquelure: none observed.

DESCRIPTION: The paint is almost everywhere thinly applied; there is a relative impasto in the highest lights on the right hand and in the ruff, and in the darkest parts of the clothing.

The light areas in the head are painted mainly with short, somewhat smoothed-out strokes, with various shades and accents of colour placed over a flesh tone, using a thin and more or less translucent paint. The shadow areas comprise a somewhat ruddy brownish flesh tint, which is opaque almost everywhere and shows a weak indication of reflected light at the righthand contour. The lit and shadowed parts merge fluently one into the other. The highest lights are set on top of the basic flesh tone, just as the deepest shadows are placed over the basic shadow tone. This technique has been most clearly used where there was the greatest need to suggest plasticity, such as in the nose area and in the moustache and beard where the hairs have been painted in grey tints over the somewhat

translucent underlying tone; at the chin this underlying tone is a striking pink.

The lips are shown in summary fashion, and the broad mouth-line somewhat vaguely in black. The areas round the eyes are structured and drawn very convincingly, with a quite detailed rendering of folds, wrinkles and edges of moisture. The retouching of the iris in the eye on the left has produced an abrupt transition to the white of the eye that is absent from the other eye, where a sharp edge has been avoided. Here, the catchlight at the upper left harmonizes with a rather lighter touch at the lower right in the iris; this will also have been the case in the lefthand eye.

The ruff has been painted with great care. Its basic tone is an opaque white on the right, merging into a translucent grey towards the left and then again becoming whiter and more opaque. The detail of the ruff has been worked up on top of this basic tone, with fine lines of white for the piped edges, becoming thicker to the left and grey in the lightest parts. A translucent grey has been used in the shadow cast by the chin.

The hand making the gesture is modelled clearly, with the paint in the lit areas relatively thick. In the shadow the paint is greyer and more translucent; the plasticity is enhanced by reflected lights along the contours. The brushstroke, laid in various directions, is everywhere easily distinguishable. The gloved hand is painted in an easy, rather summary manner, using quite thick, opaque grey in the light and a translucent paint in the shadows, with black between the fingers. The empty glove is shown very roughly.

The doublet is in a very dark grey, with a brown showing through the brushwork. The outlines and ornament are in a thicker black. The shiny right sleeve is painted in lighter and darker greys with a brown showing through; the ornamental pattern – in dark grey over lighter grey, and light grey over darker areas – is rendered fluently but precisely. In the cloak along the righthand contour the brushstrokes are long and follow the direction of the folds.

The backrest of the chair, like the fringe at its top, is painted fluently in browns. The background is everywhere done with broad brushstrokes running in various directions. At the left the colour is a dark, cool grey. Here, the underlying ground shows through the brushstrokes only sporadically. Virtually all around the figure the paint has – possibly in a second application – been laid down more thickly. On the left, starting a little above the edge of the backrest of the chair, a dark zone can be seen along the man's back, running parallel to the outline of the back; this area runs, with a less distinct border, round the head, though in paint which is lighter and browner than that along the back (especially to the right above the hair). One gets the impression that a reserve for the whole of the figure was made in the background paint a few centimetres further to the left, and that during the final execution the background was filled in along the edge of the figure in its present position, using a slightly different paint. Since one can tell from the X-rays (q.v.) that the righthand part of the background did indeed run through further to the left than the present contour of the body, it may be concluded that in the preparatory stage, and even while the background was being painted, the entire figure was somewhat further to the left.

Towards the lower right the grey of the background becomes much lighter, but is still thicker immediately next to the contour than it is near the edge of the picture. Along the figure, level with the projecting part of the hand, a thickly-painted area is bordered to the right by a very thinly-painted area; it would seem that the protruding shape of a left arm projecting further out from the body has been painted over. A similar thicker zone along the thigh indicates that the contour

of this was originally a little higher, practically parallel to the present outline.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The X-rays present a low contrast, possibly due to the walnut support. The structure of the wood can be seen in dark, practically vertical bands that are evident mainly in the background.

The areas with paint containing more white lead (such as the face, ruff, bare hand and righthand part of the background) show a rather clearer brushstroke in the radiographic image than they do to the naked eye at the surface, but otherwise bear out very largely what has been said about the manner of painting. An evidently rather more thinly painted area at the centre of the forehead shows up a little darker than the rest of the lit part of the face.

The background, which appears light in the X-rays, runs on the righthand side of the body rather further in towards the left, and shows a slightly higher-placed reserve for the thumb and perhaps also for the index finger. Here, consequently, the black of the clothing is seen to have been extended out on top of the background that had already been painted. Similarly, the collar has been taken out a little to the right, over the already-executed background. Partly because of this (see also the description of the paint layer), it can be concluded that the entire figure was shifted slightly to the right after completion of the background.

It is noticeable that along the lefthand outline of the figure, where in the paint surface one can see a dark zone, there is a lighter area in the radiographic image that is obviously due to the paint used to fill in the background, after the figure had been moved to the right.

#### *Signature*

None.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

In the vital areas the manner of painting tends clearly towards a large degree of precision and a strongly differentiated rendering of materials. The way the paint is applied, and the way various levels of translucency are used, play a clear role in this.

The attention to detail and the striving after a convincing suggestion of materials are more strongly apparent in this portrait than in most of those by Rembrandt. However, they fall well within the limits of the general stylistic characteristics that mark his portraits from the early 1630s (see Introduction, Chapter I). Some components – the head (especially the eyes, nose and hair), ruff, hand and sleeve – have been executed with great thoroughness, while others such as the greater part of the clothing and the gloved hand (which are meant to attract less attention) have been dealt with far more summarily. The background differs from the usual types found in Rembrandt's portraits, in that light and dark are separated by the figure rather more

markedly than is usual. For the rest, the quite considerable tonal gradient, the fairly distinct brushwork and the second layer of paint around the figure are phenomena that are frequently encountered and often – as in this case – have to do with corrections made to an outline. In interpretation and composition the portrait has a liveliness that has been achieved by the marked turn of the head against the body and by the gesture with the hand, which gives an impression of the man speaking besides suggesting a relationship with the pendant. The direction of the gaze, straight at the viewer, establishes contact with the latter. In this liveliness of pose, gesture and lighting there is a clear resemblance to the Leningrad *Man at a writing-desk* of 1631 (no. A 44) and to a number of figures in the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* of 1632 in The Hague (no. A 51). Because of these similarities and of the treatment referred to above there can be no doubt in ascribing the portrait to Rembrandt, and dating it as 1631 or 1632, although it is unsigned, something that is quite exceptional for a Rembrandt portrait from the 1630s and even later.

Observations made at the paint surface and in the X-rays together prompt the conclusion that the painting's genesis includes a rather unusual feature: the figure was a few centimetres further to the left in the first lay-in and when the background was being painted. Although not insubstantial alterations can also be seen in the portraits of Nicolaes Ruts from 1631 (no. A 43) and of Marten Looten from 1632 (no. A 52), moving the whole figure across the picture area in the way it has been done here must have been quite out of the ordinary. In this instance one can assume that the original, more off-centre positioning of the man was intended to provide a more or less symmetrical effect vis-à-vis the composition of the associated woman's portrait (no. C 80). The latter is, in our opinion, not by Rembrandt, though one is inclined to think that he was aware of its composition and took account of it, in respect not only of the man's gesture but also of his placing in the picture area. It may be that a desire for a slimmer silhouette and more liveliness in the figure led him to make an alteration that took less account of the symmetry originally aimed at.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

1. Canvas, dimensions unknown but said to be about the same as those of the original; Frankfurt-on-Main, private collection.

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)

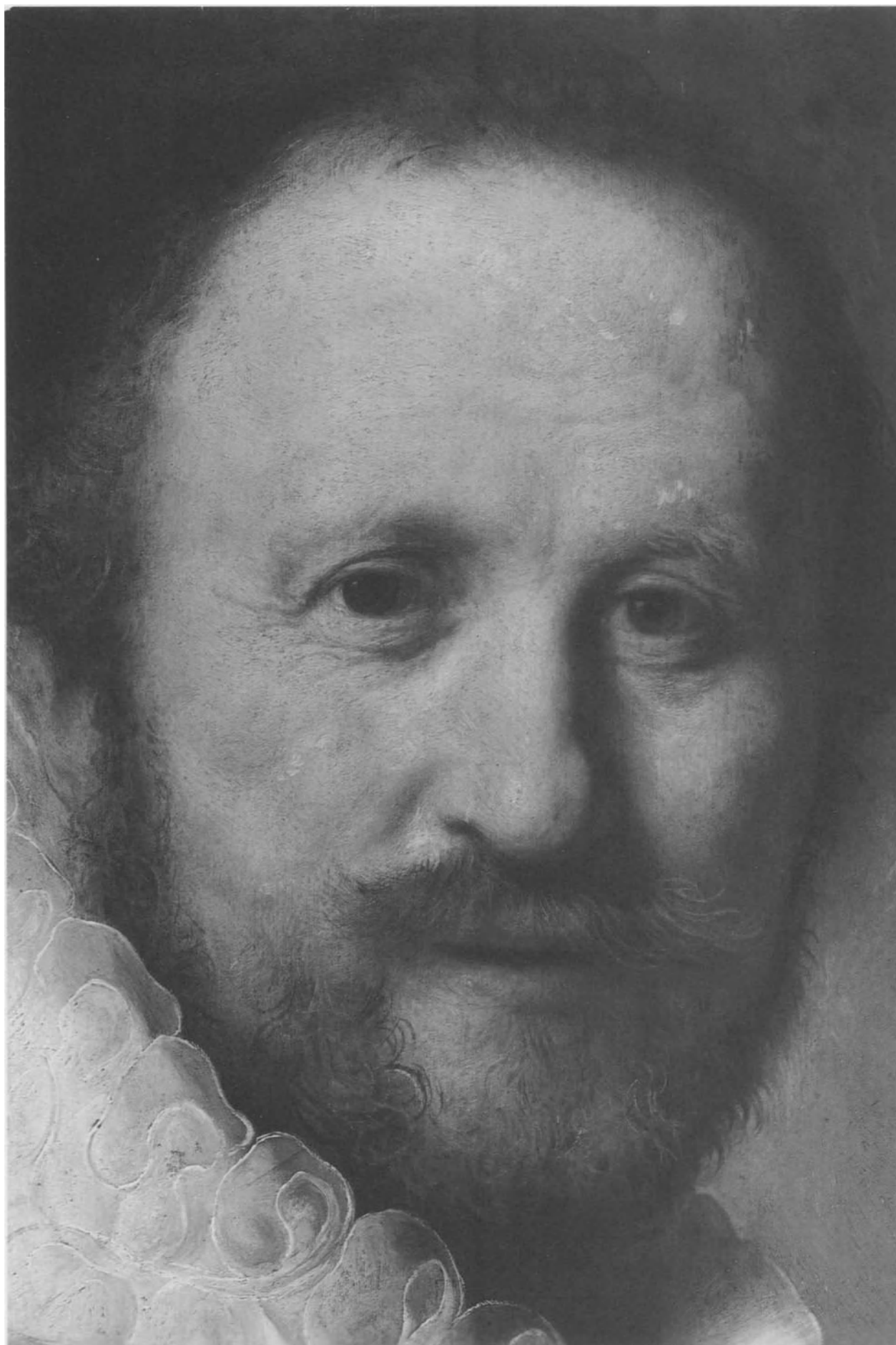




Fig. 4. X-ray

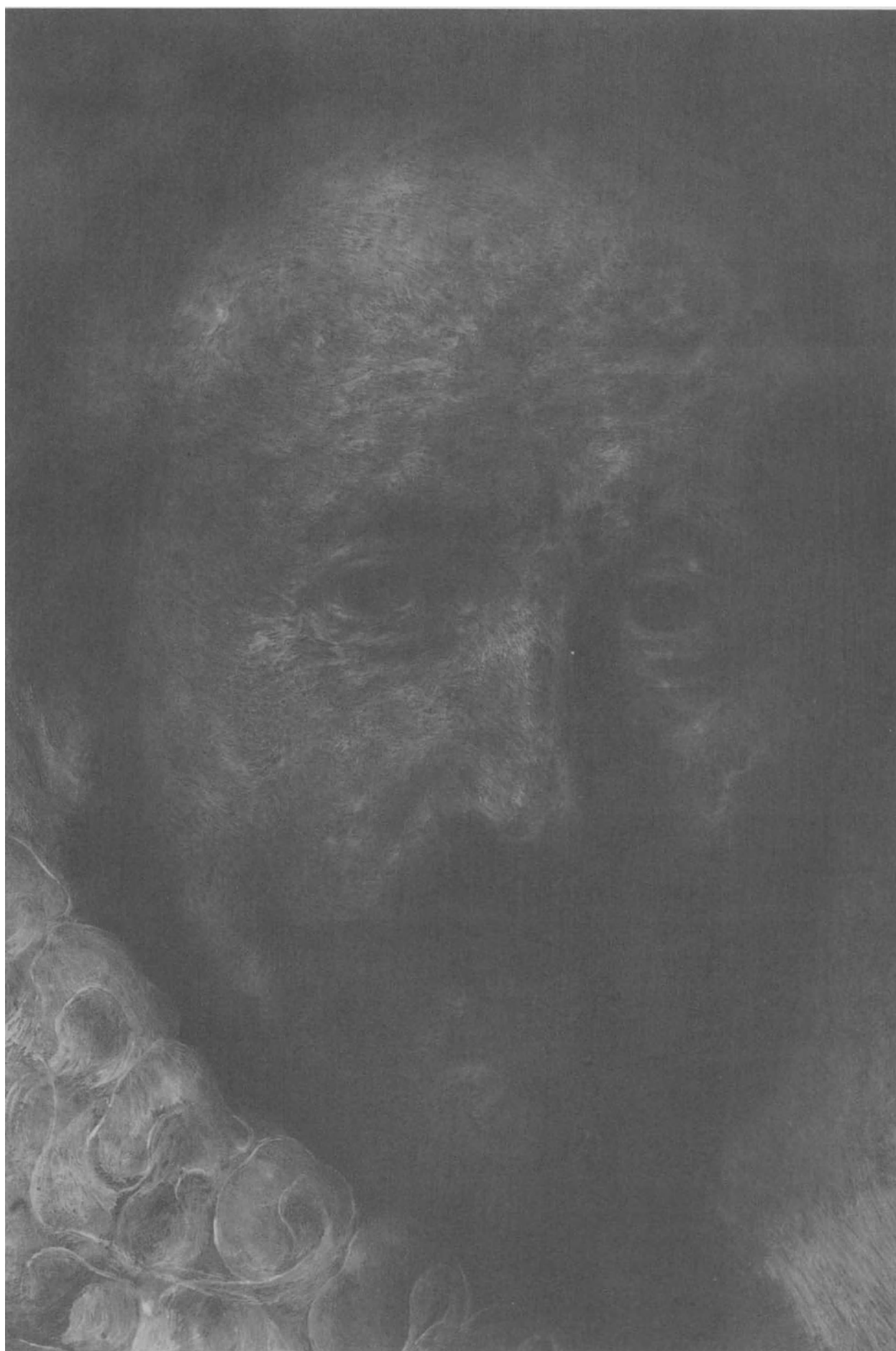




Fig. 5. Detail (1:1)



To judge from a photograph, a not very competent copy of indeterminate age.

2. Canvas 77 × 63 cm; Madrid, Palacio Real (E. Valdivieso, *Pintura Holandesa del siglo XVII en España*, Valladolid 1973, p. 347, fig. 225). Companion piece to the copy mentioned in no. C 80, 7. *Copies*, 2.

3. Pencil on paper, 24.5 × 19 cm, by Hendrik Pothoven (1725–1795). Sale Amsterdam (Mak van Waay), 15ff January 1974, no. 1308; signed. Probably done when the original was sold by the descendants of the sitter, as can be assumed in many cases. Unfortunately the back, on which the identity of the sitter might perhaps be given, could not be examined.

### 8. Provenance

\*– Together with the companion piece no. C 80, coll. Gaillard de Gagny, sale Paris 29ff March 1762 (Lugt 1206), no. 11: 'Deux Portraits, homme et femme, à mi-corps, & vus de trois-quarts assis dans des fauteuils. L'homme porte ses cheveux & sa barbe; il a au col une fraise; son habit est noir, relevé en broderie; une de ses mains est gantée. La femme a sur sa tête une toque et une fraise au col; elle tient d'une main des gants. Ces Tableaux quoique très finis, laissent appercevoir une liberté de pinceau qui les fait estimer être de Rembrandt, les carnations fraîches et le bel accord, en augmentant le mérite. Ils sont peints sur bois et portent chacun 33 pouces de haut, sur 25 pouces de large [= 89.1 × 67.5 cm]' (300 livres to Colins).

\*– Coll. Lebrun, sale Paris 21ff September 1774 (Lugt 2325), no. 46: 'Rembrandt van Rhyn. Deux autres tableaux du même Rembrandt, & qui ont aussi beaucoup de mérite, peints

sur bois, hauteur 2 pieds 9 pouces, largeur 2 pieds 1 pouce [= 89.1 × 67.5 cm]. L'un représente un homme assis, la tête découverte, une fraise au col; il a une main gantée. L'autre fait voir une femme assise, en corset orné de broderie d'or, des gants dans sa main gauche.' (2951 livres).

– Acquired, under Emperor Josef II, for the imperial collection, Vienna; see Christian von Mechel, *Verzeichnis der Gemälde der kaiserlich königlichen Bilder Gallerie in Wien*, Vienna 1783, p. 89 nos. 23 and 24: 'Zwei Portraite. Das erste eine vornehme Frau von mittlerem Alter, in einem Sessel sitzend, mit einer übergeschlagenen Spitzenhaube, dickem steifem Halskröse, in reicher Kleidung; Sie hält in der linken Hand ihre Handschuhe. Das andere ein ansehnlicher Mann in einem braunen geblühten Kleide und schwarzen Ueberrock, mit einem krausen Kröse um den Hals, der mit der rechten Hand die Gebehrde eines Redenden macht. Auf Holz. 2 Fuss 10 Zoll hoch, 2 Fuss 2 Zoll breit [= 89.5 × 68.5 cm]. Halbe Figuren. Lebensgrösse.'

### 9. Summary

The handling of light values and plasticity, and the concentration of attention on the vital parts of the figure, are highly characteristic of Rembrandt's portraits from the early 1630s. There is thus no reason, despite the absence of a signature, to doubt the attribution to Rembrandt. The whole figure seems to have been moved across to the right during the execution, and the righthand outline greatly

simplified. The pendant (no. C 80) is by a different hand. The liveliness of pose and gesture that typify the composition is borrowed from a usage more common in group than in single portraits.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 Cf. J. Bauch and D. Eckstein, 'Woodbiological investigations on panels of Rembrandt paintings', *Wood Science and Technology* 15 (1981), pp. 251–263, esp. 254.

**A 46 The apostle Peter**

STOCKHOLM, NATIONALMUSEUM, CAT. NO. 1349

1632

HDG 181; BR. 609; BAUCH 139; GERSON –

Fig. 1. Canvas 81.3 × 66.2 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



### 1. Summarized opinion

A moderately to reasonably well preserved painting, signed and dated 1632, with sufficient similarity to Rembrandt's work to be considered an authentic work from that year.

### 2. Description of subject

The figure, dressed in a brown cloak and a dark grey undergarment, is seen three-quarter length, with the body turned slightly to the left and the head a little to the right. His left hand, clasping a key, is held in front of his chest, while in the right he grips a staff. The light falls from the upper left, mainly onto the wrinkled head with its grey hair and full beard, onto his left hand, and onto his left shoulder over which the cloak is draped in heavy folds. The remainder of the figure is lost in shadow and half-shadows, and the background is neutral.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in February 1969 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good artificial light and ultraviolet light and in the frame. X-ray films by the museum, covering the whole of the painting, were available and a print of these was received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 81.3 × 66.2 cm measured along the stretcher. Single piece. Cusping of the threads is plainly visible on both sides, but hardly at all at top and bottom. The statement in the museum catalogue<sup>1</sup> that the painting has been transferred from panel to canvas is not, according to a letter from the Nationalmuseum dated 22 July 1969, based on any documentary evidence, and must very probably be looked on as incorrect (see 4. *Comments* below).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: The data are obtained from a reduced print of the whole radiograph and a contact print from one X-ray film. On the left the cusping has a pitch of *c.* 10 cm, and extends some 12.5 cm into the canvas. On the right it is again *c.* 10 cm, but stretches about 14 cm inwards. At the top and bottom, cusping is so vague that it cannot be measured. This is possibly secondary cusping, and the canvas may have been taken from a taller piece of prepared canvas. Threadcount: 13.1 vertical threads/cm (12–13.25), 13 horizontal threads/cm (12–14.5). The yarn quality appears identical in both directions, and the threads present similar, longer and shorter thickenings. The warp direction is very probably vertical, as the vertical threads have a more even density. The original strip-width may have been 1 ell.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Not observed.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: It is hard to tell precisely to what extent wear and overpainting have affected the appearance of the painting. The paint surface presents numerous retouches and a few obtrusive overpaintings, though these are not such as seriously to interfere with an overall assessment. The shadow side of the face has been overpainted with somewhat translucent paint, and there are scattered retouches in the beard. The dark accents at the corners of the eyes are probably also not original. The cloak shows darkened retouches here and there, as at

the righthand outline. The craquelure has been filled in with paint, especially in the background. There is a restored damage by the shoulder on the right, where the contour of the cloak bends downwards. To the left of and just in Peter's right hand restoration of another damage has marred its present appearance. Touched-up damages and paint losses can be seen along the bottom edge of the canvas. The overpaintings and restorations show up more or less dark under an ultraviolet lamp, and the damages and paint losses appear as dark patches in the X-ray. Craquelure: the craquelure visible over the whole surface varies greatly in form and size from one area to another. The background to the left of the figure has cracks in a horizontal and vertical pattern, while elsewhere the craquelure is irregular.

DESCRIPTION: The background is painted evenly, the tonal value running from a fairly dark grey-brown at the top to a lighter tint at the bottom, where the paint is comparatively more thickly applied and the brushstroke more plainly apparent; at the far left at the bottom this is even quite pronounced.

The head is painted quite thickly; the surface shows a varied handling of the paint, but the brushstrokes are not easy to follow. The face has in general a fairly ruddy tint, with occasionally a little yellow. A rather dark red is used in the wrinkles of the forehead and in the eye-sockets and left nostril. The eyes are painted with an easy brushstroke, delimited in a very summary though most effective fashion. The iris and pupil of the eye on the left are dark grey, and run one into the other; there is no catchlight in this or the other eye. The white of the eye is done in a greyish paint, and the right corner of the eye is marked with a touch of rather bright red. The same red has been used for a dab on the left above the eye, and for tiny dots near the lefthand corner of the eye just into the white. The eye on the right is painted in the same way, but without the accents in red. The heavy touches suggesting shadow in both inner corners of the eyes, on either side of the bridge of the nose, must most probably be considered to be subsequent additions. The bushy eyebrows are painted boldly in greys, with yellowish and brown strokes some of which extend over the lighter area above the eye.

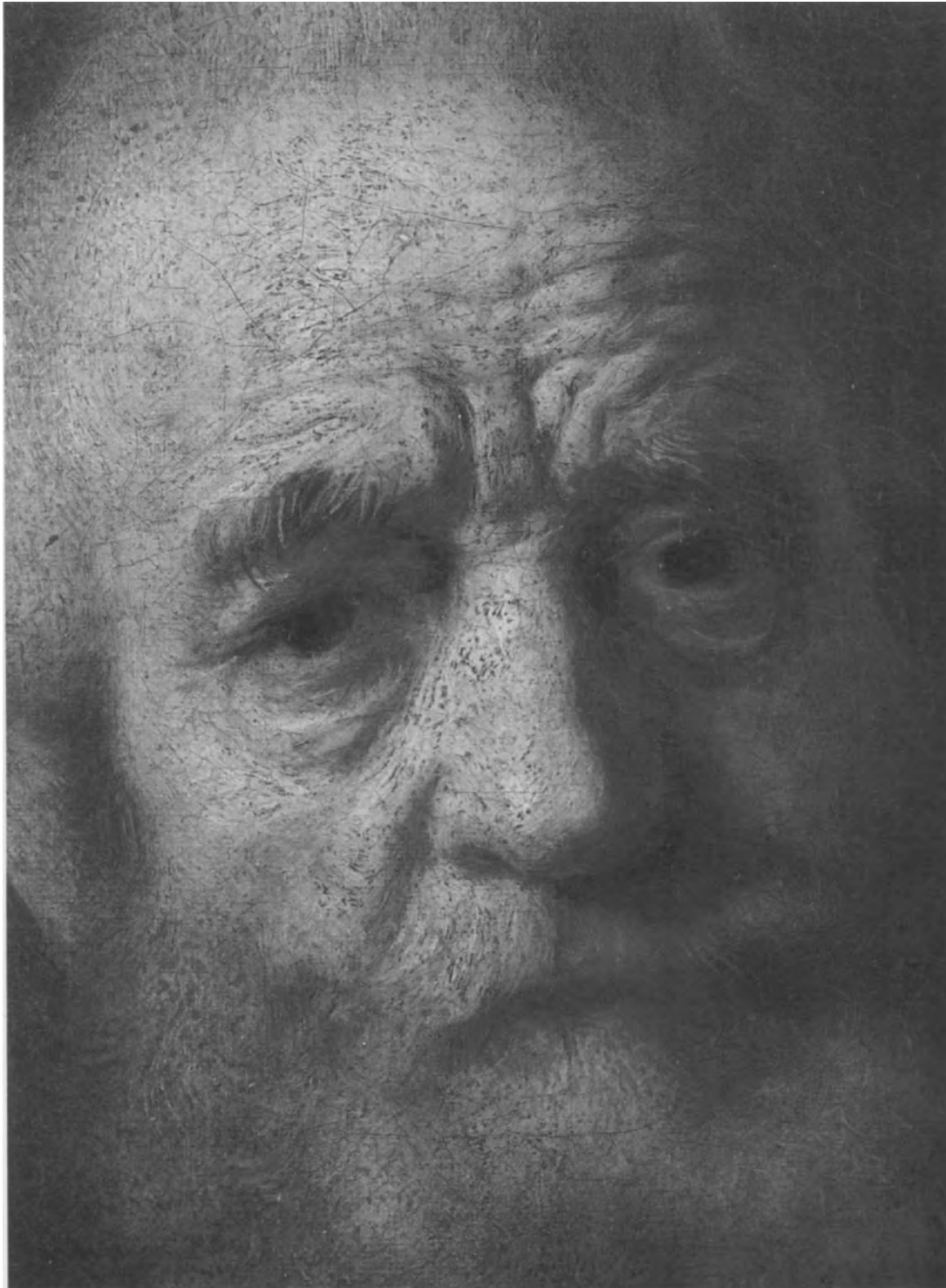
In the shadow side of the head, which is difficult to assess because of overpainting, the paint is mostly an ochrish yellow, applied quite thickly. The shadows in the lit part of the face are painted fairly thickly, with an opaque paint.

The mouth is indicated vaguely, with a little red, the mouth-line shown summarily but lending this area an effective suggestion of depth. The hair, moustache and beard are executed in much the same manner; the hairs are worked up in the lit parts with fine strokes of grey and ochrish grey. Beside the ear on the left the hair is a dark grey, and possibly there is an overpainting at this point. The ear itself is drawn very roughly in a pink flesh tone, with scarcely any suggestion of form.

The hand holding the key is painted with short, clearly distinguishable strokes; the flesh colour shows little variation, but the sparingly applied gradations of light still provide a plastic form. The key is done with bold strokes of grey, with heavily applied white highlights. The hand in shadow, grasping the staff, is set down in brownish tints, with an opaque pinkish grey for the lighter tones; the fingers are indicated with distinct lines of shadow in grey. The fact that there has been a damage next to and in the hand prompts the suspicion that when this was restored the outlines of the hand and fingers were not left undisturbed, and that the overall appearance of the hand has suffered as a result.

The cloak is done in varying shades of brown. The brush-

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)





stroke, which is visible throughout, mostly follows the folds but is sometimes at right angles to them.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### X-Rays

The structure of the canvas is everywhere apparent in the X-ray image: the cusping at the right- and lefthand sides can be clearly seen as wavy lines, and slight curves are also seen at the top and bottom. The damages at the shoulder on the right and in and beside the lower hand and along the edges show up as dark patches.

The head offers a pronounced image of light and dark areas that corresponds on the whole to what the paint surface leads one to expect. A dark and notchlike edge inside the outline of the beard must be interpreted as a locally thinner application of the grey of the beard, and not as signs of its shape being altered, since the lobe of beard that projects well out by the cheekbone on the right appears to have had a reserve left for it in the background. The line of the shoulder on the left very largely matches the image seen today at the paint surface, but shows a slightly narrower reserve above the elbow. On the right the shoulder-line, at the point where the bulky form of the cloak is draped over the shoulder, once ran rather lower down in a gently downward-curving line. The damage which in the present paint surface comes just inside the shoulder-line appears in the X-ray as a dark patch entirely outside the shoulder, in the background. Further down, the outline of the cloak has been modified by being extended over the paint of the background. The background appears light above the shoulder on the right, with clearly visible brushwork. Lower down, too, the background on both right and left exhibit more radioabsorbency than one might expect from the present dark colour; this can probably be explained by the paint being more thickly applied at these points.

#### Signature

In the right background level with the shoulder, very vaguely seen in grey <RHL (in monogram) [van] Ry[n]/1632>. The writing, in so far as it is visible, matches that of other signatures from 1632, and there is no reason to doubt its authenticity. The fact that the painting was looked on in the 19th century as a Ribera or of the Italian school (see *Provenance*) may indicate that the signature was by then already vague and perhaps hidden under a heavy layer of varnish.

#### Varnish

A badly yellowed layer of varnish.

#### 4. Comments

Although in the quality of performance no. A 46 is in almost every respect inferior to any comparable painting such as the *Man in oriental dress* of 1632 in New York (no. A 48), there are nonetheless enough resemblances – with that painting in particular – to make an attribution to Rembrandt reasonable (in line with the vestigial signature and date, which would seem to be authentic); this is taking account of the fact that the present state of the painting, with its yellowed varnish and overpaintings and retouches, mars the overall effect of the picture.

The flesh areas have a logical and powerful structure, and the distribution of light and shade shows

a mastery of modelling. The shadow areas, unlike those in the *Man in oriental dress*, do not seem to be translucent. The structure of the eyes is similar, with no clear outlines and a deftly suggested form. The use of red accents, too, appears in a similar way in the head of the *Man in oriental dress*, as does the way the mouth and mouth-line have been given a strong suggestion of plasticity by summary means. The lit hand is, in its manner of painting and massive, fleshy appearance, comparable to some extent with the hand in the *Portrait of a man trimming his quill* in Kassel (no. A 54), which dates from 1632, the hand in shadow shows some similarity with the shadowed hand in the *Portrait of Joris de Caullery* of 1632 in San Francisco (no. A 53). It is, however, especially the way the lighting is arranged that prompts a comparison with this latter portrait and the *Man in oriental dress*; for while the turn of the body in no. A 46 differs from that in these two paintings, the way the lower part and left half of the figures are lost in shadow, with one shoulder and head catching the light, is the same. The cloak and background, though nowhere painted with any great imagination, do nevertheless present an image that is not untypical of Rembrandt, in the supple folds and contours of the cloak and in the gradual change of light and the brushwork in the lighter areas of the background. The reserve left for the figure was, to judge from the X-ray, smaller than its final shape. This feature, familiar from many autograph paintings by Rembrandt, confirms the impression gained from the paint surface that no. A 46 must be considered an original Rembrandt and not, as Gerson believed<sup>2</sup>, a copy.

The craquelure in some places exhibits a vertical and horizontal pattern. This craquelure effect, which is somewhat unusual for a canvas, may have prompted the assumption that the painting has been transferred from panel to canvas<sup>1</sup>. The X-rays however show the very clear imprint of a canvas structure in the ground. If the painting had originally been on wood, the imprint of the grain structure would have remained visible in the X-ray, and even if the panel had been entirely removed such a perfect image of the canvas, with its marked cusping, could never have come about. Moreover one would, in the case of a panel, expect there to be transparent areas with a yellowish ground showing through.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

Fig. 4. Detail (1:1)



## 7. Copies

1. Canvas 75 × 62 cm, Rotterdam, Museum Boymans van Beuningen, cat. 1907, no. 256. It reproduces the original quite faithfully and seems to render the head in a better condition than it is in today. It is not easy to estimate the date of this copy.
2. Canvas, measurements unknown, Bankeryd (Sweden), coll. Mr Erik Engström. Known to us only through a photograph.

## 8. Provenance

- According to tradition, bought by Carl van Cracow in Amsterdam in 1646<sup>1,3</sup>. This probably means Carel Carelsz. van Cracau(w) or Cracou, agent of the Admiralty of Holland at Helsingör and Resident (envoy) of the States-General to the Danish court (cf. R. Fritz in: *O.H.* 85 (1970), p. 132 and R. E. O. Ekkart, *Johannes Cornelisz. Verspronck*, Haarlem 1979, pp. 123–124).
- Coll. M. Durell<sup>1</sup>.
- Coll. Th. Carlheim-Gyllensköld, Stockholm (as Ribera)<sup>3</sup>.
- Bought in 1881 by the Nationalmuseum, as by an unknown Italian artist<sup>3</sup>.

## 9. Summary

The condition of no. A 46 makes assessment somewhat difficult, but not impossible. The condition to some extent mars the appearance of the painting, but even discounting this the quality of execution is definitely inferior to that of a comparable painting such as the New York *Man in oriental dress* of 1632 (no. A 48). There are however sufficient features, both of interpretation and of execution, to indicate so much kinship with other works from 1632 that it can, in line with the vestigial signature and date, be regarded as an original work from 1632. These include the way the figure is placed in the picture area, the turn of the body and the associated lighting effects, the lively contours and the treatment of the face and eyes. The method of working, including the corrections deducible from the X-ray image, makes it impossible to look on the painting as a copy (as has been done).

## REFERENCES

- 1 Catalogue Stockholm Nationalmuseum, *Äldre utländska målningar och skulpturer*, 1958, p. 164 no. 1349.
- 2 Br.-Gerson 609, p. 613.
- 3 HdG 181.

HDG 201; BR. 464; BAUCH 100; GERSON 62

Fig. 1. Panel 62.2 × 77 cm



### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved and authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1632.

### 2. Description of subject

The scene is based on the story in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (II, 833–875).

On the left Jupiter, in the guise of a white bull, dashes into the water with Europa seated on his back and (as Ovid's text describes) holding on to one horn with her right hand and gripping the nape of his neck with the other. On a sloping, sandy bank – where a few plants, including a thistle, an iris, some reeds and burs, are growing – three of her female companions display clearly differing emotions of fright, alarm and despair. Further up the bank is an open coach with four horses, from which a negro coachman, holding a whip and reins, watches the event. Further back still there is a clump of trees. Towards the left a vista opens over a meadow surrounded by trees, with a cow in the distance. Further off, to the left, the city of Tyre lies alongside the water, with ships in

the harbour and a crane atop an unfinished tower structure. The light falls from the left onto the main figures, and leaves the knot of trees, the foreground vegetation and the distant view in semi-darkness.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 1 September 1972 (J. B., P. v. Th.) in good daylight and in the frame, with the occasional use of a microscope.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain horizontal, 62.2 × 77 cm. Single plank. The grain widens out considerably towards the bottom (up to distances of about 1 cm). There is a small knot on the left, below the root of the bull's foreleg. A horizontal crack runs from the righthand side at about halfway up the panel and reaches in towards the upper edge of the righthand wheel of the coach, and there is a second, shorter, crack close to the bottom edge. The back of the panel is slightly planed

Fig. 2. Detail (1:1)



and has been cradled, as a result of which the presence of bevelling cannot be ascertained.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light colour can be glimpsed in open brushstrokes in the sky and in thin patches at the lefthand edge of the area of foliage.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: So far as can be seen through the thick layer of varnish, the condition is generally very good. There are retouches along the nose of the bull, on the knot in the panel below the root of his foreleg, above the rear pair of horses, along the two cracks and along the edges. Some wear can be seen in Europa's face, and possibly also in that of her com-

panion with the arms raised. Craquelure: there are a few fine cracks in the white of the bull and in that of the cloak of the seated woman. A few have also appeared in the water where a light blue (below the bull's tail) and a broken white (the reflection of the clothing of the seated woman) were evidently placed on top of paint that was not fully dry.

DESCRIPTION: There are wide differences in the handling of paint: the sky is brushed broadly in paint of varying opacity; the areas of trees and plants are shown with thicker dabs and short strokes, and occasionally longer strokes; the middle ground is quite thin in the figures and horses, and thicker in the darkest passages; the figures in the light in the foreground are thicker and more colourful; and the water is done with thin, freer strokes and with thicker, bright accents of colour in the reflections. Generally speaking, the paint layer is fairly opaque.

The clouds above the distant view are brushed with thin



Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)





Fig. 4. Detail (1:1.5)



greys, merging upwards into a light grey-blue in which the ground can be seen through the broad scratchy brushstrokes; a more vivid blue has been used towards the top, and to the right it shades into a dark grey over the top of which the foliage has been painted.

In the distance the city has been depicted summarily in a liver-coloured grey-brown, with grey highlights and brown shadows and with a trace of green on a dome and below it.

The trees and the lower righthand corner are set down in a very dark grey-brown, with some brown-green in the trunks and tiny dabs and strokes of the brush in lighter colours to indicate the leaves; the bur leaves are modelled in green-brown with light green accents and yellow showing the veins. The coach wheels and parasol, drawn sketchily in brown, are thinner, and the body of the coach is in brown with yellow highlights. The negro coachman is painted succinctly in brown with black accents and dark grey in the clothing; the horses are modelled in somewhat thicker greys, with blue harness.

The woman to the rear provides the transition to the lit areas, and is depicted effectively using half-tints with small accents in blue and a light-brown ochre. The young woman

sitting with her arms raised in despair shows flesh areas that are somewhat unsharp (possibly they are slightly worn), and her freely-brushed whitish undergarment has light blue reflections of light from the light-blue overgarment, which is modelled with areas of sheen; the light-blue and pinkish-red flowers and leaves lying in her lap are shown with small dots of thick paint. The head of the young standing woman has a carefully modelled profile; she wears a dark brick-red overgarment with an orange-brown sheen and highlights of ochre yellow and thick light yellow at the hem. The latter are repeated in the ochre-yellow undergarment, which also has touches of green-blue in the wide hanging sleeve. The plants growing in the sandy bank (done in a fairly thick light brown) are painted in greens with purplish-red blossoms and there is a single blue iris (level with the face of the standing woman). Towards the right the bank becomes a thickly-painted grey, with the shadow cast by the standing figure starting narrow and reddish-brown and then widening out as a darker grey-brown. To the left the bank continues as a mossy green, with mainly fine brushstrokes, and then in quite thick browns indicating vegetation. To the right of this is the greenish grey-brown of a far-off meadow with a small cow, set off against the city by the

thickly-painted cool green and blue-green of a repoussoir of trees and shrubbery.

The bull is painted in a broken white, with a thick highlight along the lefthand outline and touches of ochre brown to indicate folds in the skin; the shadow area on the right is in a thin grey. Europa's dark red overgarment is painted with a free brushwork, and the undergarment is done in light brown with small lines of brown-grey and fine, small highlights in ochre-yellow and light yellow and, on the left, a small streak of light blue. Small, thick dots of light yellow, white and a little blue and carmine red provide a suggestion of embroidery.

The reflection of the city buildings in the water is painted with fine, horizontal lines of grey; the strokes become broader lower down, with clear brushmarks, in brown-grey and a thicker grey. Freely painted touches of blue-grey and grey are used to indicate the waves in the foreground, with a thick white for the foam. The reflection of the bull and Europa is suggested in off-white, a little light yellow and reddish-brown, in which there are streaks of grey; below the animal's tail there are a few thick dabs of light blue. The reflection of the young woman seated on the bank is indicated in grey-blue, off-white and a light grey-brown (for the head).

At the extreme right some change may have been made in the design; this might be deduced from a curved line visible in relief and cutting through the rear wheel of the coach. On the left, along the bull's head, an autograph retouch (reinforced by subsequent retouching) fills in a reserve that was presumably initially made too large.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### X-Rays

None.

#### Signature

In a light colour, on a brown stone to the right of the standing woman <RHL (in monogram) van/Ryn.1632>. It is very precisely written, matching the character of the painting; the letters of the *van* are large relative to the rest. There is no reason to doubt the signature's authenticity.

#### Varnish

A thick, yellow varnish impairs the overall effect, and makes observation a little difficult.

#### 4. Comments

The painting is marked by a generally careful handling of the paint, which in a few passages such as the waves and the reflections in the water, and in Europa's robe where it flaps in the wind, is nevertheless surprisingly free. Colour is used in fairly great variety yet very economically, and bright tones are employed only in the lit areas. Though the painting is not comparable in all aspects with any of Rembrandt's works from the early 1630s, there are striking partial similarities with some of these. The handling of the drapery and the plants is strongly reminiscent of the *Abduction of Proserpina* (no. A 39) in Berlin, which is datable in 1631, while that of the sky can be seen again in the *Christ in the storm*, dated 1633, in the Gardner Museum in Boston (no. A 68). The young woman standing on the bank is a greatly reduced version of the *Young woman in profile* in

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (enlarged)



Stockholm, which is dated 1632 (no. A 49); the same model, in almost identical attire, recurs in the Ottawa *Young woman at her toilet* of 1632/33 (no. A 64). Since the signature and date moreover make a wholly reliable impression, there can be no doubt as to the authenticity of the work.

Taken as a whole, however, the painting is something of a novelty in Rembrandt's work. Especially when compared to the *Proserpina*, which deals with a similar mythological motif (and shows a similar kind of coach) the landscape is seen to have gained far more independence and to have a three-dimensional, though not entirely logical, construction of its own. The arrangement of this landscape can be described as unusual: the combination of the high-rising wooded area in the righthand half and the open vista with the outline of a city on the left is exceptional both in Rembrandt's work and elsewhere. The diagonal line of the bank links these two elements together, though it does so in a not entirely clear way, as can be seen in particular from the suddenly very small scale of the cow placed in the meadow. The treatment of this middle ground anticipates Rembrandt's later very detailed landscapes, which are often less obviously subordinated to the figures enacting a story; he was to repeat the large repoussoir of trees only in the *Diana with Actaeon and Callisto*, which probably dates from 1634 (no. A 92). One can see, in this latter motif, a distant similarity with Elsheimer that has been pointed out by Rosenberg<sup>1</sup>, or an echo of a Flemish type of landscape of the kind that had become known in particular through the work of Gillis van Coninxloo. But Rembrandt's composition derives its individuality from the lighting, which is concentrated in the plane behind the immediate foreground, and from the sparing use of colour, which offers bright accents only in this same plane. This makes the landscape clearly subordinate to the importance of the theme

being treated, in a way that can be compared with the approach used by rather earlier Dutch artists connected with Elsheimer, such as Jacob Pynas and Moyses van Wttenbroeck.

In his composition Rembrandt was following the illustrations of Ovid current at the time, in particular the type introduced by Bernard Salomon in the Lyon edition of 1557 (copies by Virgil Solis, among others) (see M. D. Henkel, 'Illustrierte Ausgaben von Ovids Metamorphosen im XV., XVI. und XVII. Jahrhundert', *Vorträge der Bibliothek Warburg* 6, Berlin 1930, pp. 58–144, esp. p. 77ff). In accordance with this tradition, there are various motifs that closely match Ovid's text – Europa is looking back, she is holding on to one of the bull's horns with her right hand, and her robe is flapping in the wind. One gets the impression that the artist aimed at differentiating the emotional reactions of the coachman and the three female companions, ranging from amazement and alarm to fright and despair, thus meeting the requirement of a clear and varied rendering of 'affetti', one of the tenets of current artistic theory.

The strange headdress of the young woman seen standing in profile had already been used by Rembrandt in the Amsterdam *Musical allegory* (no. A 7), and recurs in a drawing in Berlin which may depict an actress (Ben. 317).

Like other pictures in Rembrandt's early, smooth and detailed manner (cf. nos. A 16, A 17 and C 13), the *Rape of Europa* was attributed to Jan Lievens by the dealer J. B. P. Lebrun (see: 8. *Provenance*).

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

1. A copy on canvas was already mentioned in the sale of the collection of the Comte de Guiche, Paris 4–7 March 1771 (Lugt 1900), no. 23: 'L'enlèvement d'Europe, copié d'après Rembrandt, sur toile, de 23 pouces de haut, sur 29 de large [= 62.1 × 78.3 cm]'. Coll. Gosse, sale Paris 11ff April 1774 (Lugt 2265), no. 589: 'L'enlèvement d'Europe, peint dans le goût de Rembrandt, sur toile, de 23 pouces de haut, sur 29 de large' (15.1 livres).
2. Canvas 69 × 79 cm, sale Brussels 6–7 December 1938, no. 59 (as Rembrandt).
3. Canvas 91.4 × 123.1 cm, sale London (Christie's) 14 May 1791, no. 38 (as Willem de Poorter). The picture reproduces the subject on a somewhat larger scale and in a narrower frame. It may be identical with paintings mentioned in the following sales: Leiden (Delfos) 19–20 October 1792 (Lugt 4953), no. 2 (as by Vliet in Rembrandt's manner; canvas 36 × 47 inches [= 93.6 × 122.2 cm]); J. van Kerkhoven

collection, Leiden (Delfos) 30 July 1798 (Lugt 5796), no. 91 (as in Rembrandt's manner, panel (!) 36 × 47 inches).

## 8. Provenance

\*– Most probably coll. Jacques Specx (1588/89–1652) of Amsterdam, who was Governor-General of the East Indies from 1629 to 1632 and returned to the Netherlands before July 1633; described in the inventory of his estate on 13 January 1653 as 'Een Europa van Rembrandt'<sup>2</sup>.

– Coll. Comtesse de Verrue, sale Paris 27ff March 1737 (Lugt 470), no. 87: 'L'Enlèvement d'Europe, par Reimbrandt' (611 livres).

\*– Coll. [Duc de Luynes], sale Paris (Paillet, Lebrun) 21 November 1793 (Lugt 5126), no. 18: 'J. Livence. Une composition de cinq figures, sujet de l'enlèvement d'Europe; la droite du Tableau présente une belle masse d'arbres; au-dessus d'un terrain qui borde un rivage, on y remarque un char attelé de quatre chevaux blancs conduits par un homme qui regarde avec étonnement; plus bas sont trois femmes dans la même attitude, regardant s'éloigner leur compagne sur un Taurau blanc. Ce morceau capital de ce Maître est d'un effet harmonieux, & soigneusement terminé. On connoît peu les productions de ce Maître, qui merite d'être placées dans les plus belles collections. Haut. 22 po. sur 29 po. [= 59.4 × 78.3 cm] B[ois].'

– Coll. Duc de Morny; sale Paris 31ff May 1865, no. 70 (9100 francs to Say).

– Coll. Princesse de Broglie née Say, Paris (c. 1909).

– Dealer Thomas Agnew & Sons, London.

– Coll. Leopold Koppel, Berlin.

## 9. Summary

Although in many respects it links up with Rembrandt's work in his final years in Leiden, no. A 47 differs in the important place that the elements of the landscape have in the composition. The significance of the latter is however subordinated, by the handling of light and of colour, to the story taken from Ovid; the composition is plainly related to illustrations of Ovid. Although there are sizeable gaps in the pedigree, it is probable that the painting can be identified with one mentioned as a Rembrandt in the middle of the 17th century.

## REFERENCES

1. J. Rosenberg, *Rembrandt. Life and Work*, London 1964, 2nd edn, p. 15.
2. W. P. Coolhaas, *Het Huis 'De Dubbele Arend'*, Amsterdam 1973, pp. 29–62, esp. 58. Cf. A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare V*, The Hague 1918, p. 1613.

NEW YORK, N.Y., THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, ACC. NO. 20.155.2  
BEQUEST OF WILLIAM K. VANDERBILT 1920

HdG 349; BR. 169; BAUCH 141; GERSON 103

### 1. Summarized opinion

An outstandingly well preserved and characteristic work, reliably signed and dated 1632.

### 2. Description of subject

An old man, wearing a turban, is seen life-size down to the knees. He is standing with the body turned slightly to the right; the head, seen square on, is tilted slightly to the right, and he gazes straight at the viewer. His right hand rests on a stick, while the left arm is hidden beneath a cloak, and to judge from the latter's outline his hand is placed on his hip. The cloak, decorated with flower motifs and other figures and trimmed with fur, hangs open at the front to reveal a tunic and a sash wound round his midriff. The hanging train of the cloak can be seen on the extreme left. A richly-worked shawl is draped over his shoulders; a large gold pendant hangs on his chest. The tall turban is adorned with two jewelled brooches, and a tassel hangs from the one on the right. A large pearl dangles from each earlobe.

The head and lefthand part of the upper body are strongly lit from the top left. The neutral background is lightest at the bottom right, and becomes darker further up.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 30 April 1969 (J. B., B. H.) in good artificial light and in the frame. Sixteen X-ray copy films, together covering the whole picture, were received later.

#### *Support*

**DESCRIPTION:** Canvas, lined, 152.5 × 124 cm (measured along the stretcher). No seam observed, so probably a single piece.  
**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** On the left, bottom and righthand sides there is cusping varying in pitch from 11 to 13 cm, and extending inwards some 13 cm. At the top no regular cusping can be seen, though irregular deformations extend inwards c. 13 cm there as well. Threadcount: 17.7 vertical threads/cm (17–18.5), 16.5 horizontal threads/cm (15–17.5). Because of the greater variation in thread density of the horizontal threads and the more frequent occurrence of thick threads among horizontal ones, it can be assumed that the warp is vertical.

#### *Ground*

**DESCRIPTION:** In the scratchmarks on the left on the chest it is possible to see grey, light brown and yellow-brown. Apart from what is apparently a grey ground, these colours are evidently due to underpainting. The grey of the ground is also exposed at the corner of the eye, and in small patches in the cheek on the left and in the nose.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** Microscope examination of three complete cross-sections carried out by Mrs C. M. Groen showed the ground to consist of two layers, the bottom one consisting of red ochre, the top one of white lead with lumps of black (lamp black), plus some reddish pigment (red ochre or red lead?).

#### *Paint layer*

**CONDITION:** Except for a few scattered retouches, the condition is very good. Craquelure: small cracks are seen over the whole surface, in an irregular pattern of varying size.

**DESCRIPTION:** The background is opaque and painted in a fairly cool grey which becomes lighter towards the bottom

and, especially, towards the bottom right. In an area along the outline of the cloak on the right the paint is lighter and more thickly applied.

The light parts of the head are painted in a warmish flesh colour which appears to have been built up from a pinkish-yellow mid-tone – on the cheek and elsewhere – on top of which have been set touches of light pink for the lightest areas and brownish red for the shadows of the eyepouch and wrinkles. A dark red is used in the deep wrinkles on the forehead above the nose, in the fold of the cheek and at the corner of the lefthand eye.

The lids of the eye on the left are done in dark red, without a sharp outline, with a little black along the upper edge of the eye, and in light pink along the lower edge. The white of the eye is painted in grey, with a little white at the bottom to show the rim of moisture. The iris is grey. The black of the pupil is not given a sharp edge, and merges with the shadow of the eyelid. A tiny white catchlight has been placed at the upper left. The eye on the right is bordered at the top by a small stroke of red and to the right by touches of black. The lower edge is formed by a vaguely-edged touch of pink. The iris is not entirely circular, and the black pupil has a greyish catchlight at the upper left.

The ridge of the nose has a relatively large amount of red in the flesh tint, and no noticeable lights. The shadow side of the nose is done in thinner and somewhat transparent paint in brownish tints, in which heavy lines of brown run along the ridge and wing of the nose. The man's left nostril is also indicated in a dark brown; his right nostril is a fine touch of light red. The shadow side of the face is painted quite thinly, with the eyepouch and cheekbone marked on top of this with dabs of a flesh colour. The mouth is indicated summarily in pink, with the mouth-line in a relatively light and thin brown. The eyebrows, beard and moustache are painted with fine strokes of grey; a trace of ochre-yellow has been used in the moustache, and a little brown and a single touch of red in the beard. The neck is painted with a very thin brown on the side in shadow, with some thick brown and a single touch of red for the folds in the skin.

The turban is executed with firm and mainly long strokes of grey, with white for the highlights. The brooch on the left has catchlights in a whitish yellow and white; the stone in the brooch on the right is dark red, with its gold mounting shown in an ochrish yellow with catchlights in pale yellow. The hanging tassel is painted in grey and black.

The shawl draped round the shoulders shows a greyish base colour (probably the ground) in the lighter areas, and a brownish tone (probably the underpainting) in the darker parts. On top of this long strokes of grey and white have been laid to represent the folds, while the embroidery is shown with small dabs and touches of green-blue and light yellow, with whitish-yellow highlights.

In the light the cloak is painted in light yellow over a brownish yellow, with a few accents in brown; it has a few erratic scratchmarks to emphasize a decorative pattern. In the shadow the cloak is done with fairly broad strokes of brown, with a summary indication of the pattern; on the extreme right a grey is also used. The fur is depicted with short strokes of brown; by the man's right sleeve the colour is a more reddish brown. The train of the cloak at the lower left is predominantly a yellowish brown, and seems to have been painted on top of the background. The tunic and sash are painted loosely in a somewhat transparent brown with a trace of purple.

The hand is done quite flatly in light brown, with strokes of brown for the more shadowed areas and for the lines of shadow along the fingers.

Fig. 1. Canvas 152.5 × 124 cm





Fig. 2. X-ray





Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)

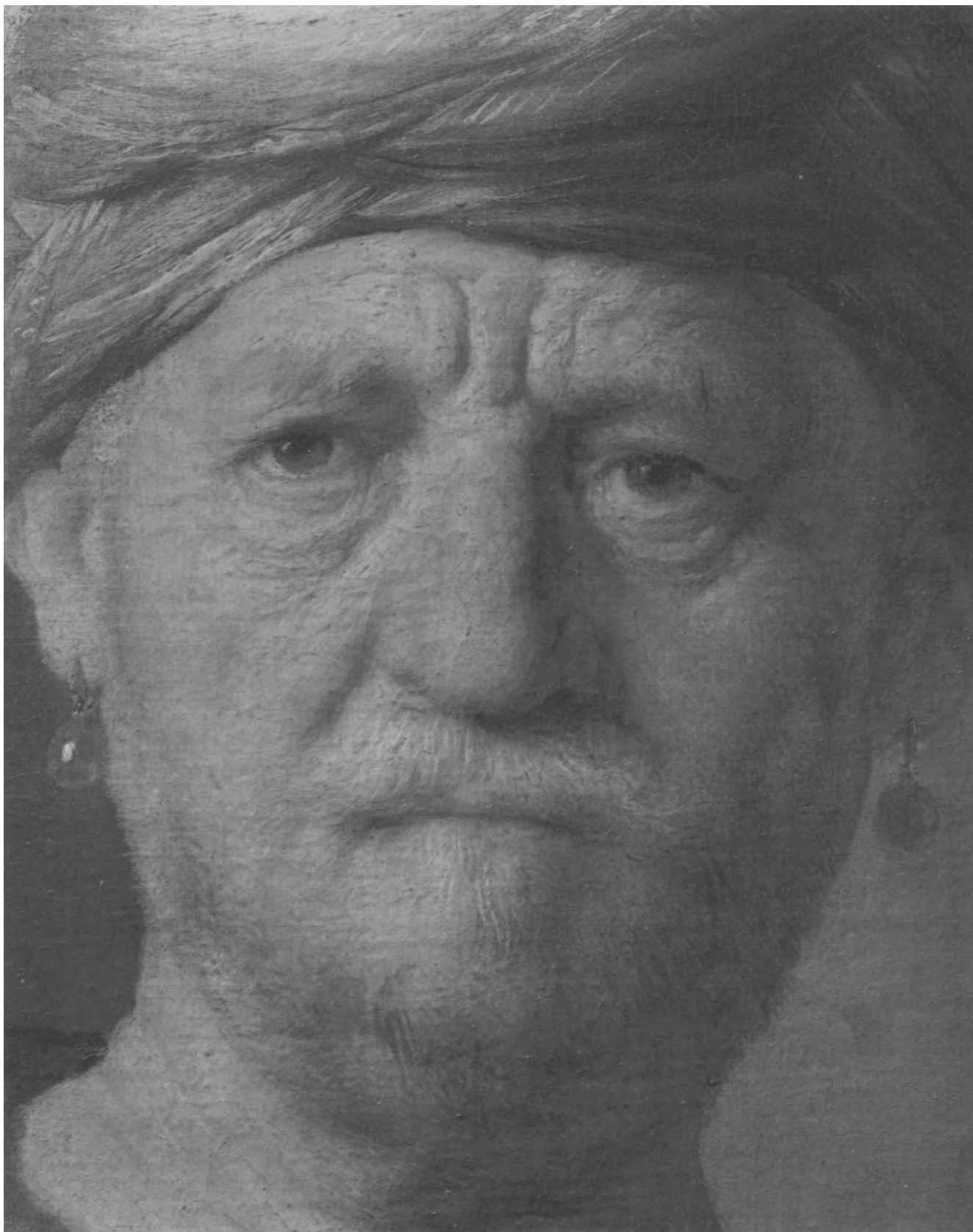


Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1)



**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** Four cross-sections were prepared and examined by Mrs C. M. Groen. One sample was taken from the bottom right in the background, 18.9 cm from the righthand edge and 47 cm from the bottom. On the ground there was a single layer mainly consisting of white lead mixed with a translucent dark brown pigment, some black, translucent red particles and a very little yellow (lead-tin yellow?). A second sample was taken from the lower left background, at 19.5 cm from the bottom edge. On the ground there were two layers, one containing black pigment, some brown and white lead, the other showing white lead, ochre, black and some dark brown pigment (umber, as appears from the presence of manganese). A third sample was taken from the dark paint to the left of the hand; on the ground there were two layers, the first dark brown with various dark pigments (hard to identify) and the other greyish black. A fourth sample from the left below the hand had, on the ground, a single reddish brown layer containing a mixture of a brown pigment (either umber or ochre), large lumps of an organic red pigment, some black and bright red pigment particles, and a little glass (?).

#### *X-Rays*

The X-ray image shows a distribution of light and dark that virtually matches what one expects from examining the paint surface. The brushstrokes in the face are distinct, and show a clear connexion with the shape of the face and of the skin-folds; folds in, for example, the forehead show up dark and were apparently planned from early in the work. The turban, too, shows a configuration of touches of brush in which it is impossible to detect any corrections.

Various reserves in the background paint can be seen along the righthand contour of the figure. Taken in conjunction with the neutron activation autoradiographs these can be interpreted as meaning that in the first lay-in the contour ran further over to the right while curving inwards much more by the leg. The background was thereafter extended – by means of autograph retouching (also apparent at the surface) – so that the contour of the cloak took on its present position and the figure became wider at the level of the legs. That the train was painted over the background at the left is confirmed by the fact that the X-ray shows no reserve left for this.

#### *Signature*

At the extreme lower right, in a light grey <RHL (in monogram). *van Rijn* / 1632>. The light area on which the *a* is placed may indicate a correction. The letters and figures show a markedly squat handwriting and an unusual tendency to the use of serifs; they have however been written with such assurance as to leave little doubt about their authenticity.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

No. A 48 is typified by an extremely sober use of colour and a striking handling of light. Only a small area of the figure itself is lit – the head and part of the upper trunk. The fact that the visible forearm and the hand stretched forward and holding the stick are in shadow helps to bring about the suggestion that they stand out from the body. We find the same use of light and shade in the San Francisco *Portrait of Joris de Caullery*, also from 1632 (no. A 53). Though the background is undefined, it plays an important part in the three-dimensional effect: a contrast with the figure is constantly aimed at, and is carried through consistently, even in details like the ear-rings. This produces a monumental effect, with the lively contours predominating over internal detail which is dealt with in a very summary fashion. Only in the head and turban is there any real attention to detail, and consequently these are the areas to which the viewer's attention is attracted. The brushwork in these areas is powerful and direct, and everywhere helps to enhance the suggestion of plasticity. The way the more or less linear elements of the face have been dealt with is typical of Rembrandt's working technique in the early 1630s: touches of paint are time and again combined to suggest the relief of the skin. The manner of painting in the components far removed from the centre of interest ranges from broad, in the hand, to very broad, in the shadowed parts of the clothing. The slightly more heavily painted light zone along the righthand outline of the cloak – which has probably become more strongly marked over the years – indicates a correction made to this contour at a late stage in the painting. This is something we frequently encounter in Rembrandt's work, e.g. in the *Artist in oriental costume* of 1631 in the Petit Palais, Paris (no. A 40) and the *Portrait of Jacques de Gheyn* of 1632 in Dulwich College, London (no. A 56). On the grounds of these numerous stylistic and technical similarities with Rembrandt's work, and of the reliable signature and date, no. A 48 must be seen as an autograph and characteristic work dating from 1632.

In its design no. A 48 can be compared with the *Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts* of 1631 in the Frick Collection in New York (no. A 43) and, especially, with the San Francisco *Portrait of Joris de Caullery* of 1632 (no. A 53). It has, however, a more monumental feel to it, as a result of the rather larger format and of the pose of the subject, in which the cloak stretching out wide to the right is an important element. It

Fig. 5. J. Lievens, *A man in oriental dress*. Potsdam, Sanssouci

shares with the *Portrait of Joris de Caullery* the off-centre placing and attitude of the figure, the distribution of light and the part played in this by the background. Yet this picture of an imaginary figure differs from all the commissioned portraits just mentioned by its bolder use of the lighting, by the looser handling of the brush (even in the face), and by a more generous use of reds and browns in the flesh areas.

The depiction of figures in oriental garb was by no means uncommon in the 17th century. Constantijn Huygens, in his autobiography from around 1630, mentions a painting by Jan Lievens: 'Est apud Principem meum Turcici quasi Ducis effigies, ad Batavi cuiusdam caput expressa . . .' (There is, in my Prince's house, a portrait of a so-called Turkish potentate, done from the head of some Dutchman or other . . .) (J. A. Worp in: *O.H.* 9, 1891, pp. 106–136, esp. p. 128). This painting is still known today (in the Gemäldegalerie Sanssouci, Potsdam, cat. 1930 no. 62; Schneider no. 152, fig. 15; our fig. 5) and shows a figure that in the pose and dress closely resembles no. A48. Schneider comments (*op. cit.*, p. 304) that the interest in eastern types may have been awoken by the mission sent by Shah Abbas I of Persia, which stayed in The Hague from 9 February 1626 until 12

March 1627, and appeared in national costume all over the country. Whether this was in fact the case is open to doubt. At all events, the figure of the Moorish King in a print (an anonymous copy after Vorsterman) after Rubens' *Adoration of the Magi* in Lyon provided the immediate prototype for Lievens' painting: the clothing and pose, with the elbows out wide and thumbs tucked in the sash, resembles this picture so closely that one can assume a direct borrowing. This print must also have been known to Rembrandt; the connexion with the composition of his *David with the head of Goliath before Saul* of 1627 in Basle (no. A9), and with the pose and dress of the figure in the *Artist in oriental costume*, probably from 1631, in the Petit Palais, Paris (no. A40), has already been mentioned in discussing those works. It must be commented that Rembrandt invariably (as in no. A48) handled Rubens' prototype more freely than did Lievens, and added his own lighting effect and monumental feeling.

The work by Lievens is described in inventories of the castle at Honselaarsdijk of 1694–1702 as 'the Great Turk', and in that of 1707–1719 as 'Sultan Soliman by Rembrandt' (S. W. A. Drossaers and Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer, *Inventarissen van de inboedels . . . van de Oranjes I*, The Hague 1974, p. 456 no. 26, p. 530 no. 177). In connexion with Rembrandt, too, we find mentions in the 17th century of paintings of this kind; in the inventory of Lambert Jacobsz. of Leeuwarden from 1637 there was among the copies after Rembrandt 'een schone Jonge turcksche prince' (a fine young Turkish prince) and ' . . . een cleine oostersche vrouwen troni . . . ' (a small *tronie* of an eastern woman . . .) (H. L. Straat in: *De vrije Fries* 28, 1925, pp. 72–73, nos. 14 and 20), and in the inventory of the widow Anna Blommerts of Amsterdam from 1646 we find 'een turcx tronie van Rembrant gedaen' (a Turkish *tronie* done by Rembrandt) (*HdG Urk.*, no. 108; Strauss *Doc.*, 1646/7).

Where the nature of the picture seen in no. A48 is concerned we can, since Huygens probably got his information directly from Lievens, assume that what he says is correct and that Lievens – and presumably Rembrandt as well – had used a Dutch model for painting his Turkish figures. The model used by Rembrandt can be recognized in a number of works by Jacob Adriaensz. Backer from the early 1630s (cf. K. Bauch, *Jacob Adriaensz. Backer*, Berlin 1926, paintings nos. 27–30, 57, drawing no. 79), where he appears in profile. There must have been a certain amount of latitude in the interpretation of Turkish figures of this kind, in view of the title given to the same painting by Huygens of a Turkish potentate and, in the inventories of Honselaarsdijk

from around 1700, that of the 'great Turk' alias Sultan Soliman the Great.

On the possibility that this painting may have been owned by Marten Looten, whose portrait was painted by Rembrandt in the same year, see our comments on no. A 52.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

1. Canvas (?), dimensions unknown, previously coll. Khanenko, Kiev. Shows the figure half-length (cf. *Les anciennes écoles de peinture dans les palais et collections privées russes représentées à l'exposition organisée à St. Pétersbourg en 1909 . . .*, Brussels 1910, p. 83 with illus. as 'Rembrandt. Portrait de son père').

#### 8. Provenance

\*— Possibly identical with 'Een Turkse Vorst of primo Vizier, door Rembrant konstig en kragtig geschildert' (A Turkish prince or First Vizier, painted skilfully and powerfully by Rembrandt), coll. Govert Looten, sale Amsterdam 31 March 1729 (Lugt 381), no. 7 (71.0 [guilders]) (Hoet I, p. 333).  
 — Coll. Paul Methuen, Corsham Court, Wiltshire (as 'Portrait of a Turk' in: R. and J. D. Dodsley, *London and its environs described* III, 1761, p. 85).  
 — Coll. King Willem II of the Netherlands, sale The Hague 12 August 1850, no. 91 (4500 guilders to Nieuwenhuys).  
 — Coll. Tomline, Orwell Park.  
 — Dealer Wertheimer, London.  
 — Coll. McKay Twombly, New York.  
 — Coll. W. K. Vanderbilt, New York, gift to the museum in 1920.

#### 9. Summary

In its arrangement and handling of light the painting shows a clear affinity to the lifesize and knee-length portraits of the years 1631–1632. This imaginary figure however has an even more monumental character and is depicted with a bolder use of the brush. The former comes not only from the larger format, but in particular from a fully exploited contrast effect between the figure and the background which stresses the figure's outline, and from a lighting that suggests depth. The use made of colour is very subdued. Features typical of this period are the billowing, lively outline, and the contrast between the detailed execution of the light areas and the broad definition in the shadow areas. The qualities just mentioned make an attribution to Rembrandt convincing, and this is confirmed by the confidence-inspiring signature and date.

HDG 698; BR. 85; BAUCH 455; GERSON 118

Fig. 1. Canvas 72.5 × 54.8 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray





### 1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved and authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1632.

### 2. Description of subject

A young woman with reddish-blond hair is shown in left profile, hip-length, against a dark background which lightens towards the right. She is wearing a dark grey cloak, decorated with gold embroidery and large jewels, over a low-cut dark red dress which is fur-trimmed at the sleeve. A white pleated shirt is worn beneath this dress. Her wispy hair is held together at the back by a ribbon worked with gold thread, in which is tucked a twig with leaves and buds and a single violet flower; a row of pearls is seen to run through the hair.

Her gloved right hand holds a fan with a metal handle close to her shiny belt. She wears a string of pearls around her neck, and a gold earring with a pearl-shaped pendant. A large, square brooch with red stones is worn at the breast; a black tassel hangs down her back. The light falls from the upper left.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in March 1969 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in the frame and in good artificial light, with the aid of an ultraviolet lamp. Four X-rays by the museum, covering most of the picture, were available, and photographic reproductions of these were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 72.5 × 54.8 cm (measured along the stretcher). Reduced on all sides (see 4. *Comments*).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Not observed with any certainty. The grey layer that shows through at a number of places in the head may perhaps be identified as the ground.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: The painting is in a reasonable state of preservation. From the patches of wear in the face it can be assumed that it has suffered some overcleaning. The X-ray shows that in the area of shadow on the breast, a few centimetres below the brooch, there is a fairly long scratch in the paint layer, and some paint loss can also be seen to the right of this, on the shoulder. Both damages have been restored. Craquelure: normal canvas-type cracking, in an evenly-distributed, irregular pattern.

DESCRIPTION: The background is painted fairly evenly in a quite dark grey, with some use of brown in the lighter areas. The face is done with small brushstrokes that are just visible, and for the most part in a thinly-applied and rather translucent flesh colour in which a grey tint seems to show through. In the most strongly lit areas the paint is rather thicker, especially at the neck, on the cheek and on the nose. The shape of the eye is depicted rather vaguely, with the lower edge in a pink that is also used for the small line of shadow above the eyelid. An ochrish dab appears in the righthand corner of the eye; a similar touch of paint is found on the left next to the iris, which has an indefinite outline and is done in a brownish

green-grey. The slightly darker pupil is indistinct. A longish catchlight on the iris extends to the right into the greyish paint of the white of the eye.

The nostril is a dark red, the colour becoming a little brighter at the bottom. The sinuous mouth-line is set over the pale red lips as a stripe of dark red. The shadows in the ear are grey, but the line of shadow along the edge of the shell of the ear is a dark red like that used for the mouth-line. The profile of the face is nowhere sharply demarcated; sometimes the flesh colour runs into the background, while at others the background grey runs into the flesh colour. The hair is painted with very fine strokes of a brownish yellow worked up with lighter yellow touches, and placed on top of the background along its edge. In the shadow parts, fairly dark brown and grey strokes are laid over the lighter brown; it seems not impossible that these were added in their present form during a restoration. A small, dark streak of hair on the temple may be a first lay-in in a dark paint that has become visible due to wear. (Two old copies give the impression that there is meant to be at this point an indication of a curl; see 7. *Copies*.) The row of pearls in the hair is indicated in very summary fashion. The black ribbon round the knot of hair, worked with gold thread, is painted quite thickly and worked up with dabs of dark red, ochre-yellow, light yellow, blue-green and white. The flower tucked into the knot of hair is a dark violet, heightened with touches of a lighter violet. The pearls at the neck are in a very light blue-green/grey, with the highlights as thick dots of white paint. Links between the pearls, perhaps meant to be gold beads, are indicated with ochre-yellow.

The pleated shirt is painted in grey and white, which at the bottom overlaps the ochre-yellow of the edge of the cloak; at the rear, a brush-touch of dry, white paint is placed over the background. The decorated edge of the cloak is executed in rather impasto dabs and strokes of light yellow, ochre-yellow and dark red. The cloak is painted thinly in a greyish brown. The hairs of the fur trimming at the sleeve are placed over the background as extremely fine lines of paint. The modelling of the glove is fairly pronounced, with the shadow lines clearly indicated. The fan is painted quite thickly, in a blue-green; the light highlights on the handle are applied as heavy dabs of ochre-yellow and light yellow. Below and alongside the jewelled brooch at the breast there is a stroke of green, whose purpose is unclear and authenticity doubtful.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The X-ray image shows, at first sight, what one would expect from examining the paint surface. There are no drastic pentimenti to be seen. Careful comparison of the pattern of the brushstrokes visible in the X-ray with what is seen at the surface does, in the light areas, reveal slight differences in the contour of the neck and on either side of the shirt. It is not improbable, on the basis of these observations, that the light areas are underpainted with a light-coloured paint containing white lead before the paint of the background was applied. The bluish-green paint of the fan shows up comparatively light, as is not unusual for this colour. Vague, irregular patches that occur throughout the X-rays could point to irregularities in the application of the ground.

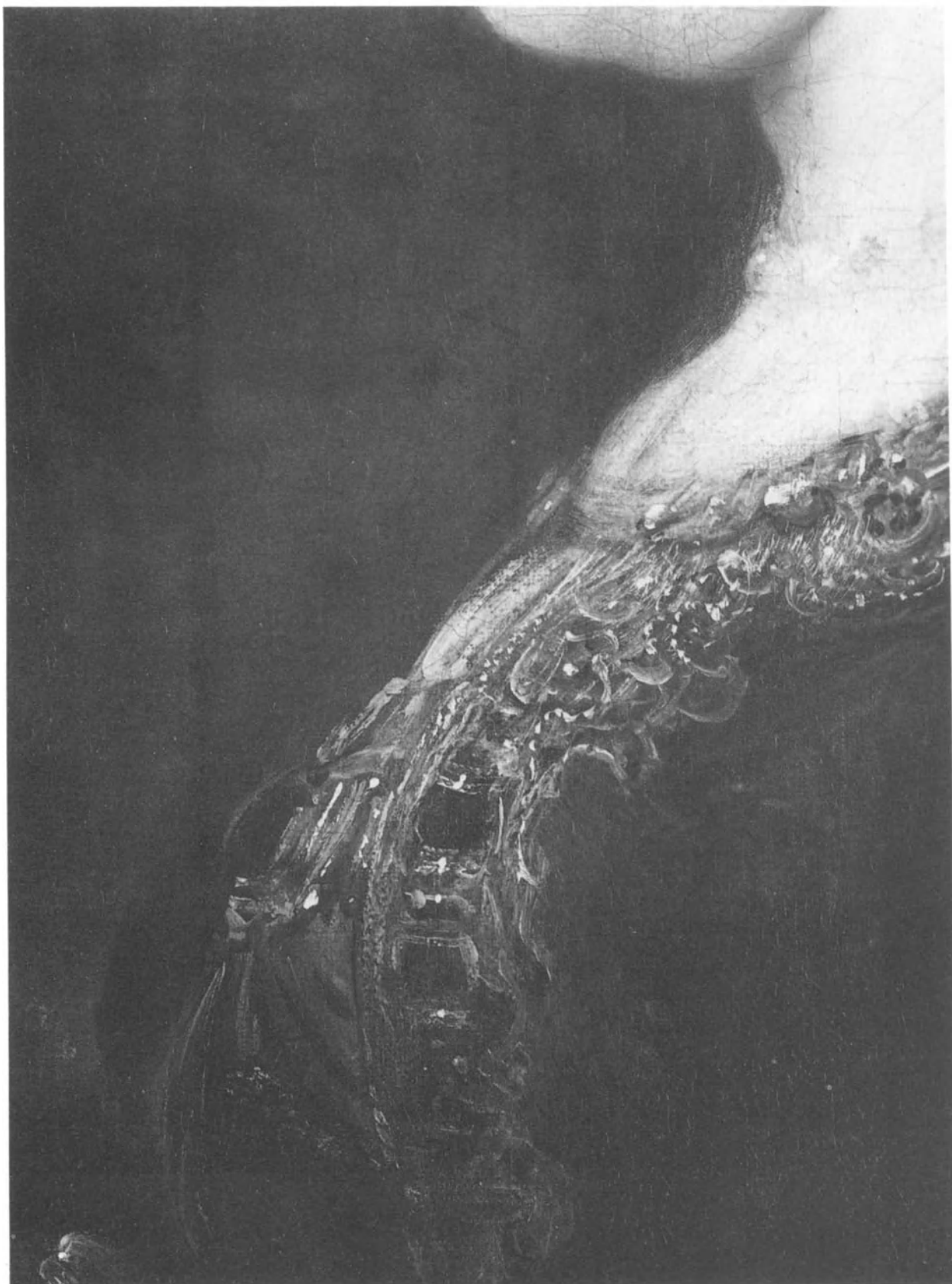
#### *Signature*

At the right in the background, level with the throat and in a dark grey, <RHL (in monogram, and followed by a backward-sloping diagonal stroke) *van Rijn./1632*>. The horizontal bar of the *H* is placed relatively low, beneath the central loop of the *R*. The shaft of the *R* of 'Rijn', which is open on the left,

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 4. Detail (1:1)



continues a fair distance downwards. The signature makes a reliable impression.

#### Varnish

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

In assessing the painting it is quite important to appreciate that in all probability it is no longer its original size. The X-rays do not reveal any cusping, but as they leave a strip some 8 cm wide uncovered round the edges of the picture, this is not in itself significant. One must however assume that the painting has been reduced in size. There is evidence for this in the print by W. de Leeuw (1603–1665) after the painting (or after a copy of it) which shows a picture area larger on all sides (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 1; fig. 6); the woman is seen to below the hips, the tassel hanging down the back (cut off in an unusual manner in the painting) is seen in its entirety as it also is on an old copy (see 7. *Copies*, 1; fig. 7), and the costume shows more details low down, in a way that the original does not really suggest in its present state. The fan, which in the painting is cut by the bottom lefthand corner at two of its edges, is also seen whole in the print. In the copy just mentioned the picture area is larger to the top (but not to the bottom), matching the De Leeuw print. On the evidence of the print, the original dimensions of the Stockholm painting would have been about 92 × 68 cm; it should be commented that the proportions of the picture area in the print are relatively narrow.

In the method of working, the head in no. A 49, as a profile portrait, is (leaving aside the Kassel *Saskia*, no. A 85) really comparable with only one work accepted as being among Rembrandt's early Amsterdam paintings: the *Portrait of Amalia of Solms* in the Musée Jacquemart-André in Paris, also dated 1632 (no. A 61). This comparison is a reasonable one to make, in view of the fact that the face, turned to the left in profile and with the light falling full from the left, evidently presented the artist with an unusual problem in both cases; for apart from the small shadow cast by the nose, there is hardly any play of light and shade that can be used to give plastic modelling to the head. In this respect, there was an identical problem to be solved in both paintings. For all the differences between the two works, involving especially the more sketchy treatment of the head in the Paris painting (which cannot however be fully assessed in this respect in its present condition), there are still many points of similarity in the two heads: the almost graphic autonomy of the profile-lines in both cases; the placing of the eye in the fully illuminated eye-socket, in which in

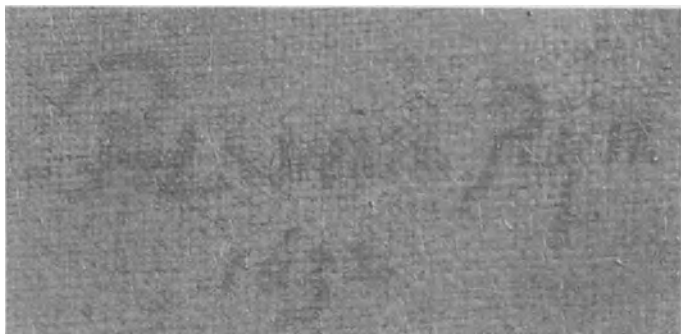
both instances the eye is not convincingly 'anchored' but appears to 'float'; the identical handling of the mouth-line, thickening towards the corner of the mouth; and the long horizontal catchlight placed in both the eyes. One is struck, in both the heads, by the way the paint is applied gently and thinly, with no appreciable increase in thickness. One noticeable difference is in the treatment of the chin and throat, which in the *Amalia of Solms* seem (at least in its present state) to have been handled almost with indifference to the possibility of providing modelling, while in the Stockholm work there is a very pronounced modelling. It may be that account was here deliberately being taken of differences in the amount of reflected light. Remarkably similar, on the other hand is the transition from the skin area into the hair. In neither painting has the opportunity been seized of allowing the hair, as a mass, to cast even the slightest shadow onto the forehead or temple.

All in all, the similarities in interpretation and execution are in both heads enough for one to assume that they are from one and the same hand. Where the remaining areas of the painting are concerned (such as the use of paint and perception of form in the jewellery and clothing, the treatment of the background and the proportions of light to dark), the work comes so close to Rembrandt's early Amsterdam paintings that there need be no doubt as to the autograph nature of the work (which is, moreover, reliably signed).

As a type – a profile figure seen hiplength – it is unusual among Rembrandt's oeuvre. He painted, probably in the same year and as an addition not originally included in the composition, a profile portrait of Jacob Koolvelt placed at the extreme left of the 1632 *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* in The Hague (no. A 51). Although this figure is seated facing away from the light, the portrait is quite comparable with the Stockholm work in its use of paint and range of colour. A further profile figure is that of the Kassel *Saskia* (no. A 85) mentioned earlier, which also provides evidence that Rembrandt drew inspiration for this formula from Italian influences, either directly, or indirectly via 16th-century German artists. The Italian influence is most evident in the last painting in which he used this formula, the *Flora* in New York (Br. 114).

There is no unanimity as to the identity of the sitter. Bode<sup>1</sup> thought that it was a portrait of Saskia, while Hofstede de Groot<sup>2</sup> and Bredius<sup>3</sup> saw her as the model that Bode believed he had identified as Rembrandt's sister. Bauch<sup>4</sup> again regarded it as a portrait of Saskia van Uylenburgh. Gerson<sup>5</sup> ventured no identification, but thought that the model would have to be looked for among Rembrandt's

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (enlarged)



circle. Wijnman<sup>6</sup> pointed to the mention of 'een kleine oostersche vrouwen troni, het contereitsel van Ulenburgh's huijsvrouw, nae Rembrandt' (a small *tronie* of an Eastern woman, the likeness of Ulenburgh's wife, after Rembrandt) in the inventory of Lambert Jacobsz. from 1637 (H. L. Straat in: *De Vrije Fries* 28, 1925, pp. 53–94, esp. p. 73 no. 20). He assumed that no. A 49, too, might be a portrait of Maria van Eyck, the wife of the art dealer Hendrik Uylenburgh in whose house Rembrandt lived in 1632, and that the same sitter was portrayed in a whole group of paintings which Bredius, on the basis of Bode's theory<sup>1</sup>, had regarded as portraits of Rembrandt's sister. The mention in Lambert Jacobsz.' inventory is in any case an interesting indication that at least some of Rembrandt's figures in 'eastern' dress were based on models from his own circle of acquaintance. This is certainly true of the Stockholm painting. The model used here reappears not only in the *Bust of a young woman* in Boston (no. A 50), but also in history paintings such as the *Young woman at her toilet* in Ottawa (no. A 64) and the *Rape of Europa* (no. A 47).

The two paintings in Boston and Stockholm, in any case, call rather for an iconographical interpretation going beyond the sphere of the portrait, and may belong to the category that also includes orientals and exotically garbed youths, by Rembrandt and others. The fact that a print reproduction of no. A 49 by W. de Leeuw in Antwerp was made during Rembrandt's lifetime suggests that at that time the painting was not being seen primarily as the portrait of a specific person (even though it might reproduce the features of Maria van Eyck), but rather as a more general type or as depicting a figure from the Bible or classical history or mythology.

One must wonder, in this connexion, whether the kind of costume being worn by the sitter in the Stockholm painting, as well as the Boston work, was regarded in Rembrandt's time as 'eastern'; this is not impossible. A comparable garb is used in the two history paintings mentioned above, one depict-

Fig. 6. Etching by W. de Leeuw (reproduced in reverse)



ing a theme from classical mythology and the other probably one from the Old Testament. The question remains of whether it forms an allusion solely to the East, or is more generally a costume perhaps based on the theatre to which no specific meaning can be attached (on this question see the comments on no. A 93).

##### 5. Documents and sources

None.

##### 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Willem de Leeuw (Antwerp 1603?–c. 1665?), inscribed: *Rembr. inv. – W D L* (in monogram). *fecit* (fig. 6). It shows the painting in reverse, but larger on all sides; at the sides and top there is more of the background to be seen, and at the bottom more of the garment; the tassel hanging down the woman's back and the fan are seen in their entirety. The probable origin of this print in Antwerp raises the question of whether this might not, like the print by De Leeuw connected with the Frankfurt *David and Saul* (no. A 25), have been based on a copy. In the reproduction of the profile in particular the print comes somewhat (though not decisively) closer to an old copy (see 7. *Copies*, 1) than to the Stockholm painting.



Fig. 7. Copy 1. London, National Art Collections Fund



## 7. Copies

1. Canvas 65.5 × 52 cm, London, National Art Collections Fund (fig. 7). Previously coll. the Earl of Denbigh, Newnham Paddox; coll. W. C. Alexander, London. Examined March 1981 (J. B.) with the help of five X-ray films by the London Courtauld Institute of Art, four covering the whole of the picture and the fifth the head and shoulder. Reproduces the picture in a framework that is roomier to the right and top, but less so at the bottom, than the original. The painting is to all appearances a 17th-century copy. That it is, notwithstanding its competent execution, a copy is apparent from, for example, the way in which the paint of the neck is applied along the pearls, for which a sharply delimited reserve is shown in the X-ray. This is evidence of the painter's dependence on a pre-existing depiction of the motif; in the original (and usually in Rembrandt's work) the pearls are superimposed on the flesh tint. The curl of hair on the temple, which has now practically disappeared in the original, is visible here.

2. An old copy mentioned by Hofstede de Groot<sup>2</sup> and showing only the head, at that time owned by Mrs Alfred Seymour, London; possibly identical with an old and very faithful copy painted on panel, known to us only through a photograph; this was sold at auction in The Hague (van Marle and Bignell) on 3 May 1944, no. 134, panel 39 × 31 cm. This partial copy too shows the curl of hair on the temple.

## 8. Provenance<sup>7</sup>

– Coll. Carl Gustaf Tessin (1695–1760).  
 – Bought in 1749 by King Frederik I of Sweden for Queen Luisa Ulrica. From 1795 in the Royal Museums in Stockholm,

later transferred to the collection of the Nationalmuseum, Stockholm.

## 9. Summary

On the grounds of its stylistic features and handling of paint, no. A 49 can be regarded as an authentic work from 1632. The signature, too, gives no cause for doubt. As a picture of a figure seen in profile it occupies, together with the *Portrait of Amalia of Solms* (no. A 61), an exceptional position among Rembrandt's early work.

A mention from 1637 of a painting after Rembrandt showing the wife of the art dealer Hendrik Uylenburgh (who had befriended him) in eastern costume leads to the assumption that this painting (like the bust of the same sitter in Boston, no. A 50) shows, if not this woman, then at least someone from Rembrandt's circle, in a costume that in those years was regarded as eastern. This assumption is reinforced by the fact that the same model also appears in two of Rembrandt's history paintings, in a comparable costume.

## REFERENCES

- 1 W. Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei*, Braunschweig 1883, pp. 417, 420–21.
- 2 HdG 698.
- 3 Br. 85.
- 4 Bauch 455.
- 5 Gerson p. 262.
- 6 H. F. Wijnman, 'Rembrandt en Hendrick Uylenburgh te Amsterdam', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 43 (1956), pp. 94–103, esp. 95, 101, 103.
- 7 *Catalogue Stockholm Nationalmuseum. Äldere utländska målningar och skulpturer*, Stockholm 1958, p. 163, no. 583.



**A 50 Bust of a young woman** (commonly called the artist's sister)

1632

BOSTON, MASS., MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, ACC. NO. 539.66

ON LOAN FROM MRS RICHARD C. PAINE

HDG 699; BR. 89; BAUCH 452; GERSON 115

Fig. 1. Panel 60.6 × 45 cm



Fig. 2. Infrared photograph



### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved, authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1632. It is doubtful whether the panel was originally oval.

### 2. Description of subject

A young woman is seen to just below the breast, the head square on and the body turned a little to the left. The light falls from the top left, leaving the righthand side of the face and neck in shadow. She wears a black overgarment on top of a white, pleated shirt reaching up to the throat; this overgarment is closed at the top centre, and lower down hangs open to reveal a dark red undergarment. A broad band of gold-thread embroidery runs along the upper edge and the closure. A row of pearls is seen to run through her wispy blond hair, on the left, a black headband is glimpsed at the sides of the head, and she wears pearl eardrops.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 9 October 1970 (B. H., P. v. Th.) in good daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of an infrared photograph of the whole and another of the head.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Mahogany panel, oval, 60.6 × 45 cm. Thickness c. 1.3 cm. Single plank. Remains of bevelling are seen at the top of the back; the fact that bevelling is absent elsewhere prompts doubt whether the panel originally had this oval shape.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Light yellow, visible in brushstrokes in the background at top right and bottom left, plus a little in the shadow of the face, beneath the chin, on the right in the hair and in thin places in the overgarment.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good, apart from slight wearing in the brown of the shadows and the black of the clothing. A few particles of paint have broken away along the edge, and this may have to do with the panel being sawn when the paint was already dry and hard. A retouched scratch runs from the corner of the mouth on the right down into the shadow on the throat. Some loss of tiny particles of paint in the background seems to be related to the grain of the wood. Craquelure: not observed.

DESCRIPTION: The grey of the background, which from a mid-tone at the lower left runs through a dark area at the top into a lighter tone at the right, provides an effective contrast with the play of light and shadow on the figure. The light grey on the right is opaque; above this, the paint is more thinly applied, and a more freely painted underlayer, through which the ground is visible, can be seen. The dark grey around the head becomes more opaque towards the left, and exhibits distinct brushstrokes, some of which run ray-like towards the head. The brushstrokes of the outermost locks of hair are placed over the paint of the background.

The soft lighting and carefully graduated shadows lend the fleshy, unwrinkled face a strong plasticity. In the light the fine strokes of opaque paint, following the shapes of the features,

are readily visible; where the shadows begin the paint is much smoother.

The highest light on the forehead is done in white, with a fair degree of impasto. The rest of the forehead and the lit cheek are painted in light pink flesh colours; the shadow on the face is in an opaque grey paint, which on the forehead directly adjoins the flesh tone but at the cheek is separated from the flesh colour by a translucent transitional zone of ruddy brown (presumably the underpainting), over which the opaque grey is to some extent placed. This translucent shadow zone continues into the shadow cast by the nose, over which is laid a further tinge of the opaque grey.

The eye on the left is clearly defined. The fold of skin above the upper eyelid is shown with brushstrokes in brown. In the inner corner of the eye there is some red. The white of the eye is greyish, the iris dark grey with a brown underpainting showing through and a weak white catchlight. The round pupil, quite large, is done in black. The other eye differs from that on the left in having the iris done in a far more opaque dark grey. The shadow of the eye-socket is handled in the same way as the remaining shadow on the face, and immediately adjoins this.

Highlights are placed on the ridge of the nose and its broad tip, and merge into the flesh-coloured brushstrokes that follow the shape of the nose. The lips have been painted with small horizontal brushlines in various tints of red; there is a vague white highlight on the lower lip. The reflected light on and beneath the chin is applied thinly, with long brushstrokes. The lit part of the neck is dealt with in the same manner as the face, but in a sand-coloured paint; the light merges into the grey shadow area on the right via a brown transitional zone (probably again the underpainting).

The hair is painted in widely differing ways, using both thin and quite thick, curling brushstrokes in brown, worked through with ochre colours in sandy and dark brown shades. The roughly defined row of pearls is indicated with touches of white and ochre. The very dark grey brushstrokes to the right and left of the hair hint at the presence of a headband worn at the back of the head. The paint of the forehead shines through the hair, as does that of the lefthand ear. The eardrop hanging in the light has bold catchlights on the pearl, done in ochre and white. The impression of this object as hanging in three-dimensional space is very convincing; the lighting of it contrasts with that of the other eardrop, which is backlit. The fluid, subtle contours of the shadow parts of the face and neck are depicted relatively more sharply than the softly-flowing contour of the side in the light.

The contrast between the bold brushwork of the white shirt and the fineness of treatment of the face and neck is very marked. The pleats of the shirt are in thick white paint, using brushstrokes laid crosswise to the folds. The folds have been drawn radially downwards in this paint, with a little brown and using a hard brush. The edge of the shirt is speckled with a little ochre-coloured paint.

The gold embroidery along the edge of the overgarment is suggested convincingly with a jumble of dotted lines, wavy lines and jagged lumps of paint, which seem to have been applied haphazardly but give the effect of a pattern when viewed from a distance. Yellow predominates in the light, applied very thickly but often with glancing touches of dry paint. Besides this, dark and light ochre-coloured paint is used together with a little dark grey, and these tints are placed over what is sometimes a greyish layer. In the shadows the yellows are subdued, and the main forms are shown in grey and brown. The overgarment is executed in black, with no apparent shading. Highlights are placed along the shoulders with

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)



opaque grey brushed over the black, at a short distance from and parallel with the outline. The undergarment is painted in a very dark, ruddy colour.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

None available.

#### *Signature*

In brown-grey on the light grey of the background, at the right above the shoulder and level with the neck <RHL (in monogram followed by a short, backwards-sloping stroke) *van Rijn* / 1632>. The large *R* of the monogram is closed on the left, while the smaller one of 'Rijn' is open. The whole signature, and especially the curl of the *R* in the monogram and the 2, is slightly worn along the relief of the brushstrokes of the background paint. It can nonetheless be regarded as well preserved and reliable.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

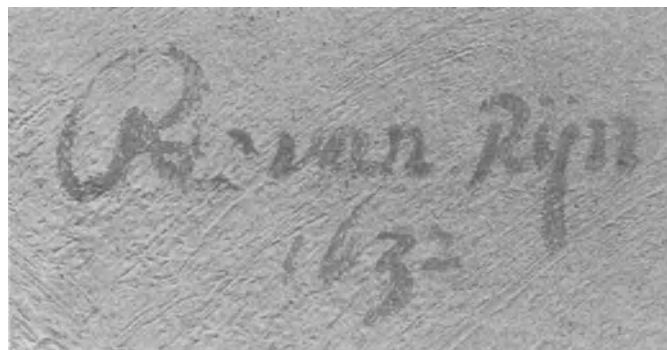
### 4. Comments

In conception and execution the painting is entirely in keeping with the characteristics we recognize in Rembrandt's portraiture from his early years in Amsterdam (see Introduction, Chapter I). The distribution of light in the vital areas is used to serve the illusion of plasticity, and this is reinforced by the subtle swelling of the contours. As the signature moreover makes a reliable impression, the authenticity of no. A 50 cannot be doubted.

Alongside these familiar features the painting does present less familiar aspects that may come about from the greater freedom the artist was able to allow himself in a *tronie* he was apparently painting on his own initiative, and not to order. Notable in this context are the way the folds of the shirt are represented, and the free treatment of the gold embroidery along the edge of the overgarment (which recurs in slightly later work – cf. nos. A 64 and A 70).

It cannot be said with certainty whether the oval shape of the panel is original. The fact that the picture was already being described as oval in 1767 (see 8. *Provenance*) does not mean a great deal; the predilection there was in the late 17th and 18th centuries for oval pictures seems to have led, around that time, to a number of cases of changed format. The fact that at the top alone is there any trace of bevelling visible may well point to a rectangular panel having been sawn down, as would the rather crumbling edge of the paint layer along the present border. Against this there is the argument that the composition fits remarkably well into the present oval shape; but the marked convexities that typify the figure would be no less effective with a rectangular framing. At the very least, serious allowance

Fig. 4. Detail with signature (enlarged)



must be made for the possibility of a change in shape.

A point worthy of mention is that the overgarment, which today appears to be black, was described in 1767 (see 8. *Provenance*) as 'd'un gros vert noirâtre'. This description of the colour must presumably be explained either by the effect of a yellowed layer of varnish or by the fact that on this occasion no. A 50 was being described together with another painting (no. C 58) that does indeed show dark green clothing.

Where the meaning of the picture is concerned, one must assume that the painting is not a commissioned portrait, but a *tronie* that was not painted with the primary intention of being a likeness of a living person. The fanciful costume, into which have been worked reminiscences of 16th-century dress, suggests this although the clothing does not point to any particular biblical or mythological personage. Rembrandt used a costume of this kind for the profile hip-length figure – based on the same female model – of 1632 in Stockholm (no. A 49), which shows how the headband is wound round the knot of hair (see also, on the costume and model depicted, the comments on that painting).

The wholly frontal positioning of the head was in a very similar way used by Rembrandt during this period in the *Glasgow Portrait of the artist* (no. A 58), as well as in a figure like the New York *Man in oriental dress* of 1632 (no. A 48), where the same contrasting effect of the eardrops has been employed.

No. A 50 has served as the prototype for a number of studio works (cf. nos. C 57, C 58 and C 59).

### 5. Documents and sources

None.

### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

1. According to Hofstede de Groot<sup>1</sup> there was a copy by J. F. Grueber (perhaps Johann Friedrich Gruber, active 1662–1672, d. 1681 in Stuttgart) in the Chauveau collection in Paris.

## 8. Provenance

\*– Together with no. C 58 in coll. de Julienne, sale Paris 30 March–22 May 1767 (Lugt 1603), no. 131: 'Rembrandt van Ryn. Deux Bustes de jeunes femmes gracieuses; l'une vue de face & l'autre de trois quarts; elles portent leurs cheveux, des boucles à leurs oreilles, le haut de leur chemise couvre la gorge; leur robe est d'un gros vert noirâtre, l'une bordée d'une dentelle d'or, & l'autre enrichie d'agrémens. Rembrandt van Ryn 1632 est marqué sur un de ces deux morceaux; ils sont sur bois de forme ovale dans des bordures dorées. Chacun porte 22 pouces de haut sur 16 de large [= 59.4 × 43.2 cm]' (1210 livres to Donjeux).

\*– Together with no. C 58 in coll. Duc de La Vallière, sale Paris 21ff February 1781 (Lugt 3221), no. 47: 'Rimbrandt Van Ryn. Deux Bustes de forme ovale: ils représentent des portraits de jeunes Femmes coëffées en cheveux; leur habillement noir est enrichi de broderies & chaînes d'or. Ces deux Tableaux d'une fonte de couleur admirable & d'une belle harmonie, méritent un rang distingué dans les ouvrages de ce grand Peintre. Haut. 22 pouc. larg. 15. [= 59.4 × 40.5 cm] B.[ois]'.

\*– [Marquis de Chamgrand, de Proth, Saint-Maurice, Bouillac] sale Paris 20–24 March 1787 (Lugt 4162), no. 25: 'Par le même [Rembrandt van Rhim]. Le Portrait d'une jeune fille, représentée de face, & coëffée de petits cheveux blonds, son habillement noir brodé en or, se détache sur une chemise froncée qui couvre sa poitrine. Ce morceau, du ton de couleur le plus savant, & rempli d'harmonie, par l'intelligence de la couleur, est aussi étudié & fini que les beaux ouvrages de Gerard Douw. La forme est ovale en hauteur; il porte 22 pouces, sur 16 pouces [= 59.4 × 43.2 cm] B.' (1000 livres to Paillet).

\*– Coll. Destouches, sale Paris 21 March 1794 (Lugt 5171), no. 16: 'Par le même [Rembrandt Van Rhyn]. Un autre portrait de jeune fille, ayant le visage plein, & vue de face; elle est coëffée de petits cheveux roussâtres, naturellement bouclés; son habillement noir est relevé d'une broderies d'or qui se détache sur une collerette qui cache sa poitrine. Ce morceau encore admirable par la richesse du ton de couleur, est aussi du plus bel empâtement. Haut. 22 pou. larg. 16 [= 59.4 × 43.2 cm] B.' (651 francs to Basan).

\*– Coll. Comte de Sommariva, sale Paris 18–23 February 1839 (Lugt 15288), no. 90: 'Rembrandt. École hollandaise (1632). Un portrait, celui d'une jeune fille de chevelure et de carnation blondes; elle est présentée de face et porte une robe d'étoffe noire bordée d'un feston de broderie d'or; on aurait de la peine à préciser son âge parce que sa corpulence est forte.' (5100 francs to Geunin).

– Coll. Valpinçon, Paris 1881.

– Dealer Ch. Sedelmeyer, Paris 1883 (*Catalogue of 300 Paintings*, Paris 1898, no. 122).

– Coll. E. Secrétan, sale Paris 1 July 1889, no. 154.

– Coll. Prince of Liechtenstein, Vienna.

– Coll. Dr Georgius Schmid von Grüneck, Bishop of Chur (Switzerland) from 1908 to 1932 (cf. two wax seals joined by small length of cord on back, and letter with details of origin stuck on back).

– Dealer Robert C. Vose, Boston 1929 (cf. the same letter).

– Coll. Robert Treat Paine II, Boston.

## 9. Summary

On the grounds of the highly effective execution, familiar from other works, that produces a vivid suggestion of space and depth, and of the reliable signature, the painting must be seen as an authentic work from 1632, and because of its sound condition regarded as an important document of Rembrandt's work during that year. It shows – apart from the technique known from other works, such as the translucent transitions from light to dark – how by scratching the wet paint he suggested the effect of folds in the shirt, and how he creates the effect of the gold-thread embroidery on the edge of the overgarment by an apparently unstructured conglomeration of mainly small dots and dabs and a few glancing strokes of dry paint.

Because of the fanciful costume the painting should not be seen as a portrait, but rather as a *tronie*.

Serious consideration must be given to the possibility that the painting which is today oval was once rectangular.

## REFERENCES

- 1 HdG 699.



HDG 932; BR. 403; BAUCH 530; GERSON 100

Fig. 1. Canvas 169.5 × 216.5 cm



### 1. Summarized opinion

A moderately well preserved, authentic and relatively well documented work, reliably signed and dated 1632. As a group portrait it occupies a special place in Rembrandt's work, and forms an important document for his artistic approach and manner of painting during his early Amsterdam years.

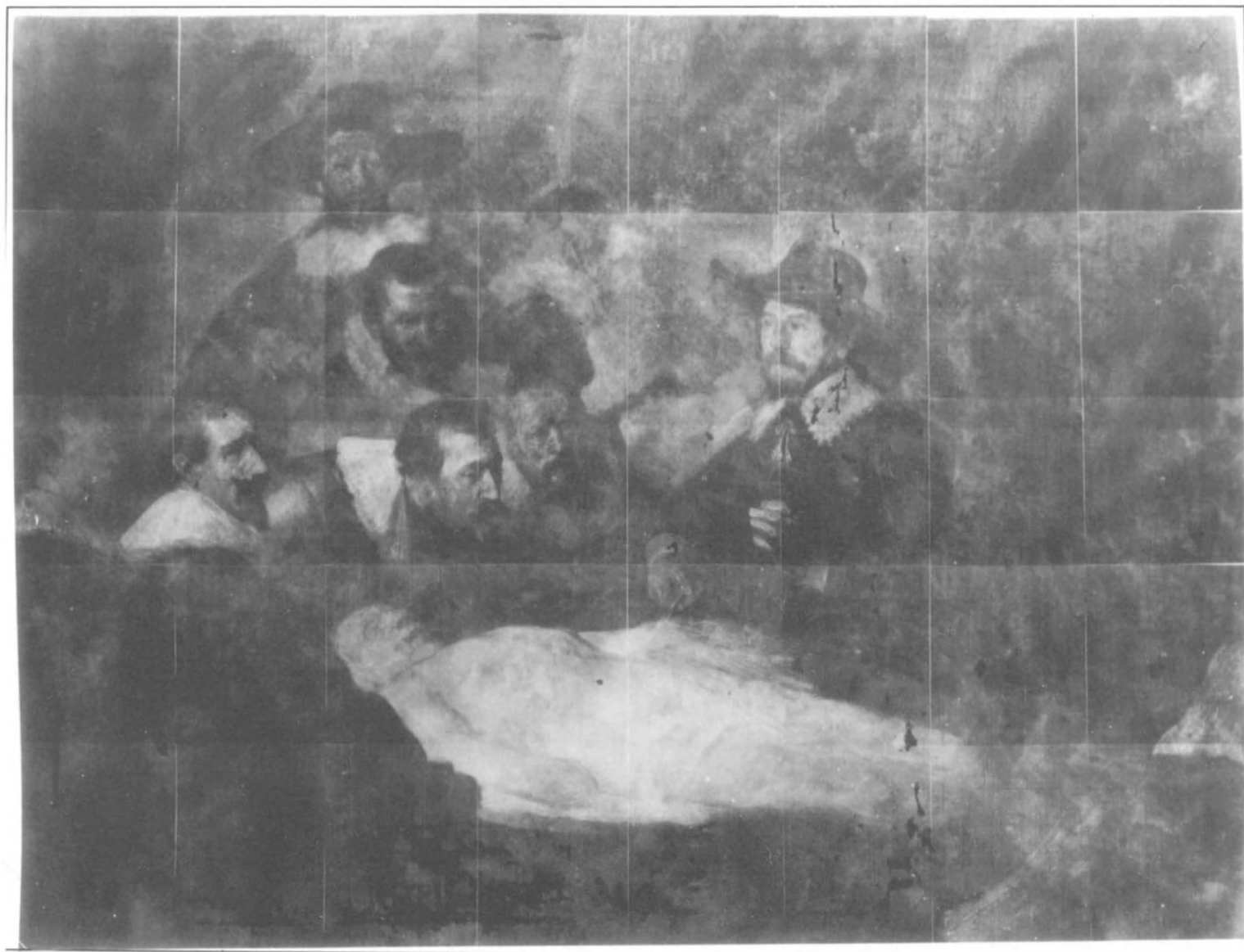
### 2. Description of subject

A group of eight figures are gathered, in a dimly lit vaulted room, around a supine corpse. To the right sits the main figure, Nicolaes Tulp (numbered 1), wearing a black hat, a black cloak that spreads over his chair, and a black doublet with knotted laces at the waist; he raises his left hand in a gesture, with the fingers slightly curved, while in his right hand he grasps a pair of forceps with which he is lifting a group of muscles from the dissected left forearm of the body stretched in front of him. To his right, four surgeons lean forward and watch the demonstration: the upper two (numbered 2 and 3)

are identified by the list of names on a page of the book held in the latter's hand as Jacob Blok [Block] and Hartman Hartm . . . [Hartmansz.], the two beneath them (numbered 5 and 6) immediately above the cadaver as Jacob de Witt and Mathijs Kalkoen [Calkoen]. Of the two sitting in the left foreground, the one on the right (no. 4) leaning against a chairback is named as Adriaan Slabraen [Adriaen Slabberaen], the one on the far left (no. 7) as Jacob Koolvelt [Colevelt]; rising above the whole group, and the only one looking straight at the viewer, is Frans van Loenen (no. 8). The light falls from the left, mainly on the figures and the corpse.

On the open lefthand page of the book that Hartman Hartmansz. (no. 3) holds in his hand, partly hidden behind Tulp's right arm, is a numbered list of the eight names – evidently written later, though in 17th-century lettering – placed on top of a less clearly distinguishable figure that can be interpreted as an anatomical illustration. In the extreme right foreground, an open book stands propped against a pile of other books. Behind this a rectangular form can be vaguely made out. Against the rear wall a vaguely visible, flattened scroll of paper hangs from a rod; on it are lines of text, the

Fig. 2. X-ray



artist's name and the date 1632. Niches can be made out in the side walls, and the one behind Tulp incorporates a shell motif.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 28 October 1973 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) and 1 March 1977 (J. B., P. v. Th., E. v. d. W.) in reasonable daylight and strong artificial light, and in the frame, with the aid of a complete set of X-rays (40 films).

#### *Support*

**DESCRIPTION:** Canvas, lined, 169.5 × 216.5 cm. Single piece. A small piece measuring c. 13 × 4 cm has been inserted in the top righthand corner.

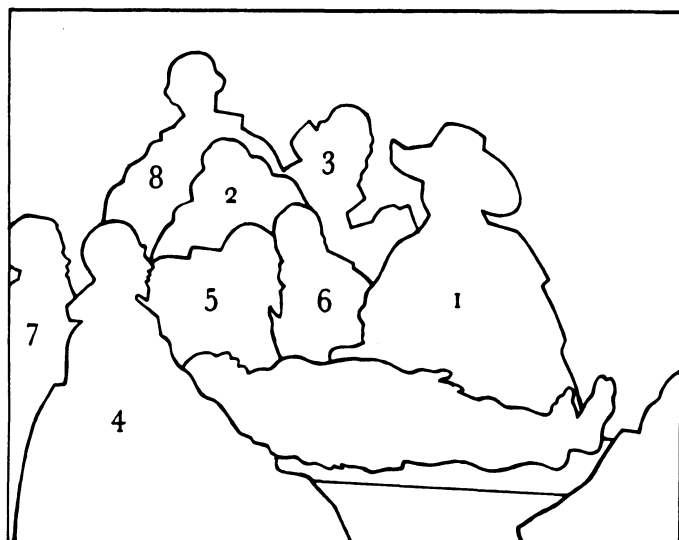
According to De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes<sup>1</sup> there are two relining canvases. These authors also mention a vague dividing line visible in the X-ray and stretching across the entire width 12 cm above the middle. Since this line does not correspond to a join in the original canvas, but separates areas of greater and lesser radioabsorbency in the X-ray, it must be assumed that one of the relining canvases consisted of two

pieces and that the dividing line is connected with an adhesive used during relining, possibly used more generously on one piece than on the other.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** The finding by De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes<sup>1</sup> of a 'vague dividing line stretching across the entire width of the painting 12 cm above the middle' was probably due to an unusually thick warp thread. Cusping is clearly visible along the top and bottom edges, with an average pitch of 11.5 cm at the top and 12 cm at the bottom. On the left the pitch of the cusping varies from 7 to 10 cm, while on the right only very vague cusping can be seen. Threadcount: 15.3 vertical threads/cm (13.5–17.5), 19.3 horizontal threads/cm (19–19.5). There is a remarkably large number of quite long and short thickenings in the vertical direction, and sporadic long ones horizontally. Because of the more even density of the horizontal threads and greater irregularity of the vertical ones, and because of the format of the painting, it may be assumed with certainty that the warp runs horizontally.

#### *Ground*

**DESCRIPTION:** A light, seemingly yellowish white is visible at various places – in the scratchmarks in the edge of the pages



of the book in the right foreground, along the underside of the collar of figure no. 2, and at the meeting of the hair and collar outline of figure no. 5.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** According to De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes (op. cit.<sup>1</sup>, pp. 89–90), the ground comprises two layers. The lower is brownish red in colour, and microscope examination shows it to consist of a mixture of yellow and red ochres with comparatively small grains of pigment, mixed with a little white lead and a trace of chalk. The upper layer is grey, and is composed of white lead, chalk, carbon black, yellow ochre and umber and appears to contain a comparatively large quantity of binding medium.

#### Paint layer

**CONDITION:** There has been paint loss on a fairly wide scale, as can be seen also from the X-ray, but in general this does not affect vital areas – it occurs in the costume of the two lefthand figures (nos. 7 and 4), along the lower edge, in the collar of figure no. 7, in that of Tulp and that of no. 6, though also in a number of flesh areas (the heads of nos. 4 and 8, by the body's left knee, and so on). There is also quite serious wearing in the less brightly lit figures, especially nos. 3 and 8, and in the darker parts of the clothing and architecture in which the indication of form has quite often been touched up. We also learn, from a document dated 20 September 1732 (see 5. *Documents and sources*), that the black cloak of Tulp was so badly damaged by hot smoke escaping from a chimney-breast that it blistered and had to be repainted.

**DESCRIPTION:** The handling of paint is governed to a great extent by carefully-weighed differences in the extent to which form is defined, which are related to the suggestion of distance; figures seen towards the rear receive less light and have less detail, are done in thinner paint and more subdued colours. The paint layer displays no areas of evident translucency.

The rear wall of the room is in general painted with a lively brushwork in an opaque grey. The darker areas to each side are in less opaque brownish greys; the lighter areas behind Dr Tulp are done with a more thickly applied paint in a cooler colour.

The heads of the two figures at the back (nos. 8 and 3) are done fairly roughly, and the suggestion of plasticity is achieved more by summary modelling than by any detailed rendering of form. Of these two, the head to the left – catching the least light – is painted mainly in greys, while the one on the right

is in a warmer flesh colour with brown used to draw the eyes and to indicate the nose shadow. In their collars thin, worn greys lie over a light underpainting that is occasionally visible in the relief.

In the heads of the three forward-leaning figures in front of them (nos. 2, 6 and 5) one can see a definite crescendo of colour and contrast. In the rearmost of the three (no. 2) a brown-grey shadow tint contrasts with a mainly yellowish flesh colour. In the next (no. 6) there is a relatively large proportion of red in the lit flesh areas, and in the indication of the right corner of the eye and the lower lip. In the figure furthest to the front (no. 5) the thick paint on the highest light on the forehead has a fairly strong yellow, the cheek is pink, and the transition to the grey-brown shadow is provided by a grey. The clothing, which in the figures to the rear is seen mainly as outlines, is in the case of no. 2 enlivened with sheens of light and a discreetly-indicated pattern, while that of no. 5, seen in a strong light, is emphasized by its modelling and by a greyish purple colour.

The two figures seated furthest to the left (nos. 4 and 7) are linked closely to no. 5. The head of the second from the left (no. 4) is done in the lit parts with quite broad strokes of flesh colour, with brown in the indication of the eye, reddish brown in the shadow of the eye-socket and pink especially on the nose. The head of the man furthest to the left (no. 7) presents a somewhat different colouring, probably partly because he has, on the evidence of a dark grey that shows through, been painted over a previously-painted background. The lit parts of the neck and head are painted quite thickly and broadly in a pale flesh colour, and the shadows tend towards a grey. Close inspection shows that the clothing of both men has been worked up fairly thoroughly in shades of greys and browns which, together with the internal detail done in black and brown, provide a clear and distinctly modelled form; the knee of the figure to the front offers an accent in dull red.

This reticent but relatively thorough modelling is seen again in the (admittedly restored) costume worn by Tulp, which is predominantly in a deep black. His hat, for example, shows clearly a black band placed round the brim, with a grey edging of light; the hat itself also has a sheen of light in grey, and a brownish reflection of light suggests the curve of the underside of the brim. The lace edge of the collar (damaged at the centre) has a reserve left for it in the black of the cloak, and is worked up with black placed on top of the white.

The cadaver is painted boldly and, in the lit areas, is almost monochrome; the colour varies here between a white broken to an ochre and a greyish white. The contours often extend slightly over the paint of the surrounding forms; those of the rib-cage over that of the figures behind, that of the ear over the sleeve of figure no. 4, and that of the left knee over the armrest of Tulp's chair. Some shadow areas are painted in or over the light paint of the lit flesh parts, as at the navel, by the sternum and (as can also be seen from the X-ray) in the shadow cast on the head. Elsewhere, such as in the armpit, a somewhat more translucent brown indicates that the paint was not applied over the flesh colour, but rather that the dark underpainting was not or not entirely covered over by the flesh colour. The whole treatment reveals painstaking observation, yet at the same time remains free. Even in the dissected left arm, the treatment is painterly; one gets the impression that here the red colours were set down last, partly over a grey underlayer; the tendons are partly exposed among the red so that the grey remains visible, and partly placed over the grey in a yellowish paint.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes (op. cit.<sup>1</sup>, p. 90) found, in the dark parts of the background,

Cologne earth, umber and bone black among other pigments, a red lake pigment used as a glaze on, inter alia, the faces where the flesh colour consists of white lead mixed with yellow ochre and red ochre. The white in the painting consists of white lead containing traces of copper and silver (mixed, in the collars, with carbon black), the yellow of yellow ochre, and the red of red ochre with here and there a small amount of vermilion; the red in the dissected arm consists of a red lake pigment, and the dark colour of the costumes largely of dark brown ochre mixed with a large quantity of black pigment.

A blackish-brown underpainting, comprising Cologne earth and bone black, was found beneath the paint of the lit parts of the heads. In the collars, only that of no. 7 (painted over the background) was seen to present beneath the white a layer of blackish brown, on top of which there is still a grey layer in places. The two lastnamed layers would seem to correspond with the two versions of the background (see 4. *Comments*).

#### X-Rays

It can be seen, from the reserves appearing dark in the rather light image of the background, that the lay-in presented in an early stage a number of differences from the picture as we see it today. The figure on the extreme left (no. 7) shows, in the darkest parts, a tint that is no darker than the background beside it and much lighter than the dark areas in the other heads; this confirms the observation that this figure has been painted over the background at a late stage. The uppermost figure (no. 8) shows a reserve for a broad-brimmed hat. Just to the left of the head of the figure bending forward (no. 3) there is a reserve, plainly originally intended for this head in a different position, to which at the bottom (interrupted by the light image of the collar worn by the present figure) is joined the dark reserve for the associated collar and body. This offers a marked contrast with the adjoining part of the background that is here lightest in the X-ray and towards the bottom is bordered by the dark reserve left for the hand holding the book in its present position. Tulp's face shows, on the left, an over-generous reserve, and the reserve for the hat, too, differs from the eventual shape – smaller for the brim to the left, and larger for the crown. The outline of his right arm was made less wide than in the final execution, where it had to be set down in black over the previously-painted background. The cuff of his left sleeve was, in a light underpainting, smaller than it is today.

An earlier version of the dissected left arm can be seen, placed higher up and probably in underpainting. Traces of a light underpainting can be seen in most of the collars, including those of figures nos. 2, 4, 5, 7 and 8.

A late pentimento can be detected in Tulp's collar, which can be seen in fully developed form in a version that is considerably larger to both left and right.

Shadows that were evidently put in at a late stage in areas appearing light in the X-ray are seen on the head of the corpse, the page of the book, in the hand of no. 3, and on Tulp's left cuff. On the other hand the moustache of no. 2, which hangs down over the collar, had a reserve left for it at all stages.

Quite extensive paint loss can be seen in the dark area along the bottom edge of the painting, in a number of vertical areas in the two figures on the left (nos. 4 and 7) and in much smaller patches, mainly here and there in the hat, the collar and elsewhere in the figure of Tulp, and in the lower legs of the corpse.

#### Signature

On the paper scroll hanging on the rear wall, in a dark brown-black <Rembrandt. f (followed by a v-shaped mark):

1632>. The arrangement is unlike any signature on paintings of 1632, which are invariably signed 'RHL (in monogram) van Ryn'. One cannot be sure that even in its present form (i.e. after overpaintings were removed during the 1951 restoration) the inscription is authentic.

For further remarks see below under 4. *Comments*.

#### Varnish

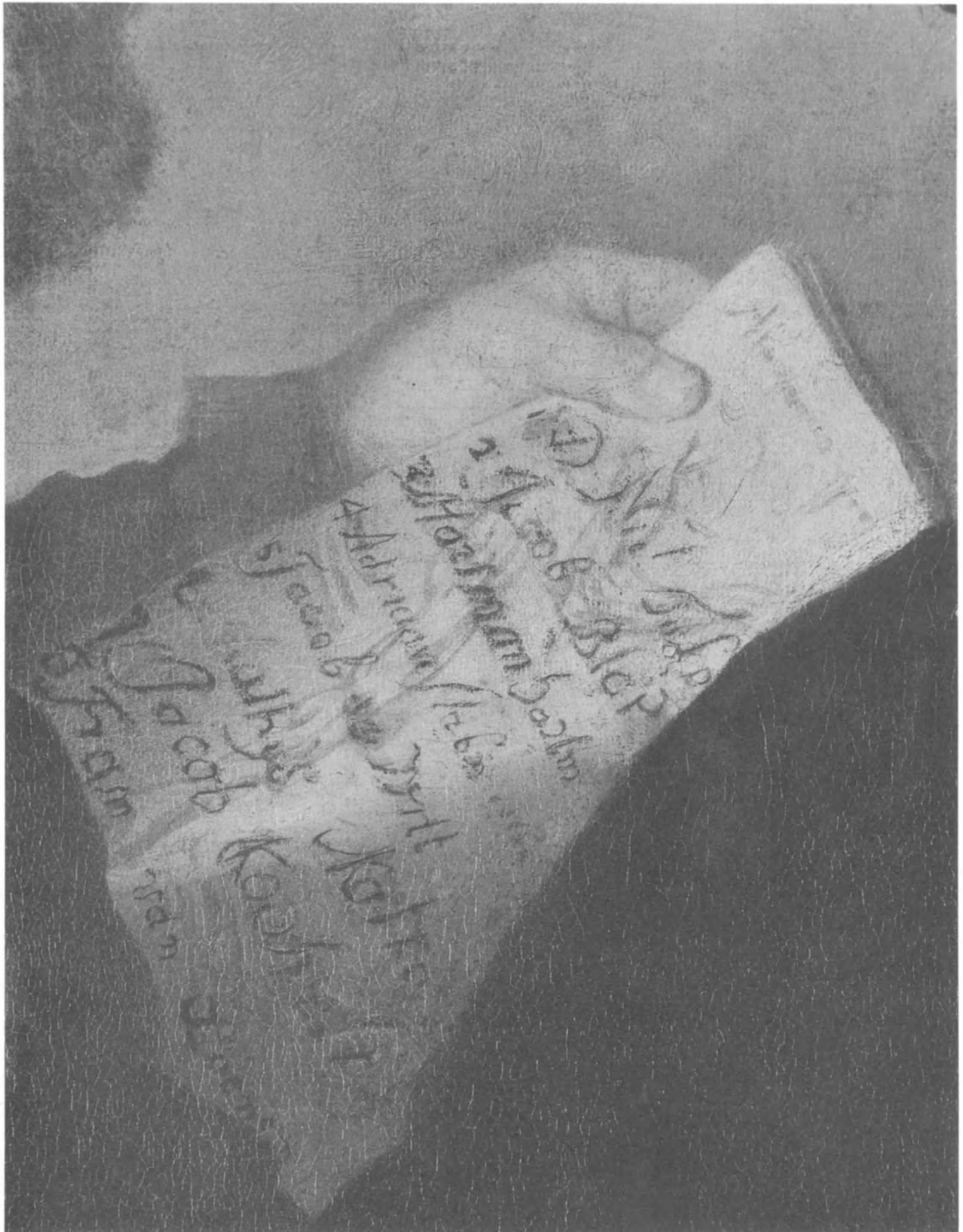
No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

The *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* cannot be counted among Rembrandt's documented works in the strictest sense of the word. Since the evidence for his authorship is admittedly not contemporary but still quite old, the painting can be looked on as relatively well documented and as one of the bases for assessing his early Amsterdam style of portraiture. The earliest mention is found in Caspar Commelin's description of Amsterdam of 1693 (see 5. *Documents and sources*), where two paintings by Rembrandt, including the representation of an anatomy demonstration, are mentioned as hanging in 'D'Anatomie' (the Theatrum anatomicum at that time in the Nieuwe Waag, previously the St.-Anthoniepoort) but not specified in any greater detail. A second mention occurs in the description (not published until 1753) of a visit made by Zacharias Conrad von Uffenbach in February 1711 to the same 'dissecting room', where again two paintings attracted his attention, especially that to the left of the chimney which was referred to as an 'incomparable' work in which 'the famous anatomist Tulpius' was carrying out the dissection; the name of Rembrandt was not mentioned by Von Uffenbach in this connexion (see *ibid.*). Jan Wagenaar, whose history of Amsterdam was published in 1765, mentions Rembrandt's two group portraits as the oldest (!) and finest of the ones in the Surgeons' Guild Chamber, and that of 1632 as the most beautiful of the two. Reynolds, when visiting the Surgeons' Hall in 1781, was full of praise for the natural rendering of the corpse and the portrait figures (though it appears from his words that he rates the *Anatomy Lesson of Dr Deyman* higher). It is obvious that the two works by Rembrandt, the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* and the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Deyman* (Br. 414) were singled out for praise by guides and the public, and that people were aware that they were by Rembrandt. In view, moreover, of the continuity of the information about the origins of the two works (see 8. *Provenance*), there can be not the slightest doubt about their identity.

The interest of the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* as a yardstick for judging Rembrandt's portraits from his early years in Amsterdam is limited to some extent by the fact that, being a group portrait, it is

Fig. 3. Detail





not readily comparable with single portraits in all respects. A major pictorial device used here and connected directly with a complication typical of the group portrait is, for example, the step-by-step lessening in emphasis of plastic modelling and of contrast in colour and lighting as the persons portrayed are placed further away from the viewer. The strongest light falls on the trunk and thighs of the cadaver and, rather less so, on the forcefully modelled heads and collars immediately above it; among these the head of Dr Tulp, through his looking almost directly into the light, shows hardly any shadow effect. His hands, too, are placed in the bright beam of light. The rearmost man (no. 8) presents the other extreme – the contrast is reduced to a cast shadow, with little internal detail, set against the dull flesh colour. In both the brightest and the least lit areas the forms appear fairly flat; in the light this is true of the body (apart from the shadowed parts of the head and feet), as it is of the rearmost figure seen in the gloom. It is precisely in these two areas that the contour plainly plays a great part in defining the form, as it does in other areas of high contrast – the arm of the second figure from the left (no. 4), the further side of the face of no. 5 (the contrast suggesting a considerable distance in both instances) and the right arm of Dr Tulp. Detail is avoided close to such points of high contrast, making the suggestion of depth stronger than that of form. It is clear that using locally concentrated contrast effects for achieving a difference in depth allows only a very limited amount of contrast for the whole group against the background, and has made an overall quite murky background essential. The resulting effect of depth in the room in which the group is gathered is in some ways ambiguous – the architecture depicted appears to extend quite far back, and yet the dimly lit rear wall is not really set back from the figures.

It is noticeable that the outlines, especially that of the whole of the group, frequently make almost right angles, presenting a stable pattern. In general the contour, where it stands out, seems hardly ever to follow a straight line – even along the edge of the board on which the corpse is lying – but often to offer swelling curves which repeatedly meet, especially in the contour of the right arm of no. 4 and that of the chest of the corpse, to form acute angles. These swelling curves give the suggestion of bulk, even where there is no further definition of the modelling. On the other hand it can also be noticed that this rhythmic independence of contour does not occur everywhere, and decreases when the depiction of form tends towards a greater degree of precision, as for example in the foreshortened left hand,

the hat and the head of Tulp. In general, however, the details in individual forms are not developed very far, and the heads and collars appear as light tones of varying intensity against a predominantly dark whole.

Coupled with this there is a decrease in the amount of detail and level of lighting towards the edges of the composition. The focus of attention is formed by the lit part of the corpse and by the figure (no. 5) leaning forward immediately above it; the latter moreover stands out through the colour accent provided by the purple-grey of his lit shoulder. Tulp is able to compete with this because his bulky figure is placed somewhat apart from the others and because his face, almost devoid of shadows, is turned directly into the light. Throughout the painting there is a restrained rendering of materials. The heads are for the most part modelled subtly with curves and hollows, yet are still seen in broad terms. Even a detail like the dissected arm is – though it may be very accurately rendered – painted remarkably freely.

The heads cannot, in the way they have been worked up, be described as stereotyped. The shadow tints in the flesh areas, for instance, range from brown to grey, and – partly as a result of this – one gets the impression of variety in the flesh colours. Yet all the heads do have a number of common characteristics in the way they have been developed. The brushstrokes, for instance, tend to follow the plastic form, and gradations – never abrupt, but rather gently flowing one into the other – render the face as a plastic whole. Even apparently linear elements, in particular the eyes and mouths, are always carefully allotted a role in the interplay of curves in the head; nowhere do the lines appear as lines, but rather as narrow zones of shadow that subtly gain and lose in width. Opportunities for creating strong contrasts within the head by using the cast shadows of moustaches and eyebrows have apparently been deliberately passed over in favour of maintaining a continuity of form. At places where sharp lines might have been expected, such as in the eye where the white of the eye and the iris meet, these lines are made vague by using a somewhat ‘ragged’ succession of fine brushstrokes. The ears are in general given very little detail. The plasticity of the heads is enhanced by an unobtrusive use of subtle reflections of light.

Where the sequence of production of the painting is concerned, it may be assumed from study of the paint surface and of the X-rays that the background was executed at an early stage, when the overall layout had been decided on in the dead colouring. When this was being done the figure of Hartman Hartmansz. (no. 3), seen turning round behind the



Fig. 4. Detail (1:2)



Fig. 5. X-ray



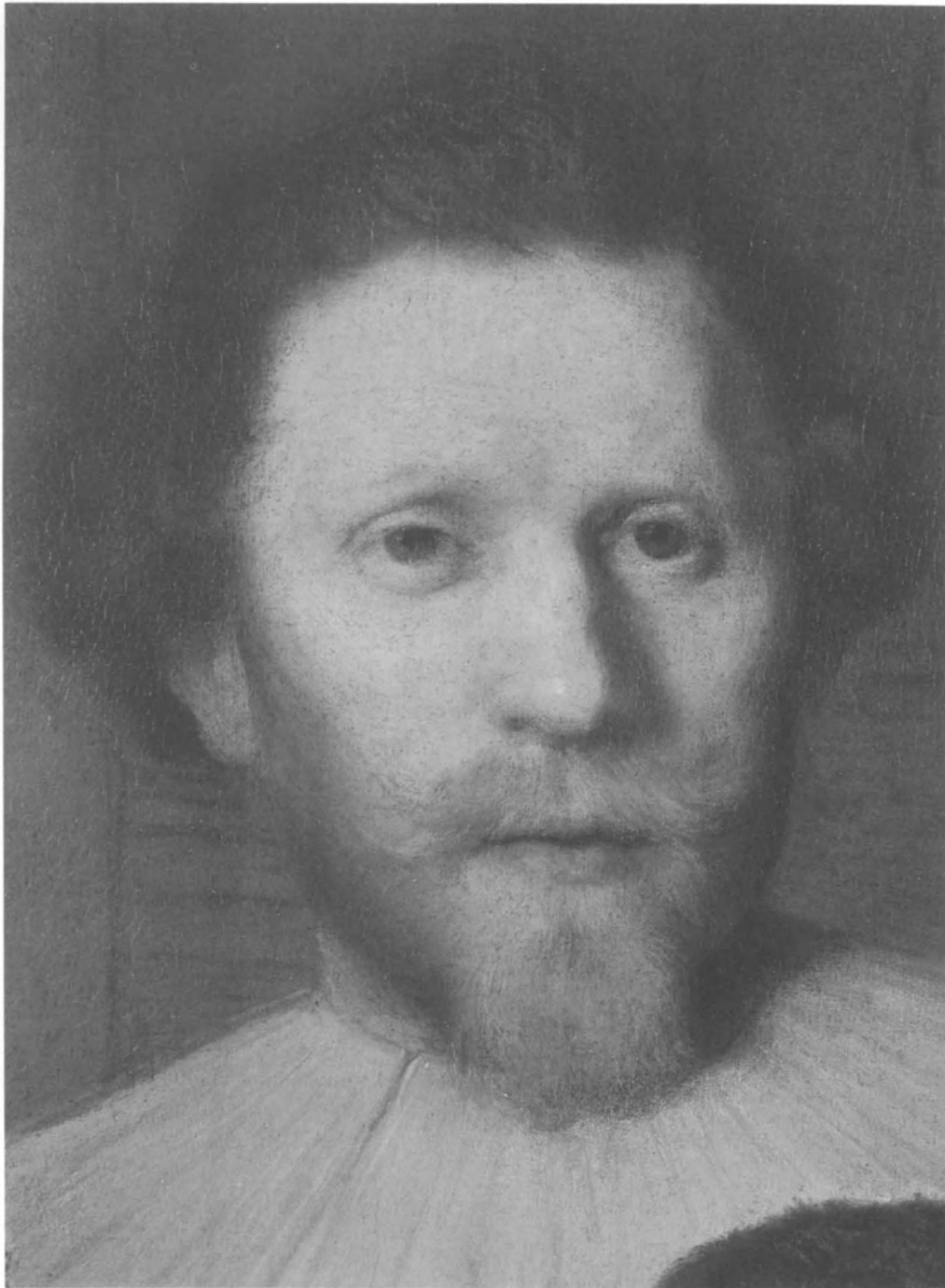
Fig. 6. Detail (1:1.5)



main group, had a reserve left for it in a different position, as was also noted by De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes (op. cit.<sup>1</sup>, pp. 86 and 102). Above him to the left Frans van Loenen (no. 8) was given a large hat, and the head of Tulp (no. 1) was broader than in the final execution. In view of the continuity seen in the paint of the background

today even at these places, and of the fairly light tone of large areas of the background in the X-rays that must come from the paint applied in an early stage, one can assume that the entire background was painted a second time, and darker than the first time. There may be confirmation of this in the fact that De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes (op. cit.<sup>1</sup>,

Fig. 7. Detail (1:1.5)



p. 90) found local traces of a layer of grey paint beneath a dark layer under the collar of the figure to the far left (no. 7), which is painted on top of the background. It is unlikely that, as the same authors assume (*op. cit.*<sup>1</sup>, pp. 86–88), the hat of Frans van Loenen was not only set down in the underpainting and had a reserve left for it in the paint of the background, but was also completed in paint. This was, on the evidence of the X-ray, certainly not the case with the figure of Hartman Hartmansz. in its original position, nor with the broader head of

Tulp. Equally improbable is their belief (*loc. cit.*) that the changes seen in Tulp's hat, collar and righthand cuff, when compared to the X-ray image, are the work of a restorer. In all these areas Rembrandt seems himself to have departed from his initial lay-in. It is evident, especially, that the slight differences in Tulp's present moustache compared to the – naturally rough – form of the reserve for it seen in the X-ray stems from the artist's working method, and not from restoration (as De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes, *ibid.*, thought).

The paint used for the corpse often slightly overlaps adjacent areas along the contours, and was consequently – as would fit in with the procedure of working from back to front – given its final execution at a very late stage in the proceedings. Finally one sees, both from observation of the paint surface and from study of the X-rays, that the figure on the far left, Jacob Colevelt (no. 7), did not have a reserve left for it in the background, but was painted over the latter (and presumably over the second version) as an addition. This was already assumed by Jordan<sup>2</sup> and later by Heckscher<sup>3</sup>. These authors believed, however, that the uppermost figure of Frans van Loenen (no. 8), too, did not form part of the original composition, and Heckscher furthermore attributed both figures to another hand. De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes (op. cit.<sup>1</sup>, pp. 86 and 105) correctly concluded from the X-rays that the figure of Frans van Loenen does belong to the original composition. They also thought, however, that another artist (Jacob Backer?) was responsible for the addition of Colevelt on the extreme left, basing themselves on the sitter's vacant gaze. This seems insufficient reason to assume that this subtly modelled profile portrait would have been added by a different hand, though one must admit that the addition of this figure, largely repeating the posture of his neighbour Adriaen Slabberaen (no. 4), does nothing to improve the composition of the group. The reason for including Colevelt at a late stage must have been the desire expressed by him only when the painting was well underway.

Apart from this addition, the only significant changes in the composition thus appear to consist of the suppression of Frans van Loenen's large hat and the shift of the figure of Hartman Hartmansz. to the right and lower down. These changes, which must both have occurred at an early stage, seem to be interrelated. In the first version, Hartman's figure must have led up to the apex of a steep and rather compact pyramid; in the final execution the disappearance of Van Loenen's hat may have entailed the lower position of Hartman, and the latter's shift to the right now produces an easier rhythm.

The large signature, appearing as an inscription on the paper scroll hanging on the wall, attracts attention for more reasons than one. In the first place, this is the only instance known to us of Rembrandt signing a painting in 1632 with his forename written out in full. In the second, the spelling of the name without a *d* is unusual though analogies are not lacking, and finally the v-shaped mark following the *f* of 'fecit' – obviously to be understood as an abbreviation – occurs in this form only a few times. The only complete analogy from 1632 is provided by the signature on the etching of *S. Jerome praying*

(B. 101). The use of the name *Rembrant* (without the *d*) occurs a number of times on paintings from 1633 and 1634 (cf. nos. A 40, A 64, A 67, A 68 and A 94). Until the painting was cleaned in 1951 the signature was overpainted with more closely placed letters (cf. the facsimile in the 1935 Mauritshuis catalogue<sup>4</sup> and the comments by De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes, op. cit.<sup>1</sup>, pp. 90–91), and differed clearly from Rembrandt's way of writing, especially in having an *R* open to the left. This overpainting must at all events have been done before 1798 (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*), presumably during one of the restorations carried out in the 18th century (see 5. *Documents and sources*). It seems doubtful whether, even in its present form, it can be accepted as original. The stiff shape of the letters and numerals and a certain lack of rhythmic cohesion in the inscription as a whole would seem to militate against its authenticity. Our suspicions on this point were prompted by the examination carried out by the handwriting experts Mr H. Hardy and Mrs R. ter Kuile-Haller of the Forensic Science Laboratory, Rijswijk, at the initiative of professor Dr W. Froentjes.

Not authentic, of course, is the list of names of those portrayed, which is painted over the anatomical illustration in the book held by Hartman Hartmansz. The letters used – themselves in turn later overpainted to some extent – do not give the impression of dating from long after 1700, but the spelling of the names (Blok instead of Block, Kalkoen instead of Calkoen, etc.) points to an origin no earlier than the last quarter of the 17th century. A dating around 1700 seems the most likely; in 1700 and 1709 there is mention of cleaning of the paintings belonging to the Surgeons' Guild, carried out by Jurriaan Pool and Pieter Blaupot respectively (De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes, op. cit.<sup>1</sup>, p. 220), and although no. A 51 is not expressly referred to the list of names may have been added on one of these occasions. The numbers alongside the figures, matching those on the list of names, are of course from the same date.

Dr Nicolaes Tulp (1593–1674), who was primarily a general practitioner, was appointed praelector of the Surgeons' Guild by the city authorities in 1628. It is generally assumed, with good reason, that the commission for the painting arose from his second anatomy demonstration (given, as usual, in wintertime) on the body of Adriaen Adriaensz., alias Het Kindt, who had been hung on 31 January 1632<sup>5</sup>. From the information quoted by Heckscher (op. cit.<sup>3</sup>, pp. 188ff) from the *Anatomij-Boek* (Amsterdam Archives no. 294), and the supplementary notes to this by Dr I. H. van Eeghen<sup>6</sup>, it appears that (contrary to what was previously

assumed) all those portrayed were in fact members of the guild; of the group, only Adriaen Slabberaen (no. 4) and Jacob de Witt (no. 5) were among the six wardens of the guild in the year 1631/32. For this reason they occupy prominent positions, on either side of the head of the corpse. Dr van Eeghen assumed that the four other wardens did not have themselves shown in the group because they were already included in earlier group portraits owned by the guild (by Aert Pietersz., 1601–1603, by Thomas de Keyser, 1619, and by Nicolaes Elias, 1625). Evidently only those members of the guild who were prepared to pay for it were portrayed. Heckscher rightly concluded from this ‘that it was not the guild but Dr Tulp himself and those portrayed with him that commissioned the painting individually and at their private cost’. This should not be taken to imply that, as Kellett<sup>7</sup> subsequently concluded, there was anything unusual about the arrangement; group portraits of members of a corporation or guild were by definition a gift to the body concerned by those portrayed, and were paid for by them privately (cf., for example, a deed published by Jan Six in: *O.H.* 4 (1886), p. 85). The composition of the group depicted by Rembrandt will therefore have been decided by the readiness of two of the six wardens and five – originally four – of the ordinary members of the guild to contribute to the cost together with the praelector.

Heckscher has commented rightly, but rather too emphatically, on the importance that anatomy demonstrations and the book illustrations based on them had for group portraits of Amsterdam and, later, Delft surgeons together with their praelectors. The earliest example from Amsterdam, the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Sebastiaen Egbertsz. de Vrij* completed in 1603 by Aert Pietersz. (A. Blankert, *Amsterdams Historisch Museum. Schilderijen daterend van voor 1800. Provisional catalogue*, Amsterdam 1975/1979, no. 336) shows all 28 members of the guild, most of them standing behind and a few sitting beside and in front of a body stretched out parallel to the picture plane (Wolf-Heidegger and Cetto<sup>8</sup>, p. 306, no. 255); the composition is obviously based on the arrangement, current well before 1600, of the banquet of the civil militia. The next Amsterdam example, the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Sebastiaen Egbertsz. de Vrij* painted by the young Thomas de Keyser in 1619 (Amsterdam, Amsterdams Historisch Museum, A. Blankert, op. cit., no. 210), shows the praelector and five wardens, grouped symmetrically on either side of a skeleton. The *Anatomy lesson of Dr Johan Fonteyn* of 1625 by Nicolaes Elias, which has survived in only fragmentary form and is now in the Amsterdam Historisch Museum (A. Blankert, op. cit., no. 138) cannot in its present state provide a valid subject of com-

parison. It is plain that the Amsterdam precursors of Rembrandt’s painting did not attempt to record an anatomy demonstration, but used this solely as a thematic formula for a group portrait. That matters could also be otherwise is shown by the Delft *Anatomy lesson of Dr Willem van der Meer* by Michiel and Pieter van Mierevelt (Wolf-Heidegger and Cetto, op. cit.<sup>8</sup>, p. 307, no. 256), where the arrangement of the figures is that usually seen in a group portrait, but where the inclusion of a balustrade in the theatrum anatomicum with the skeletons displayed on it, and of various means of masking foul odours (censers, laurel branches and a stick of incense) obviously refers to an actual event. Heckscher, basing himself on this, wrongly thought that Rembrandt too ‘was to record them [the members of the guild] at their annual lesson’ (op. cit.<sup>3</sup>, cf. also *ibid.* pp. 33ff: ‘The “Anatomy” as a Realistic Record’), that an actual situation was being depicted, and that the associated elements would have to be filled in by the viewer. The viewer would, for example, need to feel himself as forming part of a large audience (not shown) being addressed by Tulp (*ibid.*, pp. 5, 22, 33), and artificial light in a nocturnal setting was thought to have provided a ‘ready-made Rembrandtian effect’ (*ibid.*, p. 37). It is obvious, however, that (as stressed by De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes, op. cit.<sup>1</sup>, pp. 102–104, 108–109) the group portrait does not, or does not primarily, relate to an actual event. The architecture shown, as nearly always in Amsterdam group portraits, is imaginary, and the lighting is the studio lighting normally found in portraits (and in most other 17th-century paintings). The discussion as to whether Rembrandt’s painting shows a public anatomy demonstration (as Heckscher believed) or a private one (as Kellett<sup>7</sup> thought) is therefore irrelevant, and stems from an anachronistic understanding of the group portrait. The relatively modern title of the work, which we are keeping here for the sake of clarity, gives the false impression of an actual happening being depicted.

The significance of Rembrandt’s painting lies mainly in the extent to which he interpreted this traditional subject as an almost self-contained dramatic situation. While previously most of the persons portrayed almost invariably looked straight at the viewer, and in the De Keyser work of 1619 the two figures to the front still do so, this is here true only of the rearmost figure, that of Frans van Loenen (no. 8): it is he who establishes the contact with the viewer and, as observed by Schupbach<sup>9</sup>, appears to point at the corpse with his right index-finger. The other surgeons are peering intently either at the dissected arm or at the book propped open at the extreme right or, as convincingly pointed out by



Fig. 8. Detail (1:3)



Schupbach (op. cit.<sup>9</sup>, pp. 6–8), at the meaningful gesture of Tulp's left hand (on which see below); Hartman Hartmansz. (no. 3) seems to be comparing the opened arm with the anatomical illustration in the book he is holding, recognized as being such by Heckscher (op. cit.<sup>3</sup>, pp. 67, 133). Tulp, as he speaks looks straight ahead. It is evident that this dramatic treatment, suggesting a moment in time, matches a trend one finds repeatedly with Rembrandt in portraits of couples – the *Shipbuilder Jan Rijksen and his wife* of 1633 (no. A 77), the *Preacher Anslo and his wife* of 1641 (Br. 409) and occasionally also in single portraits, especially the Cincinnati *Portrait of a man rising from his chair* of 1633 (no. A 78). Diagonals invariably play a great part in the suggestion of movement and in the spatial relationships. In the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp*, for instance – the first example of this approach – the diagonal placing of the body is a compositional invention, a novel feature that Rembrandt probably borrowed from history paintings; prototypes for it could be found in, for example, various versions of the Lamentation or the Nativity. It is not impossible that, as Reznicek<sup>10</sup> assumed, Rubens' *Tribute money* in San Francisco may have formed Rembrandt's point of departure for the arrangement of the figures around the

corpse, but nor is this obvious. The motif of figures at the side leaning forward and directing their attention on a dramatic centre had already been used by Rembrandt in the major history paintings from his years in Leiden, the *Judas repentant* of 1629 (no. A 15) and the *Raising of Lazarus* of 1630/31 (no. A 30). For all the dramatic and compositional innovation, Rembrandt naturally otherwise follows current convention closely where protocol is concerned – only the praelector is wearing a hat, and the hat that he had originally intended for Frans van Loenen (according to the X-ray) was discarded.

To what extent a group portrait such as Rembrandt's *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* is removed from an actual situation is moreover shown by the fact that an anatomical dissection invariably, and for understandable reasons, started with the abdominal cavity. Reynolds' description (see 5. *Documents and sources*) – 'to avoid making it an object disagreeable to look at, the figure is but just cut at the wrist' – seems to imply that one was still fully aware of this in 1781. More recently both Heckscher (op. cit.<sup>3</sup>, p. 66) and medical historians<sup>8</sup> have pointed out that the situation depicted here, where the arm has been dissected but the trunk is still intact, could never

have occurred in practice. This is a further reason to look on the corpse in the first place as a symbolic indication of the profession of those portrayed, as a record of whom the group portrait was painted and kept. The question then arises of why the arm should have been given such a central place in the picture.

Heckscher (op. cit.<sup>3</sup>, pp. 73–74) has pointed out that the choice of the arm, in particular the *flexores digitorum* muscles, as the subject of a demonstration is not arbitrary. The woodcut portrait of Vesalius of 1542, included in his *De humani corporis fabrica libri septem* in the first edition of 1543 and various subsequent editions, shows the famous anatomist displaying a specimen of a dissected lower arm and a sheet of paper lying on the table bearing the text ‘De musculis digitorum/mouentibus (etc.)’ (of the muscles that move the fingers); the hand was to remain an attribute in a number of portraits of anatomists. Heckscher presumed ‘that Dr Tulp intentionally appeared as the Vesalius redivivus of his age’. This is improbable, as was shown by Schupbach (op. cit.<sup>9</sup>, pp. 8–23). This author examined in greater detail the various influences that shaped Tulp as an anatomist and found that what is known about his views corresponds with those of, amongst others, the Frenchman Laurentius and the Leiden professor Pieter Paauw, representatives of a tradition that emphasized the significance of the human body as God’s creation and therefore that of the art of anatomy as a path to the knowledge of God. These ideas are particularly relevant to the anatomy of the hand, the admirably constructed instrument which, since Aristotle and Galen, was considered one of the two main distinctions between man and animal (the other being the intellect). Kellett<sup>7</sup> was the first to note in connexion with Rembrandt’s painting that ‘the section on the hand is in a sense the key to Galen’s great book *De Usu Partium*, to his teleological outlook’, and that ‘. . . to those who knew their *De Usu Partium* lay revealed the avowed purpose of the picture . . .’. Schupbach (loc. cit.) was able to trace Galenic ideas in their current Christianized form in Tulp’s own writings, though these are concerned with pathology rather than with anatomy. Especially illuminating is a quotation from his *Observationum medicarum libri tres*, 1641 (III, 21) where he discusses an anatomical topic and adds: ‘Et non poteris non celebrare divinam providentiam, et eximia illa sapientiae monumenta, quae in nobis constituit Deus’ (And you cannot help celebrating Divine Providence and those sublime monuments of Wisdom that God has so profusely established within us). As pointed out by Querido<sup>11</sup> Tulp is not only demonstrating the wonder of Divine Providence by pulling on the flexor muscles

and thus making the fingers curl, but is at the same time repeating this delicate movement with his own left hand. Schupbach (op. cit.<sup>9</sup>, p. 27) summarized the situation depicted ingeniously as follows: ‘In order to illustrate the successive stages of his argument, Dr Tulp is portrayed as if he were demonstrating them all at the same time. With his right hand he differentiates the two flexor-muscles of the fingers: this is the first stage of the demonstration, in which the physical form of the flexor-mechanism is explained. With his left hand he demonstrates a later stage, the discussion of the use of the mechanism. Finally, his facial expression shows that he is mentally already at the climax of his exposition: the Galenic and Laurentian view of the hand as organ of prehension, instrument of instruments, unique to man, a miracle of design, and a monument of the wisdom and power of the Creator. The surgeons [except Van Loenen] respond to Tulp in correspondingly disparate ways.’ The same author (op. cit.<sup>9</sup>, pp. 28 ff.) held Tulp himself responsible for the iconography and interpreted the picture as an emblematic group portrait. The motto implied in the scene would then be ‘[the argument] Tulp impresses on the five lower surgeons; they, by their attitudes, confirm its importance; and Van Loenen mediates their joint lesson to the viewer’ (which might even explain the fact that Van Loenen was originally meant to wear a hat!). The author then proceeds to reconstruct the picture’s latent motto from, on the one hand, the catchphrase for anatomy current since the early 1530s, γνῶθι σεαυτόν or *nosce teipsum* (‘know thyself’) and, on the other, the recurrence of a variant of this, *te disce* (‘come to know thyself’), in the last lines of a poem of 1639 in which the Amsterdam scholar Caspar Barlaeus presents Tulp addressing his listeners during an anatomical demonstration. It can be established (Schupbach, loc. cit.) that ‘know thyself’ provided a *leitmotiv* for the opening address at the beginning of public anatomies and was treated as such by Laurentius and his followers. It encompassed two meanings, *cognitio sui* (‘knowledge of oneself’) and *cognitio Dei* (‘knowledge of God’), and these two elements can be recognized in the final lines of Barlaeus’ poem cited above, where the poet makes Tulp say: ‘te disce’ (come to know thyself), and: ‘dum per singula vadis, crede vel in minima parte latere Deum’ (while you deal with the separate components of the body believe that God lies hidden in even the smallest part). ‘Know thyself’ may thus be said to contain a paradox in as far as the stress may be either on man’s mortality – and ‘know thyself’ becomes synonymous to ‘memento mori’ or one of the other pessimistic maxims that accompanied the skeletons adorning Pieter Paauw’s

Fig. 9. Detail with signature (reduced)



theatrum anatomicum at Leiden –, or on the divine origin of man as a superior part of God's creation. According to Schupbach's attractive hypothesis, both elements of this paradox are included in Tulp's iconographic programme for Rembrandt's painting (op. cit.<sup>9</sup>, p. 49): 'While Frans van Loenen . . . points out the obvious mortality of man, Dr. Nicolaes Tulp reveals the more elusive element that does not die. If our interpretation is correct, it was this metaphysical contrast that the civic anatomist of Amsterdam in 1632 claimed to teach through anatomy.'

The rendering of the body and in particular that of the dissected left arm, has prompted many authors, most of them physicians, to advance various queries and theories; the best surveys of these have been made by Querido<sup>11</sup> and Schupbach<sup>9</sup>. What calls for an explanation is first of all the fact that the right arm, which reaches hardly to the cloth round the hips, is considerably shorter than the left. Most authors assume that this comes about through separate observation of the body with the right arm and of the dissected left arm, which Rembrandt was then not wholly successful in fitting onto the body. This explanation is not entirely satisfactory, not so much because it supposes a certain clumsiness on the part of the artist as because it does not account for the right arm in fact being too short. Querido (op. cit.<sup>11</sup>, pp. 129–130) suggests as a possible reason that the body is not stretched out straight but is slightly curved and lying at a slope on a block placed under the shoulders, which could also have caused the bulging chest. Such a supposition cannot of course be checked; the fact that the head is not tipped back as far as it is in most of the other anatomy paintings does not support the assumption.

Certainly just as important is the question of how Rembrandt's representation of the dissected left arm came about. Since 1900 there has been criticism of the rendering of anatomical details, and on the twist of the arm in relation to the shoulders<sup>12</sup>. An explanation for possible mistakes has been sought by assuming that the arm was not observed from an actual body but copied from an anatomical illustration. Jantzen<sup>13</sup> was the first to suggest that Rembrandt had used a Vesalius illustration for the purpose, that on p. 259 of the 1555 edition of *De*

*humani corporis fabrica libri septem*. Heckscher (op. cit.<sup>3</sup>, p. 66) thought that the 'dichotomy between realistically observed corpse on the one hand and mechanically copied anatomical detail on the other' was indeed to be explained by the use of a 'scientific representation (most likely a Vesalian woodcut that might have been taken from any number of anatomical atlases)'. Moreover he believed it to be evident from the faulty rendering of the anatomy of the arm that Rembrandt 'used an anatomical illustration and, undetected by Tulp, failed to interpret it correctly'; Rembrandt would have depicted the outer side of a right arm (as shown in the Vesalius illustration cited) as the inner side of a left arm. Kellett<sup>7</sup>, discussing Heckscher's book, believed he could identify Rembrandt's model as an engraving by Giulio Casserio that appears as plate XXII in a publication by his successor in Padua, Adriaen van den Spieghel, *De humani corporis fabrica libri decem*, Venice 1627. This supposition, too, failed to find favour in the eyes of later medical authorities. Wolf-Heidegger and Cetto<sup>8</sup> note, on the grounds of a comparison with an anatomical specimen prepared for the purpose, that Rembrandt's representation does contain a number of errors – most of all the arm is twisted unnaturally far outwards, and the connexion between the tendons and the individual fingers is wrong – but these do not appear in the Casserio illustration, nor do various other quite correctly observed features. These authors therefore concluded, also on the grounds of the faithful colouring, that Rembrandt had in fact studied a dissected arm. Querido<sup>11</sup>, on the other hand, believed that mistakes made by Rembrandt would not have been accepted by Tulp if they had not been vouched for by a recognized authority; he acknowledged such an authority, following Kellett, in the print by Casserio. The most recent explanations, that given by Carpentier Alting and Waterbolk<sup>14</sup> and the slightly different one given by Schupbach<sup>9</sup>, are however the simplest – that all the elements depicted by Rembrandt correspond to anatomical reality. We shall not venture an opinion on the merits of these interpretations. The likelihood that Rembrandt did use an actual dissected arm as the basis for his representation seems to us the most satisfactory answer; in the first place because none of the anatomical illustrations mentioned appear convincing to the non-expert as a model, and in the second in view of the pictorial and colouristic execution, where the true-to-nature effect can hardly have been obtained from a black-and-white illustration. That Rembrandt observed the arm at a different (and later) moment from the rest of the body remains – if only because of the usual course of events already referred to – quite probable, and

could well explain the excessive twist of the arm in relation to the body. Here it may be noted that one Pieter van Brederode, a trader who compiled genealogical and heraldic information, went to see Rembrandt two days before the latter's death, on 2 October 1669, and under the heading 'Antiquite en Rarityten overlangh vergadert by Rembrant van Ryn' (Antiquities and rarities gathered over long years by Rembrant van Ryn) listed among other items 'vier stucke gevilde Armen en beenen door Vesalius geanatomoseert' (four flayed arms and legs anatomized by Vesalius) (H. d[e] l[a] F[ontaine] V[erwey] in: *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 56 (1969), pp. 177–179; Strauss *Doc.*, 1669/3). However this information ought to be interpreted in precise terms, it does seem to prove that artists could themselves own 'anatomized' parts of bodies.

Those who have thought that Rembrandt's representation of the left arm was taken from a book illustration have of course identified the folio book propped up at the feet of the corpse as an example of this publication. Heckscher (op. cit.<sup>3</sup>, p. 67) noted that the hint of lettering on the lefthand page of this book does not match the typography of p. 258 in the 1555 edition of Vesalius, and reminds one most of handwritten letters: if a printed book is intended – and an anatomical atlas would then seem the most obvious – one has to conclude that neither those commissioning the painting nor the painter set much importance on identifying it clearly. Heckscher (op. cit.<sup>3</sup>, p. 67 and note 48) saw the paper held in the hand of Hartman Hartmansz. (no. 3) as the lefthand page of an open book on which (beneath the list of the sitter's names, added later) one can see an anatomical illustration, possibly to be identified with the small woodcuts of the arm in Vesalius or, as Schupbach (op. cit.<sup>9</sup>, p. 24) thought, with one of Vesalius' 'dancing' ecorchés.

## 5. Documents and sources

– Caspar Commelin, *Beschryving der Stadt Amsterdam, Vervolg*, Amsterdam 1693, p. 651, under the heading *D'Anatomie of Snyburg*<sup>15</sup>:

'Dese Kamer is niet alleen verciert met eenige menschen en beesten Geraamtens, maar ook van verscheyde Schilderyen, gedaan door bysondere konstige Schilders, daar onder twee door den vermaarden Rembrant gedaan, welke boven al uyt munten; deselve verbeelden in 't midden een subject van een Mensch dat ontleed word door de in der tijd zijnde Professor Anatomiae, daar by en om geplaatst staan, de in dienst zijnde Overluyden.' (This Chamber is adorned not only with a number of skeletons of men and animals, but also with several paintings done by outstandingly skilled artists, including two by the renowned Rembrant which stand out above all the others; these show in the middle a subject of a man who was dissected by the then Professor of Anatomy, with alongside and placed standing around him the serving wardens of the guild.)

As well as to no. A 51, this undoubtedly refers to the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Deyman* (Br. 414), which has survived only in fragmentary form.

– Zacharias Conrad von Uffenbach, *Merkwürdige Reisen durch Niedersachsen, Holland und Engelland*, Ulm 1753, III, p. 546<sup>16</sup>:

'Den 20. Febr. [1711] Morgens waren wir op de Schneykamer oder Theatro anatomico . . . Der Junge, so uns herumführte, rühmte die Schilderey an der Thüre insonderheit, allwo der Todte in der Verkürzung liegt, so dass man ihm unter die Fussohle siehet. Es ist zwar ein gutes Stück, doch nicht das beste. Eines rechter Hand des Camins ist demselben weit vorzuziehen und war unvergleichlich. Auf diesem Stück verichtet der berühmte Anatomicus Tulpus die Section. Hiervor soll ein noch lebender Burgermeister allhier tausend Thaler geboten haben, wie es dann gewiss gar schön.'

– Minutebooks of the Surgeons' Guild (Amsterdam City Archives). Minutes of 9 May 1732<sup>17</sup>:

'item [is geresolveerd en voldongen] om alle de schilderijen te doen ophelderen of schoonmaken, en te repareren de mantel van de prof. N. Tulpus. afgeschilferd, zijnde versengt doordien een vuurige Rook [door een vierkant gat in de schoorsteen] langen tijd tegen dat schone stuk van Rembrandts, heeft geklommen, en om sulks verder te verhoeden, is het kassien dat in de hoek bij het torentie heeft gestaan geset naast de schoorsteen.' (item [it is resolved and decided] to have all the paintings brightened or cleaned, and to repair the cloak of Prof. N. Tulpus that has flaked, it being singed through hot smoke [from a square hole in the chimney] having for a long time past risen up onto that fine work by Rembrandts and in order to prevent such happening further the little cupboard that used to stand in the corner by the turret has been set against the chimney.)

– Minutes of 20 September 1732. At the same time as the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Joan Fonteyn* by Elias, the work by Rembrandt was brought back, 'corrections' having been made to both by J. M. Quinkhard<sup>18</sup>:

'de mantel van de Heer professor nicolaas Tulp, ook gebrand zijnde voor bladders, en op enige plaatsen de verwen ten enemaal van het doek geborsten, zo hebben de overliden ook goed gevonden dien professor hoog loffelijker gedagtenisse, met een nuwen mantel te voorzien.' (The cloak of Professor Tulp also being burned into blisters, and at a number of places the paint having entirely burst off the canvas, the wardens have thought fit to provide that professor of most worthy memory with a new cloak.)

– Minutes of 16 October 1747<sup>19</sup>:

'd gildeknecht van der Waart geeft aan overliden te kennen dat het schildery Tulp door Lekkazie mogt beschadigt worden hebben overliden aan d gildeknecht gesegt dat door de timmerman te laten ondersoeken nevens d schilder J. M. Quinkhard.' (The guild steward Van der Waart having informed the wardens that the painting of Tulp could be damaged by leakage, the wardens told the steward to have this examined by the carpenter as well as by the painter J. M. Quinkhard.)

– Minutes of 6 June 1752<sup>20</sup>:

'Alzoo overliden van Haar Weledele grootagtbaaren Heeren Burgemeesteren permissie hebben gekreegen om het schilderij van d Ed. Heer professor tulp te Laaten verstellen en schoon te maaken door de Schilder: Jan van dijks.' (The wardens have obtained permission from their Honours the Burgomasters to have the painting of the Professor Tulp repaired and cleaned by the painter Jan van Dijks.) – Jan van Dijk was in the service of the city as a restorer of paintings, and had charge of the paintings in the city's art gallery in the Town Hall.

– J. Wagenaar, *Amsterdam in zyne opkomst, aanwas, geschiedenis-*

sen III, Amsterdam 1765, p. 385, in a description of the guild chamber: '... en de wanden, rondom, behangen met oude en nieuwe schilderstukken, tot twaalf of meer in getal, doorgaands, gezelschappen van Overluiden of Chirurugijs, en Voorlezers of Professoren in de Ontleedkunde verbeeldende ... Doch de twee oudsten en fraaisten zyn beide van Rembrandt: het schoonste van de twee is in't jaar 1632 geschilderd, en vertoont Doctor Tulp en de Chirurugijs Jacob Blok, Hartman Hartmansz., Adriaan Slabberaan, Jacob de Witt, Matthys Kalkoen, Jacob Koolveld en Frans van Loenen, die allen, behalve den laatsten, ook Overluiden geweest zijn.' (... and the walls hung all around with old and new paintings, up to twelve or more, most of them representing groups of wardens or surgeons, and praelectors or professors of anatomy ... The two oldest and finest are both by Rembrandt; the finest of the two was painted in the year 1632, and shows Dr Tulp and the surgeons ... all of whom, except for the last-named, have also been warden.)

– J. Reynolds, 'A journey to Flanders and Holland in the year MDCCLXXXI', *The works of Sir Joshua Reynolds* ... , ed. E. Malone, London 1809 4th edn., II, pp. 356–357, under the heading *Amsterdam, Surgeons' Hall*: 'The Professor Tulpus dissecting a corpse which lies on the table, by Rembrandt. To avoid making it an object disagreeable to look at, the figure is but just cut at the wrist. There are seven other portraits coloured like nature itself, fresh and highly finished. One of the figures behind has a paper in his hand, on which are written the names of the rest: Rembrandt has also added his own name, with the date, 1672 [!]. The dead body is perfectly well drawn, (a little foreshortened,) and seems to have been just washed. Nothing can be more truly the colour of dead flesh. The legs and feet, which are nearest the eye, are in shadow: the principal light, which is on the body, is by that means preserved of a compact form. All these figures are dressed in black.'

For other texts and further information on restorations of the paintings belonging to the Surgeons' Guild (without any specific mention of no. A 51) in 1700, 1709 and 1780, and of no. A 51 in the 19th century, see De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes, op. cit.<sup>1</sup>, pp. 91–93, 220–221.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

One of the earliest among numerous prints is the etching by Johannes Pieter de Frey (Amsterdam 1770–Paris 1834), which shows the painting in the same direction (fig. 10). It bears the inscription: *Rembrandt van Rijn pinx 1632 – J. de Frey f. aquaforte 1798*; Dutch and French texts, of which the latter runs: *DEMONSTRATION ANATOMIQUE [faite par le célèbre Médecin Nicolas Tulp/Professeur d'Anatomie à Amsterdam l'an 1632/le tableau original se trouve au Theatre/anatomique d'Amsterdam/J. de Frey Excudit Amstelodami*.

It is hard to say exactly how far the etcher has defined the forms present in the painting more precisely than they are in the original. One gets the impression that especially in the clothing and the background the rendering of form is often clearer than it is in the painting today; the nailheads along the backrest and the seat of the chair of Adriaen Slabberaan (no. 4), for instance, appear much more sharply, and the rectangular form above the open book consists of two stiles and a few rungs (of a chairback?); directly above this one can see a high, dark niche (?). The reproduced signature matches that seen before the cleaning in 1951, i.e. with an *R* open to the left; obviously, the signature had already been strengthened in 1798.

Fig. 10. Etching by J. P. de Frey



## 7. Copies

Drawings from the 18th century by J. Dilhoff of 1760 and Hendrik Pothoven (Amsterdam 1725–The Hague 1795), mentioned in the catalogue of the Mauritshuis<sup>4</sup>, are not known to us. Painted copies from the 19th century occur in a variety of sizes.

## 8. Provenance

– Placed, as the property of the Amsterdam Surgeons' Guild, in the Nieuwe Waag on the Nieuwmarkt (the previous St.-Anthoniespoort) where the Guild Chamber and the Theatrum Anatomicum were established, the latter with a break between 1639 and 1690. Heckscher (op. cit.<sup>3</sup>, p. 112) assumed that the painting hung in the Theatrum Anatomicum, and was thus from 1639 to 1690 above the Kleine Vleeshal in the Nes. De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens and Froentjes (op. cit.<sup>1</sup>, p. 92) pointed out however that Melchior Fokkens in the second edition of his *Beschrijvinge Der Wijd-vermaarde Koop-Stadt Amstelredam* of 1662, when describing the Guild Chamber, expressly mentions the 'groote kostelijke Schilderyen alle die de Kunst der Heelmeesters aangaan' (large, costly paintings all relating to the Surgeons' Art) that were hanging there; they therefore assume, probably rightly, that the guild's paintings, including no. A 51, remained in the Guild Chamber on the Waag during the years 1639–1690.

– At the dissolution of the Surgeons' Guild in 1798, transferred to the Administrators of the Surgeons' Widows' Fund, and still kept in the Nieuwe Waag<sup>21</sup>.

– Offered for sale in 1828 for the benefit of the Surgeons' Widows' Fund, and intended for the sale in Amsterdam, 4–5 August 1828 (Lugt 11819), no. 109. Bought for 32 000 guilders, through the intervention of King Willem I, by the State of the Netherlands and placed in the Koninklijk Kabinet der Schilderijen<sup>22</sup>.

## 9. Summary

On the basis of nearly-contemporary sources it is virtually certain that the painting has always been regarded as a work by Rembrandt. For these reasons the features of style and execution found in the painting are most important for judging other works from Rembrandt's early years in Amsterdam. This

is especially true of the treatment of the individual figures (such as the concentration on essentials, the predominance of plastic continuity over graphic detail, and certain idiosyncracies of contour and contrast). Other features – such as the intensity of colouring and chiaroscuro contrasts diminishing towards the rear – are directly connected with the fact of the picture's composition being more complex than that of single portraits.

As to the genesis of the painting, one has to assume that the first lay-in showed a few divergent features; Frans van Loenen (no. 8) wore a hat, and the head of Hartman Hartmansz. next to him (no. 3) was in a different position. The background was painted twice. Moreover, the seated figure on the far left, Jacob Colevelt (no. 7), was added only at a late stage and was painted over (probably the second) background.

The style has to be judged not only with an eye on Rembrandt's own portraits, but also in the light of the tradition of composition that marked the Amsterdam group portrait. Compared to its predecessors, no. A 51 differs mainly in the high degree to which a self-contained dramatic entity has been achieved with a minimum of contact with the viewer. The diagonally-placed body forms a compositional element that was presumably taken from the history painting.

In spite of the appearance created by the dramatic unity, it is obvious that the painting does not record an actual event, and that the function and form of the group portrait were still dictated by the purpose of commemorating the professional status of the sitters. The demonstration on the corpse is shown as a shared activity with a representational value, and not as a record of reality. This is confirmed by the fact that the situation depicted – the abdomen intact but the arm dissected – does not accord with the normal procedure for an anatomical dissection.

The choice of the *flexores digitorum* muscles as the subject of the demonstration appears to be determined by the special meaning of the hand as the supreme instrument that God bestowed on man. This meaning is emphasized by Tulp's gesture with his left hand (which has the fingers slightly curved through the use of the flexor muscles). As Tulp was probably one of those who considered anatomy a path to knowledge of God, his demonstration may be taken to contain precisely that message. All but one of the listening surgeons seem to be aware of this to a varying degree, absorbed as they are either by the anatomical illustrations shown, by the dissected lower arm or the gesture of Tulp's left hand. Only the rearmost figure looks straight at the viewer and seems to point at the corpse with all its implications

of *vanitas* or *memento mori*: he completes the paradoxical significance that Schupbach ingeniously recognized in the picture's iconographical programme.

The twist of the corpse's left arm, which must have been observed in isolation by the artist, against the body is difficult to explain. The dissected arm is probably, despite what has often been believed, rendered accurately enough to have been done from nature (and not from an existing illustration); the convincing reality of the reproduction is further evidence of this.

The painting shows a little general wear and some local damages, mainly the result of the harm done by hot smoke, mentioned in 1732, which led to Tulp's black cloak being restored.

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- 15 HdG *Urk.*, no. 369.
- 16 HdG *Urk.*, no. 389.
- 17 Amsterdam City Archives. Archives of the Surgeons' Guild no. 216, p. 182. See also [A.] Geyl, 'Kleine bijdragen tot de geschiedenis van de schilderijen van 't Amsterdamsche Chirurijngild, o.a. van de Anatomische Les van Rembrandt', *O.H.* 24 (1906), pp. 38–40.
- 18 Amsterdam City Archives. Archives of the Surgeons' Guild no. 216, p. 217. See also [A.] Geyl, op. cit.
- 19 Amsterdam City Archives. Archives of the Surgeons' Guild no. 218, p. 144. See also [A.] Geyl, op. cit.
- 20 Amsterdam City Archives. Archives of the Surgeons' Guild no. 218, p. 377.
- 21 J. W. R. Tilanus, *Beschrijving der schilderijen, afkomstig van het Chirurijngild te Amsterdam*, Amsterdam 1865, p. 9 and pp. 21, note 7 and 36, note 48.
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**A 52 Portrait of Marten Looten**

LOS ANGELES, CAL., LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART, ACC. NO. M53.50.3

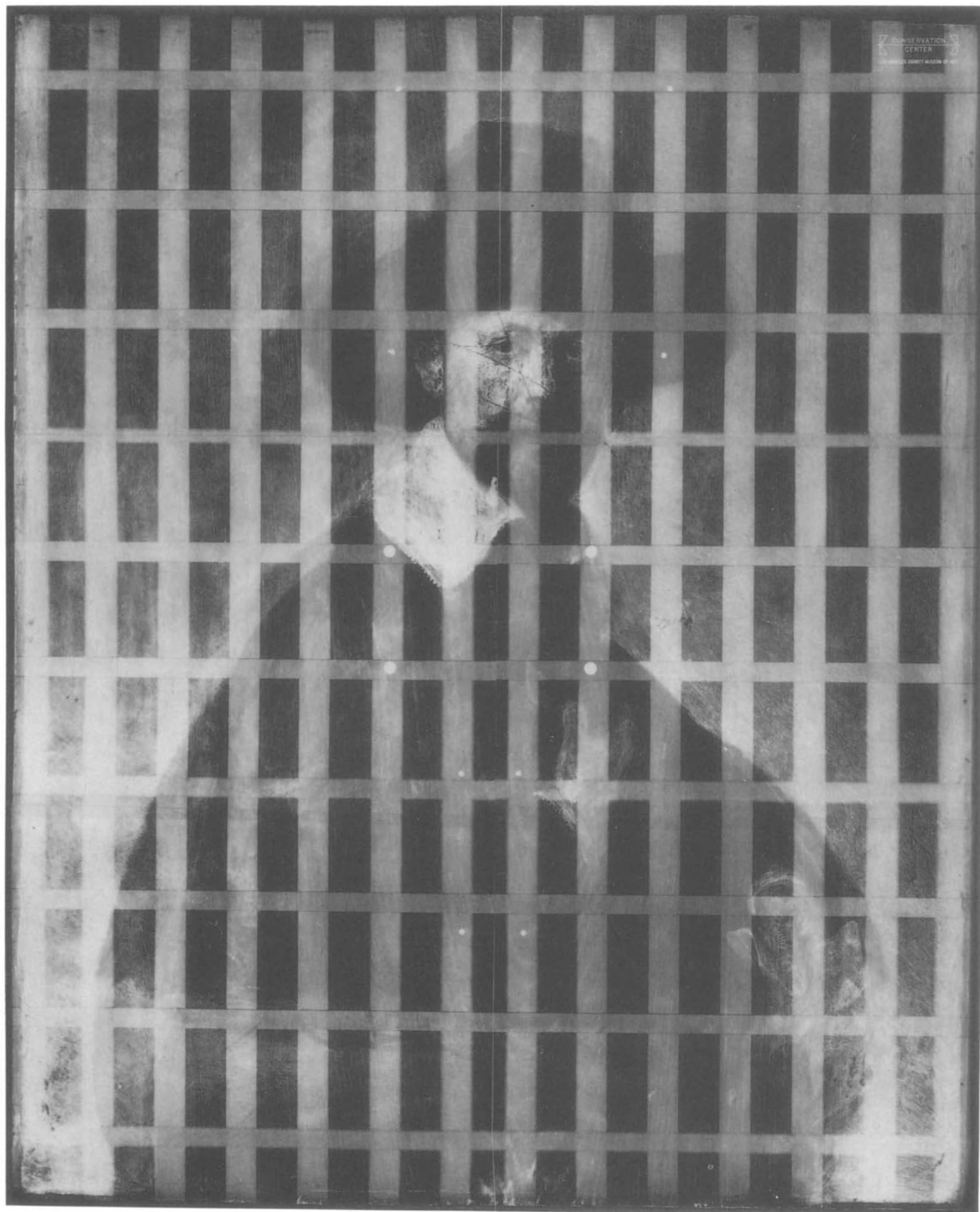
1632

HDG 659; BR. 166; BAUCH 358; GERSON 110

Fig. 1. Panel 92.8 × 74.9 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



### 1. Summarized opinion

A generally well preserved, authentic painting which besides having a reliable signature and date (11 January 1632) also bears the name of the sitter as an inscription on the letter in his hand.

### 2. Description of subject

The figure is seen down to the hips against a fairly light, neutral background, with the body turned three-quarters to the right and the head turned a little towards the viewer. His black clothing consists of a cloak draped over the shoulders and a doublet; a flat, white collar and narrow cuffs show a pinked edge. A broad-brimmed black hat casts a shadow over part of his forehead. He holds his right hand against his chest; in his left hand there is a sheet of paper, on which are written *inter alia* his name ('Marten Looten'), a date ('... xj. Januyary 1632') and, as the signature, the monogram of the artist. Grasped in the palm of his hand there is a folded piece of paper with a dark wax seal.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 2 November 1971 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good artificial light and out of the frame, with the aid of X-ray films of the whole of the painting that were later no longer available.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Panel, most probably oak, grain vertical, 92.8 × 74.9 cm. So far as can be ascertained, a single plank. Back planed and cradled. Traces of the original bevelling can be seen at the left, bottom and top; on the left the remaining section of bevelling has been filled with a wedge-shaped piece of wood.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish-brown is seen in thinly painted parts of the face, especially in the beard.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good, apart from a few local damages. There is, for instance, a narrow strip of retouched damage running diagonally across the face, from the lit part of the forehead through the man's right eye towards the lit wing of the nose and down into the shadow side of the beard. In the area between the upper hand and in the righthand outline of the body there is a small retouch, and above this in the background three damages that have been filled and retouched. Craquelure: none seen.

DESCRIPTION: Although, as will be seen below, a number of changes were made during the course of the work, the execution of the most important passages is very straightforward. The lit part of the face is done in pinkish and yellowish paint with clearly evident brushstrokes which vary in direction and length. The brushstrokes do not always follow the shapes of the face. In the nose, the consistency of the paint reaches a certain degree of impasto. Here almost white highlights are placed, with merging borders, in the pink paint. The predominantly warm tint of the illuminated areas leads, through greyish half-shadows, into shadows with a mainly warm tint. The shadow cast by the hat on the forehead, for example, is in a

darker tone that appears slightly reddish. The deep shadow area of the nose, where the paint varies in thickness, offers a reddish brown in places that are thinner and thus tend to translucency. Towards the eye-socket this tint lessens in intensity and becomes the greyish shadow tint that dominates the area of the eyebrows. Reddish-brown and greyish tints, translucent in places, mark the shadow area of the face at the temple and cheek. The outline of this shadowed half of the face is formed by a relatively opaque, narrow zone of cool grey that has no distinct borders. This tendency to avoid sharp demarcation between areas is apparent in the whole of the head, e.g. in the transitions from the grey irises to the white of the eyes, and in the predominantly pinkish eyelids. There is a quite deliberate difference in tonal values between the two eyes, which goes hand in hand with a certain lessening in the amount of detail. In the eye on the right the pupil and iris can hardly be distinguished one from the other; the catchlight in this eye is darker in tone than that in the other. Fine touches of white suggest an edge of moisture along the lower lids. The ear is, in both its shaping and the differentiation of light and shade, done extremely broadly.

While the colour range of the upper half of the face is governed by the reddish and yellowish flesh tints, the predominant tone in the lower half is that of the almost greenish, straw-coloured blond of the moustache and beard, with the lower lip in red. In the moustache and beard the impression of hair is given by small, separate strokes which in the small beard are in a cool grey with a little ochre yellow; yet moustache and beard are modelled for much the greater part in fluidly merging tones that have no sharp demarcation from the surrounding areas against which they are placed or – as at the cheeks – into which they merge. The growth of stubble along the lit contour of the jaw is indicated in grey without any distinct structure. The lower lip in particular is painted with care, using small, vertical strokes in subtle tints of grey and pink that merge into the shadows of the corners of the mouth. The somewhat blurred mouth-line is painted more thickly than its surroundings, and this dark area also serves to render the shadow of the top lip.

The hat is done in a thin black, and the effect of plasticity and depth suggested by the contours is enhanced by a hint of sheen in an opaque grey. The ear in shadow is just visible, as a reddish dark grey shape against the black of the hat. The collar is laid in with broad strokes of a somewhat yellowish white on top of which a cooler white has been applied locally to produce a subtle but highly effective tonal difference that, together with the supple, rounded contours, suggests the plasticity.

The hand on the chest is painted rather thinly in a slightly greyish flesh tint except for the highest light, where the colour is warmer. The brushwork of both an underlayer (possibly a light underpainting) and the layer of paint placed over this is plainly visible, and contributes a great deal to the lively surface of the back of the hand, especially in the somewhat translucent transition between light and shade. In the thinly painted darkest parts of the hand one can detect traces of an underlying black. The thumb and ball of the hand stand out sharply against the black of the clothing, though the contours become vaguer as the light decreases. The shadow of the cuff on the hand is indicated with an almost black area which is overlapped by the grey of the cuff.

The hand holding the letter is modelled economically, with scant nuances but with aptly placed red-brown cast shadows, grey half-shadows and flesh-coloured highlights. A black underlayer shows through in the letter, except in the bottom right corner. This is, to judge from the paint relief, set over the

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



grey of the background. The uppermost corner of the letter, around the M of 'Mart . . . ' is painted so thickly that the black, if there is any underneath it, can no longer be glimpsed. The writing is in dark grey and black.

The black clothing is executed thinly in a very dark grey, in which broad, fluid strokes, mainly of black, show the shape and shadows of the folds. The sparingly used patches of sheen on the cloak, especially on the upper arm, merge into the black of the cloak.

The structure of the background is more complicated than is usual. Areas of black showing through next to the letter and the contour of the arm above it are evidence that a second background was added over the first in the course of corrections of the figure's contour. This assumption is supported by the fact that the present background leaves narrow strips of darker paint exposed at the left and right edges and perhaps also at the bottom – an indication that the second background was painted when the painting was already framed. This explains why the background appears as an entirely opaque layer of paint, something which in backgrounds on panel by Rembrandt in the early 1630s is exceptional.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### X-Rays

The summary of features of the X-ray image given below is compiled from rough notes made while examining the painting; these were concerned solely with changes made in form, most of which are also evident at the paint surface.

1. The crown of the hat was at some time, perhaps before the second background was painted, slightly taller.
2. The lefthand contour of the collar and cloak was further over to the left.
3. The bottom half of the contour of the arm on the right ran in a less sharply curved line and merged into a bulging shape which shows through as black at the paint surface to the right of the letter.
4. The index finger of the hand in front of the chest was less sharply curved at an earlier stage.
5. The righthand contour of the cheek was a little further to the right.
6. Near the thumb of the hand held in front of the chest there is a small area of paint containing white lead that suggests that the collar may originally have had tasselled bandstrings hanging from it.
7. A large shape in the lower lefthand corner of the painting, limited horizontally at the top, appears light in the X-ray. Its horizontal boundary runs roughly level with the thumb of the hand holding the letter, and continues towards the right to about the centre of the painting. A righthand boundary cannot be made out. This shape may be interpreted as a piece of furniture, in either underpainted or completed form.

#### Signature

Incorporated in the writing on the letter held in the sitter's hand, <RHL (monogram).> with a bold zigzag underline. The letter carries the date <xj. Januyary 1632>. The bold and self-confident hand makes a wholly authentic impression.

#### Varnish

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

A great many features make no. A 52 a characteristic work by Rembrandt; on the evidence of the

reliable inscription it was completed during the first few days of 1632.

The treatment given to the head and hands reveals the familiar subordination of linear elements to the modelling that is suggested in often merging tints; the choice of colour and distribution of light and shade in the flesh areas also match what we know from Rembrandt's portraits of the early 1630s, and the same is true of the brushwork which, while generally recognizable as such, produces a strongly plastic effect. The contours show, in a shortish rhythm in the collar and over longer distances in the black clothing, the characteristic convex, swelling curves with an occasional angular break.

As a composition the portrait may be compared to the *Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts* of 1631 in the Frick Collection, New York (no. A 43). The arrangement in the picture area is similar, as are the line followed by the body contour – steep on the left and running down to the lower right at a shallower angle – and the introduction of a piece of paper in the sitter's hand as a space-creating feature. The turning of the head against the body is a motif that is seen to a greater or lesser extent in most of the hip-length portraits by Rembrandt from these years (cf. the *Leningrad Man at a writing-desk* of 1631, no. A 44; the *Vienna Portrait of a man* from 1631/32, no. A 45; the *Kassel Man trimming his quill* of 1632, no. A 54; and the *Young woman seated* of 1632 in the *Akademie der bildenden Künste*, Vienna, no. A 55). The distribution of light in the background also shows similarities to these paintings. A somewhat unusual feature is that the major part of the figure is to the right of the central axis of the painting, giving an impression of the figure moving from left to right. The evidence of changes in composition that can be seen in the X-rays and at the paint surface show however that in this respect the final result does not match an earlier design. The now quite wide strip of empty background to the left of the figure must, either in an underpainting or in a stage of the completion, have been intersected by a horizontal oblong which also cuts across a sizeable part of the black clothing. It is likely that here a piece of furniture (like the chairback in the *Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts*) provided a horizontal element as a contrast to the rising figure. The paint layer of a second background – the first must have been darker in tone – hides a projecting part of the black dress in the bottom righthand corner; the larger part of the letter and part of the present background lie over a black applied previously. The letter thus belongs, with the second layer of the background, to those areas that were painted only at the end (when the painting was already framed, see *Paint layer*, DESCRIP-

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1)





Fig. 5. Detail (1:1)

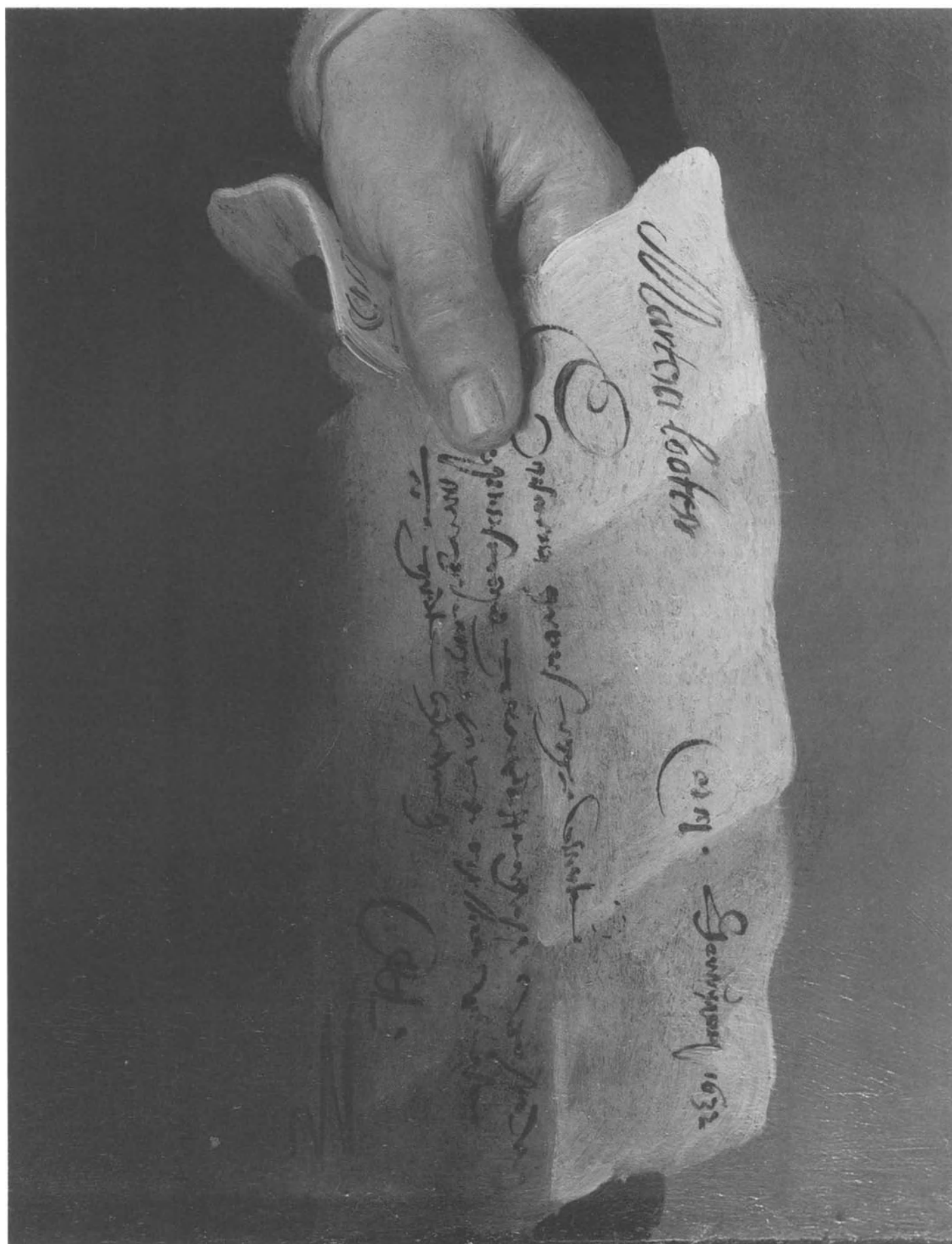
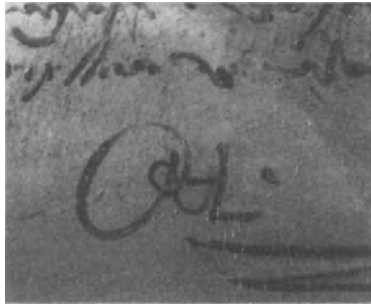


Fig. 6. Detail with signature (1:1)



TION), and the date that features in it, 11 January 1632, must relate to this final stage of completion. How the man's left hand was meant to look in an earlier stage is not clear, just as the bulging part of the cloak at the right is not entirely explicable as a shape. One minor change was the painting over with black of a small, light shape above the sitter's right hand, presumably the tassels on the band-strings holding the collar closed; one can imagine that this light accent became superfluous when the letter was added.

The painting is documented as a portrait of Marten Looten (and has been known as such since 1887<sup>1</sup>) only by the inscription in the letter shown in the picture, and not by any external evidence; one can take it that early references to a portrait of Marten Looten, without a pendant, relate to this work (cf. 5. *Documents and sources*). The reading of this inscription gave rise, in the years 1932–33, to arguments in newspapers and journals between, inter alia, the physician W. J. Kat, the historian J. F. M. Sterck and the art historian F. Schmidt-Degener<sup>2</sup>, and a short summary of this, plus our own findings, now follows.

Line 1, left: *Marten Looten*, written in a humanist cursive hand. Only the last three letters of the forename are not entirely clear, there being one vertical stroke too many. Schmidt-Degener read *Martcio*, and saw this as the dative form of a latinized name; but this is not easy to read into it, and the Latin dative – which one would in any case not expect here – would rather be 'Martino'.

Line 1, right: [ . . . ] xj. *January 1632*, in a Gothic cursive. The first word, read by Sterck as *Adi* (= on the day) is not clear. The number appears not, as is always assumed, to be in Arabic script, but shown as roman numerals. The transcription of the name of the month given here seems the most probable. Schmidt-Degener read 'Jaenuyaery'. In his later letters Rembrandt spelt the word *Januwarij* and *Jawarij* (H. Gerson, *Seven letters by Rembrandt*, The Hague 1959, pp. 34–35, 52–53).

Lines 2–5: Although some individual signs seem perfectly legible, most are not. The whole is prob-

ably, despite the finished impression that the script in the painting makes, no more than a convincing imitation of script that is entirely devoid of meaning, just as are the texts in the Leningrad *Man at a writing desk* and the Kassel *Man trimming his quill*, which are far less distinctly rendered. Sterck already described it as 'pretend writing, and no more than squiggles', while making the exceptions mentioned below. The lyric outpouring that Kat read in it can be disregarded here; yet the readings of Sterck and Schmidt-Degener too are unconvincing:

line 2: Sterck read 'Eersame en vorsienige Gelerte' (Honourable and provident Scholar), while Schmidt-Degener read 'Eersaeme en vors [ienig] vt [= vrunt] en Client' (Honourable and provident friend and Client).

line 3: Sterck read '(D)e personagie nog souden hagen' (would still . . . the person); Schmidt-Degener read this as '[U]e persoon (?) nae graevenhaege versenden' (To send your person to The Hague).

line 4: Schmidt-Degener read the first word as 'vergeten' (forgotten).

line 5: Sterck read this as 'ende Godt befoelen' (and recommended to God).

On the second sheet of paper, Schmidt-Degener thought he could decipher the word 'Cito' (quickly).

Among all the paintings mentioned, to which must be added the *Portrait of the shipbuilder Jan Rijksen and his wife* in Buckingham Palace (no. A 77), no. A 52 is the only one in which an inscription shows clearly the names of both the sitter and the artist. It is in fact uncertain whether the piece of paper depicted does indeed resemble a letter as this would normally have looked – seventeenth-century letters usually (where they are dated) carry the date at the bottom, and the name of the addressee on the outside of the folded sheet.

Marten Looten (1585/86 – 1649) was a wealthy merchant from Amsterdam where, coming from his native Bruges, he had settled and was married, on 7 October 1617, to Cecilia Lups (born in Dalen in 1594/95, died in Amsterdam in 1652). Like a number of his brothers, he was a Mennonite<sup>3</sup>. His oldest son, also called Marten, died in 1656, and his second son Govert, in whose estate no. A 52 is most probably listed (see 5. *Documents and sources* below) died insolvent in 1678. The latter's son Govert (Amsterdam 1668–1727) came back into money, and he owned an important collection of paintings including one by Rembrandt, probably the New York *Man in oriental dress* (no. A 48) which, like no. A 52, dates from 1632. Although this work cannot have been inherited from his grandfather via his father, there is the possibility that he inherited it

from another member of the family and thus that it did in fact come from the possessions of Marten Looten.

### 5. Documents and sources

At the death of Marten Looten's son Govert on 8 October 1678 there was, according to the publication by P. van Eeghen<sup>3</sup>, a mention in the inventory drawn up on 4 November of the following, described as hanging in the best room: '3 Conterfeytsels, sijnde des overledens huysvrouen vader en moeder, ende de vader van den overleden' (3 likenesses, being the father and mother of the deceased's wife and the father of the deceased), together valued at 30 guilders. A fresh valuation carried out for the Chamber of Desolate Estates on 27 February 1679 again mentions the portrait of Marten Looten, now valued on its own at 36 guilders. Although the name of Rembrandt is not mentioned in either of these lists, it can reasonably be assumed that the portrait of the deceased thus mentioned is identical with no. A 52. It can be deduced from these documents that the painting did not have a pendant.

### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

### 7. Copies

1. What must have been a small-sized copy was described in an anonymous sale in Paris, 18 April 1803 (Lugt 6604), no. 195: 'Rembrandt (Van Ryn). Peint sur bois, haut de 34, large de 28 c[m]. Un portrait d'homme de cette vérité frappante qui distingue les beaux Ouvrages de ce grand coloriste. Ce personnage, vu à mi-corps et que l'on dit être Martin Loeten, est représenté presque de face, la tête couverte d'un chapeau rabattu, portant moustache et petite barbe, selon l'usage du tems; sa main droite sur la poitrine, et l'autre tenant ses gants . . . 12 pouces, sur 10.'

### 8. Provenance

- In 1679 still in the possession of the Looten family (see 5. *Documents and sources*).
- Coll. Cardinal Fesch, sale Rome 17ff March 1845, no. 190–88 (22 000 francs).
- Coll. William Coningham, sale London (Christie's) 9 June 1849, no. 52 (£700 to Holford).
- Coll. Sir George Holford (Dorchester House, London), sale London 17 May 1928, no. 34 (to Mensing).
- Coll. A. W. M. Mensing (Amsterdam), sale Amsterdam 15 November 1938, no. 86.
- Coll. J. Paul Getty; gift of J. Paul Getty, 1953.

### 9. Summary

This generally well preserved portrait fits quite well into the overall picture of Rembrandt's portraits from 1631 and 1632 in its approach and execution, and must be seen as an undoubted and quite characteristic original work; this is confirmed by the signature and date appearing on it. At a late stage the composition underwent a number of changes, which can be described in approximate detail. As

the date of 11 January 1632 appears on the sheet of paper that was added at this stage, the painting was probably begun late in 1631. The name of Marten Looten that also appears on the paper gives reason to identify the painting with a portrait listed, without an artist's name, in the estate of his second son.

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- 1 A. Bredius, 'Un portrait de Rembrandt découvert dans la collection Holford', *Courier de l'Art* 7 (1887), pp. 21–22; C. Vosmaer, 'Martin Looten door Rembrandt', *Nederlandsche Spectator* 1887, p. 35.
- 2 [J. F. M. Sterck, W. J. Kat and F. Schmidt-Degener,] 'Het schrift op Rembrandt's portret van Marten Looten', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 20 (1933), pp. 7–12; Strauss *Doc.*, 1632/1.
- 3 [J. F. L.] de Balbian Verster, 'Rembrandt's portret van Marten Looten (1632)', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 19 (1932), pp. 83–85. J. G. van Dillen, 'Marten Looten en zijn portret', *Tijdschrift voor geschiedenis* 54 (1939), pp. 181–190. P. van Eeghen, 'Eensaem was mij Amsterdam', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 44 (1957), pp. 150–154.

HDG 633; BR. 170; BAUCH 359; GERSON 124

**1. Summarized opinion**

A reasonably well preserved and authentic painting, reliably signed and dated 1632, that can most probably be identified with a portrait of Joris de Caullery mentioned in a document of 1654.

**2. Description of subject**

The sitter is seen knee-length, the body turned three-quarters to the right and the head slightly towards the viewer. He is holding a (partly visible) firearm of the type known in the 17th century as a caliver (a firearm smaller than a musket); the barrel, wooden stock and ramrod (fitted into a metal sleeve) can be clearly made out to the left of his hand, while to the right there is the projection where the stock becomes the butt.

His accoutrements, in particular the shiny bandolier from which hangs, on his left hip, a large cavalry sword with a cross-hilt, marks the man as an officer. He wears, over a velvet doublet of which only the purplish-grey sleeves are visible, a leather jerkin, or buffcoat, intended to be worn under a set of armour of which he is wearing only the gorget. (The lacing at the front serves to hold the buffcoat closed, while the strings at the shoulder are used to attach the arm or shoulder-pieces of the cuirass.)

From high up on the left light falls on the sitter's face, his right shoulder, the adjoining upper parts of his right arm and chest and the upper part of the caliver; the other parts of his body and the lower parts of the caliver remain in shadow. At the bottom righthand corner a shadow of the figure is cast on a sparsely-lit wall that serves as the background.

**3. Observations and technical information***Working conditions*

Examined on 26 October 1971 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good daylight and out of the frame. Twelve X-ray films, together covering the whole of the painting, were received later from the museum.

*Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, stuck on panel, 102.5 × 83.8 cm. Single piece. The cusping described below, taken together with the presence of a few nail- or lacing-holes at the lefthand bottom edge, indicates, that the canvas was not originally stuck to a panel. The panel is of oak, and cradled.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: The evidence of fine cracks in the paint at the crest of practically every thread confirms that the canvas was stuck to the panel only after the paint had dried. At the top the cusp pitch varies from 7.5 to 12 cm, extending inwards 11 cm. On the right the cusping is very vague and shallow, and probably secondary. At the bottom the pitch varies between 10 and 12 cm, with a depth of between 5 and 7 cm; on the left the pitch varies between 7.5 and 10 cm, with a depth of 12.5 cm. Threadcount: 11.7 vertical threads/cm (11–12), 13.8 horizontal threads/cm (13.5–14). There is a relatively large number of short thickenings to be seen in the vertical direction. Because of the yarn quality and more even density of the horizontal threads, one may assume the warp to be horizontal.

*Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Difficult to ascertain, but probably a brownish grey.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*Paint layer*

CONDITION: Reasonably good. The structure of the canvas is everywhere very clearly apparent, perhaps as a result of it having undergone some pressure when it was stuck on a panel. There is retouching on the cheekbone, while a large number of darkened retouches can be seen in the clothing and background, mainly in the lower half of the painting. Craquelure: there is virtually none of the craquelure normally seen with paintings on canvas; there are merely some small and mainly horizontal cracks in a number of fairly thickly painted areas, probably connected with the working of the panel, on which the canvas was obviously stuck not long after the painting's completion. In the X-rays extremely fine cracks can be seen on the peaks of the weave (again probably connected with the canvas being stuck on panel).

DESCRIPTION: The background on the righthand side of the painting is a warm grey, applied with brushstrokes that are visible throughout, and has its lightest tone along the outline of the figure. In this light zone the paint is relatively thick, and the brushstrokes for the greater part follow the contour. To the left of the figure the background is a good deal darker, and done more thinly with brushwork that is scarcely detectable. The cast shadow at the bottom right exhibits brushstrokes that probably belong to an underlying layer and match those in the neighbouring grey.

The head is for the most part painted fluidly and thinly. In the somewhat thicker light parts the brushwork is visible to some extent, as it is in the greyish area at the chin, where long, curved strokes can be seen. The highest light on the forehead has been indicated with a little pinkish white, applied quite thickly; the lights on the ridge of the nose are also slightly pinkish, and merge into the stronger pink and red of the nose. The shadow half of the face, too, has a markedly reddish tinge. The reddish brown shadow area has relatively bright red touches that run from the inner corner of the eye in shadow towards the eye-socket and pouch, and can also be found in the shadow half of the nose. The transitions between the shadowed and lit sides of the face have a greyish tint, and in the forehead especially this is used subtly to suggest the relief of the skull. The whole jaw area is modelled predominantly in these subtle greys and browns. The eyes have a clear plastic structure, though forms and shades have not been sharply demarcated. Where lines appear to have been used, as along the upper and lower edges of the eyelids, these are composed of small strokes that merge somewhat one into the other. The brown irises are done with slightly translucent paint, lightest and most opaque at the lower right; opposite this somewhat lighter area there is a small white catchlight. The shadows on the eye-socket in the lit half of the face become a bluish-seeming grey as they come near to the bridge of the nose. In the pinkish lower eyelids, against the eyeball, the small rims of moisture are suggested by tiny, light dots. The nostril on the left is marked with a black, sharp-edged patch; on the right the nostril merges into the shadow area. The moustache and tuft of beard on the chin are indicated summarily in short strokes of thin brown, with the beard worked with fine scratchmarks. The line of the mouth is fragmented, and composed of a number of touches of dark red. The lower lip is rendered plastically with small dabs of pink and red that flow into the sensitively modelled chin area.

The ear, very largely covered by the hair, is indicated cursorily in brown. The hair is painted very thinly, for the most part in browns; the liveliness of rendering of the monochrome hair area is due very largely to the translucent nature of the paint. The fine, curving brushstrokes along the outlines of the hair area lie over the grey of the background.

Fig. 1. Canvas stuck on wood 102.5 × 83.8 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray

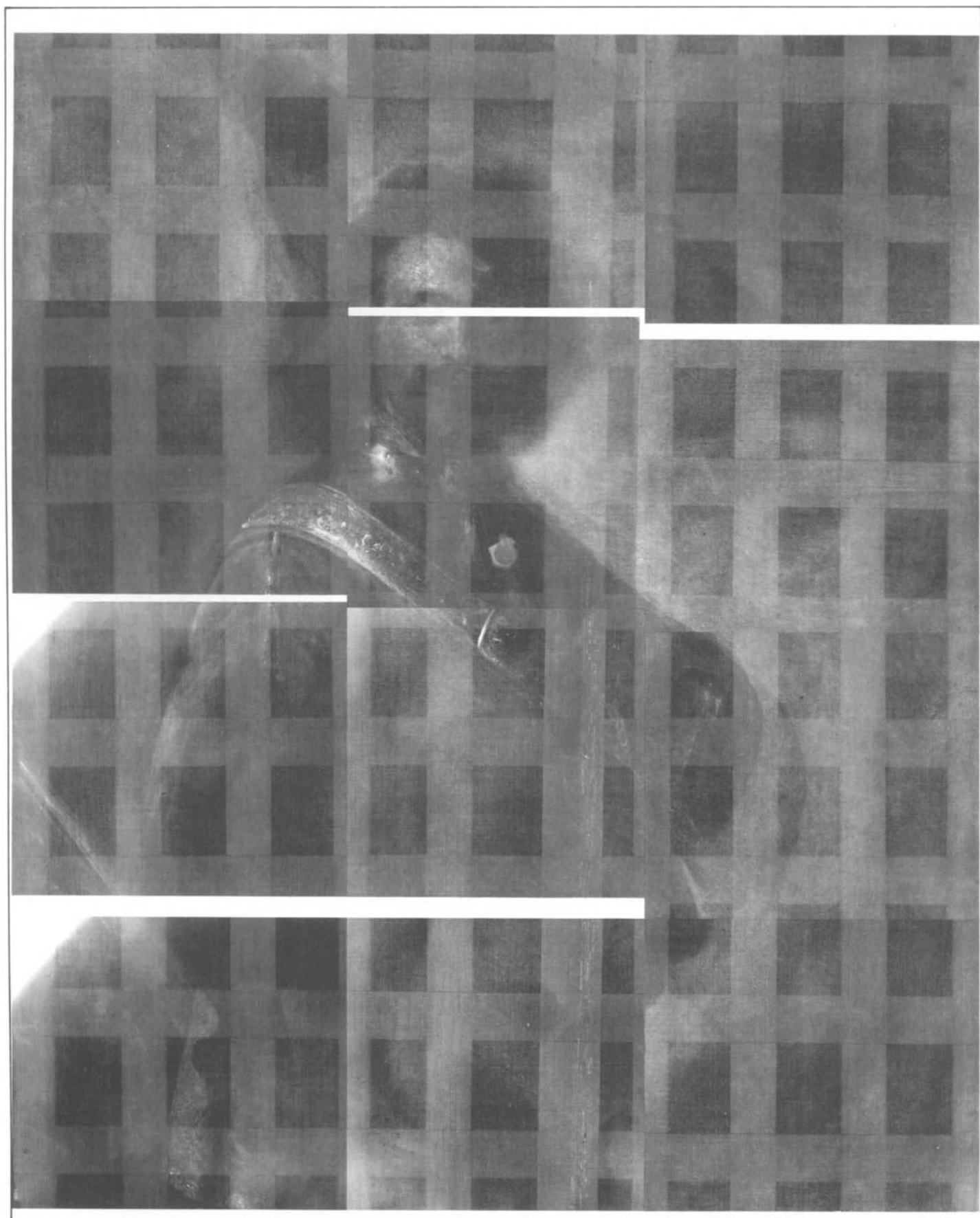
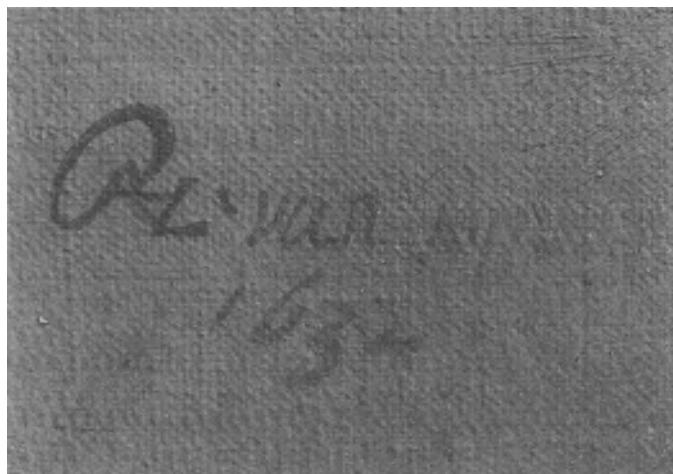




Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1)



The various parts of the clothing are, where they are seen in the light, painted very emphatically, using for each a treatment suited to the material being portrayed. The neckerchief, painted with a striking degree of impasto, shows green-blue and ochre yellow set over a dark basic tone with short, quite thick strokes. The gorget is remarkable for a precisely observed play of light, rendered with careful brushwork in cool and warm tints that merge one into the other, becoming thinner towards the shadow areas. The white catchlight on the up-standing rim by the throat is painted so thickly that one of the brass-coloured rivet-heads is, so to speak, recessed into it. The bandolier is painted in confused greys and browns with a little ochre, in a pattern of superimposed dabs and strokes that is very difficult to follow. On the highest lights, white paint is applied thickly with often smeary and sometimes very thin strokes and dots. At the upper edge of the bandolier a small amount of blue-green (the same colour already seen in the neckerchief) has been used. The yellow buffcoat is painted with broad fields of colour with merging tonal values, the appearance marred towards the bottom by carelessly applied and darkened retouches. The lit part of the sleeve is done in a flat, warm grey that tends towards purple, on top of which the indication of folds and accents of light have been placed using quite long brushstrokes. The small strings dangling from the buffcoat cast deep black shadows onto the sleeve; the strings themselves show strong white highlights. The sleeve of the arm on the right, held with the hand on the hip, is in a rusty reddish brown in the upper part, while the rest is in grey with somewhat stiffly indicated folds. Level with the hilt of the sword the resty red-brown reappears in the sleeve, as a sharply-outlined patch the purpose of which is not entirely clear. The details of the sword-hilt are provided mainly by aptly-placed catchlights on an otherwise summarily indicated shape done in strokes of grey.

The hand holding the caliver is shown in a subdued brown shadow tone, on which the play of reflected light is suggested with soft reddish-grey tints. The firearm itself is rendered with quite long brushstrokes roughly indicating the shape, with subdued highlights that gain in intensity only towards the left, on the blue-grey of the barrel. The paint with which the weapon is rendered stops a few millimetres short of the edge of the painting, while the dark grey tint of the background continues to the edge of the canvas. It is probable that the edge of the canvas was covered by a frame or folded over when the weapon was painted over the background, then already present. This would be evidence of the firearm having been

added at a late stage of the work, and this suspicion is reinforced by the fact that the yellow paint of the buffcoat also continues along the upper part of the left contour of the hand and does not – as one would expect – stop short at the place the firearm was planned to occupy.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The shadow of the cradle interferes with the X-ray image of the painting. The background appears remarkably light on the right along the figure. It can be seen that the reserve for the elbow on the right was far broader, and continued lower down, than the final outline. The righthand outline of the buffcoat, too, was placed a little farther over to the right. It must thus be assumed that the background on this side of the figure was painted twice, up to or slightly beyond the present contour, here and there subsequently covered over again by the paint used for the figure; this is clearly the case at the righthand edge of the neckerchief. On the other hand the small area of background between the sword-hilt and the outline of the figure has been extended a little more to the left, compared to the light area seen in the X-ray.

There seems to have been a change at the lower left near the hand: the lit part of the buffcoat continues where the caliver now slopes upwards to the left. This, combined with the fact noted earlier that the paint of the yellow buffcoat continues between the contour of the hand and the paint of the weapon and that the paint of the weapon stops before it reaches the edge of the painting, leaving the background exposed, confirms the belief that the firearm was painted only after this part of the painting had been completed in a somewhat different form. It is not entirely clear how a dark reserve at the right hand should be read.

At the bottom right the radioabsorbency of the background paint continues out to the edge; the darker paint that at the surface indicates a shadow at this point has evidently been set on top of the background that had already been painted.

#### *Signature*

In the background on the right, a little above the cast shadow, in brown <RHL (in monogram). (in the form of a backwards-sloping stroke) *van Ryn* / 1632>. It makes a very spontaneous and authentic impression, and corresponds closely in form and formulation to other signatures of 1632, such as the one on the well-documented *Portrait of Jacques de Gheyn III* in Dulwich (no. A 56).

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### **4. Comments**

This portrait presents numerous features, of conception and execution, that are found in other portraits from Rembrandt's early Amsterdam period. In the face, for instance, a convincing suggestion of plasticity and effect of light has been achieved with a use of technical means that could be described as almost summary. The almost total avoidance of sharp edges in the various formal elements, the use of grey half-shadows and the carefully calculated gradations of light closely attuned one to the other lend the appearance of the head an atmospheric quality that is particularly rich in suggestion. This quality

Fig. 5. M. van Uyttenbroeck, *Portrait of Joris de Caullery* (?). Coll. Jonkheer Dr H. W. M. van der Wyck, Doorn



is present throughout the painting. The spatial effect is further enhanced by the fact that the figure is only partially lit; the forms nearest to the front are shrouded in shadow, thus giving the impression that they project outside the shaft of light that strikes part of the figure and the rear wall, where the shadow cast by the figure helps define the space depicted.

A number of changes must have been made during the genesis of the painting. The caliver the sitter is holding in his hand was added at a late stage, the righthand outline of the figure was moved substantially to the left compared to the reserve left earlier in the background, and the cast shadow at the bottom right was set over the background when this had already been painted.

Rembrandt had already employed the effect of forms nearest to the front being lost in shadow. It occurs in the Amsterdam *Self-portrait* (no. A 14) and, more forcibly, in the 1629 *Self-portrait* in the Gardner Museum, Boston (no. A 20). It is seen in its most impressive form in the *Man in oriental dress* in New York (no. A 48) from the same year of 1632 in which the de Caullery portrait was produced. In multi-figure compositions it is, as a dark foreground

repoussoir, a common way of enhancing the three-dimensional effect. Applied to the single figure, this arrangement of light was probably developed by Rembrandt himself.

The identification of the sitter as Joris de Caullery was first put forward by Bredius<sup>1</sup>. It is based on a deed drawn up in The Hague on 16 June 1654, in which 'the Noble and Valiant Joris de Caullery, Captain at sea in the service of these lands' transferred a large number of portraits of himself and his late wife to his four sons and three daughters<sup>2</sup>; among these portraits there was 'the likeness of himself, the deponent, with a caliver ['roer'] in his hand done by Master Rembrant'. Bauch<sup>3</sup> wrongly thought that de Caullery was a ship's captain, and that the Dutch word 'roer' (= caliver) should therefore be taken in its other meaning of 'ship's tiller'; he felt that de Caullery would have had himself portrayed holding the latter object, and that identification of no. A 53 with the painting mentioned in the deed must therefore be doubtful. It does however seem, from the little that is known of de Caullery's life, that the interpretation of 'roer' as a firearm is wholly justifiable. According to the deed in question he was a captain at sea, i.e. a soldier on a man-of-war, in 1654 and there is mention of his brave conduct as such in 1658<sup>2</sup>; from other information we learn that in 1635 he was lieutenant of one of the six companies of militia in The Hague (G. van Loon, *Beschrijving der Nederlandsche historiepenningen* . . . II, The Hague 1726, p. 225: information kindly supplied by Prof. Dr R. W. Scheller, University of Amsterdam). One may assume that in 1632, too, he was already a member of the citizens' militia in The Hague; this would explain the military attributes with which he had himself portrayed in that year – the bandolier with a sword, and the firearm; the buffcoat, though not strictly speaking linked to a military function, can also be understood in that light.

The deed cited by Bredius mentions, in addition to the portrait by Rembrandt, further portraits of Joris de Caullery by Paulus Lesire and by Moyses van Uyttenbroeck (showing him 'in his youth'), as well as portraits of him and of his wife by Louis Queborn, Anthony van Dyck and Jan Lievens<sup>2</sup>. One may wonder whether these remarkably numerous portraits can still be identified. This seems to be so in only one instance: the only known painted portrait by Moyses van Uyttenbroeck (coll. Jonkheer Dr H. W. M. van der Wyck, Doorn; fig. 5, cf. W. Martin, 'Zeven onbekende schilderijen', *Feest-Bundel Dr Abraham Bredius* . . . , Amsterdam 1915, pp. 178–185, esp. 180; U. Weisner, 'Die Gemälde des Moyses van Uyttenbroeck', *O.H.* 79, 1964, pp. 189–228, esp.

pp. 194–195, p. 219 no. 3, as ‘probably self-portrait’), signed and dated 1633, may very well show the same man as our no. A 53.

Joris de Caullery’s will of 1661 mentions, besides his own portrait, one of his eldest son Johan also by Rembrandt. It is conceivable that the portrait of a young bachelor in a private collection in Sweden (no. A 60), which is also dated 1632, is that of Johan de Caullery.

### 5. Documents and sources

The picture is probably identical with one mentioned in a deed drawn up in The Hague, 16 June 1654, under the terms of which ‘de Edele Manhafte Joris de Caullery, Cappiteyn te water ten dienste deser landen’ (the Noble and Valiant Joris de Caullery, Captain at sea in the service of these lands) made over to his sons Johan, Lambert, Philippe and Joris and to his daughters Marya, Josyna and Sarah portraits of himself and his late wife, including ‘Aen zijn dochter, Josyna de Caullery het Conterfeytsel van hem comparant met het roer in de hant, gedaen bij Mr. Rembrant’ (to his daughter Josyna the likeness of himself, the deponent, with a caliver in his hand done by Master Rembrandt)<sup>2</sup>. The same painting is again mentioned in the will of Joris de Caullery, The Hague 30 August 1661, together with a portrait by Rembrandt of his deceased son Johan ‘Ende noch aen zijne dochteren Jouffren Josina ende Sara de Caullery . . . het Conterfeytsel van hem heere comparant ende het conterfeijtsel van zijnen soon Johan de Caullery zal. beide bij Rembrant van Rhijn geschildert.’ (And furthermore to his daughters the Misses Josina and Sara de Caullery the likeness of the deponent as well as the likeness of his son, the late Johan de Caullery, both painted by Rembrant van Rhijn)<sup>2</sup>.

### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

### 7. Copies

None.

### 8. Provenance

– Bequeathed by the sitter to his daughters Josyna and Sara in 1661 (see 5. *Documents and sources*).

\*– Probably sale Frankfurt 29 October 1770 (Lugt 1866), no. 70: ‘Rembrandt. Ein Jüngling mit dem Gewehr in der Hand. h. 48, br. 34 [Frankfurt inches, = 113.7 × 80.85 cm]’.

\*– Probably coll. Georg Wilhelm Bögner, sale Frankfurt 28 September 1778 (Lugt 2892), no. 55: ‘Un Chevalier en habillement Espagnol tenant une arquebuse dans la main, par Rembrandt, haut. de 3 pieds 8 pouces sur 2 pieds 9 pouces de large [= 104.2 × 78.2 cm]’.

– Coll. Jonkheer J. H. J. Quarles van Ufford, The Hague (cat. exhibition *Schilderijen van Oude Meesters ten behoeve der watersnoodlijdenden*, The Hague 1881, no. 247), until 1890.

– Dealer A. Preyer, Amsterdam.

– Coll. Charles T. Yerkes (Chicago), sale New York 5–8 April 1910, (3<sup>rd</sup> day), no. 84.

– Dealer Jacques Seligmann, Paris.

– Dealer J. Knoedler, New York.

– Coll. Edwin D. Levinson.

- Coll. Mrs Edna L. Ripin and Mrs Evelyn A. Stein.
- Dealer Wildenstein, New York (cat. exhibition *Masterpieces of Art, Exhibition at the World Fair*, New York 1939, no. 304).
- Gift of the Roscoe and Margaret Oakes Foundation to the museum, 1966.

### 9. Summary

Stylistically the painting is so close to the portraits from Rembrandt’s early years in Amsterdam that it must be regarded as an autograph work. A convincing signature and the date 1632 support this view, as does the fact that a portrait by Rembrandt of Joris de Caullery holding a firearm is mentioned in a document from 1654.

Rembrandt has used here a way of lighting the subject that, so far as is known, had previously been employed in portraiture only by him – that of allowing most of the parts of the figure in the foreground to remain in shadow.

### REFERENCES

- 1 A. Bredius and G. H. Veth, ‘Poulus Lesire’, *O.H.* 5 (1887), pp. 45–51, esp. 51.
- 2 A. Bredius, ‘De portretten van Joris de Caullery’, *O.H.* 11 (1893), pp. 127–128; Strauss *Doc.*, 1654/9 and 1661/7.
- 3 Bauch 1966, 359.

**A54 Portrait of a man trimming his quill** (presumably companion-piece to no. A55)  
KASSEL, STAATLICHE KUNSTSAMMLUNGEN KASSEL, SCHLOSS WILHELMSHÖHE, CAT. NO. GK 234

1632

HdG 635; BR. 164; BAUCH 351; GERSON III

Fig. 1. Canvas 101.5 × 81.5 cm





Fig. 2. X-ray





### 1. Summarized opinion

An authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1632 and as far as can be ascertained in good condition. It may have been somewhat reduced in size before 1734.

### 2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen down to the knees, seated with the body turned slightly to the right in a simple armchair, and looks straight at the viewer. Dressed in black, he wears a pleated collar, with a red ribbon just visible at the join. He holds a quill in his left hand, and is trimming it with a small knife. To the right can be seen a table bearing a few books, and a sheet of paper on which an inkwell is placed. The light falls from the left.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 4 November 1968 (J. B., B. H.), in good artificial light, the painting in the frame and on the wall. Nine X-ray films of the museum, together covering the whole picture, were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 101.5 × 81.5 cm (measured along the stretcher). Single piece. At all four sides a strip of the original painted canvas, c. 2 cm wide, has been folded over along the stretcher (see also *Signature*) and the original canvas must have measured at least 105.5 × 85.5 cm. The lining canvas has been covered with a radioabsorbent paint at the back, except for behind the stretcher.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: At the top the pitch of the cusping varies between 9 and 11 cm; because the canvas has been treated at the back with radioabsorbent paint the depth of the cusps cannot be measured. On the right the cusping has a pitch of 13 to 15 cm, while at the bottom it is between 8 and 10 cm. No cusping can be seen on the left in the X-ray. Vague and possibly secondary cusping seems to be present at damages in the folded-over edge. Threadcount: 12.5 vertical threads/cm (11.5–14), 12.4 horizontal threads/cm (12–13). The weave shows shorter and longer thickenings in both directions. The remarkably even density of the horizontal threads suggests a horizontal warp. The thread density and weave structure show so much similarity to those of the canvas of no. A 55 that it is very probable that these two canvases came from the same bolt.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Not observed.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: According to Kühn<sup>1</sup> the ground consists of two layers; the lower is mainly red ochre with the addition of white lead, and oil as a medium. The upper layer contains white lead and vegetable black, with oil as a medium. The presence of protein points to the use of glue to prepare the canvas.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: So far as can be judged through the yellowed layer of varnish, in a sound condition. Craquelure: a quite large and fairly evenly distributed, irregular network is seen in the collar and light flesh areas. The shadow areas of the face and hands, darker parts of the background and the costume have a much

smaller pattern of shallower cracks. In the darkest parts of the clothing, e.g. between the collar and the hands, there are some large, deep cracks alongside the smaller ones.

DESCRIPTION: Examination of the paint layer is seriously hampered by a quite thick and yellowed layer of varnish.

In the light areas the head is executed in an opaque flesh colour with fairly firm, short brushstrokes that contribute to the modelling. Towards the shadow side the modelling of the forehead is continued in brownish tints. The shadow area, too, is painted opaquely, and especially near the hair and along the underside of the chin shows a greyish reflection of light.

The eye-socket on the left has been formed with care. The upper eyelid is drawn in grey, and its lower edge indicated with a trace of pinkish red, the fold of skin done with a carmine red. In the greyish white of the eye the iris is rendered fairly sharply in greys and at the upper left close to the edge of the pupil is given a white catchlight, placed opposite the lightest part of the iris. The eye on the right is done in similar fashion, but rather more broadly.

The ridge of the nose is bordered by a long, reddish-brown zone that merges into a brown-grey shadow. The dark line of the mouth is interrupted by the drooping hairs of the moustache. The lips have the same light red colour as the flush on the cheek. The moustache and tuft of beard on the chin are painted with thin strokes of yellowish-brown paint, and in the light the hair is executed in a similar fashion in a somewhat darker grey-brown.

The hands are done very carefully, and treated in the same way as the head. The gradations in light and the shadow cast by one hand on the other make a major contribution to defining their spatial relationship.

The collar is painted in long strokes, which follow the pleats, and there is a touch of red at the join beneath the chin. The ends of the piping are indicated with a few small, convoluted lines of a rather thickly applied, clear white.

The books have been painted freely in grey-brown, with a dangling cord in red. The lit part of the table and the background are painted in a grey that becomes darker towards the top. The paint layer is fairly even and smooth and, so far as can be made out, is opaque in the darker parts as well.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: A paint sample taken by Kühn<sup>1</sup> from the collar contained white lead; another from the dark clothing had carbon black with the addition of red lake and white lead.

#### *X-Rays*

The radioabsorbent paint on the back of the canvas veils the X-ray image, apart from behind the frame and crossbars of the stretcher where no paint has been applied.

Short brushstrokes can be clearly made out in the lit part of the head; the shadow cast by the head on the collar appears dark; a reserve was evidently left for this in the white paint of the collar.

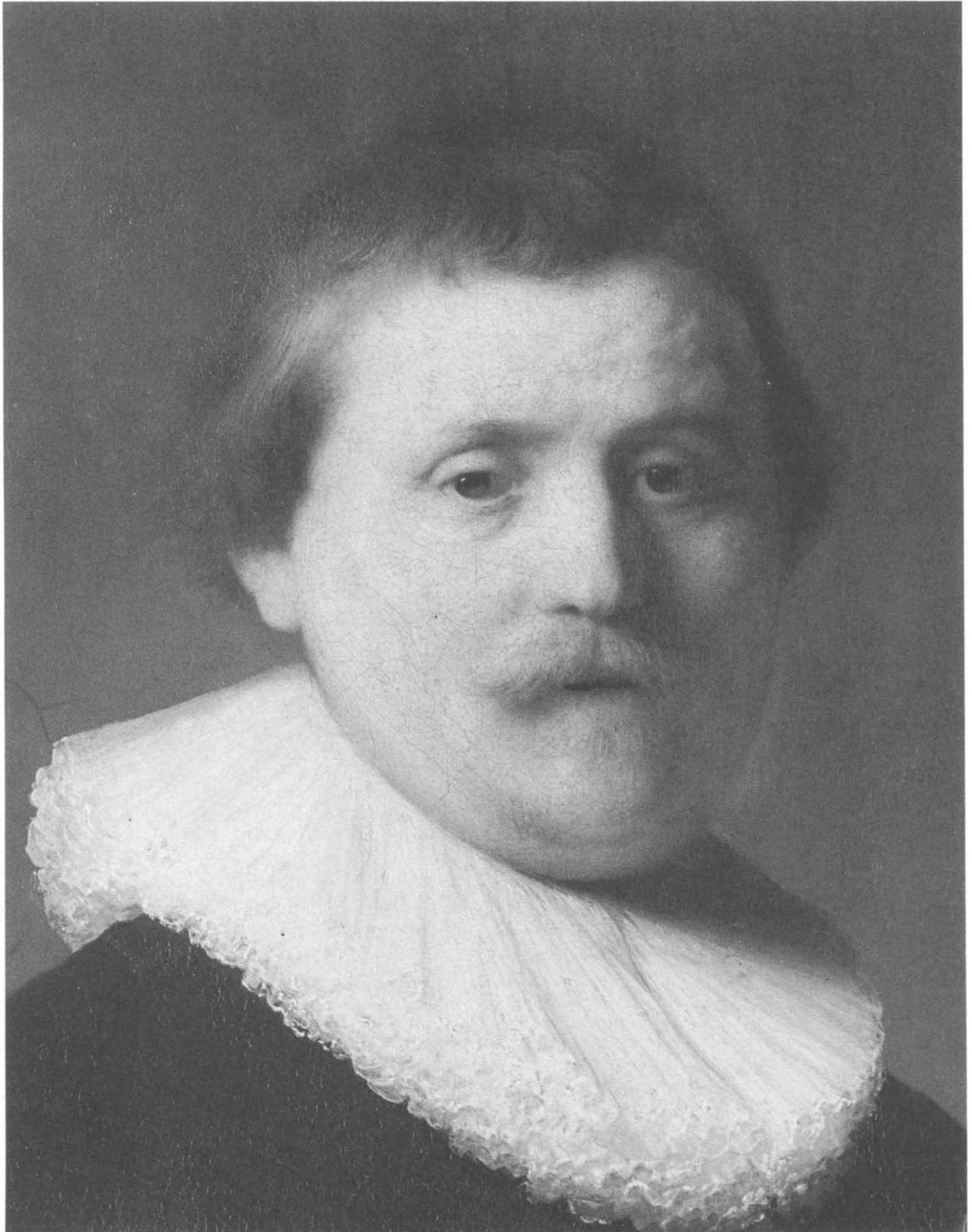
#### *Signature*

In black on a sheet of paper at the right of the table <RHL (in monogram, followed by a backwards-sloping, curving mark) *van Rijn 1632*>. The *R* of *Rijn* is open on the left, and is smaller than the closed *R* of the monogram. The date is on a strip of the original canvas folded over along the stretcher, as shown in a recent photograph kindly supplied by the museum. The *1* and part of the *6* are missing due to paint loss along the fold. The inscription makes an entirely reliable impression.

#### *Varnish*

A fairly thick and yellow layer of varnish makes an assessment

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)



of the state, nuances of colour and manner of painting quite difficult.

#### 4. Comments

In both conception and execution no. A 54 fits well into the series of portraits that Rembrandt produced in his early Amsterdam years, in which – even though its present appearance is marred by a thick layer of varnish – it forms a high point. The handling of chiaroscuro governs the plasticity. The contours, while avoiding any straight lines (even in the chair!), reinforce the plastic effect and, for example, give an effortless suggestion of the foreshortening of the man's left arm. The spatial relationships are suggested by means of a more general indication of shape and more subtle lighting in the middle ground. In all these respects this portrait comes so close to the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* of 1632 in The Hague (no. A 51) that there cannot be the slightest doubt as to Rembrandt's authorship. The central placing of the sitter's hands, and the spatial effect provided here by the use of chiaroscuro are strongly reminiscent of the effect of Tulp's raised left hand, and the impression of a frozen moment of action is very similar in the two paintings. The date of 1632 usually given to the Kassel portrait has been confirmed by the appearance of the year on a strip of the original canvas that has been folded over.

One may wonder whether the canvas has survived in its entirety. When looking at the composition one can imagine that the painting, apart from the narrow strips folded over, was once somewhat larger, especially along the top and perhaps on the lefthand side. At all events, it already had its present dimensions by 1734, when it appeared in a sale in Amsterdam (see 8. *Provenance* below). The presence of a radioabsorbent layer on the back of the lining canvas makes it impossible to verify by means of the X-rays the idea of a reduction in size. Examination of the weave does however provide evidence that the canvas comes from the same bolt as that of the *Portrait of a young woman* in the Vienna Akademie der bildenden Künste (no. A 55), thus suggesting that the two pictures originally formed a pair (see 3 under *Support* and the *Comments* on no. A 55).

The identity of the sitter presents a problem. In the 1734 sale catalogue no name is given. Shortly afterwards Valerius Röver mentions in his catalogue the name of Coppenol. Lieven Willemsz. van Coppenol (c. 1599–1662) was a Mennonite schoolmaster and calligrapher living in Amsterdam. He had his portrait engraved in 1658 by Cornelis Visscher, and etched twice around the same year by Rembrandt (B. 282 and B. 283); he sent copies of

these prints to wellknown poets, asking them to write (for payment) a poem to go with his portrait. Röver's identification of the painting as Coppenol was adopted in the inventory of the Landgrave Wilhelm VIII of Hesse, and has been maintained in the Kassel museum catalogues. Various authors have however expressed doubts, voiced most clearly by Wijnman<sup>2</sup>. This author noted that there was little resemblance between the Kassel portrait and those of Coppenol engraved and etched by Visscher and Rembrandt, respectively, in or around 1658; he further thought, not too convincingly, that a person from Mennonite circles would dress more simply than the man shown in this portrait. It is debatable, however, how far one can draw conclusions from a comparison of the painted portrait with prints done 26 years later, though it has to be said that the structure of the nose, in particular, does not seem alike. It may well be that a superficial likeness plus, of course, the fact of the man handling a pen prompted Röver to recognize him as Coppenol.

On the other hand there is evidence that Rembrandt did produce a painted portrait of Coppenol. In a poem written by Vondel to accompany the portrait engraved by Cornelis Visscher in 1658, the following passage occurs:

.....  
'T is niet genoegh dat Rembrant eël  
Hem maelde met zijn braef penseel:  
Quellijn laete ons dien helt aenschouwen,  
En levendigh in marmer houwen,  
.....

(it is not enough that the noble Rembrandt painted him with his worthy brush: let Quellinus show us this hero, and carve him alive in marble). It is unlikely that Vondel was using the words 'painted' and 'brush' to mean the etched portraits by Rembrandt. The title of a poem by Jan Vos first printed in 1662 (*Alle de Gedichten van den Poet Jan Vos*, Amsterdam 1662, p. 161) also points towards there having been a painted portrait:

Meester/Lieven van Koppenol/Vermaart Schrijver./

Door Rembrandt van Rijn geschildert (Master Lieven van Koppenol, renowned penman, painted by Rembrandt van Rijn).

A small painted portrait in the Metropolitan Museum, New York (Br. 291) cannot be considered for identification with the painted portrait referred to by Vondel and Vos, since it cannot be attributed to Rembrandt, and must be seen as a copy done after his etching B. 283 (cf. H. F. Von Sonnenburg in: *Rembrandt after three hundred years. A symposium – Rembrandt and his followers*, The Art Institute of Chicago 1973, p. 88). That the reference by Vondel

Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 1.5)



and the poem by Vos relate to a portrait painted as long before as 1632 can however hardly be assumed, and it could well be concluded that the painted portrait of Coppenol by Rembrandt mentioned by Vondel and Vos has been lost. Bearing in mind, moreover, the not very convincing facial resemblance between the prints of 1658 and our no. A 54, identification of the sitter as Coppenol remains dubious.

Doubts would seem to be all the more justified as the motif of a man trimming a quill, rather than indicating a calligrapher's profession, had a moralizing significance. It carried, in the 17th century, the meaning of practice (*exercitatio* or *usus*), in particular practice in the arts: these can be achieved not only on the basis of a natural gift and training (*ars* or *ingenium* and *disciplina*) but also, and especially, by dint of constant practice<sup>3</sup>. The depiction of this generally current notion occurs many times in the 17th century in pictures with this intention, including some done in Rembrandt's circle (by Dou and Lievens, among others). We know of no instance of this motif having been employed in portraits other than no. A 54, even those of calligraphers. In itself, it could apply very well to a schoolmaster and calli-

grapher, but it cannot provide a cogent argument for identifying the man shown in no. A 54 as a calligrapher, let alone as Coppenol.

If one accepts that the *Portrait of a young woman* of 1632 in the Akademie der bildenden Künste in Vienna (no. A 55) was originally the pendant of no. A 54 (see above), then the identification of this painting as a portrait of Coppenol is wholly invalidated. The 20-years-old woman with whom Coppenol made his first marriage in 1619 died, according to Wijnman (op. cit.<sup>2</sup>, p. 114), in 1643 when she was 63 years of age.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

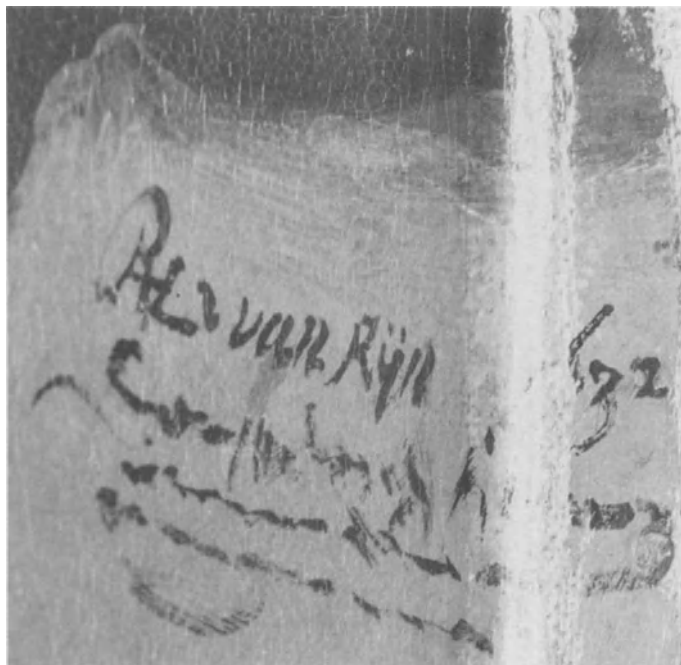
#### 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Joachim Jan Oortman (Weesp 1777 – Paris 1818) in: Filhol, *Galérie du Musée Napoléon*, Paris 1809, no. 413.

#### 7. Copies

None.

Fig. 5. Detail with signature, showing the canvas folded over along the stretcher (1:1)



## 8. Provenance

\*— [Coll. De Wolff], sale Amsterdam 7 April 1734 (Lugt 438), no. 5: 'Een Pourtret van Rembrand van Ryn, met 2. Handen, tot de Knien toe, (levens groote,) kragtig en heerlyk geschilderd, breed 2 voet 9 duym, hoog 3 voet 6 duym [= 79.8 × 100.4 cm]' (A portrait by Rembrand van Ryn, with 2 hands, down to the knees, life-size, vigorously and beautifully painted) (120 guilders to A. Rutgers who was obviously buying for Röver, see next item) (Hoet I, p. 409, no. 5: 110 guilders). — Coll. Valerius Röver, Delft; probably bought by him through the art dealer Antonie Rutgers. In Röver's catalogue, written by himself, it is described under the year 1734, no. 111, as: 'het portret van den vermaarden Schrijver Lieve van Coppenol, voor een tafel zittende een pen te versnijden, tot de knien toe, levensgroote, kragtig en konstig geschildt. van Rembrandt van Rhijn, breed 2 voet 9 duym, hoog 3 voet 6 d. gekogt van de Hr. de Wolff te Amst. N.B. Vondel en Jan Vos hebben vaerzen op dit portret gemaakt — f 120: —' (the portrait of the renowned penman Lieve van Coppenol, seated at a table and trimming a pen, seen knee-length and life-size, vigorously and artfully painted by Rembrandt van Rhijn . . . bought from Mr. de Wolff, Amsterdam. N.B. Vondel and Jan Vos made poems on this portrait) (Amsterdam, University Library ms. UB II A 18; published by E. W. Moes in: *O.H.* 31 (1913), pp. 4–24, esp. 23).

— Sold in 1750 by Röver's widow to the Landgrave Wilhelm VIII of Hesse at Kassel. In the *Haupt-Catalogus* begun in the year 1749 it was described as: '559. Rembrant, Ein Schulmeister so eine Feder schneidt, Namens Koppenol. Höhe 3 Schuh 3 Zoll Breite 2 Schuh 7 Zoll (Rhineland feet) [= 101.4 × 80.6 cm].' In Paris from 1807 to 1815, then returned to Kassel.

## 9. Summary

In conception and execution no. A 54 is a characteristic work by Rembrandt. A date of 1632, suggested by the close resemblance to the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* (no. A 51), is confirmed by a recently discovered inscription on the painting. The present

composition suggests that it may have been reduced in size, at the top and perhaps also at the lefthand side; if so, this must have happened before 1734.

Although there is evidence that Rembrandt did at some time paint a portrait of Lieven Willemsz. van Coppenol, it is dubious whether the sitter can be identified with this Amsterdam schoolmaster and calligrapher. The identification is definitely ruled out if, as the canvas leads one to believe, the picture originally formed a pair with the *Portrait of a young woman* in Vienna (no. A 55).

## REFERENCES

- 1 H. Kühn, 'Untersuchungen zu den Pigmenten und Malgründen Rembrandts durchgeführt an den Gemälden der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Kassel', *Maltechnik/Restauro* 82 (1976), pp. 25–33.
- 2 H. F. Wijnman, 'Mr. Lieven van Coppenol, Schoolmeester-Calligraaf', *Jaarboek . . . Amstelodamum* 30 (1933), pp. 93–187, esp. 157–158.
- 3 J. A. Emmens, 'Natuur, Onderwijzing en Oefening. Bij een drieluik van Gerard Dou' in: *Album Discipulorum J. G. van Gelder* 1963, pp. 125–136.

HDG 884; BR. 330; BAUCH 460; GERSON 128

**1. Summarized opinion**

A moderately well preserved and authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1632. It has been somewhat reduced in size.

**2. Description of subject**

A young woman, shown knee-length, sits in a chair placed to the right in front of an almost uniformly dark grey background. Her body is turned three-quarters to the left, and she leans slightly forward. On the left her forearm is resting on the arm of the chair, on the right only her hand. The face is directed towards the viewer, and is quite sharply lit by light falling from the top left.

She is dressed comparatively simply. On her head she wears a small, transparent cap with a narrow lace border at the front; the wings bending outwards at the sides are at the bottom folded round a close-fitting metal band, and gleaming buttons at the ends of this can be seen on both sides. A white pleated ruff is worn round the neck, beneath which, at the front, projects a border of lace trimming the top edge of the bodice. Her dark costume consists of three parts – a bodice and a pleated skirt worn beneath an open gown ('vlieger'). At the wrists there are deep, lace-trimmed cuffs.

**3. Observations and technical information***Working conditions*

Examined on 30 May 1970 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in sunlight and in the frame. An X-ray film of the head was received from Dr M. Meier-Siem, Hamburg, and 8 films, together covering the entire painting, were received later from the museum.

*Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 92 × 71 cm (measured along the stretcher). Single piece. The height was reduced by some 7 cm, as appears from the dimensions given in a sales catalogue of 1738 (see 8. *Provenance*). The reduction in height is also in accordance with the assumption that no. A 55 originally formed a pair with no. A 54, which in its present state measures 101.5 cm (not counting c. 2 cm folded over the stretcher at top and bottom). From the connexion with no. A 54 it also follows that the original width of no. A 55 has been reduced by at least 10.5 (+ c. 4) cm.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Along the top there is cusping with a pitch of 12.5–13 cm and a depth of c. 20 cm; on the right one sees slight deformations of the canvas, possibly related to secondary cusping. Along the bottom there is cusping with a pitch of 11.5–14 cm and a depth of c. 20 cm. Along the lefthand side no cusping is seen. Threadcount: 12.7 vertical threads/cm (12–13.5), 12.5 horizontal threads/cm (12–13). Warp direction most probably horizontal, considering the even density of the horizontal threads. This is even more pronounced in no. A 54, which can, on the basis of thread density and weave characteristics, be considered to stem from the same bolt of canvas. The difference in pitch of the cusping in both paintings suggests that the two canvases were not cut from the same piece coming from that bolt.

*Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A grey can be seen in areas where brownish paint has been thinly applied, as in the righthand eyebrow, and particularly along abraded edges of cupping paint.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*Paint layer*

CONDITION: In general, somewhat worn and flattened as a result of lining and overcleaning. There is extensive cupping.<sup>1</sup> A number of retouches are seen in the background, spread along the upper edge of the painting where, a little to the right of centre, a vertical damage (running down to along the edge of the cap) has been restored. There are also retouches at the righthand edge of the painting level with the head and on the left level with the shoulder, where a C-shaped damage has been repaired. There is a retouch beside and in the lefthand contour of the cap, above the forehead. The shadow areas of the face, neck and hands also give the impression of having suffered somewhat and of having been touched up with the result that they look muddy. The arch of the eyebrow on the right towards the shadow of the nose has been a little over-emphasised by a dark retouch. The outline between the thumb and forefinger of the hand on the left, and the lower edge of that on the right, are today defined very largely by retouches. Craquelure: an irregular pattern is evenly distributed over the whole surface.

DESCRIPTION: The paint is opaque over the entire surface of the painting, and is applied thinly and evenly with no appreciable relief. Only at the hairline and in the face shadows is the paint so thin that something of the structure of the canvas can be glimpsed.

The figure stands out against an almost uniform dark grey background; this takes on a slightly lighter and warmer tint towards the bottom. The face is painted with barely visible brushstrokes that produce a clear and firm modelling; the transitions, in colour and tone, are smoothly done. In the light areas the paint has an even surface structure. The shadows are painted more thinly, and run via a greyish transitional tint (to which the ground may contribute) into a brown where on the jaw and, especially, by the chin a reflection of light has been rendered with a thicker grey. Both eyes are done in much the same way, with a black pupil, brown iris and a bluish-grey white to the eye; red has been used in the corners of the eyes and the outlines of the eyelids, rather more so in the righthand eye. Along the lower edges of the upper eyelids small brown lines have been drawn from the outer corner of the eye to just past the iris. The shadow beneath the nose is in a ruddy brown; the lips are a bright red, separated by a mouth-line built up from strokes of grey and a carmine red. Grey shows through at points in the lips, and it is possible that one is here seeing the ground. The face and ruff are separated by a deep shadow in a rather muddy brown (probably, as has already been noted, the work of a restorer), lightening at the front into a tinge of reddish brown. Adjoining this there are shadows – again in brown – over the ruff.

The cap is executed with translucent, greyish tones which at the folds and the edges of the wings of the cap become a thicker white drawn in with a fine brush. The ear, glimpsed through the material of the cap, gives a ruddy accent. The highest light in the painting is reserved for the ruff, painted in a fairly thick white varied with slight differences in tone giving a summary indication of the folds. The cool grey used for this is seen again in the cuffs, more so in the lefthand than the righthand one, where more white is used. The lace trimming on the cuffs has a pattern shown by means of dots of black placed on the white.

The costume is a dark grey, a shade darker than the background; detail is shown in black and in a somewhat thin lighter grey used for the subdued highlights at the right shoulder, on the arm on the right and on one or two folds in the skirt. The chair is indicated only broadly, in a thin grey-brown and some yellowish brown.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.



Fig. 1. Canvas 92 × 71 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



*X-Rays*

The radiographic image confirms the careful and considered structure of the painting. Except in the forehead – which appears as a more or less discrete light shape in which there are few separate brushstrokes to be seen – the distribution of pigment showing up light in the X-ray is not as even in the face as one would expect from examining the surface, the appearance of which is evidently governed mainly by a later layer of paint of low radioabsorbency. This would also explain a dark band seen along the contour of the cheek on the left, by the cheekbone, and along the ridge of the nose.

It is also evident from the X-ray image that the ruff was extended further to the right after the initial lay-in. In the right background, along the head, ruff, shoulder and arm, strokes that play no part in the finished painting show up light. The filler used to repair various damages is clearly visible. The signature and date show up light. Lightish traces visible mainly in the background appear to be due to the application of the ground.

*Signature*

To the right of the shoulder in a grey-brown and, exceptionally, lighter than the background <RHL (in monogram) van Rijn / 1632>. It makes a reliable impression.

*Varnish*

The painting is covered with a slightly yellowed layer of varnish.

**4. Comments**

The painting is marked by a discreet treatment that tends to simplify forms, especially in the face, which is stylized in both its plastic and linear appearance. It has to be remembered, however, that the paint surface has suffered somewhat and, moreover, that Rembrandt's paintings on canvas never show the strong contrasts between the more thickly handled light areas and the translucent shadow areas – sometimes left as an underpainting – seen in his portraits on panel. The support consequently limits the number of works that lend themselves to comparison, and of these none is to the same extent concerned with depicting the taut skin of a youthful face. Taking this into account, the handling of paint in this painting, with its shadow areas carefully introduced via grey halfshadows and varied with thicker patches of reflected light, the carefully orchestrated rhythm of the contours and discreet detail, comes so close to Rembrandt's portraits of 1632 – especially the Kassel *Portrait of a man trimming his quill* (no. A 54) and the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* in the Hague (no. A 51) – that there can be no doubt as to its authenticity. It must be mentioned that the height of the canvas has been reduced by c. 7 cm; this is shown by the dimensions quoted in a sales catalogue of 1738 (see *Provenance*) compared to those given in the caption of a mezzotint of 1798 (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 1; fig. 5). This reduction in size, which thus seems to have taken place before

1798, has noticeably marred the effect of the composition.

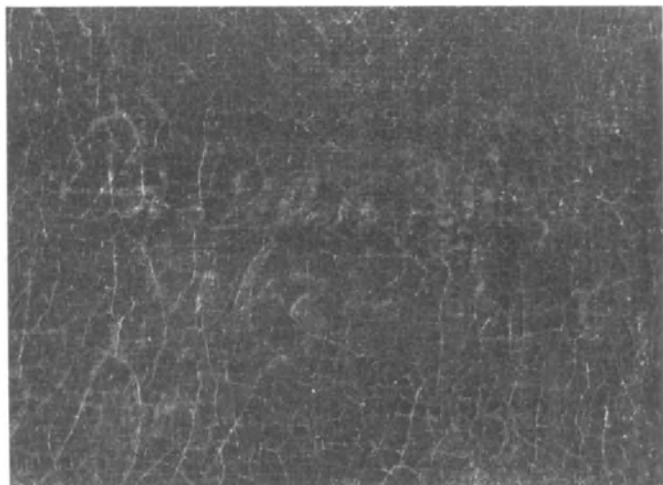
Through its almost uniformly dark background it stands somewhat apart from the series of portraits from these years, and it is in general one of Rembrandt's most unpretentious portraits, in that it is devoid of any outward display. Seen against the tradition of sobriety that marks contemporary Dutch portraits of the well-off burgher class, it is however an ambitious project in which the simplicity of the subject is combined with a carefully-weighted and relatively dynamic composition and a sophisticated execution. The care devoted to the painting is just as apparent from the balance achieved in the treatment. The extreme simplicity of the clothing and surroundings, for instance, is offset by the pose, which lends the whole a certain air of informal liveliness. At the same time, the action of leaning slightly forward brings the face, the central point of focus, into the central axis of the painting and thus enhances the stability of the composition. The differing position of the arms leads to a subtle variation in the level of the hands. The predominantly cool colour is softened by the warm tints in the face and hands, and the treatment as large shapes is counterbalanced by the finesse developed in the detail of the cuffs and cap. The very precisely drawn white edging on the cap adds a linear element to the interplay of the self-contained, white shapes of the face and ruff and the translucent shadow areas. On the left the face shows, at the temple, the broadening one frequently meets in Rembrandt's portraits at the side of the face turned away from the viewer. The contour is remarkably firmly drawn, and only on the cheek does it have the slightly translucent quality that helps to create the roundness of the face.

Within the category of the single portrait, this painting shows the same characteristics as are seen in the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp*: apart from the difference in numbers, there too the effect is based mainly on the lively pose of the figures and the carefully thought-out positioning of heads, collars and hands. In this respect, no. A 55 has the same relationship to the *Anatomy lesson* as has the Kassel *Portrait of a man trimming his quill*. Partly because of this, the Vienna and Kassel paintings are, from the viewpoint of style and composition, so very similar that one wonders whether they may not have been painted as companion pieces. This idea is corroborated by the weave of the canvas, which has been found to be so similar to that of the Kassel male portrait that the two canvases appear to have been taken from the same bolt, as is frequently the case with companion-pieces. One would then have to assume that the canvas of the woman's portrait was

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1 : 1)



not only reduced by some 7 cm in height between 1738 and 1798 (as stated above) but also by some 15 cm in width prior to 1738, when its width was given as it is today (see 8. *Provenance*).

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Mezzotint by Jakob Friedrich Clerck (Vienna 1769 – Vienna after 1821) inscribed: *Peint par Rembrandt. 1632. – Gravé à Vienne par J. F. Clerck, 1798/La femme de Rembrandt/Gravé d'après le tableau original du Cabinet de Mr. le Comte de Lamberg/Sprinzenstein haut 2 pieds 11 pouces, large 2 pieds 3 pouces [= 92.1 × 71.1 cm]* (Charrington 38; fig. 5). The picture is reproduced in the same direction in a flat black frame and in a field that is larger to the top. This would seem to indicate that the painting had not yet been reduced to its present height; this is however contradicted by the measurements in the inscription, which differ from those quoted in 1738 (see 8. *Provenance*) and match the present ones.

#### 7. Copies

None of interest.

#### 8. Provenance

- \*– Coll. Count de Fraula, sale Brussels 21ff July 1738 (Lugt 488), no. 133: 'Een Portrait van eene Jonge Vrouwe, tot aan de knien, door Rimbrant. hoogh 3 v. 5 duym breed 2 v. 10 duym' [= 99 × 70 cm] (150 guilders) Hoet I, p. 530, no. 132).
- Coll. Graf Lamberg-Sprinzenstein, Vienna, where it was by at least as early as 1798 (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*).
- Donated as part of this collection to the Akademie der bildenden Künste in 1821.

#### 9. Summary

The painting is a moderately well preserved, authentic work, with a reliable signature and date. It

Fig. 5. Mezzotint by J. F. Clerck, 1798



owes its qualities principally to the amalgam of accentuated simplicity, a carefully thought-out composition and a limited but effective use of fine detail. The subdued action of the figure reveals a striving for livelier poses that recurs in a number of Rembrandt's knee-length portraits from this period. The work is as close stylistically to the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* (no. A 51) completed in the same year of 1632 as the very similar *Portrait of a man trimming his quill* in Kassel (no. A 54). The latter may well have formed a pair with no. A 55, which would then have been reduced not only in height between 1738 and 1798 but also in width prior to 1738.



HDG 745; BR. 162; BAUCH 353; GERSON 105

**1. Summarized opinion**

A well preserved painting which already on the grounds of documentary evidence must be regarded as an authentic Rembrandt, reliably signed and dated 1632.

**2. Description of subject**

The sitter is seen down to the waist, with the body turned slightly to the left. He wears a white pleated collar and a black cloak of speckled material over a black doublet. The light falls from the right.

**3. Observations and technical information***Working conditions*

Examined in May 1968 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in reasonably good daylight and out of the frame. An X-ray film was received later from the Courtauld Institute of Art, London.

*Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 29.9 × 24.9 cm. Single plank. Relatively thick. Narrow, steep bevelling on all four sides. The bottom edge does not run straight. A vertical line of white paint on the back shows up on the X-ray. For inscription, see 5. *Documents and sources*.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light ochre colour shows through in the hair, the shadowed wing of the nose and elsewhere.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good. Craquelure: very fine cracks can be seen in the thicker, light areas.

DESCRIPTION: The background seems to have been painted in two stages, one before the head was worked up, the other subsequently. The paint of the first stage is applied thinly, its colour appearing a fairly dark grey along the edges of the panel and taking on a warmer and lighter tone towards the head. Around the head, and painted outwards from it, there is a second, somewhat thicker layer of paint that is cool grey in colour. A lively brushstroke is clearly visible in both these layers. That the second layer was applied at quite a late stage may be inferred from the fact that this layer everywhere leaves the outline of the area of hair lying over the first layer exposed, evidence that the head was probably already completed when this second paint layer was applied.

The face is painted, in the lit areas, with small strokes of mainly reddish as well as ochrish-yellow and grey paint. The lines in the eye areas are not sharp, and are built up carefully from very small strokes. In both eyes there is no clear distinction between the pupil and iris, and the border of the iris against the white of the eye is also blurred. Small white highlights have been placed on the ridge and tip of the nose, and merge into the flesh tint. The shadow part of the face is so thinly painted that at some places the ground can be glimpsed. The nostrils and mouth-line are done quite thickly, using almost black paint. The hair is executed cursorily, though with a great deal of sensitivity – in the dark areas with translucent brown paint, on top of which the light passages have been done in opaque paint, applied with quite long brushstrokes that follow the fall of the hair. The collar is painted fairly

thickly, using relatively long brushstrokes to indicate the pleats. The black of the cloak has been butted up against this. The stippled pattern of the cloak seen in the sheen on the upper arm is rendered, in the most strongly lit parts, with small dots of black, and in the half-shadows with grey to almost white spots. Below the collar strokes of light paint show through in a narrow zone parallel to the contour and in a broader area lower down on the chest.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*X-Rays*

The radiographic image confirms the observation already made at the paint surface that the background was painted in two stages. The paint of the second layer appears as a light area, everywhere clearly delimited, along the contour of the head and shoulders. A somewhat darker zone can be seen at some places within these contours, along and inside the outline of the hair and at points along the contours of the shoulders. This zone matches, in its level of radioabsorbency and brushwork, the background outside the light area just mentioned. The weak, uniformly grey X-ray image visible here obviously corresponds to the earlier stage of the background; it stretches down to the lower lefthand corner and out to the upper and righthand edges. This uniformity is not apparent in what can be seen today at the surface of the painting, where the background is darker towards the edges than it must have been in the first stage. The darker brownish and greyish paint has there quite plainly been placed over the first, lighter background. The lower edge of the paint layer of the second stage of the background runs obliquely away from the contour of the righthand shoulder. This does not necessarily point to a correction of the shoulder outline; it is rather an indication that here the first and second stages were of roughly the same tint, so that the second stage did not need to be taken right up to the line of the shoulder. By the collar there is a loosely brushed area that appears vague in the X-ray, both in the shadowed part of the collar seen today and in a broad zone below and more or less parallel to the lower outline of the present collar. It may be assumed that this broad zone was originally covered with light paint, since light brushstrokes can be glimpsed through the black of the cloak at this point. It seems natural to suspect that there was here a very roughly executed and somewhat generously wide underpainting of the collar, done in a light paint. There is also a second, coarse indication of the lower part of the collar, running just below the present one. Matching this, a freely brushed narrow band, with strokes that do not follow the direction of the pleats can be made out in relief in the paint surface. Very probably the collar was corrected as early as the dead colour stage, and reduced almost to its present size. The heavy brushstroke along the chin and jawline, which appears light and is seen in relief in the paint surface as well, probably belongs to this stage.

A light, vertical stripe on the right running through the hair and shoulder is caused by the line of paint on the back of the panel. The light dot at the top in the centre seems to come from a filled-in damage (which we did not notice) on the back. The light horizontal band along the bottom is from the frame used to hold the panel while it was being X-rayed.

*Signature*

In black, in the left upper corner <RH (in monogram, followed by a short, backwards-sloping stroke) *van Ryn* / 1632>. The curve closing the *R* of the monogram to the left is now only vaguely visible, and the smaller *R* of *Ryn* is open to the left. The letters and figures are small but firmly drawn, and make a reliable impression.



Fig. 1. Panel 29.9 × 24.9 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



*Varnish*

No special remarks.

**4. Comments**

With the associated *Portrait of Maurits Huygens* in Hamburg (no. A 57) this small but very thoroughly executed little portrait is, by reason of its small scale, an exception in Rembrandt's oeuvre which otherwise – where commissioned portraits are concerned – offers only paintings showing the figure on a larger scale. Valentiner was the first to realise<sup>1</sup> that the portraits at Dulwich and Hamburg should be seen as a pair, and suggested that the former might represent Maurits' younger brother Constantijn.

The authenticity, as well as the identification of the sitters, of no. A 56 and its companion piece is guaranteed by a combination of documentary evidence. The first proof is found in a mention in the will of Jacques de Gheyn III (1596–1641) dated 3 June 1641 (see 5. *Documents and sources*); this artist, who had lived since 1634 in Utrecht where he was canon of St. Marie, bequeathed his own portrait painted by Rembrandt to Maurits Huygens of The Hague. Working from the fact that the Hamburg painting was known, from an inscription on the back of it, to represent Maurits Huygens, H. E. van Gelder<sup>2</sup> assumed that no. A 56 was the work mentioned by De Gheyn in his will as the portrait of himself. This assumption was confirmed when a partly effaced inscription was discovered on the back of the latter<sup>3</sup>, not only identifying the sitter as De Gheyn but also describing the painting as his 'last gift at his death' (see 5. *Documents and sources*); this inscription may come from Maurits Huygens' own hand (H. E. van Gelder), and probably dates from before his death on 24 September 1642. This corroborates Rembrandt's authorship of no. A 56 and, by implication, of its pendant in Hamburg, and also confirms the identity of the sitter.

Since no. A 56 is documented convincingly as Rembrandt's work, it can serve as a prime point of reference in studying the early Amsterdam portraits ascribed to him. From the viewpoint of technique it exhibits many characteristics with which we are already familiar from the latter years in Leiden – a thin, translucent treatment in the shadow parts of the face and hair, with probably parts of the brown underpainting remaining visible, the local use of a loosely-brushed, light underpainting, and the use of overlapping on the background painted previously (in this case the first stage of the background). A characteristic feature is the legibility of the easy brushwork, even in the relatively finely-executed face area. The same is true of the flowing contours, which by the way they swell and shift give a sugges-

Fig. 3. Detail with signature (enlarged)



tion of plasticity, and of the marked and locally varying contrast effect against the background, creating an effect of depth and atmosphere. The fact that the background was repainted in a lighter tint along the contour is evidence that Rembrandt deliberately emphasized this effect. A further typical feature is the avoidance of detail close to edges and outlines that mark a contrast between light and dark. In this respect the patch of sheen on the cloak can be regarded as an effect that is, for Rembrandt, comparatively marked; yet even here the illusionistic effect is kept in balance by the autonomy of the handling of paint and brushwork. The same can be said of the treatment of the face, where in the details in and around the eyes we see the characteristic blurring effect (that contributes to the suggestion of space). The merging of the moustache and beard into the flesh tints serves the continuity of the modelling of the face; the lines at the eyes and mouth are given a plastic function by the way they vary in density and tint and merge into their surroundings. Other typical features are the strength of the cast shadow beside the nose, the coarse indication of the nostrils, and the use of catchlights on the eyes counterpointing light areas on the irises. Noticeable, too, is the quite marked lack of symmetry in the eyes.

It is plain, from the similarity in format and design between no. A 56 and the Hamburg *Portrait of Maurits Huygens*, and from the fact that this painting was bequeathed to Maurits Huygens by Jacques de Gheyn III, that there was a special relationship both between the two paintings and between the two men. Where the former is concerned, the two portraits cannot be called pendants in the usual sense of the word. In the first place, they evidently remained in the possession of each of the two sitters until De Gheyn – perhaps in accordance with a previous agreement – left his portrait to Huygens. And in the second, though the two subjects do, when the two paintings are hung side-by-side, vaguely face towards one another, they are seen in a different lighting – something that is quite unique. Pairs of male portraits are not entirely

Fig. 4. Part of inscription on back of panel



unknown in Holland in the 17th century, as appears from two pairs of like-sized men's portraits by Frans Hals in Dresden (S. Slive, *Frans Hals*, London 1970–74, I, pp. 30, 124, 162; II, pls. 141, 142; III, nos. 90, 91) and Kassel (ibid. I, pp. 30 and 162; II, pls. 237, 238; III, nos. 153, 154). In these cases, however, the light invariably falls from the same direction, i.e. from the left.

Little is known about the relationship between the two men, who were of roughly the same age, but it is certain that the two families were well acquainted. Constantijn Huygens expressed vexation, in his manuscript *Vita* of c. 1630 (The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek, no. K.A. XLVIII p. 965; cf. *O.H.* 9, 1891, p. 115), at the fact that although highly gifted the young De Gheyn 'condito talento sterili illaudabilique otio indormivisse' (that he dozed, hiding his talent in unfruitful and reprehensible sloth). It was Constantijn, too, who in January and February 1633 composed no fewer than eight epigrams in Latin on the portrait of De Gheyn (not on that of his own brother), all commenting on the poor likeness (J. A. Worp, *De gedichten van Constantijn Huygens* II, Groningen 1893, pp. 245ff):

January 1633

IN IACOBI GHEINIJ EFFIGIEM PLANE DISSIMILEM, SCOMMATA

(On Jacob de Gheyn's portrait, which is not like him at all: jokes)

Talis Gheiniadae facies si forte fuisset

Talis Gheiniadae prorsus imago foret

(If De Gheijn's face had happened to look like this, this would have been an exact portrait of De Gheijn)

January 1633

(ALIUD)

Haereditatis patriae probus Pictor

Invidit assem Gheinio, creavitque,

Quem recreet semisse posthumum fratrem.

(The worthy painter has begrudged De Gheyn his father's full inheritance, and has created a posthumous brother to gladden with the half of it)

January 1633

(ALIUD)

Quos oculos, video sub imagine frontem?

Desine, spectator, quaerere, non memini.

(Whose eyes and whose face do I see in this portrait? Stop your questions, Viewer, I cannot remember)

January 1633

(ALIUD)

Gutta magis guttae similis fortasse reperta est,

Tam similis guttae non, puto, gutta fuit.

(Perhaps a drop has been found that more resembled a drop. I think a drop has never been so [little] like a drop as this)

(ALIUD)

Geiniadem tabulamque inter discriminis hanc est

Fabula quantillum distat ab historia.

(There is as little difference between De Gheijn and the painting as between myth and history)

(ALIUD)

Tantum tabella est, si tabella quae bella est,

At haec, tabella bella, bella fabella est.

(It is only a painting, though a lovely painting, but this lovely painting is a lovely myth)

18 February 1633

(ALIUD)

Cuius hic est vultus, tabulam si jure perculj

Quisque suam possit dicere, nemo sui?

(Whose face is this, that anyone can call his own for money, but no-one on the grounds of likeness?)

(ALIUD)

Rembrandtis est manus ista, Gheinij vultus;

Mirare, lector, et iste Gheinius non est. Eod. die.

(This is the hand of Rembrandt, the face of De Gheyn; look in wonder, reader, it also is not De Gheyn)

Only the last epigram mentions Rembrandt by name, and it is this one that, unlike the others, Huygens did not include in his *Momenta desultoria* of 1644, where they are called *Joci* instead of *Scommata* (meaning the same, i.e. Jokes). Though these verses can to a great extent be seen as exercises in poetry with a witty play on words, one cannot help but

conclude that the poet thought that De Gheyn's portrait was a poor likeness<sup>4</sup>.

One must assume that the portrait, like that of Maurits Huygens, was painted in The Hague, perhaps during the same visit during which Rembrandt also did the portraits of Joris de Caullery (no. A 53) and his son Johan and of Amalia of Solms (no. A 61).

### 5. Documents and sources

– Partly effaced inscription on the back of the panel (fig. 4), applied after De Gheyn's death on 4 June 1641 and before that of Maurits Huygens on 24 September 1642. It has been read: 'JACOBUS GEINIUS IUN<sup>R</sup>/H . . . NI IPSIUS/EFFIGIE[M]/EXTREMUM MUNUS MORIENTIS/R/. . . MO.I E.STE. UN. HABET ISTA SECUNDUM HEU:'<sup>6</sup>, and the last line also as: 'MORIENTE. NUNC HABET ISTA SECUNDUM HEU:'<sup>7</sup>. A tentative translation would run, roughly: Jacques de Gheyn the Younger/[bequeathed] his own/ portrait/[to Huygens: HUYGENIO?] as a last duty when he died./He may rest/. . . now this [portrait] has its companion-piece [meaning the *Portrait of Maurits Huygens*, no. A 57], alas.

– Mentioned in the will of the sitter, drawn up in Utrecht on 3 June 1641: 'Item maeckt ende legateert hij comparant aenden Heere Maurits Huygens, Secretaris vanden Raedt van Staten inden Hage, zijn comparants eigen contrefijtsel bij Rembrandt geschildert . . .' (Item: the deponent makes over and bequeaths to Maurits Huygens, Gentleman, Secretary to the Council of State in The Hague, the deponent's own likeness painted by Rembrandt . . .) (A. Bredius, 'Rembrandtiana', *O.H.* 33, 1915, pp. 126–128, esp. 128; J. Q. van Regteren Altena, *The drawings of Jacques de Gheyn I*, Amsterdam 1936, p. 129; Strauss *Doc.*, 1641/1).

### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

### 7. Copies

None.

### 8. Provenance

– Bequeathed by the sitter, Jacques de Gheyn III, to Maurits Huygens, Secretary of the Council of States in The Hague (see 5. *Documents and sources* above), who must also have owned his own portrait done by Rembrandt (no. A 57). Nothing is known of the fate of the two paintings between Maurits Huygens' death in 1642 and the year 1764. H. E. van Gelder<sup>5</sup> believes that after the death of his son-in-law Hendrik van Utenhove, squire of Amelisweerd, in 1715 there was a sale.

\*– Together with no. A 57: coll. Allard Rudolph van Waay, sale Utrecht 27 February 1764 (Lugt 1351), no. 123: 'Twee origineele Pourtraiten uit de Familie van Huigens, door Rembrandt P. hoog 11½ en breed 9½ duim [= 30.8 × 25.5 cm, Sticht or Utrecht measure].'

\*– Together with no. A 57: coll. Aubert, sale Paris 2ff March 1786 (Lugt 3993), no. 17: 'Par le même [Rembrandt van Rhyn]. Deux petits Tableaux, Portraits d'Artistes. Ils sont chacun ajustés d'une fraise autour du cou, & vêtus d'habillemens noirs. Ces deux morceaux portent le caractere de la plus grande vérité, & sont d'une belle couleur: leur maniere moins libre que celle de différens ouvrages connus de Rembrandt, nous fait juger qu'ils ont été peints dans sa jeunesse, &

pendant qu'il suivoit l'Ecole de Gerardow. Hauteur 9 Pouces, largeur 7 [= 24.3 × 18.9 cm]. B[ois].'

\*– Conceivably Desenfans private sale, London 8ff June 1786 (Lugt –), no. 264: 'Rembrandt. A head. 1 ft. by 11 in. [= 30.7 × 28.2 cm], on pannel'. If one assumes that Desenfans owned both no. A 56 (which formed part of his estate in 1807) and the *Portrait of Maurits Huygens* (no. A 57), it seems more likely that no. A 56 remained in his possession and that the painting described here is identical with no. A 57.

– Conceivably coll. Pieter Cornelis Baron van Leyden (Amsterdam), sale Paris [5 July, postponed to] 10 September [actually held 5 November] 1804 (Lugt 6841, 6852, 6864), premier supplement no. 152: 'Rembrandt (Van Rhin). Peint sur bois, haut 11, larg. 9 p. [= 29.7 × 24.3 cm] Portrait d'un Personnage vu presque de face, et aussi à mi-corps, dans un Habilleme[n]t noir, ajusté d'une Fraise indiquant le costume d'un Magistrat. Morceau plein de vérité et de la plus riche couleur.' It seems more likely that the picture described here is to be identified with no. A 57 (although it seems to correspond less well to the description, which mentions 'une Fraise') than with no. A 56 (which would rather seem to have remained in Desenfans' possession).

– Coll. Noel Joseph Desenfans (Douai 1745–London 1807), by whom bequeathed to his friend Sir Francis Bourgeois in 1807.

– Coll. Sir Francis Bourgeois, R.A. (London 1756–1811), bequeathed to Dulwich College.

### 9. Summary

On the grounds of a combination of documentary evidence and the reliable signature, no. A 56 is without doubt a work by Rembrandt from – according to the date – the year 1632. Despite its unusually small size, which it shares with the *Hamburg Portrait of Maurits Huygens* (no. A 57), it provides an opportunity to study a whole range of stylistic and technical features of Rembrandt's early Amsterdam portraits. With the *Portrait of Maurits Huygens* it makes up a pair, which is unusual in that the De Gheyn portrait has the light coming not from the left – as normal – but from the right.

### REFERENCES

- 1 W. R. Valentiner, 'Opmerkingen over enkele schilderijen van Rembrandt', *Onze Kunst* 11 (1907), pp. 157–168, esp. 162.
- 2 H. E. van Gelder, 'Marginalia bij Rembrandt I. De pendant van Maurits Huygens', *O.H.* 60 (1943), pp. 33–34.
- 3 K. E. Waterhouse, *An exhibition of paintings by Rembrandt arranged by the Arts Council of Great Britain for the Edinburgh Festival Society*, Plaistow 1950, no. 5; J. G. van Gelder, 'The Rembrandt exhibition of Edinburgh', *Burl. Mag.* 92 (1950), p. 328; H. E. van Gelder, 'Rembrandts portretjes van M. Huygens en J. de Gheyn III', *O.H.* 68 (1953), p. 107.
- 4 S. Slive, *Rembrandt and his critics 1630–1730*, The Hague 1953, p. 19; H. E. van Gelder, 'Constantijn Huygens en Rembrandt', *O.H.* 74 (1959), pp. 174–178, esp. 176; Else Kai Sass, *Comments on Rembrandt's Passion paintings and Constantijn Huygens's iconography*, Copenhagen 1971 (Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabskabernes Selskab, Historisk-Filosofiske Skrifter 5, 3), esp. p. 54.
- 5 H. E. van Gelder, *Ikongrafie van Constantijn Huygens en de zijnen*, 's-Gravenhage 1957, p. 9.
- 6 P. Murray, *Dulwich Picture Gallery. A catalogue*, London 1980, p. 101.
- 7 Strauss *Doc.*, 1633/1.

HDG 654; BR. 161; BAUCH 352; GERSON 104

**1. Summarized opinion**

A fairly well preserved painting, reliably signed and dated 1632, which already on the grounds of documentary evidence can be regarded as authentic.

**2. Description of subject**

The sitter is seen down to the waist, with the body turned slightly to the right. He wears a lace-edged collar with tasselled bandstrings over a black cloak, with velvet revers, which reveals to the front a black doublet with rosettes at the waist. The light falls from the left, and the figure casts a shadow on the rear wall.

**3. Observations and technical information***Working conditions*

Examined in October 1968 (J. B., B. H.) in good artificial light and out of the frame. An X-ray film was received later from the Rijksmuseum.

*Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical,  $31.1 \times 24.5$  ( $\pm 0.1$ ) cm. Thickness c. 0.6 cm. Originally a single plank. At some later date a strip has been added to the bottom, 1.2 cm wide at the left and changing abruptly at the centre to 1.6 cm. Back bevelled on all four sides. The absence of the letter *n* of the signature at the bottom right suggests that the panel has been slightly reduced on the right.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg): measured at top edge, 190 annual rings (+ 1 sapwood), dated 1423–1612. Statistical average felling date  $1631 \pm 5$ . Growing area: Northern Netherlands<sup>1</sup>.

*Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A yellow-brown shows through in many places, e.g. in the hair and shadow areas of the face and in the background to the right of the cheek.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*Paint layer*

CONDITION: Reasonably well preserved, though with some wearing especially in the hair. There are small overpaintings at the join with the added strip. Craquelure: very little in the collar, otherwise none seen.

DESCRIPTION: The background is painted in grey, more thickly along the outline of the figure where the tone becomes lighter. The very lightest part of the background, the small area to the right alongside the cheek away from the light, is however very thin, and its light tint is determined by the almost bare yellowish ground. The fact that, close along the contour, there is a thick deposit of the same grey paint as is used for the rest of the background prompts the suspicion that in this lightest area the wet paint has been wiped away, thus exposing the light ground beneath. The background paint is also very thin along the bottom righthand contour. The cast shadow at the lower right is in dark grey set on top of the lighter background (as shown by the X-ray).

The lit part of the face is built up from very small and carefully placed strokes in flesh tints. At the transitions from the lit areas to the half-shadows the clearly visible brushwork is somewhat less pronounced, as the paint has been applied more thinly.

The eyes are done with careful touches and strokes of the

brush, with slightly more impasto in the lit parts, and more so in the lefthand eye. The areas of shadow in and around the eyes are so thin that the ground shows through. In the shadows of the wrinkles round the eye and the eyepouches a russet brown tint predominates. The folds of the eyelids are suggested with small, fine lines. The shadows of the folds of skin in the eyepouches lie in gaps between the slight impasto of the light flesh tints placed over a reddish-brown tone. In both eyes the pupil, iris and white of the eye have been indicated with loose but effective brushstrokes, here and there leaving the ground exposed.

The nose is formed with quite thick strokes, with a little white on the ridge and tip. The nostrils are drawn in brown, and shadowed on the left with a little red and dark brown. The mouth is indicated in reds in a very thin paint, with some pinkish white on the lower lip; the line of the mouth is drawn with small strokes. The hair is fairly devoid of detail, done with small strokes of dark brown that become vague towards the outer edge, set over a very thin underlayer of brown. The moustache, like the small beard, is in ochre brown worked with small strokes of a very dark grey. To the left these strokes take on a lighter tint, and along the jaw the smooth-shaven skin is shown with light, cool grey.

The collar has a relatively thick white in the lit areas. The shadows and lacework are rendered with a thinly applied grey and dark grey spots and squiggles. The two tasselled bandstrings hanging from them are, where they are seen in the light, indicated with thick white paint.

The structure of the cloak and doublet is carefully defined. The velvet revers of the cloak are done thinly in black so that the underlying ground shows through, producing a slightly ruddy effect. The folds in the cloak and doublet are indicated in dark to very dark grey, using a rather more opaque paint. The lighter areas are partly in very fine strokes of grey placed on the dark grey. The rosettes at the waist are a thick, dark grey paint, with a few highlights.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*X-Rays*

Where the mixtures involving paint containing white lead are concerned, the radiographic image matches the observations made at the surface. Small discrepancies in the line taken by the contours of the hair and shoulder suggest that the hair and clothing were completed after the background had been executed in grey paint. It can be seen, from the light image in the X-ray, that at the place where the cast shadow falls on the wall the light paint of the background continues underneath.

*Signature*

At the bottom right in the dark part of the background, in almost black paint <RH (in monogram). *van Rij*/1632>. The final letter of 'Rijn' is missing, evidently because a small strip has been removed from the panel along the righthand side. The signature makes a reliable impression.

*Varnish*

No special remarks.

**4. Comments**

For documentary evidence of Rembrandt's authorship of this painting, see the comments on no. A 56, the *Portrait of Jacques de Gheyn III* in Dulwich College.

The two paintings are alike in many respects,



Fig. 1. Panel 31.1 × 24.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray

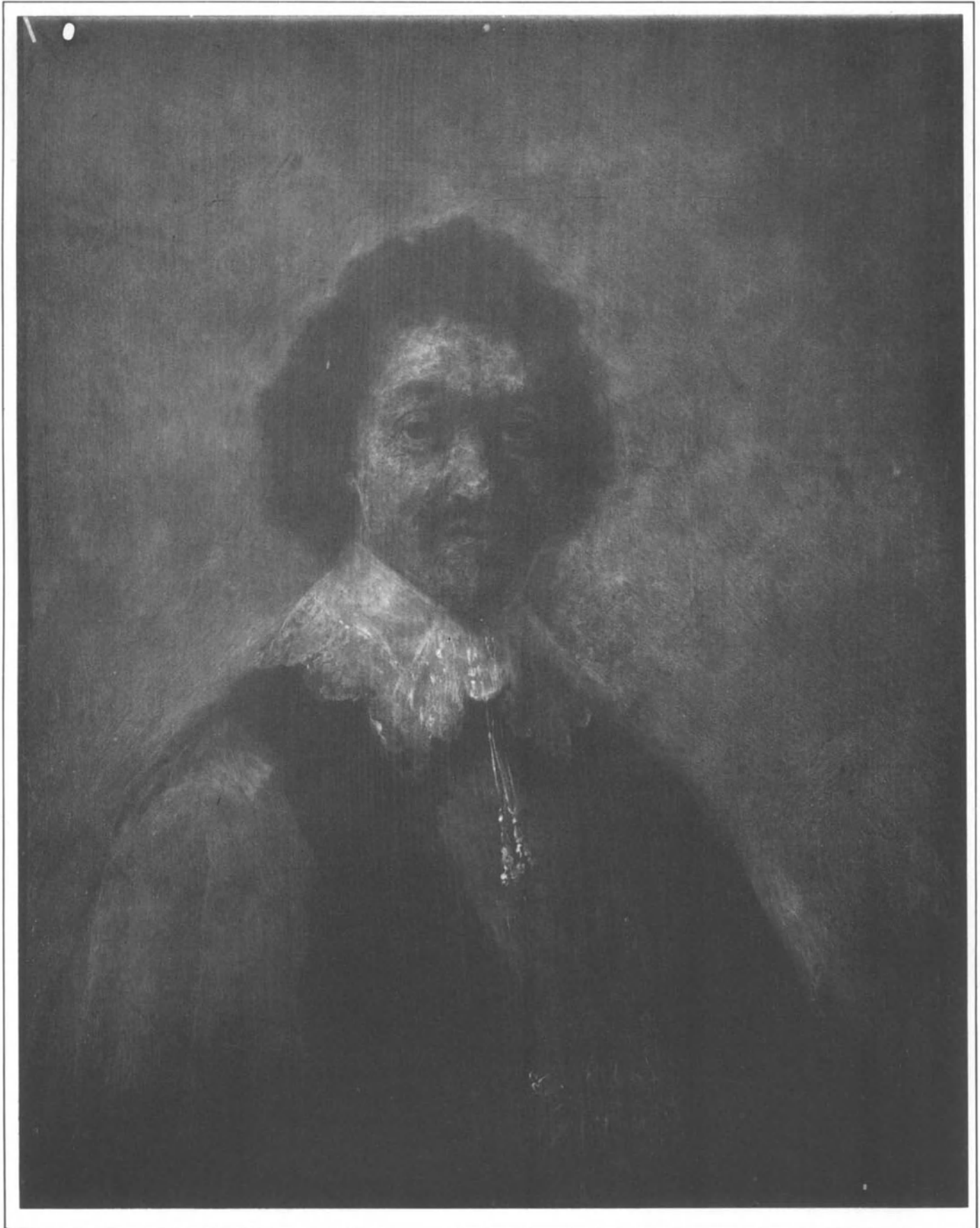
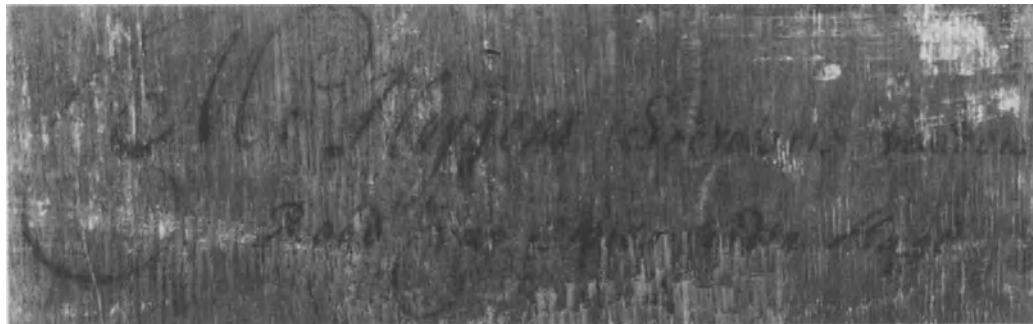


Fig. 3. Inscription on back of panel



both stylistically and from the viewpoint of technique. There are, however, differences as well. In contrast to the De Gheyn portrait, where the pleated collar was in all probability underpainted in white, no light paint was, so far as one can tell from the X-ray, used for underpainting the collar seen in no. A 57. This confirms the supposition (cf. Vol. I, pp. 20–24) that using light paint in the dead-colouring stage was by no means a rule for Rembrandt; even in these two portraits, which can be seen as a pair, his practice in this respect clearly varied. A further technical difference is that in no. A 57 the background has been done in a single stage, undoubtedly before the painting of the figure, while in the De Gheyn portrait the lighter zone around the head and shoulders was added as a second paint layer, after the figure had been completed. This also makes a stylistic difference evident: compared to no. A 57, the *Portrait of Jacques de Gheyn* has a more intense lighting, and thus a greater emphasis on the chiaroscuro contrast and on the sinuous pattern of the contours and folds. One might say that the difference in interpretation between these two otherwise very similar paintings lies in that between on the one hand a greater independence of plastic form in the light (in the De Gheyn portrait) and on the other an atmospheric effect (in the Huygens). That this difference must be seen as a tendency that is regularly apparent during these years is evident from, for instance, a comparison between the high-contrast earlier state of the Toledo *Young man* of 1631 (no. A 41) and the final state of that painting, and – more generally – from the growing atmospheric character of Rembrandt's portraits from the early 1630s. It is significant in this connexion that unlike the *Portrait of Jacques de Gheyn* and several other portraits from 1632 (e.g. the Glasgow *Portrait of the artist*, no. A 58), that of Maurits Huygens (like, for example, the *Portrait of a 40-year old man* in New York, no. A 59) shows a cast shadow on the rear wall; this device was subsequently to be used with great regularity in the portraits of 1633. This cast shadow was, as can be

deduced from the X-ray showing a continuity of tint at this point, added at a late stage and placed over the earlier background. A characteristic detail is the curling lobe of the lace collar (a fashionable item of clothing, and a new motif for Rembrandt), which introduces a deliberately irregular element contributing to the suggestion of depth.

Maurits Huygens (1595–1642), older brother of the better-known Constantijn Huygens and godson of Prince Maurits of Orange, followed his father Christiaan in 1624 into the not unimportant post of Secretary to the Council of States, a governing body under the States-General of the Republic. As a high-ranking official, he appears more stylishly dressed<sup>2</sup> than does De Gheyn in his portrait by Rembrandt. One may assume that both portraits were painted (or at least prepared) in The Hague, where the two sitters lived.

### 5. Documents and sources

- Inscription in black letters on the back of the panel: *M. Huygens Secretaris vanden Raad van State inden Hage* (illustrated in: Strauss *Doc.*, p. 205; our fig. 3).
- See also the documentation for no. A 56, which has a close bearing on this portrait.

### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

### 7. Copies

None.

### 8. Provenance

\*– Together with its companion-piece, the *Portrait of Jacques de Gheyn III* (no. A 56), in the possession of Maurits Huygens until his death in 1642, and later in the sale of the A. R. van Waay coll., Utrecht 27 February 1764 and a Paris sale on 2ff March 1786 (for further details see no. A 56).

\*– Probably Desenfans private sale, London 8ff June 1786 (Lugt –), no. 264: 'Rembrandt. A head. 1 ft. by 11 in. [= 30.7 × 28.2 cm], on pannel'.

\*– Probably sale coll. Pieter Cornelis Baron van Leyden (Amsterdam), Paris [5 July, postponed to] 10 September [actually held 5 November] 1804 (Lugt 6841, 6852, 6864),

first supplement no. 152: 'Rembrandt (Van Rhin). Peint sur bois, haut 11, larg. 9 p. [= 29.7 × 24.3]. Portrait d'un Personnage vu presque de face, et aussi a mi-corps, dans un Habille-ment noir, ajusté d'une Fraise indiquant le costume d'un Magistrat. Morceau plein de vérité et de la plus riche couleur.' It seems more likely that the picture described here is to be identified with no. A 57 (although it seems to correspond less well to the description, which mentions 'une Fraise') than with no. A 56 (which would rather seem to have remained in Desenfans' possession).

– Coll. D. Vis Blokhuisen (Rotterdam), sale Paris 1–2 April 1870, no. 60 (8200 francs to Wesselhoeft).

– Coll. Joh. Wesselhoeft, Hamburg; bought from the Hudtwalcker-Wesselhoeft collection by the museum in 1889.

### 9. Summary

On the grounds of style and handling of paint, as well as of the reliable signature and date, no. A 57 can be accepted as being an authentic Rembrandt from 1632. By reason, principally, of the combination of documentary evidence, it should be seen as a companion to the Dulwich College *Portrait of Jacques de Gheyn III* (no. A 56). Compared to the Dulwich picture it shows, alongside striking similarities, differences that spring from a more atmospheric approach of the kind that in Rembrandt's later Leiden and early Amsterdam years supplanted a rendering of form, by means of marked chiaroscuro, aimed particularly at achieving plasticity.

### REFERENCES

- 1 Cf. J. Bauch and D. Eckstein, 'Woodbiological investigations on panels of Rembrandt paintings', *Wood science and technology* 15 (1981), pp 251–263, esp. 260.
- 2 H. E. van Gelder, *Ikongrafie van Constantijn Huygens en de zijnen*, The Hague 1957, pp. 8–9 (nos. 1 and 2).

HDG 573; BR. 17; BAUCH 302; GERSON 99

Fig. 1. Panel 64.4 × 47.6 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray





### 1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved and authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1632. As a portrait in the proper sense of the word, done in conventional costume, it is unique among Rembrandt's painted self-portraits. It is uncertain whether the panel was originally oval.

### 2. Description of subject

Bust of a young man, with Rembrandt's features, the body turned slightly to the left, the head seen almost square-on. The sitter has frizzy, half-length hair, a moustache and a tuft of beard on the chin. He wears a partly-unbuttoned black doublet with gold-coloured buttons and loops, a cloak and a white pleated collar. This collar is fastened with a red ribbon part of which is visible at the top of the join. A black hat with an ornament and a broad, curling brim (a 'respondet') casts a shadow on the face. Strong light falls from the left. The background is fairly light, and almost uniform.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 31 May 1971 (B. H., P. v. Th.) in good daylight and out of the frame and again on 11 June 1983 (E. v. d. W.). X-Rays received from the museum included films covering the whole painting, and one of the head alone.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 64.4 × 47.6 cm. Thickness c. 0.8–0.9 cm. Two planks, joined at 13 cm from the righthand edge. Back planed and cradled. No traces of beveling, from which it might be concluded that an originally rectangular panel has been made oval at a later date; the edges do not however show any obvious signs of having subsequently been sawn, so it is still possible that the oval shape is original. SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Not observed with any certainty. Small exposed areas between the white of the collar and the black of the doublet show a brownish colour. A yellow-brown can be glimpsed beside the eye on the left, and in the scratchmarks in the hair. In interpreting these observations, allowance must be made for the presence of an underlying painting (see *X-Rays* below).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: The shadow areas of the face probably have a translucent overpainting. The lines in the area of the eyes have been strengthened here and there, particularly in the righthand eye. Retouches are seen in the righthand part of the moustache, and there are darkened overpaintings at some places in the background. Paint loss has been restored along the join; the two planks have been separated and not entirely accurately glued together again, so that they do not lie exactly level. Moreover, part of the planks seems to have been planed away when they were being glued. Craquelure: a fine regular pattern of cracks is seen in the thicker parts, but little elsewhere.

DESCRIPTION: The overall appearance of the painting is gover-

ned by the fact that it has been done on top of an earlier painting (see *X-Rays*). One result is that translucent areas such as one tends to find in shadow passages, the hair and the background are absent.

Moreover, an underlying layer of paint shows through at various places – in the hat above the forehead on the left, in the right of the white of the lefthand eye and around the righthand eye as a flesh colour, and above and to the right of the crown of the hat and along the shoulder contour on the left as a darker colour. The top painting seems to have been rapidly executed; along the contours of the figure it has frequently been done wet-in-wet with the background.

The background is done entirely opaquely in grey, somewhat lighter to the right than to the left. Especially in the lighter part it shows clearly visible brushwork, sometimes running parallel to the shoulder outline and further up set crosswise to it; elsewhere the background has brushstrokes running in various directions.

The lit parts of the face are painted opaquely with a clearly visible brushstroke that follows the forms without directly producing modelling. In the cheek and nose area the colour is quite reddish, while there is a greyish tint at the chin and jawline. The transitions to the shadow areas are fairly abrupt. The shadowed areas have a lumpy surface, and have probably been subsequently overpainted with a translucent paint. Dark red is used in the nostrils.

The corner of the eye on the left has been touched up with thin grey, and the same grey has been used to strengthen the upper border of the top eyelid. The grey of the iris is worn; the pupil is black. A vague catchlight has been placed on the iris. The structure of the other eye is weak, and it appears to have been entirely gone over. The mouth-line, built up from a variety of brushstrokes, shows the same dark red that was used for the nostril; to the left it broadens out into the shadow. The lips are modelled with touches of pink. The tuft of beard on the chin is done with strokes that can barely be distinguished one from the other and some rather summary touches, and the moustache in a light ochre colour and a little grey. The reflected light on the underside of the chin is indicated with a greyish flesh colour.

The hair is in various shades of brown, painted with a somewhat woolly effect. The indication of form has been heightened with some fairly coarse scratchmarks (by the hat and on the right at the outline) and small, curling lines of paint. In the hair on the right, the paint has a lumpy surface except along the joint where it has been restored, including the scratchmarks.

The hat is painted in an opaque black, and is lent a strong impression of plasticity by a sheen of light done in grey and by the lively contours. At one point in the curled brim above the lefthand eye the black has obviously been placed over another paint visible in relief (which proves to belong to an underlying head: see *X-Rays* below). The ornament on the right is done cursorily.

The collar, in white, greys and ochre, shows brushstrokes following the direction of the pleats, with a light accent halfway along and becoming thicker towards the lower edge. The edge is done with small, lively strokes. At the fastening below the chin the small ribbon is indicated with a stripe of red.

The clothing is painted broadly and somewhat translucently in black, with a more opaque grey for the lights. The buttons and loops are formed quite roughly.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The presence of an underlying picture, suggested by paint

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



showing through the present top layer, is confirmed by the X-ray. Of the present portrait, the lit parts of the face (including the area of reflected light along the underside of the chin), the collar, the sheen on the clothing and parts of the background (especially along the edge of the hat and along the right shoulder-line) show up light in the X-ray image. Dark areas include not only the present body, hat and hair and shadow areas, but also, above the present hat, the hair of a head turned three-quarters right and, to the left of the present collar, the dark reserve for the body belonging to this underlying head. In the hat and its cast shadow can be seen the lit parts of the forehead, the nose and right eye of the earlier head.

It may be concluded from this that beneath the present portrait there is a mainly light background in which there was a reserve for the hair of a head, placed rather higher up, and for the associated upper body. The righthand contour of this body cannot be made out, due to the radioabsorbency of the

paint of the second background along the present righthand shoulder. As the underlying painting shows a considerable amount of detail in the lit areas, one may assume that it was completed (or nearly so) before the present one was painted over it.

The radiographic image is somewhat confused by the shadow of the cradle.

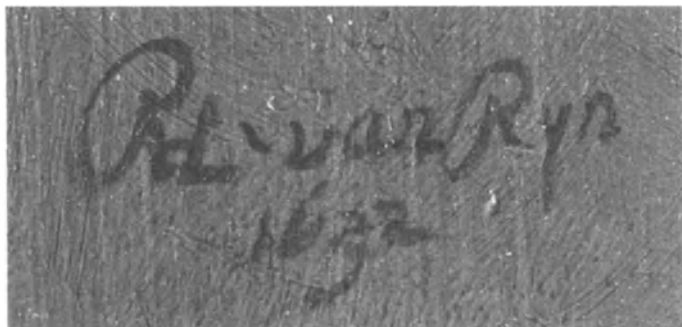
#### *Signature*

On the right, level with the chin, in grey set on the dry background <RHL (in monogram, followed by a short, backwards-sloping and slightly curving mark) *van Ryn*/1632>. With its spontaneous execution it inspires confidence; the shaping is almost identical to that of, for example, no. A 56.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

Fig. 4. Detail with signature (enlarged)



#### 4. Comments

The means by which, in this portrait, the appearance of the figure has been given bulk and weight, thus creating a strong impression of 'presence', are wholly consistent with the general characteristics of Rembrandt's portraits from the early 1630s. The plasticity of forms is suggested by sinuous contours and, in the face, by a marked contrast of light and shade. This goes together with a playing-down of the linear elements in the face and a deliberately broad treatment of the details of the costume; both help to ensure the unity of the appearance. One notices that the effect of plasticity and three-dimensionality is very convincing at some distance; when the painting is viewed closer up, there are some deficiencies – mainly around the eyes – but these are due mostly to later restorations. An unusual feature is that the background has been done entirely opaquely and with little variation in tone; this is undoubtedly connected with the presence (revealed by the X-rays, but already suspected from examination of the paint surface) of an earlier painting beneath the present surface. Everything taken together, there is full reason to look on this work as being by Rembrandt and dating, as the confidence-inspiring signature states, from 1632.

Yet in many ways the portrait is unusual. The head seen almost frontally does occur a number of times in painted and etched self-portraits, but only once – in etching B. 7 – in the same formal dress of hat, collar, doublet and cloak. No. A 58 is very similar indeed to one stage from the (long) genesis of that etching, and in particular to the composition that Rembrandt, starting from a proof print of the head, completed with black chalk to make a half-length figure, and signed and dated 1631 (B. 7 iv, Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale; fig. 5). The resemblance is even more striking if one assumes that the panel was originally rectangular (cf. *Support* above). In the proof print the body faces left, exactly as it does in the painting. The hat and, to a slightly lesser extent, the head are however an exact mirror image of those in the painting. One thus arrives at the

Fig. 5. Rembrandt, *Self-portrait*, etching (B. 7 iv), completed in black chalk. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale

remarkable situation of the painting combining the body drawn on the print with the head and hat as the artist drew them (reversed relative to the print) on the etching plate.

As in the etching, the elegant clothing in the painting is quite uncommon in a self-portrait of Rembrandt; it is small wonder, therefore, that in the 18th century it was no longer recognized as being a self-portrait and was then seen as forming a pair with the *Bust of a young woman* in Allentown (no. C 59) (cf. fig. 6; see 6. *Graphic reproductions* and 8. *Provenance*) after having previously – according to two drawings in Haarlem (see 7. *Copies*, 1) – been regarded as a pendant to the Milan *Bust of a young woman* (no. C 57). It is however clear that the composition is not designed to go with a companion-piece: the head facing slightly to the right and the body turned a little to the left form obviously well-considered deviations from the vertical axis, and together produce an effect of freely-handled frontality. Virtually the same effect is found in the *Young woman* (known as Rembrandt's sister), also from 1632, in Boston (no. A 50) which shows the same posture. The same composition was used again in

Fig. 6. Etchings by F. Voyez and F. R. Ingouf, in: *Galerie du Palais Royal* . . .

1634 by a follower in the *Portrait of a young man* now in Leningrad (no. C 78), that certainly did not have a pendant either and must have portrayed a bachelor. The same appears to be true of the Glasgow self-portrait.

That the elegantly dressed young man in no. A 58 is indeed Rembrandt is plain first of all from the similarity with etching B. 7. It is also in accordance with the fact that Rembrandt used a panel that had already been painted on – something that would have been virtually unthinkable with a commissioned portrait, but that one finds him doing time and again with less valuable works (see Vol. I, p. 131).

The painting hidden beneath the present portrait appears in the X-ray to be similar to the 1633 *Self-portrait* in Paris (no. A 71), though without a gold chain and perhaps against a somewhat lighter

background. What it looked like can possibly be deduced from two paintings – one, probably by Isack Jouderville (cf. Introduction, Chapter III, fig. 28) and obviously a fragment, reproduced here (fig. 7), the other, probably copied from the first, in *Burl. Mag.* 105 (1963), p. 229 as by Jouderville – in which the distribution of light and shape of the body, hair and eye-sockets are very like those in the underlying painting as shown in the X-ray of no. A 58. One can imagine that these paintings might reflect a self-portrait painted over by Rembrandt himself in 1632. If so, the fact that one of them shows the figure in a rectangular field lends some support to the idea that the Glasgow picture too was originally rectangular (cf. *Support*).

##### 5. Documents and sources

None.

Fig. 7. Copy after (?) Rembrandt's *Self-portrait* hidden under the present painting. Probably transferred to canvas. Whereabouts unknown



## 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching (fig. 6) by François Voyez (Abbeville 1746–Paris 1805) inscribed: *Voyer le Jeune Sculp./Peint par Rembrandt Vanryn*, on one plate together with an etching by François Robert Ingouf after the Allentown *Bust of a young woman* (no. C 59) with the joint inscription: *FLAMAND.-FLAMANDE./De la Galerie de S.A.S. Monseigneur Le Duc d'Orléans*. Published in: *Galerie du Palais Royal, gravée d'après les tableaux des différentes écoles qui la composent . . . Dédiée à S.A.S. Monseigneur d'Orléans . . . par J. Couché . . .*, Paris 1786–1808, III, [p. 9]. Shows the picture in reverse with a clear stress on the turn and tilt of the head.

## 7. Copies

Painted copies, mostly on canvas, have occurred fairly frequently (cf. HdG 573). Worthy of special mention are:

1. Drawing, black chalk heightened with white on very thin Japanese paper, oval, 27.9 × 19.4 cm, signed on the right in background: *D . . . . vo.RT*, Haarlem, Teylers Stichting (no.

ox64). In the same collection there is a similarly executed copy after the Milan *Bust of a young woman* (no. C 57) (ibid. no. ox65). Both drawings are undoubtedly, as pointed out by Mr Peter Schatborn of the Amsterdam Rijksprentenkabinet (in: *N.K.J.* 32, 1981, p. 40), identical with two in an inventory of Valerius Röver of Delft from the 1730s (Amsterdam, University Library ms. II A 17-4) described under nos. 45–46 as the work of Rembrandt: 'T. Pourtrait van Rembrand A<sup>o</sup> 1634. met swart krijt en gehooft, Ovael, halfleeven met een hoed en kraag, boven lijf en rok met een Mantel. Een Dito zijnde de vrouw van Rembrand in t'hair gehult en een swarte kap achter ahangende met een tabbart over de schouders. Deeze twee zijn bejide van Rembrand soo uijtvoerig en konstig geteekent als ietz van hem bekent is.' (The Portrait of Rembrandt anno 1634. with black chalk and heightened, Oval, half-length with a hat and collar, shirt and doublet with a cloak. A ditto, being the wife of Rembrand with her own hair and a black cap hanging down behind with a tabard over the shoulders. These two are both done by Rembrand as thoroughly and artfully as any known from him.) The identity of the subject of no. A 58 was thus still known around 1730. The authorship of the

drawings, now ascribed to Dirck Pietersz. Santvoort (1610/11–1680), is uncertain.

2. Copy in tapestry, together with one after no. C 59, sale coll. Abel-François Poisson, Marquis de Menars, Paris, end February and 18 March–6 April 1782 (Lugt 3376 and 3389), no. 91: '... Ces deux Tableaux sont exécutés par le Sieur Cozette en tapisserie à la Manufacture Royale des Gobelins, & supérieurement rendus; ils sont de forme ovale, sous glace de 24 pouces sur 17 de large [= 64.8 × 45.9 cm] (750 livres to Gomchou). Fourth International Exhibition of CINO, Amsterdam 1970, no. 85 (as dating from 1779).

### 8. Provenance

– Together with no. C 59 in coll. Philippe Duc d'Orléans (d. 1723). Du Bois de Saint Gelais, *Description des Tableaux du Palais Royal... dédiée à Monseigneur le Duc d'Orléans*, Paris 1727, p. 365 (2nd impr., 1737, p. 366): 'Paul Rembran. Un Portrait. Peint sur bois, ovale, haut de deux pieds, large d'un pied six pouces [= 64.9 × 48.7 cm]. C'est un homme qui a un petit chapeau noir et un pourpoint boutonné avec un colet tournant comme une fraise.' Thus not, as Hofstede de Groot<sup>1</sup> assumed identical with: 'Deux portraits de forme ovale peints par Reimbrant. L'un un homme et l'autre une jeune fille', sale coll. Comtesse de la Verrue, Paris 27ff March 1737 (Lugt 470), no. 14. *Galerie du Palais Royal...*, Paris 1786–1808, III, [p. 9]: '1<sup>er</sup> et 2<sup>me</sup> Tableau de Rembrant van Ryn. Peints sur Bois ayant de hauteur 23. Pouces sur 16. Pouces 6. Lignes de large [= 62.1 × 44.5 cm]. Mgr. le Duc d'Orléans possède six Tableaux de Rembrant. Ils étoient autrefois au Palais Royal; mais on les voit aujourd'hui au Rincy où Feu Mgr. le Duc d'Orléans, les fu transporter avec les meilleurs Tableaux de l'École Flamande'.

– Sold from the collection of Philippe Egalité with the other Dutch and Flemish paintings to Thomas Moore Slade who acted also on behalf of Lord Kinnaid, Mr. Morland and Mr. Hammersley and brought to England in 1792. Exhibited at 125 Pall Mall, London, April 1793 as no. 68: 'Portrait of Rembrandt by himself', and valued at 200 guineas<sup>2</sup>.

\*– Bought by the 3rd Lord Egremont, Petworth, from Charles Birch, 27 January 1800 (50 guineas, with the presumed companion-piece, our no. C 59)<sup>3</sup>.

– By descent to Lord Leconfield, Petworth; sold privately 1927<sup>4</sup>.

– Coll. Viscount Rothermere, sale London (Christie's) 6 December 1946, no. 65.

– Bought by Sir William Burrell, who presented it to the Glasgow Museums and Art Gallery in 1946.

### 9. Summary

In its general approach, handling of light and space, contrast effect and contours this is convincing as a painting by Rembrandt. The confidence-inspiring signature and date of 1632 confirm the authorship and pinpoint the date. If the execution appears of uneven quality, this is due in part to the not entirely satisfactory state. There is another picture beneath that now seen; this is something that is often encountered with painted self-portraits of Rembrandt. Among the latter no. A 58 is unique by reason of the formal dress, which it shares with etching B. 7 (which it closely resembles in other respects as well).

It is uncertain whether the oval shape of the panel is original.

The underlying picture was, so far as can be read from the X-ray, the bust of a young man with the body turned three-quarters right, and was presumably also a self-portrait.

### REFERENCES

- 1 HdG 573.
- 2 W. Buchanan, *Memoirs of painting I*, London 1824, pp. 18–19, 196.
- 3 C. H. Collins Baker, *Catalogue of the Petworth Collection of pictures in the possession of Lord Leconfield*, London 1920, p. 101, no. 183.
- 4 Cat. exhibition *Primitives to Picasso*, London (Royal Academy of Arts) 1962, no. 124.



**A 59 Portrait of a 40-year-old man**

1632

NEW YORK, N.Y., THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, ACC. NO. 64.126

GIFT OF MRS LINCOLN ELLSWORTH IN MEMORY OF LINCOLN ELLSWORTH, 1964, SUBJECT TO LIFE ESTATE

HDG 761; BR. 160; BAUCH 357; GERSON 122

Fig. 1. Panel 74.5 × 55 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



### 1. Summarized opinion

An authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1632. As far as can be ascertained, in good condition.

### 2. Description of subject

Bust of a man, with the body turned three-quarters right and the head almost square-on. The sitter is bareheaded, and wears a white pleated collar and a black costume. The light falls from the left onto the figure and, especially to the right, onto the rear wall on which the figure casts a shadow.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 16 April 1969 (J. B., B. H.) in reasonably good daylight and good artificial light, and in the frame. One X-ray film of the head, collar and shoulder (by the museum) was available. A print from this was received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, oval, grain vertical, 74.5 × 55 cm. Thickness *c.* 1.1 cm. Two planks, greatest widths 37.3 cm on the left and 17.8 cm on the right. Back bevelled rather irregularly all round the edge, from which it may be concluded that the oval format is original.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology measurement (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) in 1977; a dating is not yet possible.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish brown is visible in a few patches that show through in the hair, in the shadow side of the forehead and in the righthand eye-socket close to the bridge of the nose.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: The condition cannot be assessed properly because of a thick and badly yellowed layer of varnish. It gives the impression of being sound. Craquelure: none seen.

DESCRIPTION: The grey background is in general painted quite smoothly, but is relatively thick and boldly done by the right-hand shoulder and, to a lesser extent, along the contour of the left shoulder, where fairly long brushstrokes run parallel to the contours, suggesting that here the background was extended beyond the border of the reserve originally left for the figure. The cast shadow at the bottom right is (so far as one can tell through the varnish) done in a thin dark grey, and placed in a reserve left in the thicker light grey.

In the light areas of the face, and especially at places where the most light falls, the brushwork is clearly apparent. The fairly short strokes have a predominantly modelling function. The shadow areas are, apart from the comparatively thick paint of the shadow cast by the nose, painted thinly. The transitions from light to shade are finely graduated, and especially on the forehead this transition displays a subtle range of nuances creating a strong effect of plasticity.

The eye areas, which are quite precisely detailed, give a marked impression of depth, particularly in the eye on the left. Here, the iris is painted thinly in a translucent grey-brown on which a tiny dot of light has been placed. Red has been used on the left in the lines of shadow in the upper eyelid, and a pinkish red in the corners of the eyes and on the underside of the nose, where it surrounds the dark brown of the nostril. The

mouth-line is fairly dark and pronounced, and the red lips have no sharp outline.

The hair is painted, at the temples and along the hairline, in a thin light grey and for the rest, again thinly, in brown. The transition between the two is gradual. The moustache is also done in a thin grey; so is the beard, which becomes darker lower down. Individual hairs are picked out here and there, using separate thin strokes. The collar is painted with strokes of grey, with some more thickly applied white. The edge of the pleats is done in the same way with small, lively strokes. The grey of the shadow cast on the collar overlaps the white along its edge.

The clothing is in a grey-black, with small strokes of grey for the buttons and seams.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The short and lively brushstroke in the light areas can be seen very clearly in the X-ray. To the right the outline of the shoulder was originally meant to run higher, as is revealed by a higher reserve left in the background, which at that point contains a large proportion of white lead; the present shoulder-line is delimited by the paint of the background which has been taken further downwards, and appears somewhat less light in the radiographic image.

#### *Signature*

Far over to the right, at half height, in a dark brown-grey <RHL (in monogram) *van Ryn* / 1632.>. Makes a reliable impression. On the left, slightly higher up and in the same colour, there is in large, unsteady letters <AET (backwards-sloping curved mark) 40>.

#### *Varnish*

A layer of thick, yellowed and possibly tinted varnish makes it difficult to judge the state of preservation or to determine the colour values.

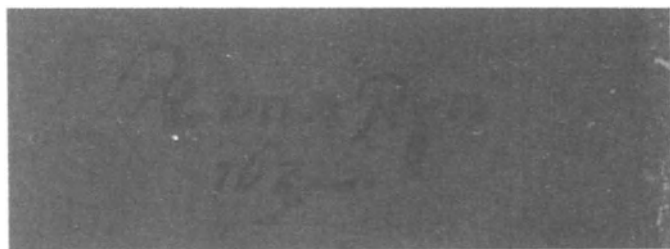
### 4. Comments

So far as the present layer of varnish allows an assessment, this portrait is wholly consistent with the general characteristics of Rembrandt's style and method of working in his early Amsterdam portraits (see Introduction, Chapter I); there is every reason to accept the authenticity of the painting, which is moreover reliably signed and dated. The effective distribution of light and shade creates a strong three-dimensional effect. In the head, the area round the eyes has the greatest detail. The background shows quite strong tonal variation and contrasts with the figure, and has a marked effect of depth comparable to that in a number of knee-length portraits and busts from these years. It is, with the Hamburg *Portrait of Maurits Huygens* (no. A 57), one of the earliest examples of a bust in which Rembrandt used the motif of the pronounced shadow cast on the wall. In the Hamburg painting this was however placed over the grey paint of a background that had already been painted, whereas here it was planned from the outset and seems to have had a reserve left for it.

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (enlarged)



No. A 59 has frequently, and wrongly, been referred to in the literature as the pendant of a *Portrait of a woman* from 1633, also in New York (no. A 83). This portrait is however smaller in size (67 × 50 cm), and on a different scale. One certainly has to assume that no. A 59 did once have a companion-piece, though this cannot be identified with certainty. On the possibility that the *Portrait of a 39-year-old woman* in Nivaa (no. A 62) should be seen as the pendant, see the *Comments* on that painting.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

– Coll. Claude Tolozan, sale Paris 23 ff. February 1801 (Lugt 6204), no. 96: 'Rhyn (Rembrandt van). Peint sur bois, haut de 28, large de 20 pouces [= 75.6 × 54 cm]. Un portrait d'homme, représenté presque de face, la tête nue, portant une chevelure grisâtre, avec courte barbe, qui se détache sur une fraise de mousseline. Tout ce que l'art peut produire de merveilleux, est porté, dans cet ouvrage, au plus haut degré de perfection. Il joint au plus admirable fini, cette fraîcheur de carnation qui semble animer la nature et la rendre parlante. Nous ne balancerons pas à classer ce magnifique portrait au nombre des chefs-d'oeuvres du premier coloriste de l'école hollandaise, auquel il suffirait pour sa renommée.' (4001 francs to Noudoux). See also, in the description of the painting sold as the pendant (no. A 62), no. 97: '... Cette figure et le pendant se détachent dans la plus parfaite harmonie, sur des fonds grisâtres, qui contribuent à produire une grande illusion. Tous deux sont en ovales.'

– Coll. Montaleau, sale Paris 19 July 1802 (Lugt 6480), no. 130: 'Rhyn (Rembrandt Van). Peint sur bois, haut de 72, large de 54 c.[entimètres]. Un portrait d'homme représenté presque de face, la tête nue, avec chevelure grisâtre et courte barbe, qui se détache sur une fraise de mousseline. Nous ne répéterons point ici l'analyse des beautés qu'offre ce portrait, et que nous avons tracées au No. 96 du Catalogue de la magnifique collection des Tableaux de feu C. Tolozan, dont il provient. La sensation qu'il a faite à cette époque sur tous les vrais connaisseurs nous est un sûr garant qu'il sera aussi justement apprécié à cette vente, et que les curieux s'empresseront

de saisir cette occasion pour se procurer un des chefs-d'oeuvres du plus grand coloriste de l'école hollandaise.' (4001 francs to Montelant).

– Coll. Collot, sale Paris 29 March 1855, no. 22 as: 'Rembrandt, Portrait de Nicolas Tulp' (16 000 francs to Collot fils; cf. C. Blanc II, p. 508).

– Coll. Baron de Seillière, Paris.

– Coll. Duchesse de Sagan, Paris.

– Coll. James W. Ellsworth, Chicago, then New York (around 1915).

– Gift of Mrs Lincoln Ellsworth, 1964, subject to a life estate in the donor.

#### 9. Summary

In the handling of light, plasticity of form and manner of painting this portrait fits in entirely with the portraits that, from 1631 onwards, occupied an increasingly large place in Rembrandt's work; it is moreover reliably signed and dated 1632, and there can be no doubt as to its authenticity. As an oval bust it belongs to a type that occurs for a few years from 1632 on in Rembrandt's work, and with the undamaged state of the panel it provides a perfect example of these. The background with its strong contrasts of light and a cast shadow forms, in this portrait, an element that occurs in a number of works from 1632. The pendant to this male portrait cannot be identified with certainty (though see the *Comments* on no. A 62).

HDG 783; BR. 155; BAUCH 355; GERSON 108

**1. Summarized opinion**

A generally well preserved authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1632.

**2. Description of subject**

Bust of a young man, seen facing slightly to the left against an all but even background. He is bareheaded, and wears a white pleated collar over black clothing. The light falls from the left.

**3. Observations and technical information***Working conditions*

Examined on 9 March 1969 (B. H., E. v. d. W.), in good daylight and in the frame, and again in the Spring of 1983. Five X-ray films, four covering the whole picture and one of the head, were received later.

*Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, oval, grain vertical, 64 × 47 cm. Thickness *c.* 1 cm. Two planks, the join at 12.5 cm from the righthand edge. Bevelled at the back around the entire edge, from which it may be concluded that the oval format is original. The back once had a primitive cradle, consisting of a rectangular frame with a horizontal cross-batten in the middle; the panel was planed down somewhat when these relatively wide battens were being fitted. There are two long cracks in the panel, one of which runs from the upper righthand edge down through the background, along and just missing the hair area and passing through the collar and clothing. This crack must be relatively recent – it is not visible in the illustrations in Bredius<sup>1</sup> and Gerson<sup>2</sup>. The other crack runs upwards from the lower left.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown is seen along the lefthand outline of the collar. Here and there it contributes to the colour, e.g. in the background, hair and shadow areas.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*Paint layer*

CONDITION: There is some local paint loss to the left in the collar. Some retouching is seen in both cheeks, the bridge of the nose and to the left in the forehead; in the background there are a few darkened retouches. Otherwise the picture is in sound condition, apart from the two cracks already mentioned. Craquelure: very fine and fairly regular cracking in the collar.

DESCRIPTION: The background, to which the colour of the underlying ground contributes in a number of places, is painted in a fairly even grey with clearly visible brushwork; especially along the hair, it can be seen that space for the head was left as a reserve in this paint.

The face is, where the light falls, painted quite thickly in flesh tints that tend towards yellow and pink. The clearly evident brushstrokes are sometimes quite long, for instance along the hairline and below the eyes, but in most other places they are short; they frequently follow the direction of the fall of light, especially on the forehead, both cheeks, the bridge and the upper half of the nose. Towards the shadow side the paint becomes thinner, and merges into a ruddy grey transitional tint. The colour of the ground can be sensed in these transitional areas. The reflected light by the ear and along

the underside of the jaw, on the other hand, is painted opaquely.

The eye on the left has a translucent brown iris, in which a catchlight has been placed at the upper left and a touch of opaque brown at the lower right. The not quite round pupil is black. The shadow under the upper eyelid is indicated with a stroke of dark brown. The white of the eye is painted in a light grey on the left where it is bordered with strokes of yellowish paint below and above, and somewhat darker grey on the right; in the corner of the eye pink paint has been used. The heavy top eyelid has been carefully modelled. A red-brown stroke is placed horizontally in the grey shadow of the eye-socket. The eyebrows, painted fairly translucently, have a quite dark grey colour, and are bordered by greyish flesh tints. The execution of the righthand eye differs from that on the left mainly in that there is a stronger contrast between the lit and the shadow part; in the corner there is a dab of ochre yellow, and a fine white highlight is placed on the lower eyelid. The shadow side of the nose forms a whole with the shadow of the eye-socket; opaque touches of russet brown are set over a translucent grey, and alongside the wing of the nose the cast shadow is shown quite sharply in a dark red-brown. A rough, opaque stroke of a lighter colour has been placed over the translucently-painted wing of the nose on the right, to represent a reflection of light; the nostril is dark brown. The left nostril is dark red. The moustache has been painted with a thin brush in the flesh colour while the latter was still wet, so that on the right the soft underlayer has been slightly indented. The mouth-line is a brown tinged with carmine red; the lips are light pink with, in the corners of the upper lip, touches of a darker red of the shade used for the lefthand nostril.

The bulk of the hair is painted somewhat translucently, and the hair structure is shown over this with strokes of brown and black paint that must have been applied while the background was still wet. The white collar is executed in long, straight brushstrokes, bordered at top right by a zone of opaque grey that indicates the shadow. Along the ends of these touches of grey, following the direction of the pleats, have been placed, to show the thickness of the collar; these extend partly over the black of the cloak, and partly over the white of the collar. At the righthand corner of the collar this grey somewhat overlaps the background.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*X-Rays*

The radiographic image matches to a great extent what one expects from the surface. The reserves left for the hair and clothing in the background (which shows up lightish), and the clothing and contours of the collar, coincide almost exactly with those in the final execution. The same is true of the image of brushmarks in the lit parts of the face. One gets the impression that when the underpainting was done no use was made of paint containing white lead.

The image is impaired to some extent by traces of the glue used to attach two horizontal battens (now removed).

*Signature*

In the right background, slightly above the centre and in dark paint <RHL (in monogram). *van Ryn* / 1632>. The date is followed by a small mark sloping down to the left, which may continue a little further after a break. The curve of the *R* of the monogram is closed on the left, while that of the *Ryn* is smaller and open on the left. The bowl of the latter *R* starts above the top of the stem, and the oblique tail is noticeably short. The *a* of *van* has the stem separated from the bowl. The signature makes a reliable impression.



Fig. 1. Panel 64 × 47 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)

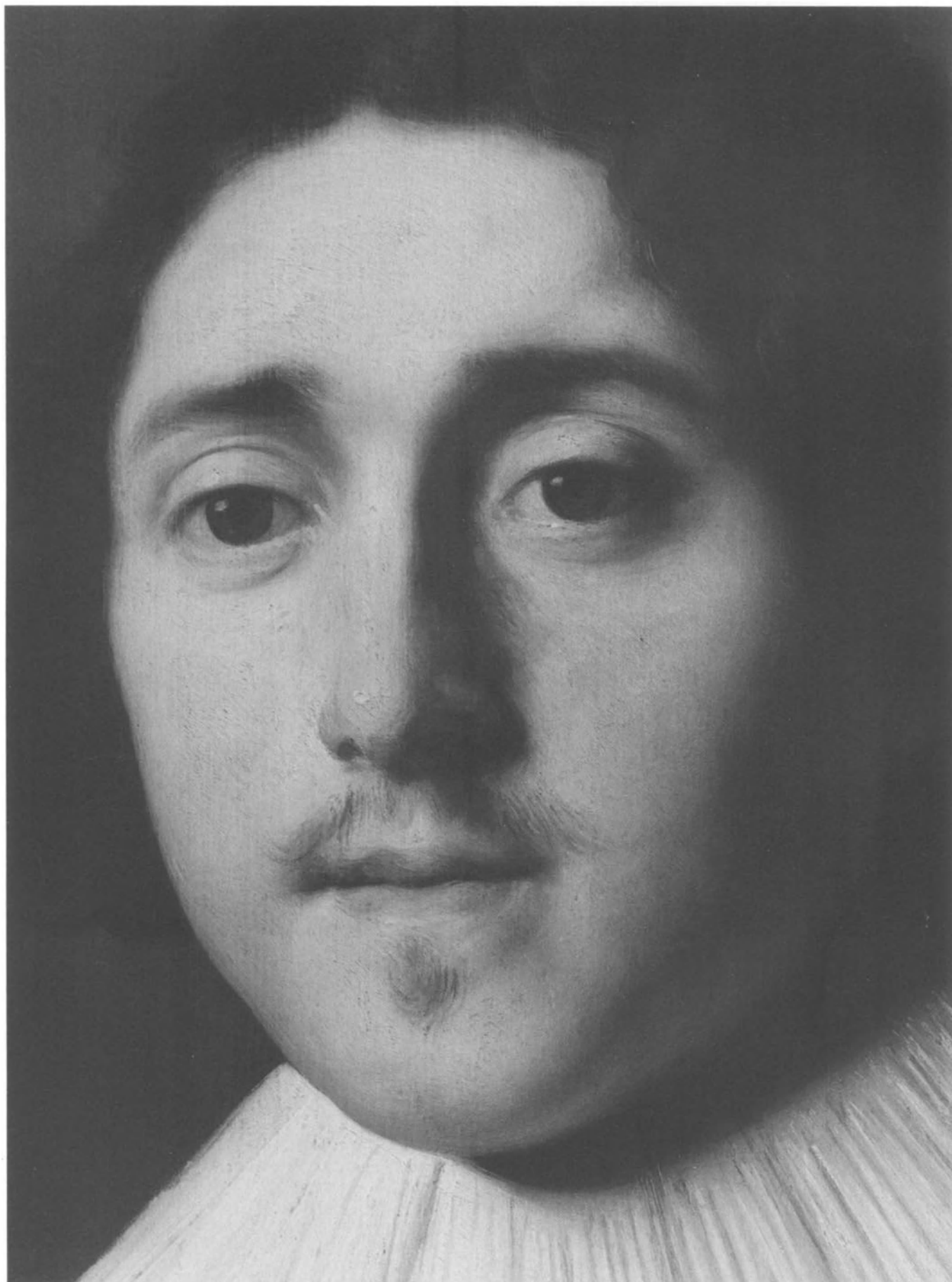
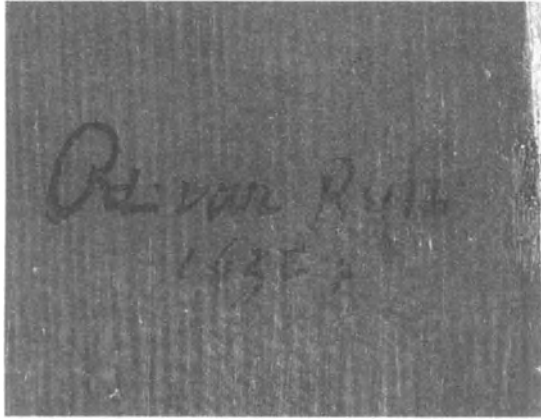


Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1 : 1)



#### Varnish

A yellowish, dull layer of varnish somewhat hampers the observation.

#### 4. Comments

Because of the turn of the body to the left, unusual in a man's portrait, the face is lit in the way normally seen in portraits of women, and this makes it rather less easy to compare the work with other male portraits. The painting makes however in many respects an impression of authenticity, and the working method presents many familiar features. A reserve was left in the background for the figure and one notices that background and hair have at some places been done wet-in-wet, evidence that the painting was produced fairly rapidly. The paint of the collar mostly overlaps that of the background which is normal, and the showing of translucent areas in the half-shadows of the face, too, is a familiar feature. The quite vigorous treatment of the background, with the ground showing through in places, is another regular feature.

The brushwork in the head is characterized by the force and translucent treatment given to the hair, the fine flicks of the brush on the forehead and small strokes following the direction of the light in various places, the off-round pupils, and the relatively broad way the reflection of light on the right wing of the nose and the nostrils have been depicted compared to the subtlety with which the area round the eyes has been done. These are all features that can be seen in very similar fashion in other, reliable Rembrandt portraits from the early Amsterdam period. The same is true of the quality of the contours, the subtle pattern of light in the collar, and the skilful distribution of light and shade in the head. Rather uncommon for a man's portrait is the fact that the background shows no differentiation in the way light is handled, and offers instead an even, grey tone; this is however something we regularly encounter in portraits of women with which

no. A 60 has the lighting in common, see for instance nos. A 55, A 79, A 83, A 84, A 85 and Br. 350. The regular occurrence, in the normal run of men's portraits, of a background with varied lighting is evidently the consequence of bold shadowing given to the righthand side of the face, which demands a contrasting background.

Everything taken together, there is sufficient reason to accept the work's authenticity, and the attribution is moreover supported by a signature that inspires confidence.

The turn of the sitter's body to the left, practically rules out the likelihood of no. A 60 having had a woman's portrait as a companion-piece, which would have meant the man forming the sinister and the woman the dexter half of the pair. It has been suggested (letter from Mr H. J. Ammeraal to the present owner) that the picture would be a portrait of René Descartes, who was thirty-six in 1632; this seems however utterly unlikely in view of the sitter's features – which don't show sufficient resemblances to the French philosopher's – and his apparent age<sup>3</sup>. It is conceivable that he may be identified as Johan de Caullery, eldest son of Joris de Caullery; portraits by Rembrandt of both father and son are mentioned in the former's will of 1661 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1661/7). As the portrait of Joris de Caullery may be identified with the painting now in San Francisco (no. A 53) and this is dated 1632, it may be that no. A 60, also dated 1632, is identical with that of Johan. It is difficult to judge to what extent facial similarities between the two sitters support this speculation. If it were correct the painting would have been executed by Rembrandt in The Hague where in the same year he appears to have portrayed, besides Joris de Caullery, Jacques de Gheyn III (no. A 56), Maurits Huygens (no. A 57) and Princess Amalia of Solms (no. A 61).

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

– Acquired by a Count Sparre, who travelled in England, Holland and France in the 1760s and 70s.

#### 9. Summary

The painting can on the grounds of many aspects of

the treatment of form and lighting and the handling of paint, as well as of the confidence-inspiring signature, be accepted as an authentic Rembrandt. The oval shape of the panel can be regarded as original.

REFERENCES

- 1 Br. 155.
- 2 Gerson 108.
- 3 Cat. exh. *The impact of a genius. Rembrandt, his pupils and followers in the seventeenth century*, Amsterdam (K. & V. Waterman) 1983, p. 86, no. II.

PARIS, MUSÉE JACQUEMART-ANDRÉ, CAT. NO. 423

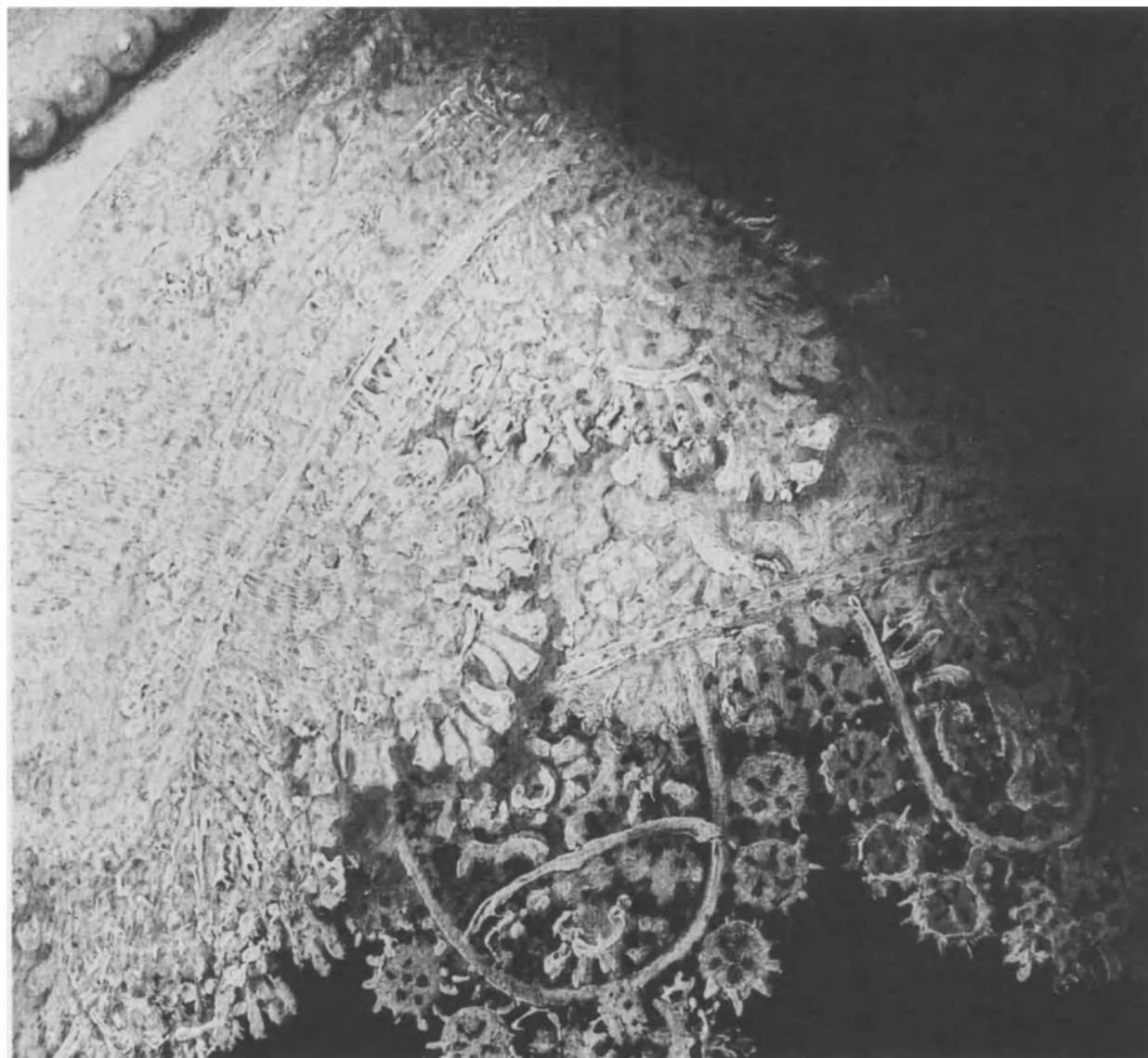
HDG 612; BR. 99; BAUCH 456; GERSON 112

Fig. 1. Canvas 69.5 × 54.5 cm





Fig. 2. Detail (1:1)



### 1. Summarized opinion

A for the most part badly worn painting, which can be accepted as authentic, and carries a not entirely intact but probably reliable signature and date of 1632. It has been somewhat reduced in size on all sides. There can be hardly any doubt that a mention from 1632 of a profile portrait of Amalia of Solms by Rembrandt relates to this painting.

### 2. Description of subject

The female sitter is seen down to the waist in an (only partly visible) oval surround with scrollwork at the top and bottom; the body is turned nearly, and the head fully, in left profile. She wears a broad, double lace collar, with a brooch at the front, over a black high-belted garment, and wears pearls in her hair, on her ear and around her neck. Both the figure and the surround are lit from the upper left.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 16 April 1971 (J. B., S. H. L.) in good daylight and in the frame, with the aid of a UV lamp.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 69.5 × 54.5 cm (measured along the stretcher). From the incomplete painted surround and the dimensions of the pendant (see 4. *Comments*) it is evident that the canvas must originally have been larger, at about 77 × 60 cm.

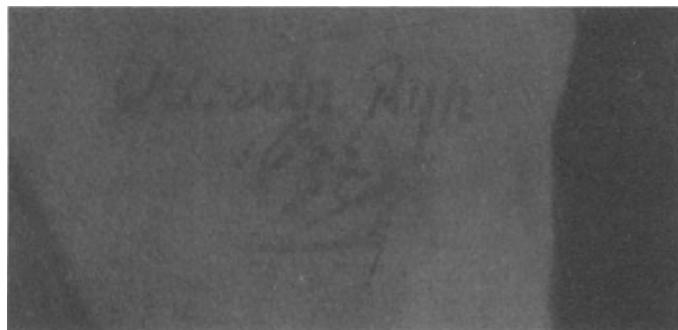
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Not clearly observed; a light colour shows through in a number of thin areas in the background and clothing.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Fig. 3. Detail with signature (1:1)



#### Paint layer

**CONDITION:** The surface is severely flattened and large areas have obviously been overcleaned (e.g. in the hair and face). There is some local paint loss, mainly in the thin, dark areas but also in a few small patches in the face. Retouches, mostly in a patchy grey, can be seen in the hair, and on a large scale (as glazes) in the background and clothing. Under the UV lamp retouches are seen along the whole of the lefthand side of the painting, in the shadow area of the collar along the upper part of the righthand contour, in the shadowed part of the hair along the pearls of the ornament, in the middle of the eyebrow, in the scrollwork at the upper right section of the surround, and in a number of scattered patches.

**DESCRIPTION:** The background, in a dark grey that becomes a little lighter at the lower left, has no distinct surface structure. The surround is broadly done in browns, without any specific rendering of the material.

The face is mainly in a creamy flesh tint; traces of the brushwork can be detected only here and there, most clearly in a curved zone of quite thick light pink running along the underside of the cheek area. There is more pink along the outline of the forehead, partly covered somewhat along the contour of the nose, and again in the wing of the nose, the lower edge of the eye and the underside of the eyelid. Below the eyebrow (which has been touched up) there is a brownish grey that, as a greyer tone, continues in the indication of the eye-socket. Brown lines (retouched) set the limits of the eyelid; the shadow the latter throws on the eye is brownish in colour. In the eye the link between the various components has been impaired by wear and restoration. The white of the eye is greyish, with a catchlight in the form of a horizontal stroke of white paint. The nostril is indicated in carmine red, bordered by the dark brown of the cast shadow that offers a strong contrast to the surrounding flesh colour. The mouth is worn, and shows a brown mouth-line with pink and pinkish red in the lips. To the right and along the lower part of the cheek there is a worn area of grey, and along this a better-preserved yellowish-brown zone that was no doubt meant to represent reflected light.

All that remains in the hair is a flesh-coloured layer with wide, sinuous brushstrokes, on top of which there is a patchy grey resulting from restoration. In the pearls in the hair it is mainly the thick white highlights that are original, and much the same is true for the chain alongside them; a dangling bow still shows an original blue in the lit parts. The pearl eardrop is also restored to a substantial degree, as are the pearls worn round the neck.

The elaborately-painted double lace collar is relatively well preserved. The brown-grey paint of the shadow that the upper layer of collar casts on the lower has, placed on it, firm touches of white to pick out the border of the upper collar; the pattern is indicated in a relief of clear white over broken white, and in dabs of grey and black.

The dark clothing and the brooch have suffered badly; as with the bow on the hair, there are small strokes of original blue in a bow at the belt.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** None.

#### X-Rays

None.

#### Signature

At the left close to the bottom, in grey on the lighter grey of the background, somewhat worn and possibly touched up to some extent <RHL (in monogram) van Ryn / 1632>, beneath which there are two small, sloping marks that meet. It seems, despite not being intact, to be basically reliable. The motif of one oblique stroke beneath the date occurs in a few signatures from 1633 (see nos. A 78, A 82 and A 84) and one from 1634 (see no. A 103).

#### Varnish

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

Because of its poor state of preservation this portrait is only a pale shadow of what it must once have been. This makes assessment difficult, and a judgment has to be based mainly on the general interpretation of form and handling of light and, where the use of paint is concerned, on the execution of the collar that can be seen as the best-preserved part of the painting.

Comparison of the general stylistic features of the work with those of Rembrandt's other portraits from the early 1630s comes up against the problem that it is in two respects exceptional – it is not, like all other portraits of this size, on panel but on canvas, and it shows the sitter in profile instead of threequarters view. Both of these peculiarities are probably a direct result of the terms of the commission (see below). Because canvas has been used as the support, one can expect the differences between the thicker and more opaquely painted lit areas and the thinner and more translucent shadow parts to be less pronounced than in paintings on panel. Since the head is seen in left profile and lit from the left, there is hardly any opportunity for the usual interplay between the contour and the distribution of light and shade to bring about a suggestion of plasticity. Instead, the outline of the profile has had to be given a very large measure of independence, and the shadow effect limited to scarcely more than a few strong accents and the half-shadows and reflections of light that were indispensable if the evenly-lit half of the face was to be given any modelling at all. We can see how Rembrandt coped with this problem in the Stockholm *Young woman in profile* also dated 1632 (no. A 49), and the Kassel *Saskia* (no. A 85), which is however difficult to interpret as a stylistic document. In the much

Fig. 4. G. van Honthorst, *Portrait of Prince Frederik Hendrik of Orange*, 1631.  
H. M. the Queen of the Netherlands, The Hague, Huis ten Bosch



better preserved Stockholm painting the face is outlined less sharply against the background, and the contour is more varied. Both features contribute, together with the soft half-shadows, to a suggestion of modelling in a way not to be found in the *Amalia of Solms*. Making allowance for the latter's worn paint surface, one can however say that the treatment of the head comes sufficiently close to that in the Stockholm painting. What can still be read of the handling of paint supports the impression that this is an authentic Rembrandt. In particular, the painting of the double collar, at the same time relaxed and refined – and done differently depending on whether the lace lies over the black clothing or over the underlying layer of the collar – can be

found in a number of works from 1633 (no. A 84) and 1634 (no. A 101, though in that instance not well preserved). If one considers on top of this the convincing (though not clinching) identification of this painting with one mentioned as a portrait of Amalia of Solms by Rembrandt, then there is reason enough to accept his authorship.

Following an article by Bode of 1897<sup>1</sup> the portrait was believed to represent Saskia van Uylenburgh, to whom Rembrandt became engaged in 1633. The background was at that time largely overpainted, and the painted surround was virtually invisible. Even before that came to light as a result of cleaning in 1965<sup>2</sup>, the painting had been discussed by Staring<sup>3</sup> in connexion with a profile portrait, described

Fig. 5. G. van Honthorst, *Portrait of Amalia of Solms. H. M. the Queen of the Netherlands*, The Hague, Huis ten Bosch



Fig. 6. G. van Honthorst, *Portrait of Amalia of Solms in arcadian dress*, 1632. Utrecht, Centraal Museum



in 1632, of Amalia of Solms, the wife of Frederik Hendrik of Orange (see 5. *Documents and sources*); he drew attention to two paintings owned by the Queen of the Netherlands, one a profile portrait of Frederik Hendrik (canvas  $77 \times 60$  cm; The Hague, Huis ten Bosch, fig. 4) signed by Gerard van Honthorst and dated 1631 and described as such in 1632, and the other a portrait also by Honthorst of Princess Amalia seen almost in profile (panel  $74 \times 55$  cm; The Hague, Huis ten Bosch, fig. 5). Staring assumed that the attribution of the portrait of the princess in 1632 to Rembrandt was based on a misunderstanding, and he had no doubt that no. A 61 did in fact show Saskia. When it was found in 1965 that the latter painting had a painted surround exactly like that seen on Honthorst's portrait of Frederik Hendrik, Gerson<sup>2</sup> argued that it was identical with the portrait of Amalia mentioned in 1632 and must be seen as the pendant to Honthorst's portrait of the prince, in spite of the fact that in 1632 the two paintings were not hanging in the same room. Gerson further assumed that these same portraits are mentioned in the 1667 inventory, although they are there cited not as being by Rembrandt and Honthorst respectively, but as by Hanneman and Rembrandt; and he correctly pointed out that Honthorst's female portrait (which

he thought to be not of Amalia but of Elisabeth of Bohemia) now hanging in the royal collection as a pendant to the Frederik Hendrik of 1631 comes from a later stage of Honthorst's production, shows a surround of a slightly different design, and is furthermore on panel. It was, he believed, evidently not intended as a companion-piece to the prince's portrait. Rembrandt's painting must be seen as the pendant – it must originally have shown the painted surround complete, like that on the male portrait, and must have measured about  $77 \times 60$  cm.

Gerson's conclusion that no. A 61 was identical with the portrait of Amalia of Solms described in 1632 must be termed convincing. It offers the only possible explanation for the painted surround, and also explains two features exceptional for Rembrandt's work in 1632 – the use of canvas as the support for a painting of this relatively small size and, especially, the sitter being turned in profile. One may assume that these unusual features are a direct result of the commission. Rembrandt kept, in any case, less strictly to the pure profile than Honthorst – for the body is not seen in pure profile.

It cannot be said that Rembrandt has provided a very imposing picture of Amalia of Solms, who must have been a proud woman. The costume, although

Fig. 7. G. van Honthorst, detail from *Portrait of Frederik Hendrik and Amalia of Solms*. The Hague, Mauritshuis



rich and fashionable, is not particularly royal. The likeness is hard to judge: this seems to be due not only to different portraitists' view of her (Miereveld twice; van Dyck around 1628; Honthorst in 1632 as a portrait in arcadian dress (fig. 6), and some time later in the portrait already mentioned as owned by the Queen of the Netherlands; Honthorst again in or shortly after 1637 in a double portrait of Frederik and Amalia, cf. fig. 7), but also to her constantly varying coiffure, hair colour and make-up (on dyeing blond during the years 1630–40, see F. van Thienen, *Das Kostüm der Blütezeit Hollands 1600–1660*, Berlin 1930, p. 69 and figs. 50 and 51: two portraits of Amalia). Perhaps it was the lack of any obviously royal appearance that eventually resulted in the identity of the sitter ceasing to be known.

Precisely when this happened it is hard to say. After 1632 there is no mention in any of the Orange inventories of a portrait of Amalia by Rembrandt. It is conceivable that the portraits of the prince by Honthorst and of the princess by Rembrandt are to be recognised in a pair of profile portraits mentioned in 1667 as by Rembrandt and Hanneman respectively, and even in a pair of portraits (not described as in profile) mentioned in 1673 as by Honthorst and Vaillant respectively. In all likelihood, however, the Rembrandt was replaced by

Honthorst's profile portrait of the princess at some time before or after Amalia's death in 1675. Portraits of a Prince and Princess of Orange in profile by Honthorst can be traced in the estate of Henriette Catharina of Anhalt-Dessau, daughter of Frederik Hendrik and Amalia, in 1708, and in that of her daughter Henriette Amalia of Nassau-Dietz at Oranienstein Castle in Nassau in 1726 (see 5. *Documents and sources*). These would seem to be identical with Honthorst's portraits now in the royal collection in The Hague. Amalia's portrait by Rembrandt, on the other hand, turned up in a Paris sale in 1795, robbed of its identity.

### 5. Documents and sources

In the 1632 inventory of the Stadtholders Quarters in The Hague mention is made of 'Een contrefeytsel van Haere Ex<sup>cie</sup> in profijl bij Rembrants gedaen' (A likeness of Her Excellency in profile done by Rembrants) in the Princess's *Kabinet* (S. W. A. Drossaers and Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer, *Inventarissen van de inboedels in de verblijven van de Oranjes*, The Hague 1974–1976, I, p. 191, no. 219). In the same inventory the pendant is described as being in her *Kleine Garderobe*: 'Een schilderje van Zijn Ex<sup>cie</sup>., geschildert in perfijl door Hondthorst, staende in een eebben lijst' (A painting of his Excellency painted in profile by Hondthorst, in an ebony frame) (ibid. I, p. 189, no. 186).

Probably the same pair of portraits was described in 1667 as being in the Oude Hof on the Noordeinde in The Hague: 'Een schilderje van sijne hoogheyt prince Frederick Hendrick hooglofl. memorie in profijl, bij Rembrant gedaen' (A painting of his Highness Prince Frederick Hendrick of most worthy memory in profile, done by Rembrant; ibid. I, p. 283, no. 1209) and 'Een schilderje van haer hoogheyt, mede in profijl, bij Hanneman gedaen' (A painting of Her Highness, also in profile, done by Hanneman; ibid. I, p. 283, no. 1210).

In the 'Disposition book' of Amalia of Solms of 1673 there is no mention of profile portraits among the paintings in the Oude Hof on the Noordeinde; presumably the same pair of portraits is identical with the following paintings described as being in 'hare hoogheys alcooffcamer' (Her Highness's alcove room): 'Een pourtrait off contrefeytsel van sijne hoogheyt prince Fredrick Henrick hooghlofl. memorie, door Honthorst gedaen' (A portrait or likeness of His Highness Prince Fredrick Henrick of most worthy memory, by Honthorst) and 'Een contrefeytsel van hare hoogheyt, gedaen door Vaillant' (A likeness of Her Highness, done by Vaillant) (ibid. I, p. 318, nos. 766 and 767).

The following mentions of portraits by Honthorst would seem to relate to the portraits of Frederik Hendrik and Amalia by that artist now in the royal collection, The Hague, which originally did not form a pair.

In the 16th chapter ('of the paintings') of the partition of the estate of Amalia of Solms in 1676 no profile portraits are mentioned. Staring<sup>3</sup> assumed that they could be identified as 'Twee van Honthorst zijnde contrefeytsels' (Two likenesses by Honthorst; ibid. I, p. 369, no. 1404) assigned to the daughter Maria, widow of the Count Palatine of Simmern; when she died childless in 1688 her inheritance went to her sisters, who included Henriette Catharina, the wife of Johann Georg II of Anhalt-Dessau.

The 1708 inventory of Henriette Catharina's estate mentions 'Prinz und Prinzessin von Oranien im Profil v. Hont-

horst' (C. Rost in: *Jahrbücher für Kunstwissenschaft herausgegeben von Dr. A. Zahn* 6, 1863, p. 67, nos. 25 and 26).

When Henriette Amalia, daughter of Henriette Catharina and married to Hendrik Casimir II of Nassau-Dietz, died in 1726, Oranienstein Castle in Nassau contained 'Ein printz van Oranien' and 'Eine princessin von Oranien, beyde in profil, von Honthorst' (Drossaers and Lunsingh Scheurleer, op. cit. II, p. 371 nos. 334 and 335).

## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

None.

## 8. Provenance

\*— It can be gathered, from the information given above under 5. *Documents and sources*, that in 1632 no. A 61 was in the Stadtholder's Quarters in The Hague. It appears to have been replaced by a profile portrait of Princess Amalia by Honthorst at an unknown date, before or after her death in 1675.

\*— Coll. Aranc [= Harenc] de Presle, sale Paris 16–24 April 1792 (Lugt 4899), no. 27: 'Rembrandt van Ryn. Une jeune femme vue en buste, la tête tournée de profil, & couverte d'une toque à rangs de perles, le col entouré d'une grande fraise à pointe avec collier de perles; elle est vêtue d'une robe noire & d'une ceinture bleue. Ce tableau de la manière finie de Rembrandt, est du plus piquant effet & de la plus parfaite conservation. Hauteur 25 pouces, largeur 19 pouces 9 lignes [= 67.5 × 53.3 cm]. T.[oile]'. Again in the Harenc de Presle sale, Paris 30ff April 1795 (Lugt 5303), no. 22 (1800 francs to Le Brun J).

— Coll. de Mier (Vervey) sale Paris 2–3 April 1840, no. 42<sup>4</sup>.

— Coll. Jacques Reiset, sale Paris 29–30 April 1870, no. 23. According to the catalogue of the Haro sale (see below), the painting came from the collection of the Landgrave of Hesse in Kassel, and was acquired by the Comte de Reiset, ex-envoy of France in Kassel<sup>5</sup>.

— Coll. Courtin, Paris 1872.

— Dealer Haro, sale Paris 30–31 May 1892, no. 41.

— Coll. Edouard André, Paris; bequeathed to the Institut de France by his widow in 1912.

## 9. Summary

So far as can be judged, this for the most part badly worn painting is acceptable as a Rembrandt from 1632. It shows little similarity to other portraits from the early 1630s in terms of lighting and suggestion of plasticity, because showing a head in left profile and lit from the left presented Rembrandt with quite unusual requirements. These must have to do with the fact, deducible from a description in 1632, that the portrait is of Amalia of Solms, the wife of Frederik Hendrik of Orange, and was commissioned as a companion-piece to a profile portrait of the prince painted by Honthorst in 1631. At some time the canvas was slightly reduced in size and the background was overpainted (this overpainting was removed in 1965).

## REFERENCES

- 1 W. Bode, 'Die Bildnisse der Saskia van Uylenborch als Braut und junge Gattin Rembrandts', *Jb. d. Pr. Kunsts.* 18 (1897), pp. 82–91, esp. 83–84.
- 2 H. Gerson, 'Rembrandt's portret van Amalia van Solms', *O.H.* 84 (1969), pp. 244–249.
- 3 A. Staring, 'Vraagstukken der Oranje-Iconographie III, Conterfeitte Rembrandt Frederik Hendrik en Amalia van Solms?', *O.H.* 68 (1953), pp. 12–24.
- 4 HdG 612.
- 5 J. Foucart in: exhibition catalogue, *Le siècle de Rembrandt*, Paris 1970/71, p. 172.



HDG 875; BR. 334; BAUCH 458; GERSON —

Fig. 1. Panel 76.5 × 58.5 (74.5 × 55) cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



### 1. Summarized opinion

An authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1632, that is in a reasonably good state in its original parts but has been substantially altered by changes in the design made by another hand.

### 2. Description of subject

A woman is seen to below the waist with the body almost in left profile and head turned three-quarters towards the viewer on whom the gaze is fixed. The light falls from the upper left.

She wears a black bodice, a gown with large shoulder-caps and a narrow, pleated white collar, and has a white, lace-bordered cap on her head. In the right hand she holds a small book held closed by metal clasps, with circular motifs on the gilt edges of the pages.

The neutral background catches some light towards the bottom.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in March 1969 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good daylight and artificial light, and out of the frame. Five X-ray copy films, together covering the whole, were received later together with an infrared photograph of the head.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 74.5 × 55 cm. Three vertical planks measuring, from left to right, 18, 19.5 and 17.5 cm in width. A crack runs from the lefthand bottom edge through the tip of the ring finger to about halfway up the panel. It has been increased in size all round by an outer ring, probably of oak, to form an oval measuring c. 76.5 × 58.5 cm. The ring has a varying width, as the panel is set excentrically into this surround; at the top left the ring is broadest at about 2.4 cm, at the bottom it is 1.5 – 1.7 cm, and at the top right only a few millimetres. As can be inferred from the X-rays, the original panel is bevelled all round over a width of 2 cm, from which it may be deduced that the oval shape of this panel is original. This bevelling was brought level with wedged-shaped blocks and filling material when the surrounding oval ring was fitted. The panel, together with the added surround, is cradled. The X-ray shows that there has been woodworm damage along the righthand join in the original panel.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown, visible at many points along the contours, in the face and in the background.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Reasonably good, apart from overpaintings associated with changes in the design made by another hand. The painting has suffered somewhat in the dark area of the clothing and in other dark passages, such as the iris of the eye on the left. Some paint loss can be seen along the righthand join in the panel, possibly as the result of woodworm damage, and affects especially the collar and clothing. At the edges of the original panel the paint has in some places been scoured away – evidently when the priming on the added surround was being rubbed flat. There has also been some paint loss along the crack which runs upwards through the hand. Other-

wise, the paint layer is in sound condition. Craquelure: apart from a fine and mainly horizontal pattern of craquelure in the sleeve close to the cuff, and in the shadow parts of the hand, there is no cracking to be seen.

DESCRIPTION: In the upper half the background has been painted with a lively brushstroke in a very dark and slightly translucent grey-brown, which becomes somewhat lighter and browner further down, but remains translucent. In the lower half, to right and left of the body, the background takes on a still lighter grey colour. There the paint is, especially along the outlines, more opaque than elsewhere in the background; one should allow for the likelihood of there having been later overpainting at this point (see 4. *Comments*). Along the lefthand contour of the figure dark shapes can be glimpsed and indicate that this outline once ran more to the left.

The shadow areas of the head are painted so thinly that in many places the ground can be seen; may be one can also see at some places the dark underpainting which, according to the infrared photograph, was painted very freely and thinly. The half-shadows in the head are done with thin strokes that merge softly one into the other. The lit part are relatively thin and done with quite short brushstrokes that follow the facial structure, using an opaque paint. The forehead is painted with diagonal strokes of pink, merging into a brownish grey in the shadow area.

The bridge of the nose is done in a yellowish-white paint, which merges into the pink of the nose; clear highlights have been placed on the ridge and tip. The lit side of the nose, just visible, is painted in a pink that shifts into a grey along the tip. The shadow side of the tip of the nose has a somewhat translucent paint, the nostril is black, and the cast shadow from the nose is a slightly translucent ruddy grey through which the ground can be glimpsed. The ground also shows through in the lips, done in a thin red with an opaque pink along the lower edge of the bottom lip. The mouth-line is built up with a variety of strokes of dark red, and there is a small white highlight on the lower lip. The reflections of light in the shadow side of the chin are done in a greyish and fairly opaque paint.

A light grey catchlight is placed in the grey of the slightly worn iris of the eye on the left; the black pupil is quite distinct. The lower lid of this eye is bordered by a short line of pink, and the pink corner of the eye has been given a very fine catchlight. The white of the eye, seen in the light, has a somewhat yellow colour. The upper eyelid is bordered by fine strokes of dark paint that indicate the shadows. The other eye is painted in an almost identical manner; in the socket of this latter eye there are translucent areas that continue out into the shadow of the bridge of the nose and into the temple. In the area of shadow below the mouth one finds a curious brown patch in the shape of a tilted trapezoid.

The pleats of the collar are shown with long strokes of white over a greyish white; the ends of the piping are indicated with fine lines and strokes in white and grey. The border between the collar and the rather formless throat area is indicated with a reddish-brown line built up from several brushstrokes; the shadow cast by the chin on the collar is a cool grey. The lefthand wing of the cap is painted in a flat, cool grey that becomes a little lighter further down; a fine edging along the outline, done in a light grey paint, is used to suggest the thickness of the material. The lit part of the cap over the top of the head is painted in a creamy white, rather more thickly applied. The area of shadow on the right, on top of which have been laid quite bold strokes of dark grey and cool grey, is slightly translucent. In the hair, indicated above the forehead with a confusion of yellow-brown strokes, the underlying

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)



ground (and possibly also a brown underpainting) contribute to the colour effect everywhere.

The hand is carefully modelled in a flesh colour that differs markedly from that used for the face. In the light areas a ruddy grey colour is used, its appearance governed to some extent by an underlying black or grey. The shadows and folds of skin are executed in an opaque brown paint, applied with little subtlety. The fingernails are quite sharply drawn; the tip of the thumb is shown with a dab of pink. The clothing is a dark grey, with shadows in black and subdued lighter tones to lend shape.

The righthand outline of the figure is sharp, while the lefthand contour is vague other than below the hand.

The ring added later to the panel carries modern paint applied in *tratteggio*-technique; this was substituted for an earlier paint layer which was removed during recent restoration (1966–69), when it appeared to be of considerably later date than the rest of the painting.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The image is somewhat impaired by the cradle (filled in with sugar during the X-ray exposure), and particularly so by radioabsorbent filling material used when the panel was enlarged, as will be discussed below.

In the face the radiographic image corresponds to what one would expect from observation of the paint surface. The lit forehead shows up as a light area, less broad on the left; apparently it was extended to the left at a late stage, using paint of low radioabsorbency. A reserve for the body was provided on the right beneath the shoulder-cap, curving further towards the right than does the present contour. The hand holding the book yields a very vague image.

The X-ray image enables one to work out how the panel was enlarged: an analysis of the features concerned also helps to answer the question of whether the panel was originally

oval. One is struck first of all by a series of radioabsorbent patches along the edge of the inner panel, rectangular or somewhat trapezoid in shape, about 2 cm wide, and uneven in length. They show, towards the centre of the panel, locally fragmented contours and, here and there, erratic dark lines. One notices, too, that they become lighter towards the outer edge. From these features it may be assumed that, thickening towards the edge, there has been filling with a radioabsorbent material, placed in wedge-shaped or trapezoid cavities that are deeper towards the outside edge. The filler would seem to have crumbled at some places (the fragmented contour) and to have split (giving the erratic dark lines). There are, between the light patches, a number of dark interspaces, most of which are of the same length at about 3.5 – 4 cm, while some are shorter and others longer. The light patches terminate 0.4 – 1 cm inside the edge of the original panel, producing a continuous dark border inside the added oval ring, which yields a light image. The dark interspaces are seen to be separated at some places from this dark surrounding band by thin, light straight lines. Occasionally the interspaces also have a light contour at the other side. In both cases these contours butt onto the contours of the light rectangular or trapezoid patches, and present a corresponding light tone on the side towards the centre. The light contours of the interspaces along the inner contour are, where present, sharp and merge into a darker tone on the side towards the middle of the panel. As has been said, the added ring around the panel shows up very light. Dark gaps at the lower right, which point to crumbling, again indicate the presence of a layer of filling material.

Our interpretation of the above symptoms is that the original panel, when being enlarged and cradled, was evidently planed scarcely if at all – as would normally be the case. An oval ring with an oval opening slightly smaller than the actual panel was then attached to its bevelled and hence very thin edge. Wedge-shaped blocks stuck to the inner panel (the dark interspaces in the X-ray) were used to mate the two, and the gaps between the blocks were levelled up with filling material (the trapezoid light patches) which at some points partly filled in the joint between the blocks and the added ring (the thin, light contours) and at others made up the differences in level between the thin edges of the wedge-shaped blocks and the inner panel (the merging light contours). The wedge shape of the blocks, which cannot be seen directly from the X-ray, can be deduced from the fact that the light image of the plaster filling between the blocks increases in its light tone towards the outside. The existence of an overlap by the added ring over the bevelled edge of the panel can be deduced from the fact that inside the outline of the inner panel there is a dark edge. The difference in level between the added ring and the inner panel has evidently been bridged by a thick layer of filling material at the front (appearing light in the X-ray).

The conclusion is that the original panel has a bevelling running all round its oval periphery, and one can thus assume that it still for the most part retains its original shape.

#### *Signature*

On the right next to the shoulder in dark grey <RHL (in monogram, followed by a short, backward-sloping stroke) van Ryn / 1632>. The R of the monogram is closed on the left, while the small R of 'Ryn' is open. On the left, level with the chin and in letters and figures larger than those used for the signature, <AET (backward-sloping stroke) 39> (dot level with the upper edge of the inscription). Both inscriptions make an impression of authenticity.

#### *Varnish*

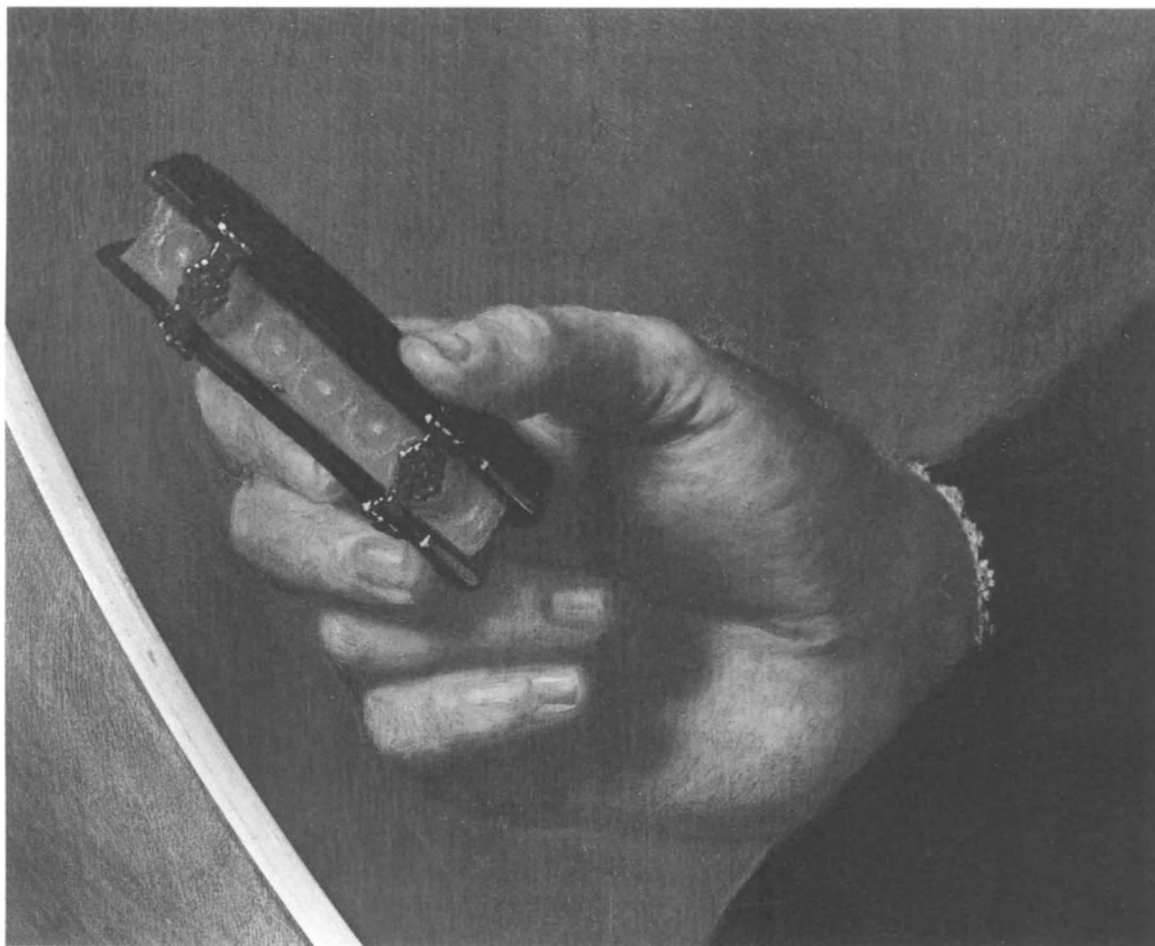
No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

Gerson, in his 1968 edition of Bredius<sup>1</sup>, expressed serious doubts whether this portrait was autograph, and these doubts obviously weighed heavily enough for him not to include the painting in his own catalogue published in 1969. Among what were according to him weak passages, it was the hand holding the book that prompted him to reject the usual attribution to Rembrandt. We share Gerson's objections to the hand with the book, but do not on that account reject the attribution; rather we believe that there is sufficient evidence to warrant the assumption that the hand holding the book is by a painter other than Rembrandt, probably the same artist who altered the lower part of the contour of the back and the outline of the right arm. The remainder of the painting exhibits all the features of an autograph Rembrandt work. The free but effective brushwork which, depending on the result sought, varies from coarse to delicate; the way in which many areas have been left translucent so that the ground and underpainting contribute to the effect; the marked three-dimensionality and plasticity; the rhythm of the contours at the shoulder, collar and cap; the moderation in the striving for an illusionistic effect in the rendering of materials – all are very typical of the Rembrandt of the early 1630s. The signature and inscription, too, with their easy and direct style of writing, support the attribution to the full.

The changes in the lower half of the painting have already been mentioned briefly. On the evidence of the radiographic image, the outline of the back took a bend to the right, and the changes made in the contour of the lefthand shoulder and arm are equally substantial. Corrections to the contour like those visible here to the naked eye in the shoulder and upper arm are, admittedly, regularly found in Rembrandt's portraits, yet in this instance the resulting contour with its slack line and the small, regular indications of pleats in the material at the inside of the elbow are entirely un-Rembrandtesque. The contour of the skirt below the hand is unaltered. However, the greatest difference between the original and the present state is that originally, it seems quite certain, the hand holding the book was not included. The reasons for believing that this hand and the associated forearm with the narrow lace cuff are later additions are firstly that there is in the black of the sleeve a fine, horizontal craquelure that does not occur in the rest of the clothing but recurs in the shadow of the hand itself.

Fig. 4. Detail (1:1)



Furthermore, the hand is laid over a layer of dark grey that can be seen at many points in the scratch-marks in the brushwork – probably the grey of the background continuing underneath. It is however mainly stylistic arguments and considerations of quality that suggest that the hand, book and sleeve were added by someone other than Rembrandt. The ruddy grey of the lit areas, very different from the colour used for the face; the very detailed rendering of form; the uncertain brushwork; the uniformity of the brown, opaque shadow areas in which there are neither dark accents nor the reflections of lights invariably found in Rembrandt; the clumsy way the lace on the cuff has been painted; and the finicky technique in the rendering of the book – all argue against this passage being painted by Rembrandt.

The fact that the corrected contour of the arm takes a line that does not match Rembrandt's style forces one to assume that the background immediately alongside the new contour is by another hand, but this does not rule out the possibility that the grey of the background in the lefthand lower half of the painting was indeed originally planned as such by Rembrandt. The bold brushwork in, for in-

stance, the area above the thumb and book supports this assumption. But the intervention of whoever painted the hand was, where the background is concerned, not limited to painting out the altered parts of the arm – in the neighbourhood of the old contour the background shows a denser and less spontaneous manner of painting, which could show that the background, too, has been overpainted at these points. The altered contour on the right, with its long, taut curve, follows a line that is again untypical of Rembrandt. The change may well have been made by the same painter.

The painting was sold in 1801 as a pendant to the New York *Portrait of a 40-year-old man* of 1632 (no. A 59); from the measurements given for the man's portrait one may infer that the oval ring had not yet been added to the painting in Nivaa (see 8. *Provenance*). The hand holding the book was at that date already part of the composition. The assumption that the outer ring was attached after 1801 is borne out by the fact that during the restoration of 1966–69 the paint on this added edge was easily removable. It cannot be immediately concluded, from the fact that they were together as pendants in 1801, that they were conceived as companion



pieces. The creation of pairs from paintings that did not originally belong together was a very common practice in the 18th century. There are various items of evidence that can be advanced in favour of the assumption that these portraits were in fact painted as pendants – not only are the dimensions very close, but the panels have also been made up in the same way from three planks, and both have a bevelling about 2 cm wide running all round the edge. The signature and the Aetatis inscription are appended in the same, rather unusual manner in corresponding positions in relation to each other (with the Aetatis inscription slightly higher up than the signature); the size of lettering and style of writing show a great resemblance. However, the scale of the figures – that of the woman appreciably smaller than that of the man – and the way they are placed in the picture area make it difficult to assume that these paintings were designed as companion pieces.

The addition of the hand and the book could, on stylistic grounds, quite well be regarded as having taken place in the 17th century. It seems to have been done for reasons of content – quite probably at the behest of the sitter or her descendants – rather than for aesthetic reasons; the hand is too awkwardly jammed into the corner for the latter. In view of the absence of any jewellery or other finery, and of the very modest collar, the sitter could well be a Mennonite; the addition of the hand holding the book – perhaps a hymnal – could have been undertaken in order to emphasize her piety. In the 19th century exception was obviously taken to the placing of the hand close against the edge, and the panel was enlarged in the manner already described (see under *X-Rays* above).

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

None.

## 8. Provenance

– Together with our no. A 59, coll. Claude Tolozan, sale Paris 23 February 1801 (Lugt 6204), no. 97: 'Rhyn (Rembrandt van). Le pendant. Le portrait encore très-frappant et également terminé, de la femme du personnage précédent, et tournée en regard. Sa coiffure est un simple béguin de batiste, portant pour parure une fraise à petits plis réguliers, qui se détache sur un habillement noir, dans l'ancien costume des femmes du Nord-Hollande. Elle tient de la main droite un

petit livre d'heures. Cette figure et le pendant se détachent dans la plus parfaite harmonie, sur des fonds grisâtres, qui contribuent à produire une grande illusion. Tous deux sont en ovales' (1380 francs to Prallins).

– Coll. Sir Matthew Wilson, London.

– Dealer Lawrie & Co., London.

– Dealer Dowdeswell & Dowdeswell, London<sup>2</sup>.

– Coll. Mr J. Hage, Nivaa since 1903 (Exhb. *Portraits anciens*, The Hague, Haagsche Kunstkring, 1903, no. 113).

## 9. Summary

Apart from the hand holding the book and the forearm (added by another, probably 17th-century artist), and from a slight addition all round the panel, this painting is an authentic work, reliably signed and of originally oval shape. The line of the left arm and shoulder has been altered, probably when the hand was being added. There is an alteration in the righthand contour as well, not done by Rembrandt himself. The panel was enlarged slightly subsequent to 1801, but the original panel still has its original bevelling despite the cradling. A number of similarities with the New York *Portrait of a 40-year-old man* (no. A 59), and the fact that in 1801 the two paintings were sold as companion pieces, might give reason to believe that nos. A 62 and A 59 are pendants, but differences in the scale of the figures and their placing in the picture area seem to invalidate this.

## REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> Br.-Gerson 334.

<sup>2</sup> 'Portrait of a lady by Rembrandt', *Burl. Mag.* 2 (1903), p. 360.

HDG 877; BR. 333; BAUCH 461; GERSON 127

### 1. Summarized opinion

An authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1632. As far as can be ascertained, in good condition. It is uncertain whether the oval format is original.

### 2. Description of subject

An elderly woman is seen to the waist, facing slightly to the left. She is seated, as can be deduced from the pronounced opening of the black, fur-trimmed gown with shoulder-caps. Beneath this overgarment can be seen a close-fitting bodice closed down the front with numerous buttons. She wears a simple white collar and a winged cap. The light falls from the left. In the background there is some variety of tone, but no cast shadow from the figure.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 21 April 1971 (J. B., S. H. L.) in good daylight and in the frame.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, 73.5 × 55 cm. Grain vertical. Three planks, widths (left to right) *c.* 17.5, 20 and 17.5 cm. Back intact but covered with oiled paper along the edges so that it was impossible to ascertain whether the panel is bevelled; there is thus nothing to show whether or not the format was originally oval.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown is clearly visible in the hairline, in the shadow areas on the temple, in the cap and on the collar, as well as in the fur and here and there in the background. Long, broad brushstrokes can be seen beneath the paint layer in thinly painted passages, and come from the application of the ground.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: So far as can be seen through the yellow varnish, very well preserved. Craquelure: a fine and fairly regular network of craquelure can be seen only in the thicker parts. DESCRIPTION: The lower half of the background is painted with clearly apparent, short brushstrokes in an opaque grey, which changes upwards into a thinner grey-brown through which the ground can be made out at some points. Along the outlines of the arms and shoulders the paint has been applied rather more thickly.

The lit parts of the head have been painted with very small strokes in a quite thick, yellowish flesh colour. At the cheeks a pink has been applied more evenly, with a little grey on the lefthand cheek, while the right cheek is bordered by a thin grey that provides the transition to a translucent brown in the shadow area. Similarly, a very thin grey forms the transition to a translucent brown at the hairline. A thin grey scumble also overlays the underside of the cheeks and chin, especially below the woman's left cheek where a fairly thickly painted light colour, covered with grey, shows the reflection of light from the white collar. A thin grey also provides the transition from the translucent brown of the eye-sockets to the flesh colour of the lit areas and to the dark shadow cast by the nose.

The eyelids are, along the top, edged in a fairly dark brown,

and along the underside with a thin and translucent brown coming from beneath the flesh colour and locally reinforced by a dark indication of shadow. The whites of the eyes – an opaque, broken white on the side towards the light and a thin, irregularly bordered grey on the shadow side – define the irises done in a thin and not wholly opaque dark grey; in these irises there is a dull catchlight and a black and not completely circular pupil. The inner corners of the eyes are shown with a little pinkish red that in the righthand eye continues as a stroke along the lower edge; the lower edges of the eyes are otherwise done in flesh colour, with some grey on the right and a very fine white indication of glistening moisture.

A stroke of very dark paint marks the nostril in the dark brown of the shadow cast by the nose, which continues on the right around the wing of the nose. The lips are shown in pink along a dark mouth-line, the upper lip in a thin, dark pink and the lower in a thicker pink mixed with white; small, dark strokes mark the corners of the mouth. On the left the contour of the cheekbone and cheek stands out clearly against the white of the cap; a small stroke of grey close to the eye area gives an effective hint of a shadowed hollow.

The cap is painted in thick white and a thin grey which is slightly translucent in the darkest shadow; there is a thick, white edging of light along the wing. The collar, done for the greater part in a thick white, shows on the right along the edge of the thick material small strokes of grey with fine edges of white into which the black of the clothing penetrates in a sawtooth pattern. The clothing is shown with a fair amount of detail in a thin grey-black, black and grey sheens on the crosswise folds of the bodice and the lengthwise folds of the outer garment. The ground shows through particularly in the dark brown of the fur trimming of the latter.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

None.

#### *Signature*

In dark paint, placed unusually high up in the right background, level with the top of the skull <RHL (in monogram, followed by a short, backwards sloping stroke) *van Ryn/1632*>; on the left, level with this <AE (in monogram, followed by a similar sloping stroke) 62>. Both inscriptions make an entirely reliable impression.

#### *Varnish*

A yellowed varnish, forming patchy lumps over deep places, interferes with observation and impairs the overall effect. It seems to have been abraded on the thick highlights in the face.

### 4. Comments

This painting is wholly convincing as to its authenticity, because of the simple and at the same time subtle way that strokes of opaque paint and translucent patches combine to produce a strong effect of plasticity. The suggestion of depth, which could almost be termed atmospheric, seen in the whole of the head, and the liveliness of the contours of the clothing are wholly in line with what we know from portraits from Rembrandt's early years in Amsterdam. The reliable-seeming signature can be seen as a confirmation of this. If the painting were cleaned

Fig. 1. Panel 73.5 × 55 cm



its quality would undoubtedly come even more to the fore, and the details (which today can be almost better made out in old reproductions than in the original) would appear more clearly.

The detailed treatment of the dress up to the edge of the painting in fact distinguishes the portrait from most of Rembrandt's other portrait busts from 1632 onwards, as does the relatively small scale on which the figure is shown in the oval surround. One may feel tempted to explain these features by assuming that this portrait was done early in 1632, before Rembrandt adopted the scale and more simplifying treatment common to such oval portraits as the *Portrait of a 40-year-old man* in New York (no. A 59) and the *Portrait of a young man* in a private collection in Sweden (no. A 60), both of 1632, and the *Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq* in Frankfurt (no. A 82) of 1633. It must however be borne in mind, in this connexion, that it is not impossible that the painting was originally still larger and rectangular. The existence of a rectangular copy suggests that this was in fact so, and a comparison with other oval portraits may therefore not be apposite. It probably once had a companion-piece now unknown.

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

1. Canvas 85 × 67 cm, private collection Felbrigg Hall, Norfolk (as: Lievens?); photo Courtauld Institute of Art no. B 55/579. A rectangular but otherwise faithful copy.

## 8. Provenance

- Dealer John Smith, London until 1835.
- Bought from the above by dealer Albert Brondgeest (d. 1847), Amsterdam.
- Baron Alphonse de Rothschild, Paris.
- Baron Henri de Rothschild, Paris.
- Baron Edouard de Rothschild, Paris.

## 9. Summary

Despite the layer of yellowed varnish, no. A 63 is recognizable as an outstanding specimen of Rembrandt's portraits from his early days in Amsterdam, dating – according to the reliable signature and date – from 1632. The figure is on a somewhat smaller scale, and the detail more carefully developed, than is usual in busts of this kind.

HDG 311; BR. 494; BAUCH 9; GERSON 58

Fig. 1. Canvas 108.5 × 92.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray





### 1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved and reliably signed authentic work, which on the grounds of style fits into Rembrandt's work from 1632/33; the date on the painting cannot however be clearly read.

### 2. Description of subject

A young woman sits on a shallow platform in a dimly lit room; the light falls on her from the left. She wears a wide, dark-red overgarment with a deep neckline, a hem trimmed with gold embroidery, and short sleeves; from the latter protrude the very wide sleeves of a thin undergarment that is also visible at the front of the open overgarment. A gold ornament with a feather is worn in her long blond hair. Her right hand is held over the waist, while her left arm appears to rest on the back of a bench almost entirely hidden beneath her clothing. To the left behind her, in the darkness, an old woman stands in front of a table raised on a plinth and bearing jewellery, a folded cloth, an open book set askew and a goblet on a dish; the old woman leans forward over the young woman's right shoulder, and with her right hand combs the latter's long blond hair. Behind her, above the table, can be seen a bed curtain. To the right some light falls on the rear wall of the room, which is broken up with pilasters and shell-shaped niches; in front of this wall stand a stone bench with a greenish blue cushion and, on the extreme right, a column. A metal bowl can be made out in the shadowy foreground on the far left.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 6 September 1972 (S. H. L., E. v. d. W.) in good daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of nine X-ray films, together covering the whole painting, and of ultraviolet photographs and photographs taken during restoration. These documents were also available later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined; the original canvas in one piece c. 108.5 × 92.5 cm, the present stretcher measuring 109.8 × 94 cm.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: At the top the pitch of the cusping varies between 8 and 10 cm, and it extends inwards some 10 cm. To the right the pitch varies between 7 and 9.5 cm, extending 11 cm into the canvas. At the bottom the pitch varies between 6.5 and 10 cm, with a depth of 13 cm. On the left a very slight distortion of the canvas can be seen, possibly due to secondary cusping. Threadcount: 13.4 vertical threads/cm (13–14), 12 horizontal threads/cm (11.5–12.5). It is impossible to determine the warp direction with any certainty, but the absence of cusping along the lefthand side suggests that it is horizontal and that the canvas is one-half of a larger canvas (as is often the case with companion-piece portraits).

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown shows through in the grey of the stone floor beneath the young woman's foot.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: A study by Stolor, Hanlan and Boyer<sup>1</sup> of cross-sections by normal-light and ultraviolet-fluorescence microscopy and by X-ray macroprobe technique has shown there to be two layers, the lower consisting of ochre, quartz and white lead and the upper mainly of white lead.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: In general badly flattened; partly as a result of this, the finely-woven canvas is clearly visible in thinly painted areas. Here and there, as in the young woman's face and throat, there is some overcleaning. Local paint loss, clearly apparent in the X-rays, is scattered over the surface in, for example, her left temple, right sleeve and waist area, at some distance from the bottom edge (probably as a result of a stretcher being pressed hard against the canvas), and similarly but to a lesser extent along the righthand edge. The paint presents slight cupping along the cracks. Craquelure: fine cracking, varying with the consistency of the paint.

DESCRIPTION: The background is painted in the dark areas in fairly thin browns and greys, the bed curtain being indicated in grey-browns with a few scratchmarks to show the edge of the canopy and a tassel (?). On the right the background is in greys, sometimes thick and rather lighter. Above the dark greenish-blue cushions there is a broad area of mouse grey possibly indicating a hanging cloth. The bench, placed further forward and seen in silhouette, is in a dark brown. The floor is painted in varying shades of grey, thin in the lit parts above the shadowed steps in the foreground; the round plinth on which the table stands is shown in brown. A few yellow and black lines are used to indicate the bowl at the bottom left.

The jewellery hanging over the edge of the table is done in a little yellowish brown and white, standing out against the tablecloth which is painted in brown-grey with a pattern done in dark yellow and green; the objects on the table are painted summarily in yellow, dark yellow and grey, and the book in grey. The old woman's clothing is painted fairly broadly in a subdued blue, used also for the highlights on her greenish-blue headcloth. In the brownish face her eyes are shown in grey and black; her neckscarf is painted in greys. Her hand is done with fine strokes of light brown.

The (slightly worn) face of the young woman is painted in the light in a light flesh colour with fine, merging brushstrokes; pink is used in the cheeks, in the eyelids of the eye on the left, beside the nose and, in a deeper tone, in the lips which are modelled effectively on either side of a lively, brown mouth-line. The shadow areas of the face are done in an opaque grey over which has been placed a thin brown. The vaguely outlined hair shows hardly any brushwork, and is painted in a light yellow-brown in the light, in a brown-grey towards the left and a dark grey towards the right. The thin chain in the hair is executed with spots of black and touches of a yellowish-brown colour, and the feather on the head in a thick grey.

The throat area (where there is wearing and local restoration) shows in the light a thickly-applied, reddish flesh colour, and in the shadow an opaque grey. The (badly worn) string of pearls around the neck still shows thick white spots of light and dots of ochre yellow between the pearls. The pleated shirt is painted with long, more or less parallel strokes of white and broken white, from which a more yellow tint provides the transition to the grey of the shadow.

Better preserved than the areas just described are the hands; in the light, these are done with small brushstrokes running in various directions and using a pink flesh colour – fairly thick, especially in the hand on the right – and modelled very subtly with grey shadows, while brown shadows are used between the fingers and along the bracelet.

The young woman's overgarment is executed with broader strokes in a wine-red that tends to purple in the shadow and to a blood-red in the light. The gold embroidery along the hem is shown with thick, loosely placed strokes and dots of yellow, yellowish browns and brown, with here and there a little black and a white catchlight. The sleeves of the undergarment are

Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)



painted with occasionally quite long strokes of a fairly thick white, merging into a thin brown (on the left) or a thin grey (on the right), and have ornamentation done in fairly thick strokes and touches of yellow and light blue, occasionally mixed with a little white and yellow ochre. At the front the undergarment is painted loosely, with lively brushstrokes; in the light there are greys with parallel strokes of white and with some yellow and a darkish blue, elsewhere there are greys with brown shadows. The stocking, just visible, has green-blue highlights placed on a grey-blue; the slipper is wine-red, with embroidery indicated with thick ochre-coloured and white highlights.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The X-rays provide, with the clearly-visible reserves that have been left in the light paint of surrounding areas and which do

not always match the final picture, a clear image of how the painting came into being. The whole of the floor appears to have been laid-in light (without the dark steps and without the plinth beneath the table); the foot of the table had a rough reserve left for it in this, and the bottom edge of the young woman's overgarment was rather narrower on the left than its ultimate outline; her left foot had a larger reserve, placed further to the right. The righthand half of the background shows more light, extending further to the left, than one would expect from the present painting; the two pilasters and the column on the extreme right appear in this in their present position. There is no reserve in the background for the part of the bench now seen on the right, next to the woman's left hand; above her left arm there is a shape (a table-top?) that is no longer visible today. The shape of the reserve left for her hair matches the final execution on the right, but is somewhat broader on the left. No edge can be seen for the present

Fig. 4. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 5. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 6. Detail with signature, infrared photograph (slightly reduced)



curtain. The bluish tints in the figure of the old woman, the cushion on the bench and the young woman's stocking show up relatively light.

Dark traces, especially in the upper righthand corner, probably have to do with a relining.

A number of dark patches indicate paint losses.

#### Signature

At the bottom to the right of centre, in dark and fairly small letters that are not readily legible on the dark paint of the shadowed step <Rembrandt. f 1633(?)>. The final figure cannot be read clearly, and by having a long tail it looks like a modern 7. The spelling of 'Rembrandt' without the *d* occurs in 1632 and 1633 in a number of signatures on etchings (B. 38, B. 81 (I) and B. 101), as well as in 1633 and 1634 in a number of signatures on paintings (cf. nos. A 40, A 67, A 68 and A 94); it is also seen in the earliest known autograph documents from 1630–31 (cf. Vol. I, p. 53). As can be seen in the infrared photograph (fig. 6), the letters and numerals are somewhat slimmer than is usual in Rembrandt signatures. There is however sufficient similarity to the signatures on nos. A 68 and A 78, both of 1633, to consider the authenticity at least possible.

#### Varnish

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

In its genesis, as far as this can be reconstructed by comparing the painting with the X-rays, no. A 64 is already closely related to other works by Rembrandt; the slightly over-narrow reserve (left for the lefthand outline of the clothing, and for the slipper) is something that occurs frequently in his work, and the change in the lighting (by covering over areas laid in light so as to make them darker, especially in the foreground) has already been seen in, for example, the *Judas repentant* in a private collection (no. A 15) and the *Simeon in the temple* in The Hague (no. A 34). Decisive for making the attribution is however the style of the completed painting. The design of the whole is based first of all on the distribution of light and colour. In a room shown only dimly by a few horizontal and vertical elements, a beam of light lends a strong plastic quality to the young woman's appearance, in which the warm red of her garment is dominant; all the rest, including the old woman, is shown cursorily in partly dark

and partly cooler colours, enlivened with catch-lights on a few metal objects. This way of presenting a strongly three-dimensional figure within a confined space can be termed characteristic of Rembrandt's work since, say, the Amsterdam *Jeremiah* of 1630 (no. A 28) and the *Simeon in the temple* in The Hague of 1631. The subtle modelling of the flesh parts, still intact in the hands and in which each linear element serves the effect of plasticity (one may note the highly effective mouth-line), is very similar indeed to the treatment of portraits and portraitlike figures from the early 1630s. Wholly characteristic is the contrast between the very careful manner of painting in these areas and the far freer painting of the clothing, where the suggestion of the bulky mass of the overgarment draped round the body and over the chair has been achieved with broader and sometimes very long strokes and an outline that offers bold curves and sharp steps. This motif has already been seen (on a smaller scale) in the Amsterdam *Old woman reading* of 1631 (no. A 37), but the manner of painting is here more powerful still, and we see the addition of adornment with cursory and almost daublike strokes of yellow and other colours, such as recur particularly in the New York *Bellona* of 1633 (no. A 70) and to some extent also in the Stockholm *Young woman in profile* of 1632 (no. A 49) and the *Rape of Europa* of 1632 (no. A 47). With the two lastnamed paintings there is also the connexion of the same model being seen in almost identical costume (in both instances in profile); this model (the so-called 'sister') also appears – full-face – in an overgarment of a different colour but with similar ornamentation and in a similar pleated shirt in the oval bust in Boston (no. A 50), again dated 1632. One might assume that the half-length figure in Stockholm and the oval bust were, even though they cannot be seen as preliminary studies in the modern sense of that word, nevertheless the starting-point for the small figure in the *Rape of Europa* and this Ottawa painting respectively; the latter must, on the grounds of this connexion but especially on that of the stylistic similarities already mentioned, certainly be dated in 1632/33. Unfortunately the last figure of the date on the painting cannot be read with certainty. Madlyn Kahr<sup>2</sup> has understandably seen it as a seven, but such a reading is in itself improbable (Rembrandt's 7 has a much shorter tail) and it does not besides result in a dating that is acceptable from the viewpoint of style; she also saw in the model 'the tender, vulnerable Saskia' instead of the plump young woman who long passed for Rembrandt's sister.

The painting contains a number of elements that must be termed new at this point in Rembrandt's development. The type of the large-scale composi-



Fig. 7. After J. Lievens, *Bathsheba receiving David's letter* (mezzotint by J. G. Haid)



tion on canvas, a relatively broad picture area with a roughly half-lifesize figure seen full-length, had never been attempted by him previously. In some respects it reminds one most of the *Artist in oriental costume* of 1631 in the Petit Palais, Paris (no. A 40), though in the present case the scale is considerably larger and the predominance of the darkness in the vaguely shown room is rather a precursor of later knee-length works showing biblical, historical or mythological female figures practically life-size (nos. A 70, A 93, A 94 and Br. nos. 103 and 469). Another novel feature, certainly in connexion with the larger scale, is the very broad treatment of accessory items, especially in the lefthand half where the bed-curtain is merely hinted at and the figure of the scarcely-lit old woman is sketched with bold strokes in subdued colours. The contrast between the blooming, sumptuously-dressed young woman and the plain old woman is also emphasized by the manner of painting.

Apart from the paintings mentioned in which the same model is seen in the same or only slightly different costume, there are no works one can point to as being linked to the genesis of no. A 64. A drawing in the Albertina in Vienna (Ben. 395), earlier looked on by Hofstede de Groot as a preliminary

study<sup>3</sup>, is definitely later (Benesch, cautiously taking account of a similarity to the painting, however dates it as about 1632–34), and the subject differs considerably in arrangement, lighting and dress.

Opinions vary widely as to the subject depicted by no. A 64. In the survey provided by Kahr<sup>2</sup> one finds the following titles: 'Une Femme Juive' (1787), 'The Jew Bride' (1806, 1818, 1832), 'A Jewish Bride' (1885) (cf. also 8. *Provenance*). In the modern literature this interpretation has rightly been dropped, though a wholly convincing alternative has yet to be found. Bode<sup>4</sup> called the painting *Rembrandt's sister at her toilet* (the so-called *Jewish Bride*). The interpretation accepted by Bredius<sup>5</sup> and others of *Bathsheba at her toilet* was the first to look to the Bible for the subject matter. Kauffmann<sup>6</sup>, on the other hand, thought the picture did not match in with the story of Bathsheba, and pointed to a place in Jacob Cats' *Werelts Begin, Midden, Eynde, besloten in den Trouwingh* . . . , Dordrecht 1637, where the shepherdess Bocena is raised by an old noblewoman to become a queen. Madlyn Kahr<sup>2</sup>, finally, favoured the interpretation of *Esther preparing to intercede with Ahasuerus*, already suggested by Heckscher<sup>7</sup>.

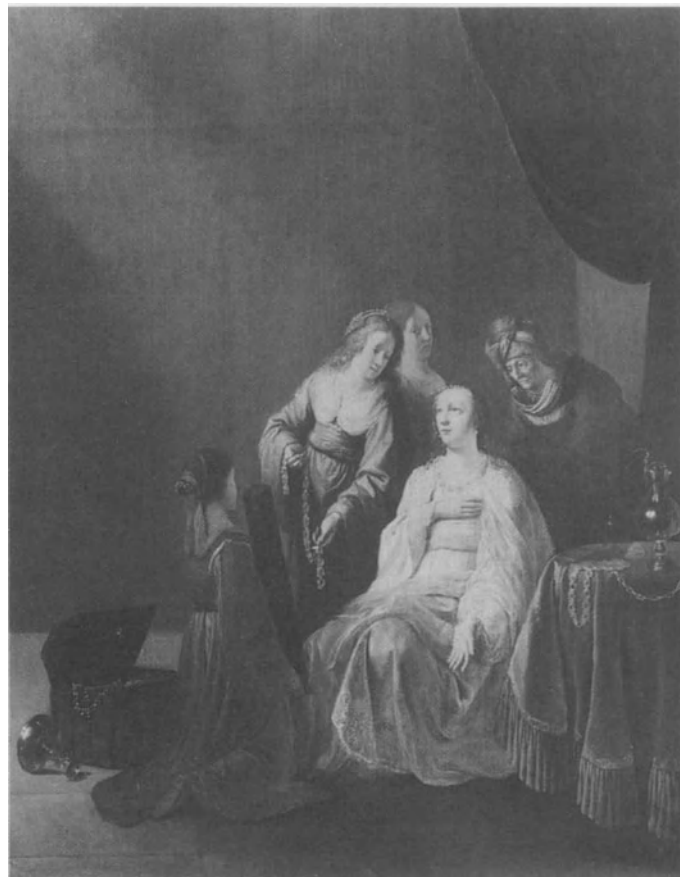
It is more than probable that the painting does, within the general framework of the contrast between the young and the old woman and the idea of Vanitas that this implies, represent a specific historical and probably biblical scene. A lost painting by Jan Lievens (fig. 7), which may well have been a model for Rembrandt's composition, shows the young woman holding a letter and apparently in the role of Bathsheba. The situation depicted in Rembrandt's painting, however, does not fit in very well with the Bathsheba story or Rembrandt's renderings of it (cf. no. C 45), and for a number of reasons Kauffmann's reference to Cats cannot be accepted either; even if it is assumed that Cats' text was not only completed years prior to its publication but was also known to Rembrandt (which is dubious), one cannot really expect that a major painting should illustrate a relatively obscure story. Moreover, the scene depicted cannot be regarded as an illustration of the text that Kauffmann quotes – the story mentions the care and training of the body, but says nothing about dress or finery. Yet Kahr's contention that what is being shown is how, as in Esther 5:1, Esther after praying 'put on royal apparel' in order to appear before Ahasuerus, who had issued a decree proclaiming the destruction of the Jewish people, is not entirely convincing either. For one thing the picture shows no decisive similarities with this biblical account, and for another the interpretation is not corroborated by iconographic analogies. Thus, a pile of papers on the table (if what we see is not a book as we believe) would



admittedly be explained by the fact that the king's scribes wrote 'to every province . . .' (Esther 3:12), but it cannot be assumed that so many copies would have been sent by Mordechai to Esther. The Bible text makes no mention of jewels – they might be seen as emphasising the 'royal apparel', though royal insignia are not what is shown – but also none of a handmaid. This motif, though then in the form of two serving women, is however mentioned in the apocryphal appendix to the Book of Esther (Esther 15:2–4) 'and she took two maids with her; And upon the one she leaned, as carrying herself daintily; And the other followed, bearing up her train'. It is clearly this version that was the basis for the only iconographic analogy identified by Kahr – one of a series of four prints done by Philip Galle after Maerten van Heemskerck showing the story of Esther. Here, however, one sees not the dressing or adornment of Esther, but the moment when Esther, already dressed, is approached by the two serving women one of whom is leaning down to pick up the train of her robe; something similar is shown in a few paintings by Aert de Gelder, though the composition is there otherwise totally different (cf. *Holländische Malerei, Alte Pinakothek Katalog III*, Munich 1967, pp. 26–27).

The claims of Esther are thus certainly far from indisputable. If one assumes that this is indeed meant to be a biblical scene, then one could just as reasonably think of the toilet of Judith, after prayer and before she went to visit Holofernes, as has already been suggested by Baudissin (cf. note 6). The biblical text (Judith 10:2–4) contains substantially more matching motifs than does the one relating to Esther: 'She rose where she had fallen down, and called her maid, and went down into the house, in the which she abode in the sabbath days, and in her feast days, and pulled off the sackcloth which she had on, and put off the garments of her widowhood, and washed her body all over with water, and anointed herself with precious ointment, and braided the hair of her head, and put on a tire upon it, and put on her garments of gladness, wherewith she was clad during the life of Manasses her husband. And she took sandals upon her feet, and put about her her bracelets, and her chains, and her rings, and her earrings, and all her ornaments, and decked herself bravely, to allure the eyes of all men that should see her.' Of the following episode (Judith 10:5), where the maid is laden with a bottle of wine, a cruse of oil, etc. (illustrated in a print in a Judith series by Galle after Heemskerck of 1564) there is no hint in no. A 64. One can see as a serious objection that even if it is interpreted in this way the picture cannot be fitted into any iconographic tradition, any more than it can using the Esther inter-

Fig. 8. Ascr. to W. de Poorter, *The robing of Esther*. Dublin, National Gallery of Ireland



pretation. At most, one can say that the contrast between the young and the old woman was quite common in depicting other episodes in the story of Judith. This is not the only example of Rembrandt giving so few specific clues when treating a theme that the iconographic intention may well have very soon been lost, and is certainly difficult to trace today (cf., for example, the Melbourne painting, no. A 13, which probably depicts *S. Peter and S. Paul*).

Two paintings from Rembrandt's circle that have been derived in quite different ways from no. A 64 both contain the motif of a document or letter held in the young woman's right hand, and in this already differ substantially from their prototype. A painting in which the old woman is lacking, once ascribed to Rembrandt and previously in the coll. C. A. Mandl in Hamburg (Br. 495), is thought by Kahr<sup>2</sup> to show Esther with Ahasuerus' decree in her hand; but it could also depict, for instance, an episode from the Bathsheba story, in which David's letter was not a biblical motif but was certainly traditional in illustrations. A painting in Copenhagen attributed to Salomon Koninck (Statens Museum for Kunst, cat. no. 371), in which a young woman is shown reading and an old woman is seen in a role that might be that of a servant or a procuress, most resembles a domestic version of the Bathsheba scene. These derivatives

can throw no light on the subject matter of no. A 64. Nor is there any enlightenment from a painting in Dublin ascribed to Willem de Poorter (no. 380) (fig. 8), that is said to show *The robing of Esther* and offers reminiscences of both no. A 64 and Rembrandt's *Sophonisba* of 1634 in Madrid (no. A 94); in this, a young woman is having her hair combed and dress attended to by two young servant-women and one old woman, while a kneeling servant-woman holds a mirror up for her. Here, again, the theme cannot be identified with certainty.

In the inventory of the widow of Captain Aldert Mathijsz. drawn up in Amsterdam in 1682, a 'painting by Rembrandt of Queen Hester' was valued at 30 guilders (HdG *Urk.*, no. 355); it is of course impossible to check whether this mention relates to no. A 64.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

– Coll. Mme de Bandeville, sale Paris 3–10 December 1787 (Lugt 4227), no. 14: 'Rembrandt Van-Ryn. Une Femme Juive, ayant la main droite posée sur sa poitrine, & la gauche sur le bras d'un fauteuil dans lequel elle est assise; elle est vêtue d'une robe de mousseline à grandes manches & d'un manteau d'écarlate orné richement de broderie d'or: ses deux pantoufles aussi brodées; un collier & des bracelets de perles; elle a une plume sur sa tête, attachée par une bandelette avec des perles & une pierre de couleur; une autre femme lui accommode les cheveux; derriere elle est la table de toilette. Ce Tableau réunit toutes les qualités essentielles; aussi il est en grande réputation, parce que l'on ne croit pas qu'il soit possible de trouver un portrait de Rembrandt plus parfait que l'est celui-ci. Il est sur toile & porte 3 pieds 3 pouces de haut, sur 2 pieds 9 pouces de large' [= 105.3 × 89.1 cm].

– Coll. Lord Rendlesham, sale London (Coxe) 20 June 1806 (Lugt 7129), no. 47: 'Rembrandt, The Jew Bride – small whole length, a first rate performance of this highly esteemed and universally admired Painter, all his great merit is concentrated in this admirable specimen of his unrivalled abilities, most capital' (367 gns, apparently bought in). Sale London 17–18 May 1809 (Lugt 7590), 2nd day no. 52: 'Rembrandt. The Jew Bride – Small whole length, a first rate performance of this highly esteemed and universally admired Painter, all his great merit is concentrated in this admirable specimen of his unrivalled abilities to produce finishing with effect.' (210). The description as a 'small whole length' should be understood as meaning smaller than lifesize; it does not justify Kahr's doubt<sup>2</sup> as to the identity of the painting.

– Coll. the Earl of Mulgrave, sale London (Christie's) 12 May 1832, no. 45; as: 'The Jew Bride' (£120.15s. to Séguier).

- Coll. Sir William W. Knighton, sale London (Christie's) 21–23 May 1885, no. 485, as: 'A Jewish Bride'.
- Coll. Sir Charles Robinson, London, until 1891<sup>2</sup>.
- Dealer Ch. Sedelmeyer, Paris from 1891 (*Catalogue of 300 paintings*, Paris 1898, no. 120).
- Coll. Prince of Liechtenstein, Vienna.
- Bought by the museum in 1953.

#### 9. Summary

No. A 64, while coming very close in many respects to Rembrandt's paintings from his final years in Leiden, represents because of its relatively large format and, associated with this, very broad treatment of large areas, a new type in his oeuvre. The last figure of the date on the painting cannot be read with certainty, but it must be dated 1632/33, and belongs among the first paintings on canvas to follow the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* (no. A 51). There is uncertainty as to the subject; if one assumes that the very richly dressed young woman is a biblical figure with her old serving-woman, then on the grounds of biblical texts the most likely candidate is Judith (Judith 10:2–4); but no iconographical tradition is known to exist for this subject.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 N. Stolow, J. F. Hanlan and R. Boyer, 'Element distribution in cross-sections of paintings studied by the X-ray macroprobe', *Studies in Conservation* 14 (1969), pp. 139–151.
- 2 M. Kahr, 'Rembrandt's Esther. A painting and an etching newly interpreted and dated', *O.H.* 81 (1966), pp. 228–244.
- 3 HdG 311.
- 4 W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt. Beschreibendes Verzeichnis seiner Gemälde . . . I*, Paris 1897, no. 69.
- 5 Br. 494.
- 6 H. Kauffmann, 'Rembrandt und die Humanisten vom Muiderkring', *Jb. d. Pr. Kunsts.* 41 (1920), pp. 46–81, esp. 76. Cf. C. Hofstede de Groot, 'Rembrandt. Bijbelsche en historische voorstellingen', *O.H.* 41 (1923–24), pp. 49–59, 97–114, esp. 57–58; K. von Baudissin, 'Rembrandt und Cats', *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 45 (1925), pp. 148–179, esp. 156.
- 7 W. S. Heckscher, *Rembrandt's Anatomy of Dr Nicolaas Tulp*, New York 1958, p. 118.

**A 65 The Descent from the Cross**

[1632/33]

MUNICH, BAYERISCHE STAATSGEMÄLDESAMMLUNGEN, ALTE PINAKOTHEK, INV. NO. 395

HDG 134; BR. 550; BAUCH 56; GERSON 65

Fig. 1. Panel 89.6 × 65 cm

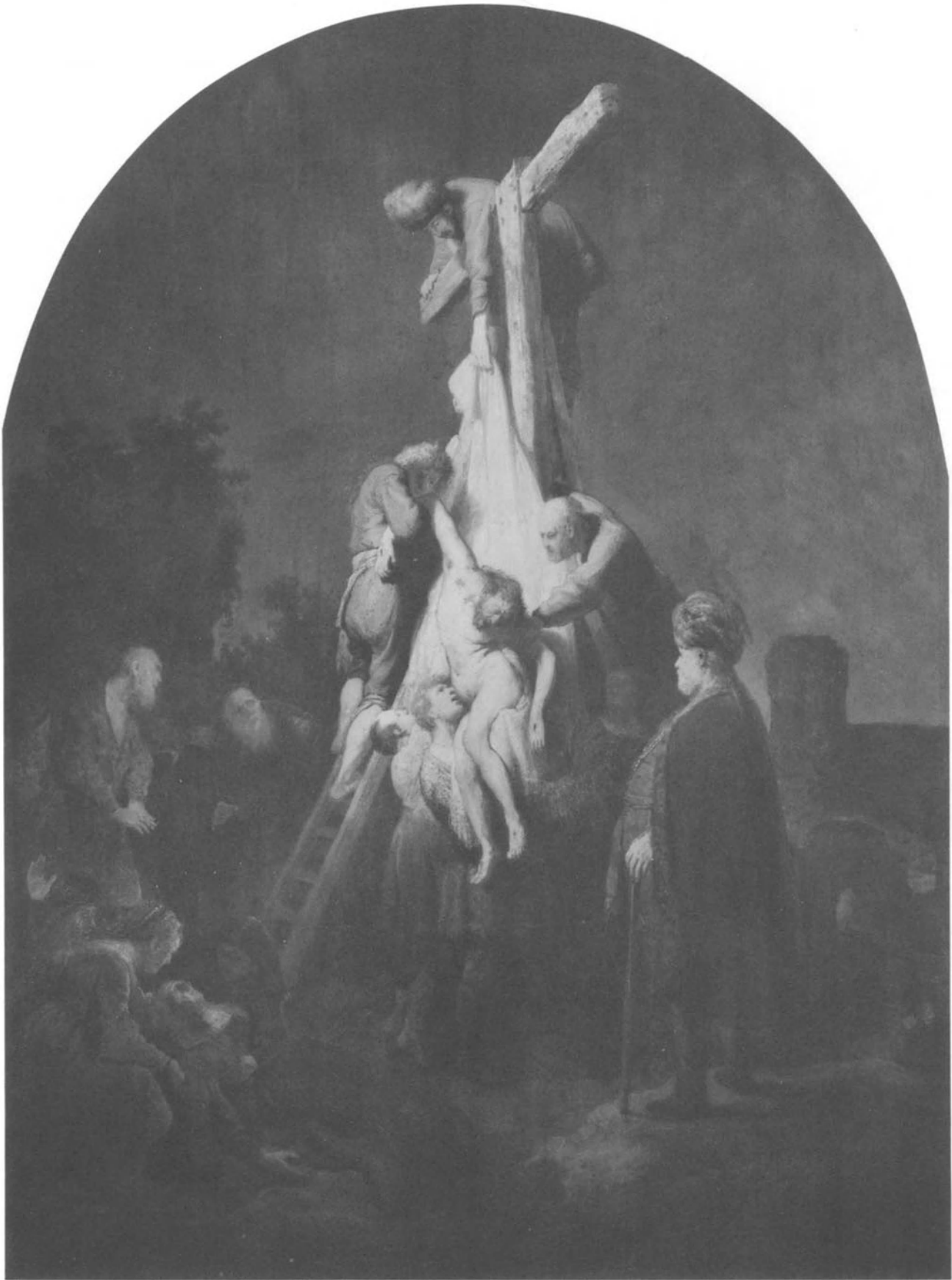


Fig. 2. X-ray



### 1. Summarized opinion

A not very well preserved but undoubtedly authentic work that was most probably completed in its present form in 1633, after having been reproduced by Rembrandt in a slightly different form in two etchings in the same year.

### 2. Description of subject

In the centre the main group of figures and the cross, placed obliquely to the picture plane, are illuminated by a shaft of light falling from the left in otherwise murky surroundings. A shroud is held by a man in a fur cap who bends over the arm of the cross. The body of Christ, supported under the arms by a young man on a ladder to the left and an older man on another to the right, is being caught by two young men standing on the ground. To the right of this group, and seen obliquely from the rear, is an old man in a turban and fur cloak, apparently Joseph of Arimathea, standing with legs apart and holding a stick in his hand, on what appears to be a hillock. In the left foreground is a group of three women kneeling on the ground by the swooning figure of Mary; the woman further to the left raises her left hand in anguish. Behind them, dimly lit, are two old men, one with hands clasped together and the other with his arms outstretched; behind them again a number of heads are vaguely visible. A tree-covered cliff can be seen in the darkness of the distance on the left, while on the right there is a town with a towered building and a city gate with two figures in front of it.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in January 1969 (S. H. L., P. v. Th.) in good light and out of the frame. Seven X-ray prints, together covering virtually the whole of the painting, were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Panel, Spanish cedar (*Cedrela odorata*: Prof. Dr J. Bauch, Hamburg<sup>1</sup>), semicircular at the top, 89.6 × 65 cm. Thickness 1.5 cm (left) to 1.3 cm (right). Straight bevelling at the back along all four sides (including the top), at the top over a maximum width of 6 cm, on the right 5 – 5.2 cm, on the left 4.4 – 5.1 cm and at the bottom 6.8 cm. A vertical crack, at 27.5 cm from the lefthand edge, extends over 35.5 cm. Small wood blocks were once stuck along this crack, and traces of them can still be seen. Where the crack comes close to the bottom edge of the panel, a rectangular piece measuring 5 × 8 cm has been chiselled out of the back of the panel. The back of the panel has a number of deep holes that have been filled with a material that shows up light in the X-ray. Battens have been nailed to the bottom and sides of the panel at some later stage.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light yellowish colour can be seen along the outline of the back of the figure standing in the right foreground (Joseph of Arimathea), along that of the man on the ladder to the right, along the left thigh of the man on the ladder to the left, and showing through in the sky on the right. SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn<sup>2</sup> identified a yellowish-white layer containing chalk, glue and some white lead.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Considerably worn and retouched, especially in the dark passages; most of the light, more thickly painted areas are reasonably well preserved. Craquelure: regular in the thicker areas. An irregular pattern of fissures in the group of women at the lower left points to this passage having been reworked.

DESCRIPTION: The sky (in which there are numerous and sometimes extensive retouches) is painted in dark greys, originally probably rather more opaquely on the left and more thinly on the right; the paint is thickest along the outlines, especially that of the tree-covered cliff on the left. To the right the town and the two figures in front of it are shown in flat and mainly dark greys.

The structure of the wood of the cross is indicated with long strokes of opaque, ochre-coloured browns; at some points red is used to show the blood from Christ's hands and head. The other parts that receive the highest light are painted more thickly still: they include the grey tunic of the man leaning over the top of the cross, whose facial features are drawn deftly in grey and black in a yellowish face; the white shroud, with shadows in grey; the clothing of the young man on the ladder on the left, modelled with thick strokes of light blue (the outline of his back was in an earlier stage more to the left and higher up, to judge by an area of background added by Rembrandt which is in a slightly different colour and has later been further retouched); and the body of Christ, in an ochrish grey modelled with lighter greys and with brown-grey contours, the legs more thinly painted and worn towards the bottom. Passages done rather thickly in part include the badly-worn head of the man on a ladder to the right, and the young man catching the body of Christ in whose tunic small strokes in a variety of colours (yellow, ochre brown, white, red and dark grey) suggest a multicoloured weave. The man stretching up behind him to the left wears a shirt in light grey and broken white, and both his legs are almost lost in an area of browns and greys (with a great deal of retouching). The man standing on the right (Joseph of Arimathea) has a worn flesh colour and greyish white in his head and beard, and is otherwise executed in a thin dark grey and black, except for a brown area at the waist and for his turban, painted with small strokes with some dark green and small highlights of white and yellow. A shadowy head (perhaps originally painted-out) can be glimpsed between this figure and the cross.

On the left the two old men, done in brown with grey hair, stand out against the dark area of the cliff; this area, which includes two further heads that can be glimpsed between them, with a third on the extreme left, is badly worn and retouched. At the bottom left the (heavily retouched) group of three kneeling women and Mary is done with scant use of colour; the woman to the front has a small amount of red in the rim of light along her shoulders and arm.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

To some extent the radiographic image shows what one expects from observation of the paint surface. One does however also see traces that indicate that there have been more or less substantial changes in design. A number of light shapes reveal elements that have either disappeared or been altered. The brushstrokes showing up light, which give a simplified rendering of form in these as well as in other light areas, make it likely that they come entirely or for the greater part from an underpainting containing white lead. The most striking example, no longer visible at the surface, is a figure with drapery over the head partly hidden behind Joseph of Arimathea, who appears



Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)

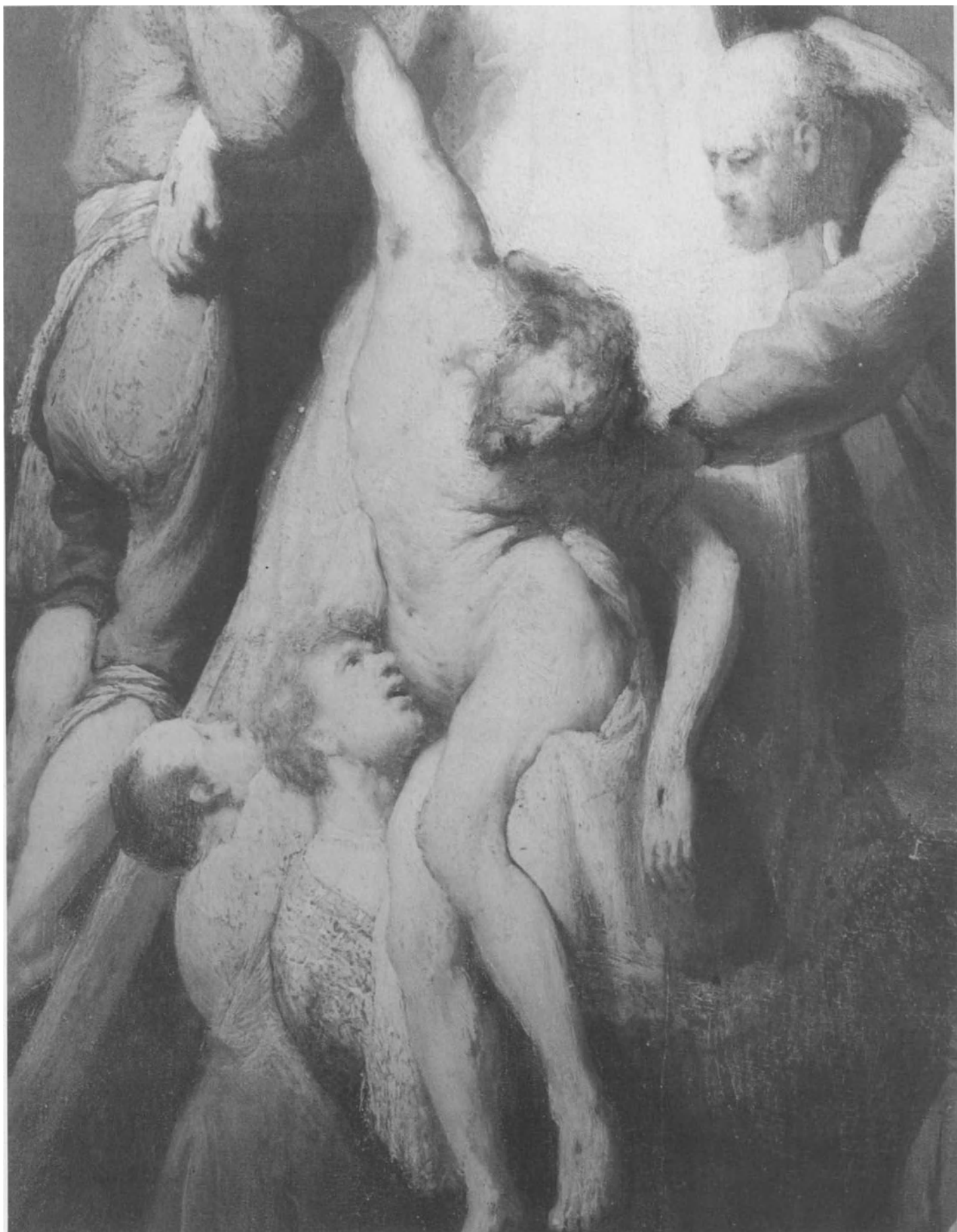




Fig. 4. Detail (1:2)



to be moving to the left towards the cross and stretching the left hand out in the direction of Christ's legs while clinging to His drooping forearm with the right hand. A comparison with the print after Rubens that will be mentioned below under 4. *Comments* confirms the impression that this figure was intended to represent Mary. The fact that Mary did not always occupy her present position at the bottom left of the composition is evident from the cracking clearly visible both in the X-ray and in the surface paint in the area now showing Mary and the holy women; this is sometimes fine and sometimes very coarse, and is obviously the result of paint having been placed over an earlier layer before the latter was completely dry. The X-ray does not offer any firm evidence of what forms were originally at this point, but vaguely-visible dark reserves – together with the area of cracked paint stretching towards the right – allow one however to assume that there was here a group of three kneeling figures on an outspread pall-cloth, as can be seen in Rembrandt's own etchings B. 81, I and II (cf. 4. *Comments* below).

It is not clear how far the zone that appears very light in the X-ray just above this lastnamed area is connected with the change in design of the lower lefthand corner of the painting. The most natural explanation would be to assume that here one is seeing the originally rather more strongly-lit or more thickly-painted ground on which the two figures supporting Christ's body from beneath are standing; the outline of this light zone would then be governed to a large extent by the placing of their feet.

Parallel to the contour of the head and back of the man on the ladder to the left there is a light band, probably an extension of the paint of the background, correcting the contour of the figure for which originally a more generous reserve had been left, as already observed at the paint surface.

Minor changes can be detected in the outstretched arm of the uppermost figure and in that of the man on the ladder to the right. In both cases the forearm can be seen in the X-ray as painted with bold, white strokes, and was evidently meant in the first lay-in to be bare.

The occurrence of the dark shapes in the X-ray confirms that forms to the front of the scene had reserves left for them in those further to the rear, and then slightly overlapped the latter during the working-up of the painting. This can be seen by the head of Christ and that of the man at the front holding

His body from beneath, and at the neck and back contour of Joseph of Arimathea.

The remains of three wax seals along the upper edge of the painting, and the filled-in holes in the back of the panel, appear in the X-ray image as light patches.

#### *Signature*

None.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### 4. *Comments*

Although the condition of the painting is unsatisfactory, especially in the dark passages, because of wearing and of old restorations (including one by Philipp Brinckmann around 1755, see 5. *Documents and sources*), the well-preserved thicker areas taken together with the existing documentation on the whole Passion series allow one to be certain that this is an original work by Rembrandt.

In its execution it closely resembles, in many respects, work from his final years in Leiden. In the use made of cool and often broken colours in the light areas, set against a dark background, it continues – albeit on a somewhat larger scale – the approach already seen in the *Simeon in the Temple* of 1631 in The Hague (no. A 34) and (even closer in manner and scale) in the *Christ on the Cross* at Le Mas d'Agenais (no. A 35), also from 1631. Certain motifs, too, call to mind works from 1631 and even earlier. The figure of Joseph of Arimathea makes one think not only of the *Artist in oriental costume* of 1631 in the Petit Palais, Paris (no. A 40), but also of various versions of men standing with their legs apart and holding a stick, in particular the little etchings of 'Polanders' B. 141 and B. 142, the latter dated 1631. The old man with his head tilted, on the left below the cross, is very like the man on the left behind Christ in the Los Angeles *Raising of Lazarus* (no. A 30), and the old man next to him, wringing his hands and with his head tilted in lost profile, is almost a repetition (in reverse) of the figure of Judas in the *Judas repentant* of 1629 (no. A 15). There is thus every reason, as Else Kai Sass has already argued<sup>3</sup>, to put the date as not long after 1631; for the rest, the relationship the painting, in its various states visible in the X-rays, bears to other documents that include in particular Rembrandt's etchings B. 81 (I) and (II) of 1633 (fig. 5) can help to date the painting more precisely.

It has long been recognized that Rembrandt's design is based partly on an engraving by Lucas Vorsterman from 1620 which reproduces Rubens' *Descent from the Cross* in Antwerp Cathedral (V.S. 342) in reverse (fig. 6). Stechow<sup>4</sup> has pointed

Fig. 5. Rembrandt, *The Descent from the Cross*, 1633, etching (B. 81 (II) I; reproduced in reverse)



out that Rubens' composition, deriving from a 16th-century Italian type and to be seen mainly as a rhythmic and linear composition, led Rembrandt to a depiction showing greater spatial differentiation. This is already apparent from the strong diagonal of the obliquely-placed cross – a motif that occurs frequently, especially in northern art, after Dürer's engraving of the *Crucifixion* of 1508 – but can also be seen in, for instance, the use of the figure of Joseph Arimathea as a repoussoir accentuating the distance between him and the main group. The extent to which this motif, and especially the way it is employed, involved a deliberate alteration to Rubens' prototype is evident from the X-ray first published by Brochhagen<sup>5</sup>: immediately to the right of the

cross one sees, in what is probably a light underpainting, a figure that – like the Mary in the Rubens in the same position – grasps Christ's arm with the right hand and stretches out towards His leg with the left. This is undoubtedly the form that Rembrandt initially (and not only in a later phase, as Else Kai Sass<sup>3</sup> suggested) gave to Mary in line with Rubens' prototype, but her figure was then already largely hidden behind the figure of Joseph of Arimathea, which is darker in the X-ray and thus had a reserve left for it from the beginning. The way this Mary-figure stood out light against the latter must have been very similar to the effect of the (originally light grey) figure of Mary seen behind the dark figure of Joseph in the Hamburg *Simeon in*

Fig. 6. After Rubens, *The Descent from the Cross* (engraving by L. Vorsterman)

*the Temple* (no. A 12), and will have had a similar depth-creating function. Campbell<sup>6</sup> has quite rightly emphasized the differences in the treatment of space one finds between Rembrandt and Rubens, precisely in this instance of thematically-related works. One can moreover draw the conclusion from the X-ray that the painting in this 'first state' was not, or scarcely, taken past the dead-colouring stage.

When Rembrandt discarded this first version of the Mary-figure and substituted a barely visible (perhaps painted out in its turn, or merely over-cleaned during a later restoration?) figure of a woman in the dark, Mary was not yet – so far as one can see today – shown fainting in the lefthand corner of the composition. This can, at least, be assumed on the basis of his own etchings of the same scene which, like the etching (B. 73) after the Los Angeles *Raising of Lazarus* (no. A 30), can be regarded as reproductions of an ambitious history painting. He depicted the scene twice in a large etching, in reverse. The first plate (B. 81, I) failed in the biting; it showed an arched top like that of the painting. The second (B. 81, II) reproduces the scene on a slightly larger scale, in a rectangular

picture area. Both are signed and dated 1633. Both show – so far as the printing of the unsuccessful plate permits a reading – the same differences from the painting: instead of Mary swooning and surrounded by the three kneeling women there is a group of three figures who are (or of whom at least one visibly is) busy spreading out the pall-cloth. The middle of these three figures, partly hidden behind the man kneeling at the front, has a cloak pulled over the head and is the only figure, that can be identified as Mary. In the corresponding part of the painting the topmost paint layer exhibits the crack formation stretching far out to the right that has already been described, and that points to the presence of an earlier paint layer that was not completely dry when more paint was applied on top of it. The X-ray does not show in this area any pattern of lights and darks that can be clearly interpreted as shapes – at most, one can believe one can make out a dark reserve for a head in between the heads of the two women seen today at the extreme left, and a dark point (for the knee of the kneeling man to the front?) in the present upper part of the body of Mary. One may surmise that the underlying paint layer showed a scene matching the corresponding area of the etching. If this supposition is correct, then Rembrandt reproduced the composition after the first modifications (i.e. Mary as the middle figure of the group in the bottom lefthand corner instead of seen partly hidden by the figure of Joseph of Arimathea to the right of the cross) in print form, just as he probably did in the case of the 1630/31 *Raising of Lazarus* (no. A 30). The principal differences that the successful etching B. 81 (II) presents vis-à-vis the painting are, apart from the kneeling group with Mary already mentioned, a diagonal shaft of beams of light done in gradations of light and shade, a massive, round building where the painting (and also the first etching) show a tree-covered cliff, and a much greater and sometimes slightly differing degree of detail in all passages; the latter provides to some extent an explanation of forms that are now hard to read in the painting. It can be seen, for instance, that the old man with a grey beard to the left of the cross has a garment – presumably his own cloak – hanging over his outstretched arm, and that his neighbour who is wringing his hands has a large pouch on his belt. The two men halfway up the ladders are quite different in type from those in the painting; the younger of them is generally regarded as a self-portrait both in the painting and the etching<sup>7</sup>. Kauffmann<sup>8</sup> thought that this figure might have been reproduced, in the etching, following the more generous contour visible at the paint surface and in the X-ray, and thus in a form somewhat different from the presentday paint-

ing. This is, given the wide variety of small discrepancies between the etching and the painting in respect of the positioning and relationships of the various motifs one to the other, difficult to ascertain, and is not all that probable if one sees the more generous contour as a version set down only in the dead colour but never completed in worked-up form.

Rembrandt must subsequently have given the painting its final form; the main changes compared to the 'second state' reproduced in the etching then consisted of the painting-in of Mary, fainting and surrounded by the three women, on top of the group of Mary kneeling with her attendants and the spread-out pall-cloth, and perhaps also of the painting-out of the dark figure of a woman between Joseph of Arimathea and the cross.

Dating the production of the painting is naturally determined mainly by the fact that the two etchings that (we assume) show it in its 'second state' carry the date 1633. Even if a working drawing served as an intermediate prototype for the reproduction, one has to assume that at some time in 1633 the 'second state' was still being regarded as the final version. On the other hand the overall approach and the execution of large areas are, as we have said, so reminiscent of works from 1631 that it would seem that the first phase must be dated at least in 1632. In any case the suggestion by Else Kai Sass<sup>3</sup> that no. A 65 was painted earlier than the other works in the Passion series, and earlier than the Munich *Raising of the Cross* (no. A 69) which precedes it in the chronology of the biblical story, is highly probable. This is the only work in the series done on panel and is, like for example the *Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts* in the Frick Collection, New York (no. A 43), on an unusual kind of wood. One may even wonder whether no. A 65 was originally intended to belong to any series at all; Benesch<sup>9</sup> and Brochhagen<sup>5</sup> already thought it possible that the commission from the Stadholder was given only when the *Raising of the Cross* and the *Descent from the Cross* had already been painted. It is even more likely that only the *Descent from the Cross*, with its clear signs of Rembrandt's 'aemulatio' of Rubens, was done as a self-contained work and reproduced as such in an etching, and was then followed later – and probably as the result of a commission from Frederik Hendrik – by the other scenes from the Passion, painted on canvas.

The iconographic motifs used by Rembrandt in the various versions can, separately and in combination, be explained only partly from traditions and prototypes, and even then only from divergent ones. A motif that occurs frequently in Rubens is the shroud suspended from above into which the body

Fig. 7. A. Altdorfer, *The Descent from the Cross*, woodcut (1 : 1)



of Christ is lowered; the same is true of Mary (seen only in the 'first state') with her arms stretched out towards the body. For the rest, the motifs used, and the way they are used, do not stem from this source; in part, they derive from considerably older models. Broos<sup>10</sup> has, for the placing of the cross and ladders and, especially, for the man leaning over the arm of the cross, convincingly identified a prototype in Altdorfer's *Descent from the Cross*, from a series of 40 small woodcuts that appeared around 1513 and were regarded in the 17th century as being by Dürer (F. W. H. Hollstein, *German engravings . . . I*, Amsterdam 1954, pp. 238–241, no. 31; our fig. 7). Less obvious is the origin of the group of three kneeling figures – a man, Mary and a woman (Mary Magdalene?) – with the outspread pall-cloth that appears in the 1633 etching and was probably visible in the 'second state' of the painting. Stechow<sup>4</sup> saw a source for this in a composition by Tintoretto that occurs in a number of versions (Caen and Strasbourg), where this motif, in the form of two standing men holding the cloth spread wide, is combined with Mary seen fainting; Münz (II, p. 94) mentioned as an older prototype the triptych showing the *Descent from the Cross* by Jan Mostaert in Brussels (Musée Royal des Beaux-Arts, cat. no. 537), where Mary sits, unmoved, beside the outspread shroud. An older prototype in which Mary is seen kneeling and helping to spread the pall-cloth has not yet been shown, and it is quite possible that this is an original variant by Rembrandt on a traditional motif. The motif of Mary swooning and attended by a number of women indicates a return to a pre-Reformation tradition according to which, in the *Crucifixion*, the *Descent from the Cross* and the *Entombment* the motif of Mary fainting (and often also attended by John) is frequently used in both

Italian and northern European art. More or less similar groups, usually including John, can thus often be found in Netherlandish and German art – Bruyn<sup>11</sup> has pointed to Lucas van Leyden's engraving of the *Crucifixion* from the Round Passion of 1509, and Broos<sup>10</sup> to Altdorfer's woodcut of the same subject from the series mentioned earlier. Stechow's reference<sup>4</sup> to an *Entombment* by Jacopo Bassano, one version of which was in the Reynst collection in Amsterdam (see A.-M. S. Logan, *The 'Cabinet' of the brothers Gerard and Jan Reynst*, Amsterdam–Oxford–New York 1979, pp. 112–114, no. 5) seems even more appropriate; Rembrandt's group is – with the addition of one woman – very similar in form and function to that in Bassano's composition, in which likewise John is not included. The paintings of the Reynst collection however came to Amsterdam only some years later. Iconographically the final representation of no. A 65 is remarkable in that, alongside these motifs that are more or less explainable from various traditions and prototypes, there are also uncommon features. As such may be considered the prominence of the isolated Joseph of Arimathea, the minor accent on John (if, as Kai Sass<sup>3</sup> believed, he may be recognized in the young man beneath the cross who is catching the body of Jesus), the presence of the two old men on the left one of whom perhaps represents Nicodemus, and the vaguely-seen anonymous onlookers in the middle ground. The effect of details like these is to give Rembrandt's version a strongly narrative character compared to the devotional emphasis in Rubens' altar-piece, evident also in the prominent placing of the crown of thorns lying in a dish.

Finally, it may be remarked that the same motifs appear repeatedly in later representations of the Descent from the Cross by Rembrandt and his followers. In this connexion one may point particularly to the *Descent from the Cross* in Leningrad (no. C 49), which is in many respects based on no. A 65 and where the spreading out of the pall-cloth and Mary's fainting are both depicted, and to etching B. 83 of 1654 where the pall-cloth is spread over a bier in the foreground. A Mary moving towards the cross, similar to the figure seen in the underpainting of no. A 65, was used by Rembrandt himself, in reverse in a drawing of the *Descent from the Cross* in Berlin (Ben. 108) that is dated at around 1635.

On the early history of no. A 65 and the other paintings that form part of the Munich series, we are relatively well informed, first of all by Rembrandt's own letters to Constantijn Huygens – those from Huygens to the artist are lost – and then by the 1668 inventory of the Stadholder's widow,

Amalia of Solms (see 5. *Documents and sources*). It remains a mystery, however, when and how the seven pictures left the collection of the House of Orange and entered that of Johann Wilhelm, Elector Palatine (d. 1716), in Düsseldorf. Yet another unsolved problem is the generally poor state of preservation of the six surviving pictures and the disappearance of the seventh, the *Circumcision*. The only precise information available on this point is provided by Philipp Hieronymus Brinckmann (1709–1761), court painter to Carl Theodor, Elector Palatine in Mannheim; he states in March 1756 that he restored 'all six [Rembrandts]' (see 5. *Documents and sources*), which implies that the *Circumcision* had been lost by that time. This information suggests that the six remaining paintings had been moved from Düsseldorf to Mannheim by 1756, and by then were in an unsatisfactory state. The Düsseldorf Electoral collection is in fact known to have been moved to Mannheim in its entirety but this was only in 1758, before the siege and bombardment of the city by the Prussian general Wangenheim during the Seven Years' War (F. von Reber in: *Katalog der Gemälde-Sammlung der kgl. Aelteren Pinakothek*, Munich [c. 1883], p. xix). Less precise evidence is provided by the title-page of the catalogue of a London sale of copies after paintings in the Düsseldorf gallery (including copies after Rembrandt's *Descent from the Cross* and *Adoration of the shepherds*), which took place in 1795. It states that several of 'the inestimable Originals . . . were unfortunately destroyed, and much damaged in their Removal from Dusseldorf, during the Bombardment of that City, when the Building which contained them was totally burned' (for the full text see 5. *Documents and sources*). This text – which was obviously meant to enhance the importance of the copies to be sold – appears to refer to the destruction and capture of Düsseldorf by the French in 1794 and not to have any bearing on the state of preservation of the originals, as these had been removed from the city beforehand (see under 8. *Provenance*).

## 5. Documents and sources

The documentation presented here applies not only to no. A 65 but also to other works in the series (nos. A 69, Br. 557, Br. 560, Br. 561 and Br. 574).

In Rembrandt's first letter to Constantijn Huygens in February(?) 1636 (see H. Gerson, *Seven letters by Rembrandt*, transcription Isabella H. van Eeghen, translation Yda D. Ovink, The Hague 1961, pp. 18–24; Strauss *Doc.*, 1636/1) it is implied that the *Raising of the Cross* and *Descent from the Cross* had already been delivered to Frederik Hendrik of Orange some time before. There is also mention of three further works ordered by His Excellency that were not yet delivered: 'een grafleggij[ng] ende een verrijsenis en een Heemelvaart Christij. De selvijge ackoordeeren met opdoening en

afdoeningen vant Chruijs Chrisstij. Van welken drie voornomden stuckens een van opgemaect is daer Chrisstus ten Heemel opvaert ende die ander twee ruym half gedaen sijn' (an Entombment, and a Resurrection and an Ascension of Christ. These match the Elevation of and the Descent from Christ's Cross. Of these three aforementioned pictures one has been worked up, namely where Christ ascends to Heaven, and the other two are more than half done).

In his second letter written shortly afterwards, in February or March 1636 (Gerson, op. cit. pp. 26-30; Strauss *Doc.*, 1636/2), Rembrandt announces 'dat ick corts volgen sal om te besien hoe dat het stucken met de rest voucht' (that I shall follow anon to see how the picture [i.e. the *Ascension*] accords with the rest). A postscript adds: 'op de galdeerij van S exc<sup>11</sup> salt best te toonenen sijn alsoo daer een starck licht is' (it [i.e. the *Ascension*] will show to the best advantage in the gallery of His Excellency since there is a strong light there), meaning probably the gallery in the Oude Hof on the Noordeinde, The Hague, where the pictures are described in 1668 (see *8. Provenance*). In this letter there is, moreover, the first mention of a price – Rembrandt thinks he can ask 200 [Flemish] pounds, i.e. 1200 Carolus guilders, but is ready to be satisfied with less.

Almost three years later, according to the third letter dated 12 January 1639 (Gerson, op. cit. pp. 34-40; Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/2), the *Entombment* and *Resurrection* are ready: 'Dees selvij twee stuckens sijn door stuijdiose vlijt nu meede afgedaen soodatt ick nu oock geneegen ben om die selvijge te leveren om sijn Hoocheijt daer meede te vermaeken want deesen twee sijnt daer die meeste ende die naetuerelste beweeghelickeijt in geopserveert is dat oock de grooste oorsaek is dat die selvijge soo lang onder handen sij geweest' (These same two pictures have now been finished through studious application, so that I am now also disposed to deliver the same in order to afford pleasure to His Highness, for in these two pictures the greatest and most natural emotion and animation have been observed, which is also the main reason why they have taken so long to execute). (On the interpretation of 'die meeste ende die naetuerelste beweeghelickeijt' see Gerson, op. cit. pp. 39-40 with further references.)

In the fourth letter (Gerson, op. cit. pp. 42-47; Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/3), which can be dated shortly afterwards (though Vosmaer dated it after what since Hofstede de Groot's *Urkunden* has been considered the fifth), Rembrandt reports in reply to a lost letter from Huygens that he has despatched both works; he thinks they are worth at least 1000 guilders each, and from his wording one can gather that he received less for the previous work or works: '... dat sijn Hoocheijt nu selfs mij niet min als duseut gulden voor ider toeleggen sal' (... that his Highness will now even pay me not less than a thousand guilders each). In a postscript he mentions that he has paid out a total of 44 guilders 'aen de lijsten ende kas' (for the frames and crate).

Again in answer to a lost letter from Huygens, Rembrandt reports in the fifth letter, dated 27 January 1639 (Gerson, op. cit. pp. 50-55; Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/4), that the tax collector Johan Uytendogaert (portrayed by Rembrandt in etching B. 281 dated 1639), who came to see the paintings while they were being crated by Rembrandt, is prepared on the Prince's authority to make the payments from his office. He will appreciate speedy payment whatever His Highness grants him for the two pieces. Gerson (op. cit., p. 55) recalls that Rembrandt had on 5 January 1639 bought a large house in the Breestraat for 13 000 guilders, the first payment on which fell due on 1 May 1639.

In reply to a lost letter from Huygens in which the latter

obviously reported that the Prince was unwilling to pay more than 600 guilders per painting, and disclaimed responsibility for the decision, Rembrandt writes in the sixth letter dated 13 February 1639 (Gerson, op. cit. pp. 58-63; Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/5) that he is sure that if it were left to Huygens there would be no objection to the price he was asking. The first works delivered, too, had fetched no more than 600 guilders (although he had asked 1200 guilders for the *Ascension*!), and if the Prince could not be moved to pay a higher sum then he would be satisfied to take the same amount provided that his outgoings of 44 guilders on the ebony frames and crate were reimbursed. Once again, he presses for an early payment.

Huygens reacted promptly, as may be seen from the Warrant Book of Prince Frederik Hendrik for 1637-1641, p. 242 (see HdG *Urk.*, no. 70; Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/7): 'Den XVII februarij 1639 is gedepescheert ordonnancie op d'attestatie van d'Heer van Zuylichem [= Constantijn Huygens] ten behouwe vanden schilder Rembrandt, als volcht:

Sijne Hoocheijt ordonneert hiermede Thyman van Volbergen synen Tresorier ende Rentmeester- generael, te betalen aen den schilder Rembrandt de somme van twaelffhondert vier en veertich carolus gulden, over twee stucken schilderij wesende 't eene de begraeffenisse ende het ander de Verrijzenisse van onse Heer Christus, bij hem gemaect ende geleverd aen Sijn Hoocheijt, uijtwijsende de bovenstaende verclaringe ende midts f. 1244:0:0'.

(Sent on 17 February 1639 the payment order, on the attestation of Constantijn Huygens in favour of the painter Rembrandt, as follows:

His Highness hereby orders Thyman van Volbergen his Treasurer and Paymaster-General to pay the painter Rembrandt the sum of twelve hundred and forty-four Carolus guilders for two paintings being the one the entombment and the other the Resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, done by him and having been delivered to His Highness, in accordance with the above declaration and therefore f. 1244:0:0).

Even before he had received this money, Rembrandt was in the undated seventh letter urging Huygens to haste (Gerson, op. cit. pp. 66-71; Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/6).

For two works delivered to Frederik Hendrik later, the *Adoration of the shepherds* dated 1646 (Br. 574) and a lost *Circumcision*, in respect of both of which we know of no correspondence, Rembrandt was paid in 1646 by the Prince, according to his Warrant Book for 1641-1647, fol. 442 (HdG *Urk.*, no. 107; Strauss *Doc.*, 1646/6): 'Syne Hooch' ordonneert hiermede synen Tresorier en Rentmeester Generael, Willem Ketting de Jong, te betalen aen N. Rembrant, schilder tot Amsterdam, de somme van twee duysent vier hondert Carolusgulden, ter saecke dat hy ten dienste van Syne Hoochheijt, heeft gemaect ende geleverd twee schilderijen, d'eene van de geboorte Christi, en d'ander van de besnijdinge Christi, Ende mits enz ... 2400:0:0.

s Gravenhage, desen XXIX November 1646.'

(His Highness hereby orders his Treasurer and Paymaster General Willem Ketting de Jong to pay to N. Rembrant, painter of Amsterdam, the sum of two thousand four hundred Carolus guilders, for having made in the service of His Highness and delivered two paintings, the one of the nativity and the other of the circumcision of Christ, and therefore ... 2400:0:0 The Hague, this 29 November 1646).

Rembrandt had thus received for these last two paintings twice as much as for the five delivered earlier, and exactly the amount that he had, according to the second letter to Huygens, asked in 1636 for the *Ascension*.

With regard to the frames of the seven paintings it may be remarked that in Rembrandt's sixth letter to Huygens, on 13



February 1639 in connexion with the *Entombment* and *Resurrection* there is mention of '2 ebben lijsten' (two ebony frames), and in the 1668 inventory of Amalia of Solms (see under 8. *Provenance*), in connexion with all seven paintings, mention of 'swarte lijsten, boven ovaelsgewijse ende rontom vergulde gesnede feullages' (black frames, oval at the top and with gilt leaves all round). One must perhaps deduce from this that Rembrandt supplied the paintings in black frames veneered with ebony, and that gilt carving was added at some time in The Hague.

On a restoration of six out of the seven paintings – the *Circumcision* was evidently already lost – we are informed by a letter which Philipp Hieronymus Brinckmann (1709–1761), court painter and curator to Carl Theodor, Elector Palatine (reigned 1742–1799) in Mannheim, wrote to Carl Heinrich von Heineken in Dresden on 30 March 1756: 'ich möchte wünschen Sie seheten unsere Rimbrand wie sie jetzt Seindt ich habe alle 6. wieder in guten standt gebracht. Die auferstehung Christi habe die Mahlerey von seinem alten Tuch herunter genommen und auf ein Brett gemacht, und so dasz auch nicht dass mindeste ryssel oder sprüngel ersehen' (Brochhagen op. cit.<sup>5</sup>, p. 42). This restoration appears not to be related to the damage referred to in the catalogue of the Green sale of 1795, quoted below. A bombardment of Düsseldorf as mentioned there took place in 1758, but another calamity must have been responsible for the damage that led to Brinckmann's restoration, which was completed by March 1756.

The restoration did not entirely escape Joshua Reynolds' attention. He wrote ('A Journey to Flanders and Holland in the year MDCCLXXXI', in: *The works of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Knight* . . . ed. E. Malone, London 1809, II, pp. 392–393): 'There are likewise in this [i.e. the fourth] room eight Rembrandts [besides the six surviving pictures belonging to the series, possibly a man's and a woman's portrait mentioned by Karsch, op. cit., see below]; the chief merit of which consists in his peculiarity of manner – of admitting but little light, and giving to that little a wonderful brilliancy. The colouring of Christ in the Elevation of the Cross, cannot be exceeded; it is exactly the tint of Vandyck's Susanna in the other room; but whether the ground of this picture has been re-painted, or the white horse, which was certainly intended to make the mass of light broader, has lost its brightness, at present the Christ makes a disagreeable string of light. In reality there are too many Rembrandts brought together: his peculiarity does not come amiss, when mixed with the performances of other artists of more regular manners; the variety then may contribute to relieve the mind, fatigued with regularity. The same may be said of the Vanderwerfs: they also are too numerous. These pictures, however, tire the spectator for reasons totally opposite to each other; the Rembrandts have too much salt, and the Vanderwerfs too much water, on neither of which we can live. These Rembrandts are now engraving by ———. The storm at Mr. Hope's [no. A 68] seems to belong to this set.' On the strength of the title-page of the catalogue of the Green sale quoted below, and related information, one may assume that Reynolds is referring here to mezzotints for the publication of which Valentine Green and his son Rupert were to be granted the Elector's privilege in 1789.

The title-page of the catalogue of the V. and R. Green sale, London 16 May 1795 (Lugt 5316), contains information on damage done to the paintings of the Electoral Gallery in Düsseldorf. It runs as follows: 'A Catalogue of All those Select, Beautiful, and uncommonly High-Finished Pictures, copied from the Celebrated Originals which composed the Electoral Gallery of Dusseldorf, which by the Gracious Permission of His Serene Highness the Elector Palatine, were copied for the

Purpose of being engraved, in consequence of an exclusive Privilege granted for that Purpose to Messrs. V. and R. Green. The above-mentioned Pictures are most accurately copied from the inestimable Originals, several of which were unfortunately destroyed, and much damaged in their Removal from Dusseldorf, during the Bombardment of that City, when the Building which contained them was totally burnt. Many of the Pictures are of the exact Size of the Originals, and most of the principal Subjects in that Collection are included . . . ' The sale included two copies after Rembrandt: 'Adoration of the shepherds' and 'Taking down from the cross' (nos. 53 and 82). They must have been drawings, made under the direction of Johann Gerhard Huck (1759–1811) and to be reproduced by Valentine Green (1739–1813) and his son Rupert (1768–1804) in a luxurious publication with 110 mezzotints after the principal paintings in the Düsseldorf gallery, the privilege for which had been granted them by the Elector in 1789. Seventy-two of the drawn copies, together with 14 mezzotints, were exhibited in 1792 at Spring Gardens, London (see: *Descriptive Catalogue of Pictures from the Dusseldorf-Gallery*, London 1792). After the destruction and capture of Düsseldorf by the French in 1794, the planned publication came to nothing and the Greens ran into financial difficulties, apparently entailing the 1795 sale of the drawn copies. The bombardment mentioned on the title-page of the sales catalogue refers in all likelihood to the events of 1794, and the information that several of the original pictures were destroyed and much damaged may well be an exaggeration meant to enhance the value of the copies; all important paintings, including the Rembrandts, had been removed from Düsseldorf at the approach of the French troops (see under 8. *Provenance*). Whatever damage was done on this occasion, it does nothing to explain the damage that had earlier led to Brinckmann's restoration, which was completed by March 1756, and the disappearance of the *Circumcision*.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Rembrandt, B. 81 (I), signed and dated under Joseph of Arimathea's stick: *Rembrandt.ft/1633*. The etching has been printed from a rectangular plate, and reproduces the picture with its arched top in reverse. It shows a group of three kneeling figures with the pall-cloth outspread instead of the group of women with Mary fainting. The man on the ladder on the opposite side does not have his head bent down towards Christ, but facing forward. The plate failed in the biting, and the picture is only partly legible. According to White and Boon (Hollst. XVIII, p. 45), however, the impressions taken show that Rembrandt had already attempted to rub down the plate, probably with stone. The fact that this and the etching mentioned under 2. below were printed from different plates was already recognized by Mariette but was unknown to Gersaint and Bartsch (see Münz II, p. 94). We share, albeit for different reasons, Brochhagen's opinion<sup>5</sup> that both etchings reproduce an earlier version that must be presumed to have preceded the completion of the painting in its present state.
2. Etching by Rembrandt, B. 81 (II), signed and dated in the bottom margin: *Rembrandt.f* [followed by 3 dots] *cum pryvl* [followed by 3 dots].1633. (fig. 5). Reproduces the picture in a rectangular field, in reverse, with the same differences as no. 1 above, but readily legible and very detailed. Instead of the tree-grown cliff on the left of the painting there is a massive, round building. The addition, to be read as *cum privilegio*, which occurs otherwise only on the etching of *The Good Samaritan*, B. 90, also from 1633, is evidence of Rembrandt's ambition to branch out as a publisher. The third

state carries the publisher's address of Hendrik van Uylenburgh.

3. Etching in reverse by Carl Ernst Christoph Hess (Darmstadt 1755–Munich 1828) for *La Galerie électorale de Düsseldorf . . .*, Basle 1778. Inscription: *Rembrandt p. – Hess f. aqua forti* and on a shield the cipher CT of the Elector Palatine Carl Theodor (d. 1799). Some details are more readily legible than in the painting. There are no significant differences. The woman in the dark between Joseph of Arimathea and the cross is clearly visible.

### 7. Copies

– Mentioned in the division of the estate of Henriette Catherina of Anhalt-Dessau, daughter of Frederik Hendrik of Orange, 1708, no. 7 (80 talers to her daughter Maria Eleonora von Radzivil)<sup>12</sup>. Painted copies after the etching listed under 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 2. frequently occur, and were presumably in circulation early on. A copy of this kind from c. 1647 was (is ?) in the church at Hela, Poland, probably as a gift from Adriaen van der Linde, burgomaster of Gdansk (Danzig) (HdG *Urk.*, no. 109; Strauss *Doc.*, 1647/7).

Cf. also coll. J. W. Barchman Wuytiers, sale Utrecht 17ff September 1792 (Lugt 4945), no. 52: 'Rembrandt Hoog 35 $\frac{3}{4}$  breed 29 $\frac{1}{2}$  [= 92.9 × 76.7 cm] paneel (Rhijnlandsche maat in den dag gemeten). De afneeming van het Kruis, het doode Ligchaam van den Zaligmaker is in het grootste licht geplaatst, en werkt uitneemend zoo tegens een wit Laken als tegens andere beelden, Joseph van Arimathea staat ter linkerzijde, aan de anderen zijde meer van agteren ziet men veel volk, ook de Vrouwen, alles krachtig natuurlijk en uitnemend gepenceeld.' (The descent from the Cross. The dead body of the Saviour has been placed in the strongest light and produces an excellent effect set off against a white shroud as well as other figures; Joseph of Arimathea stands [N.B.] to the left, on the other side, at some more distance, one sees numerous people, including the women. Everything painted vigorously, naturally and superbly) (fl. 14–15 to Roos); cf. HdG 135d.

### 8. Provenance

– Coll. Prince Frederik Hendrik of Orange, probably in the gallery of the Oude Hof on the Noordeinde, The Hague (see 5. *Documents and sources*).

– The inventory, dated 20 March 1668, of Amalia of Solms, widow of Frederik Hendrik, mentions among the 'paintings in the Court in the Noordeinde' (S. W. A. Drossaers and Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer, *Inventarissen van . . . de Oranjes I*, The Hague 1974, p. 285):

[1240] Seven stucken schilderije bij Rembrant gemaect, alle met swarte lijsten, boven ovaelsgewijse ende rontom vergulde gesnede feuillages:

De eerste sijnde de geboorte Onses Heeren Jesu Christi.

De tweede de besnijdenisse.

De derde de cruycinge.

De vierde de affdoeninge van den cruyce.

De vijfde de begrafenisse.

De sesde de opstandinge.

De sevend de hemelvaert Onses Heeren Jesu Christi.

(Seven paintings made by Rembrandt, all with black frames, oval at the top and with gilt leaves all round:

The first being the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The second the circumcision.

The third the crucifixion.

The fourth the descent from the cross.

The fifth the entombment.

The sixth the resurrection.

The seventh the ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ.)

The seven paintings are not mentioned in the 'Dispositions Book' of Amalia of Solms begun on 1 January 1673 (ibid. pp. 317–322), nor in the deed of division of the estate of Amalia (d. 1675) dated 1676. They thus did not come into the possession of any of her four daughters, nor subsequently of their children; it must therefore be regarded as extremely unlikely that they could be recognized in any of the works in a motley collection of anonymous paintings that was described in 1696 as being in the estate of one of her daughters, Albertina Agnes (as suggested in: S. W. A. Drossaers and Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer, op. cit. I, p. xxx; cf. ibid. II, p. 237). It must perhaps rather be assumed that they went to her grandson Prince Willem III, later King of England (d. 1702). How and when they came to be in Düsseldorf is not known.

– Coll. Johann Wilhelm, Elector Palatine (reigned 1690–1716). [G. J. Karsch] *Gründliche Specification derer vortreflichen und unschätzbaren Gemälden . . .*, In der Galerie der Churfürstl. Residentz zu Düsseldorf . . ., [1719]: 'Diese sieben folgende Stück repraesentiren die Passion unseres HErrn JEsu Christi, seynd gemahlet von dem berühmten Mahler Rembrandt.

	Hoch Fuss Zoll	Breit Fuss Zoll
N. 86. Die Geburt mit 11. Figuren		
N. 87. Die Beschneidung mit 19. Fig.	2–9	2–4
N. 88. Die Creutzigung mit 19 Fig.		
N. 89. Die Abnehmung vom Creutz mit 15. Figuren.		
N. 90. Die Grablegung Christi mit 13. Figuren.		
N. 91. Die Aufferstehung Christi mit 13. Figuren.		
N. 92. Die Himmelfahrt Christi mit 12 Figuren.		

Removed from Düsseldorf to Mannheim before the bombardment of 1758 by the Prussian army, and returned there in 1764. Removed to Glückstadt at the approach of the French troops under Bernadotte in 1794, and returned some ten years later. Removed to Kirchheimbolanden before the Duchy of Berg (including Düsseldorf) was ceded to France in 1805. In Munich since 1806 (see F. von Reber in: *Katalog der Gemälde-Sammlung der kgl. Älteren Pinakothek*, Munich [c. 1883], pp. xix and xx; reprinted in several later editions).

### 9. Summary

Although no. A 65 is not well preserved (though it is not in as bad a condition as the other works from the same series in Munich, which are on canvas while this is painted on panel), the manner of painting and the documentation available leave no doubt as to its authenticity. Judging by the X-rays, its design was partly altered twice, and two etchings by Rembrandt, both dated 1633, may be taken to reproduce the second state of the composition. The painting was thus given its present form in 1633 at the earliest.

In its first state particularly, the composition betrays a certain influence from Rubens' depiction of the subject, but Rembrandt's treatment of space

is different and he also incorporates features from early 16th-century German prints – especially one by Albrecht Altdorfer – and possibly from a painting by Jacopo Bassano.

Although dealing with a subject that in the biblical narrative follows the raising of the Cross, the *Descent from the Cross* was probably begun before the *Raising of the Cross* now belonging to the same series. It was probably a self-contained painting (on panel) that was supplemented later by the other Passion scenes (on canvas). The latter, probably including the *Raising of the Cross*, were ordered by Prince Frederik Hendrik of Orange, who eventually owned the entire Passion series. The paintings were still in the possession of his widow in 1668; it is not known exactly how they came into the collection of the elector Palatine at Düsseldorf, where they are described in 1719.

## REFERENCES

- 1 Cf. J. Bauch and D. Eckstein, 'Woodbiological investigations on panels of Rembrandt paintings', *Wood Science and Technology* 15 (1981), pp. 251–263, esp. 254.
- 2 Kühn, p. 201.
- 3 E. Kai Sass, *Comments on Rembrandt's Passion paintings and Constantijn Huygens's iconography*, Copenhagen 1971 (Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, Historisk-Filosofiske Skrifter 5, 3), esp. pp. 8–12.
- 4 W. Stechow, 'Rembrandts Darstellungen der Kreuzabnahme', *Jb. d. Pr. Kunsts.* 50 (1929), pp. 217–232, esp. 220–222.
- 5 E. Brochhagen, 'Beobachtungen an den Passionsbildern Rembrandts in München', *Munuscula discipulorum. . . Hans Kauffmann zum 70. Geburtstag 1966*, Berlin 1968, pp. 37–43, esp. 40.
- 6 C. G. Campbell, *Studies in the formal sources of Rembrandt's figure compositions*, typescript dissertation University of London 1971, p. 38.
- 7 G. Lengel, 'Beiträge zu den Bildern Rembrandts in der Alten Pinakothek in München', *Das Münster* 20 (1967), pp. 52–58, esp. 52; Gerson 65; H. von Einem, 'Bemerkungen zum Christusbild Rembrandts', *Das Münster* 25 (1972), pp. 349–360, esp. 349.
- 8 H. Kauffmann, 'Overzicht der litteratuur betreffende Nederlandsche kunst . . .', *O.H.* 48 (1931), pp. 227–240, esp. 234.
- 9 O. Benesch, *Rembrandt. Werk und Forschung*, Vienna 1935, p. 13.
- 10 B. P. J. Broos, 'Rembrandt borrows from Altdorfer', *Simiolus* 4 (1970), pp. 100–108, esp. 105–106.
- 11 J. Bruyn, *Rembrandt's keuze van bijbelse onderwerpen*, Utrecht 1959 (lecture), p. 8.
- 12 HdG 134.

### 1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved, authentic work of a sketchlike character, reliably signed and probably datable in 1633.

### 2. Description of subject

The scene is based on Genesis 37: 5–11, more particularly on verses 9–10 which relate how the 17-year-old Joseph tells his second dream ('the sun, and the moon and eleven stars made obeisance to me') to his father and brothers. He had earlier told his first dream ('your sheaves stood round about and made obeisance to my sheaf') to his brothers alone.

A canopied bed stands in a room lit from the left; in it, an old woman sits leaning against cushions; this is undoubtedly Joseph's mother Rachel, though according to Genesis 35: 16–19 she had already died giving birth to Benjamin. To the right of the bed is a chimneybreast, which is seen from the side and frames the scene on the right. A dog lies curled up by the hearth, in which chunks of wood are burning. Jacob sits facing left, on a chair set in the angle between the bed and the fireplace. Behind the chair an object lies on the edge of the bed or on a small ledge (in the Denon etching – see 6. *Graphic reproductions* – this is interpreted as a purse). Jacob is wearing a tabard trimmed with fur, and his left arm rests on his left leg which rests on a footwarmer. Facing him a little to the left of centre stands Joseph, seen in right profile and bending slightly forward; he holds his right hand out horizontally in front of him at waist level, apparently to show how low the sun (his father), moon (his mother) and eleven stars (his brothers) had bowed down before him. He wears a short cloak (the 'coat of many colours' that his father had given him, and that had aroused the envy of his brothers) and calf-length boots. Behind Joseph's back are his brothers. Two of them sit at a table; the righthand figure is turning to the left, while gesturing towards the right where Joseph stands. Before the table a young woman, wearing a necklace, stands with her back towards the viewer and lit *contre-jour*. She is only partly visible, and frames the scene to the left; she is probably Dinah, Jacob's only daughter by his first wife Leah (Genesis 30: 21).

Behind Joseph stands a third brother wearing a cap, leaning forward with his arms crossed on the backrest of a chair, listening. Behind him again a fourth brother with a fur cap peers past him towards Joseph. A fifth, only vaguely visible, stands facing the front against the bed, towering above Joseph and the brother behind him. To the extreme left, next to the fur cap, the head of a sixth brother can be seen in profile. A round patch of light grey between this head and the fur cap suggests the presence of a seventh; the hand holding a shepherd's crook to the right of the fur cap would seem to belong to this figure. The bed-curtain on the right is looped up.

Strong light falls from the left, the strongest on some of the brothers in conservation on the left and on Joseph's back, producing pronounced cast shadows from the table on the ground and from Joseph on Jacob's right arm.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in December 1974 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good daylight and out of the frame. Two X-ray films, almost covering the whole of the painting, and an ultraviolet photograph were available.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Paper stuck on card, 55.8 × 38.7 cm. The appearance of the surface at the corners and righthand side of the top edge suggests that there is a sheet of paper between the paper of the support and the card backing. The support paper has a vertical tear at the bottom edge, starting just below Joseph, running up between his legs and then curving somewhat to the left into the cloak. At the right edge the paper is also somewhat torn in the centre. Probably the torn paper, which to judge from the absence of the last figure of the date in the signature has been trimmed on the right, and perhaps on the left as well, was first stuck to another sheet of paper to stiffen it, after which the whole was stuck to the card backing. SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: At many places, most clearly in the bed canopy and curtains and along the righthand edge of the painting, a grey tint can be seen. A yellow-brown colour shows through at a number of patches of damage, such as in the head of the seated brother facing the left. It was impossible to tell whether one of these two colours belongs to the ground, and if so, which.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: There has been paint loss along the vertical tear at the bottom. Elsewhere there are a few small damages with a modest amount of paint loss, e.g. in the fold of the tablecloth, in the shadow cast by the table, and in the head of the seated brother facing left and along the bottom edge of the painting. The damages have been inpainted. The layer of varnish made it impossible to determine the nature of a few stains occurring at other points. Clumps in the paint layer that appear over virtually the whole surface are not part of the paint itself, and probably come from the effects of moisture when the paper was being glued. Craquelure: there are fine cracks in the thickest paint areas; at many places, such as in the paint used to depict Rachel's arm, one can see a network of fine cracks that are unconnected with the substance of the paint, and seem to have arisen from some extraneous factor such as kinking of the paper.

DESCRIPTION: This sketchlike grisaille exhibits a wealth of warm and cool tints, with fairly wide differences between light and dark that create a strong effect of contrast. Umber-coloured browns and brown-greys that lend a brownish tone to the whole painting are combined with greys and ochre colours mixed with white.

In the light areas fairly dry paint is applied relatively thickly; the half-shadows and shadows are painted fluidly with a brushwork that is often scarcely visible. The transition between light and dark is abrupt, especially near the invisible source of light to the left. On the floor the light and shadow merge, and the top of the bed and the chimney-breast are for the most part lost in gloom.

In places where the contrast is highest the indication of shapes has been obtained by leaving reserves for contour lines which then form a gap between two islands of light-coloured paint. This method has been used particularly for depicting the seated brother who faces left. Elsewhere, for instance by Jacob's right foot, a dark shape comes about from the light paint of the surroundings having been set down around it. In the softer shadow areas and gloom the contours and internal detail are done with a fine brush (e.g. Jacob's tabard, the dog and bed curtains). The lit hands are shown using thin strokes of paint, and the detail in Rachel's and

Fig. 1. Paper stuck on card 55.8 × 38.7 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray





Fig. 3. Detail (1 : 1)

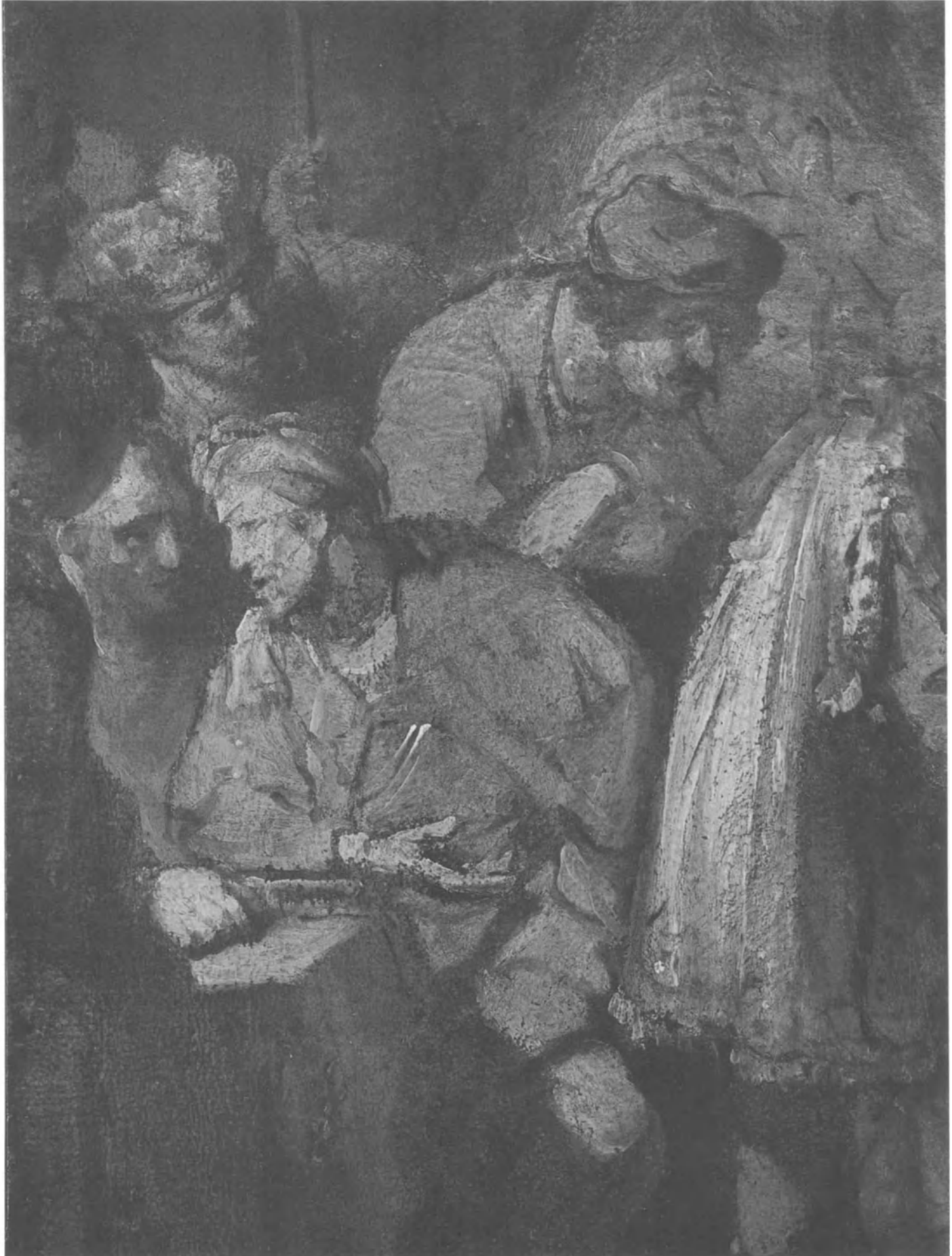


Fig. 4. Detail with signature (reduced)



Jacob's faces are done with gossamer-fine strokes of brown paint.

The ready legibility of the painting, produced by the bold shaping of forms, is further enhanced by the variations in colour given to the figures within the general grisaille tonality. In the brother seated and facing left, for instance, an ochrish tint predominates, while the brother to the left of him is done in brown and the brother wearing a fur hat above these two seated figures is in grey.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### X-Rays

The radiographic image closely matches the visible paint image. The brown shadows at the back of Jacob's head and neck did not have a reserve left for them, but were painted on top of the white of the cushion.

#### Signature

At the bottom on the extreme right, in brown paint <R[.]brandt.f:163[.]>. The inscription is very indistinct; with some of the letters (such as the *f*, the top half of which makes a reliable impression) only fragments can be seen, while others are very indistinct (such as the *R*, which also seems to slope slightly backwards). The *b*, which is not completely closed, the *d*, which tends to slope backwards, and the *t*, which is more upright, are all fairly clearly visible. What can be read is close enough to signatures from 1633 and 1634 to inspire confidence in its authenticity. The relatively sloping stance of some of the letters is seen in a few signatures from 1633 (cf. no. A 78). Considering that in 1632 the forename written out in full does not yet appear in undoubtedly authentic signatures in the paintings known to us, this signature provides an indication that the date of the grisaille can be put at 1633 or later.

#### Varnish

A quite thick, rather yellowed layer of varnish somewhat hampers observation.

#### 4. Comments

This painting, done as a grisaille, has the character of a sketch. Pictorially it thus shows more kinship to the small number of paintings done by Rembrandt

Fig. 5. Rembrandt, *A dog sleeping*, pen drawing (Ben. 455). Boston, Museum of Fine Arts, J. H. and E. A. Payne Fund

as a preparation for a planned work than it does to his self-contained paintings. There is some similarity with the Glasgow grisaille of the *Entombment* (Br. 554), which we date as not later than 1635. Here, forms are defined in a similar way by dark paint left bare in between patches of thicker light paint. The handling of light, though more forceful, is basically the same, and there is no real difference in the brushwork. The Glasgow grisaille is however kept far more general in treatment than that in Amsterdam, which in this respect comes midway between the Glasgow sketch on the one hand and the London *Ecce homo* of 1634 (no. A 89) and the Berlin *S. John the Baptist preaching* of c. 1634/35 (Br. 555) on the other, which from the viewpoint of definition of form lie at the other extreme of the scale of possibilities that Rembrandt utilized in preparatory works of this kind.

The authenticity of the Amsterdam sketch is lent support not only by stylistic similarities with the works just mentioned, but also by the fact that use was made of one of Rembrandt's drawings for the figure of Jacob, and by the link between the grisaille and his etching (B. 37) of 1638 (fig. 6), which like the drawing will be discussed further. The problem posed by this painting is not so much one of authenticity – that has never been doubted – as of its date, purpose and iconography.

Since Rembrandt followed his drawing, dated 1631, of an *Old man seated* in a private collection (Ben. 20) (fig. 8) for the figure of Jacob, and since as we shall see his work precedes the etching of 1638, it must have been done in the intervening years. Considerable differences between the compositions of the grisaille and the etching would seem to point to a certain lapse of time between the production of the two works. The sketchlike execution of the gri-

Fig. 6. Rembrandt, *Joseph telling his dreams*, 1638, etching (B. 37 II; reproduced in reverse; 1:1)



saille has, one may assume, to do with the purpose for which it must have been intended, and thus in itself offers little basis for comparison with dated, fully-fledged paintings. A more precise dating can be ventured only on the basis of the artistic approach, the composition and the motifs it incorporates. Generally speaking, the very distinct beam of light, falling from the upper left and creating patches of light and cast shadows on the ground while leaving the extreme foreground dark, matches the lighting used by Rembrandt in his Leiden years, especially in work from 1631, and then during his early years in Amsterdam. In this and other respects there seems to be a significant resemblance with what was probably a lost grisaille of the *Adoration of the Magi* from Rembrandt's hand. The composition of this is known to us only from a grisaille on paper in Leningrad (no. C 46) bearing the date 1632, and from a larger painting in Gothenburg (see entry C 46, 7. *Copies*). The way this composition is framed to the left by a figure acting as a repoussoir, and in which moreover partially visible figures, conversing, are stacked one above the other with their heads tilted, is very like the corresponding passage in the Amsterdam grisaille. The function and pose of the king standing in the centre are not unlike those of the brother standing high up in front of the bed-curtain, and the types of the kneeling king and the page are strongly reminiscent of Jacob and Joseph. Though the dating of the lost *Adoration of the Magi* is

not entirely certain, the date of 1632 on the Leningrad grisaille probably provides a reliable indication. When one adds to this the fact that motifs akin to the group of Joseph's brothers appear, *mutatis mutandis*, in Rembrandt's work from the following years – e.g. in the 1633 *Christ in the storm* in the Gardner Museum, Boston (no. A 68), the London *Ecce homo* (no. A 89) and the Moscow *Incredulity of Thomas* (no. A 90), both of 1634, then a date around 1632/34 seems preferable to a later one. Attempts to narrow the margin further must remain rather speculative. Some preference for 1633 could be justified on the one hand by the signature, which in 1632 would most probably not have consisted of the forename spelt out in full but of an *RHL* monogram followed by *van Rijn* and which (to the extent it can be read) seems most to resemble signatures from 1633, and on the other by the thought that the similarity of composition with the *Adoration of the Magi*, which probably came from 1632, makes a 1634 date less likely than one in 1633.

In any case one may take it that the grisaille came into being some time after the red chalk drawing dated 1631 that was used for the figure of Jacob and belongs to a series of model studies of one particular old man drawn by Rembrandt in Leiden (cf. no. A 11, 4. *Comments*). He also made use here, as in some later works, of a drawing of a dog in Boston (Ben. 455) (fig. 5) which Benesch dates as around 1633, or of an almost identical drawing. (Rembrandt's inventory of 1656 included a book full of drawings of animals done from life: 'Een dito, vol teekeninge van Rembrant, bestaende in beesten nae 't leven'; Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12 no. 249; cf. A 92, 4. *Comments*.) The brother who leans forward behind Joseph's back is, in type and lighting, strongly reminiscent of the drawn self-portrait in Marseille (Ben. 430) that served for an etching dated 1633 (B. 17). Taken together, these connexions, which individually might not carry much weight, do lend support to a dating of 1633 for the grisaille. Finally, one may suppose the brother leaning on the table with his right elbow to be a paraphrase of the figure of Judas in a print after Leonardo's *Last Supper* that Rembrandt copied freely a number of times during the 1630s, in particular in a red chalk drawing in New York (Ben. 443). It seems doubtful whether a pen-and-ink drawing of a similar paraphrase in Munich (Ben. 91) has any direct link with the Amsterdam grisaille, as Benesch assumed<sup>1</sup>; nor can one accept a connexion with a small sketch in red chalk on the back of a drawing in Dijon (Ben. 127 verso), Rembrandt's authorship of which moreover seems far from certain.

As to the purpose of the grisaille, it may be said that though it is generally assumed or implied in the

Fig. 7. Detail (1:2)

Fig. 8. Rembrandt, *An old man seated*, 1631, red chalk (Ben. 20; 1:2). Private collection

literature that it served as a preparation for the etching of the same subject dated 1638 (B. 37) (fig. 6), this cannot be accepted. The only grisaille known to us that definitely had this function – the London *Ecce homo* of 1634 (no. A 89) – is exactly similar in format and layout to the etching based on it (B. 77). The etching of *Joseph telling his dreams* does admittedly show a composition similar to that of the grisaille, but it is considerably smaller (11 × 8.3 cm) and has substantial differences both in the intensity of the lighting and in composition and detail. The towering figure of the brother behind Jacob has been added, Joseph is seen frontally instead of in profile, the young woman in front of the table has become a seated figure with a book, Rachel is not sitting but lying with her head propped on one hand, and various figures present less radical changes. It is evident that the immediate preparatory stage for the etching was a rough composition sketch in red chalk (on the back of Ben. 161) in Rotterdam, published by Giltay<sup>2</sup>, together

with a pen-and-ink drawing of two isolated figures in the W. Kramarsky collection, New York (Ben. 168), which has been known of for longer; both must probably be dated immediately before the etching. Three drawings (Ben. 526, 527 and 528) mentioned by Haverkamp Begemann<sup>3</sup> in this connexion would not seem to be relevant. From the viewpoint of the etching, the Amsterdam grisaille served as no more than a point of departure. This does not however rule out the possibility that it was done with an eye to an etching, but one of the same size; this was however – one must assume – never executed. The format would not argue against this – the height is practically that of the *Ecce homo*, and the same may have been true of the width before it was reduced (see *Support*) – and the fact of both grisailles being painted on paper might point to their having a common purpose. This is hardly made less likely by the fact that the Amsterdam grisaille does not have the light coming from the right, as the *Ecce homo* does, evidently by reason of the reproduction in reverse; in this respect, the procedure followed in the



Fig. 9. F. Bol after Rembrandt, *Joseph telling his dreams*, black chalk and grey wash 50 × 41 cm. Amerongen, coll. H. van Leeuwen



*Ecce homo* is exceptional in Rembrandt's work. The year 1633 was the last in which Rembrandt published a substantial etching as a reproduction of a painting by his own hand – the *Descent from the Cross* (B.81), after the painting now in Munich (no. A.65). If our dating of 1633 is correct, then the *Joseph telling his dreams* might represent the first case of a sketch specially produced in preparation for a large etching; one has to suppose that this etching never materialized or – less probably – was unsuccessful. In the following years came the next sketches of this kind, the 1634 *Ecce homo* which was in fact published as an etching in 1635 and 1636 and the *S. John the Baptist preaching* which if meant for an etching never resulted in one.

Rembrandt's sketch was used as a prototype by some of his pupils at a much later date. Jan Victors borrowed from it the figures for a large painting of horizontal format (canvas 158 × 200 cm, sale Amsterdam 21–24 March 1950, no. 68, reproduced in the catalogue), and Ferdinand Bol copied it in the early 1660s (see: 7. *Copies*, 1, fig. 9) when he owned it.

Inconographically, the picture has two peculiar features – the old woman in the bed and the young woman by the table. Tümpel<sup>4</sup>, basing himself on a paper by Lorenz Seelig, has pointed out that Rembrandt probably borrowed the figure in the bed from Aldegrevier's engraving of 1532 (Bartsch VIII, p. 367, no. 18) in which Joseph is seen telling his

dreams in the foreground while in the background he is shown in bed, dreaming. Rembrandt is supposed to have misinterpreted the figure in the bed as Joseph's mother Rachel; it is conceivable that the unusual motif did come about in this way. Nevertheless one has to assume that Rembrandt knew his Bible well enough to be aware that Rachel had died giving birth to Benjamin (Genesis 35: 16–19), long before Joseph told of his dreams. Probably Jacob's first wife Leah was still alive at that time – all that the Bible says about her is that she died before Jacob (Genesis 49: 31). The presence of Leah could then be historically sound, yet the presence of Rachel would make better sense and would not be totally in conflict with the biblical account, which is itself inconsistent on this point. Indeed, after Joseph had told his second dream about the sun, moon and eleven stars that had made obeisance to him, Jacob asked '... Shall I and thy mother and brothers indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee, to the earth?'. The presence of the young woman by the table, which is quite superfluous for the purposes of the story, is iconographically unique. Leah cannot be intended since she was, according to the Bible (Genesis 29: 16), older than Rachel. The only possible candidate is Dinah, Jacob's only daughter (Genesis 30: 21).

In the 17th century the story of Joseph and his brothers was seen as typifying hatred and discord between brothers. Vondel's tragedy *Joseph in Dothan* of 1640 has as its motto a quotation from Virgil's *Georgics* (II, 496) – 'Infidos agitans discordia fratres' (Discord inflames the disloyal brothers). That this was a popular example can be assumed from the fact that it features twice in P. Picinelli's *Mundus symbolicus* (2nd edn, Cologne 1695), where discord and jealousy between brothers are illustrated with precisely this story (III, nos. 181, 228). The way Rembrandt translates this theme in the reactions of the various brothers is typical of what Huygens called his 'affectuum vivacitas' (cf. no. A 15, 5. *Documents and sources*), and is strongly reminiscent of, for instance, his treatment of a theme such as the *Incredulity of Thomas* in the Moscow painting (no. A 90).

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Dominique Vivant Denon (Givry 1747–Paris 1825); reproduces the picture in reverse.

## 7. Copies

1. Drawing by Ferdinand Bol in black chalk and grey wash,

50 × 41 cm (fig. 9). Coll. H. van Leeuwen, Amerongen. The drawing, which may have been trimmed somewhat all round, reproduces the picture in a slightly narrower framework. The greater part of the sister standing in front of the table on the left has been lost, as have the uppermost corner of the bed canopy at the top, the fireplace on the right and the foreground up to the dog at the bottom. Unlike the original, it has in the left background an open doorway in which there is a figure wearing a broad-brimmed hat and holding a shepherd's staff. It is possible that the 1638 etching (B. 37), in which Rembrandt added a differently-shaped door and another figure, gave rise to this. The attribution of the drawing to Bol is confirmed by the identically executed drawings by him from the early 1660s, in Amsterdam and Berlin (Sumowski *Drawings* I, nos. 120 and 151). This goes to confirm that a work by Rembrandt mentioned as being in his possession (see 8. *Provenance*) is in fact identical with no. A 66.

### 8. Provenance

According to a statement by Smith<sup>5</sup>, which although very precise cannot be correct, the painting was in the Willem Six sale, Amsterdam 12 May 1734 (Lugt 441; 84 guilders) and the J. de Vos sale, Amsterdam 2 July 1833 (Lugt 13363; 1470 guilders). Wrongly identified by Hofstede de Groot<sup>6</sup> with one of two paintings in the Prince de Carignan sale, Paris 30ff July 1742 (Lugt 559), p. 24: 'Deux Tableaux sur bois, de 14 pouces de haut sur 17 pouces de large [= 37.8 × 45.9 cm – the height and width have however been transposed, see Br. 502], représentant l'un Tobie à qui on guérit la vue et l'autre Joseph qui explique les songes dans la Prison, tous deux par Rembrandt' (1101 livres). This relates to a painting with different dimensions, support and subject.

\*– Coll. Ferdinand Bol, according to an inventory of his possessions made at the time of his second marriage in October 1669: 'daer Joseph den droom uytleyjt, van Rembrandt' (where Joseph explains the dream, by Rembrandt) (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 28 (1910), p. 234). Cf. also 7. *Copies*, 1. – Coll. Duc de Tallard, sale Paris 22 March–13 May 1756 (Lugt 910), no. 157: 'Rembrandt. Joseph qui raconte ses songes à son Père en présence de toute sa famille: grisaille d'un effet piquant, et qui vaut le Tableau le mieux colorié. Elle porte 19 pouces de haut, sur 15 pouces de large [= 51.3 × 40.5 cm].' (329 livres to Remy).

\*– Coll. Nogaret, sale Paris (Lebrun) 18ff March 1782 (Lugt 3392), no. 51: 'Idem [Rembrandt]. Une esquisse peinte en grisaille sur papier, représentant l'enfant prodigue faisant ses adieux à sa famille; composition de dix figures et d'un bon effet. Hauteur 19 pouces, 14 p. [= 51.3 × 37.8 cm].' (120 livres to Lebrun).

– Coll. Six van Hillegom, Amsterdam, in 1836<sup>5</sup>; cat. 1900, no. 124.

– Coll. Jhr J. W. Six van Vromade, sale Amsterdam 29 June 1920, no. II.

– Coll. A. W. Volz, The Hague, from 1928. Acquired by the museum through the Vereniging Rembrandt in 1946, under the will of Mr Volz.

### 9. Summary

The grisaille, done on paper, gives no reason to doubt the authenticity, which is evident from the painting technique, handling of light and connexion with other Rembrandt works. The unusual and sketchlike pictorial treatment ties up with its special

purpose of a preparation for a composition, most probably an etching. Because of the use made of a drawing from 1631 for the figure of Jacob, it must have been produced after that year. On the basis of comparison with other works, and of the formulation of the signature, a date of 1633 is the most likely. In 1638 Rembrandt used the composition, with substantial changes, for a smaller etching.

The woman in the bed in the background (probably Rachel), who was never depicted with this theme, was probably introduced by Rembrandt as the result of a mistaken interpretation of an engraving by Aldegrever from 1532. On his own initiative he added a second female figure, probably intending this to be Jacob's daughter Dinah.

### REFERENCES

- 1 O. Benesch, *Rembrandt. Werk und Forschung*, Vienna 1935, p. 21; Ben. 100.
- 2 J. Giltay, 'Een onbekende schets van Rembrandt', *De kroniek van het Rembrandthuis* 29 (1977), pp. 1–9, fig. 2.
- 3 E. Haverkamp Begemann, review of Benesch, *Drawings*, in: *Kunstchronik* 14 (1961), pp. 51–52; E. Haverkamp Begemann, 'Purpose and Style: Oil Sketches of Rubens, Jan Brueghel, Rembrandt', *Stil und Ueberlieferung in der Kunst des Abendlandes* (Akten des 21. Internationalen Kongresses für Kunstgeschichte in Bonn 1964, Vol. III: Theorien und Probleme), Berlin 1967, p. 109.
- 4 C. and A. Tümpel, exh. cat. *Rembrandt legt die Bibel aus*, Berlin 1970, no. 14.
- 5 J. Smith, *A catalogue raisonné of the most eminent Dutch, Flemish and French painters . . . VII*, London 1836, no. 18.
- 6 HdG 14.



HdG 50; BR. 491; BAUCH 11; GERSON 59

### 1. Summarized opinion

A very well preserved and authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1633.

### 2. Description of subject

The scene is based on the (apochryphal part of the) Book of Daniel, chapter 14 (also called the History of the Destruction of Bel and the Dragon) which tells the story of the great idol Bel at Babylon, which had to be fed daily with twelve great measures of fine flour, forty sheep and six vessels of wine. Daniel refused to worship the idol in the temple, saying that he was clay within and brass without, and did not eat or drink. King Cyrus ordered Bel's priests to account for the food and drink; whoever should prove to be deceiving him, either they or Daniel, would have to die. After the idol's meal had been set ready, the priests retired, Daniel had ashes scattered all over the temple floor and the door was locked and sealed. The next morning, the footprints on the floor convinced the king that the priests, their wives and their children had entered the temple through a hidden entrance and had swept the table bare of its offerings. He had them all put to death, and Daniel threw down both the image and the temple.

In the dimly-lit temple the richly-clad King Cyrus stands on a staging with a curving edge. High on the right, behind a table and set between two curtains, part of a huge seated figure can be seen. Cyrus has his body turned somewhat to the right, and he points with his sceptre to the table on which stand a metal dish and chalice. He turns his head towards the left where, slightly lower down, Daniel stands bending slightly forwards with his right hand raised in a gesture and the left held across his chest. Strong light falls from the left on Cyrus and the table, and just catches Daniel's head. A large, double oil-lamp hangs between the curtains in front of the idol.

In the shadowy background, on the left, there is a figure – presumably that of a priest – holding a staff in the right hand, and to the right of Daniel and behind a second table the head of another figure standing lower down still can just be made out.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 2 September 1971 (J. B., S. H. L.), in moderate daylight and in the frame. No technical information was available.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain horizontal, 23.4 × 30.1 cm. Thickness 0.7 (top) to 0.6 cm (bottom). Single plank. Back bevelled along all four edges over a width of 3 to 4.5 cm. SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown is exposed in patches along the outline of Cyrus's lefthand cheek and in the tableleg on the right, and shows through in thin places such as the shadowed part of Cyrus's cloak, in the curtain on the left next to the oil-lamp, and on the left in the dark background. SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Very good. Craquelure: a few small cracks in the thickly-painted lefthand part of Cyrus's turban.

DESCRIPTION: The paint is for by far the greater part thinly applied in subtly shaded dark greys and browns, against which the lighter and thicker paint of lit forms offer a contrast. Cyrus's cloak is painted, in the light, with fine strokes of a thick and opaque light-brown ochre colour with a few even lighter highlights done with a very lively brushwork; in the shadows a thin and somewhat translucent brown is used. A vertical brushstroke to the left of the lefthand knee, in the thick black of the shadow, prompts the suspicion that the cloak was originally painted as hanging straight down where today the fringe ends and bends to the rear. A thin brown-grey is used for his tunic, with spots of whitish yellow for the highlights, especially in thick brushstrokes on the lit sleeve; a brushstroke in black, visible beneath the paint and running from the clasp of the cloak across the chest towards the right, is probably the dark indication in the underpainting of an open garment. An extremely thin grey-brown, bordered with thick, black strokes, shows his trousers in which there is a little green on the left. His turban is executed in strokes of light grey and white, and topped with a coronet indicated in a yellowish-brown colour and light yellow. His face shows a slightly brownish colour with detail drawn in brown and a little red; here, the paint allows an underlying drawing of fine black lines to show through – two lines along the ridge of the nose and others roughly at the position of the eyebrows and moustache. Some black can also be glimpsed under the hand, which has been given similar treatment.

Likewise, traces of a sketch in black can be seen beneath Daniel's head and hands, which are done in a rather warmer and darker flesh colour; the clearest lines are seen in the middle and ring fingers of the right hand. His clothing is painted in a thin dark grey, with thicker internal detail and a slightly thicker warm brown on the sheen of light.

A rather colourful area is provided by the tablecloth, which is a dark wine-red modelled with black and with light brown and light yellow decoration along the broad hem.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

None.

#### *Signature*

In brown on the grey of the partly-lit staging on the right, beneath the table and in very sloping letters that follow the perspective of the floor <Rembrant f 1633>. It makes an authentic impression. The spelling without a *d* occurs in 1632 and 1633 in a number of signatures on etchings (B. 38, B. 81 (I) and B. 101) as well as in 1633 and 1634 in a number of signatures on paintings (cf. nos. A 40, A 64, A 68 and A 94); it is also seen in the earliest known autograph written documents from 1630–31 (see Vol. I, p. 53). Until Van Gelder published the correct reading in 1970<sup>1</sup>, the date had been read as 1631.

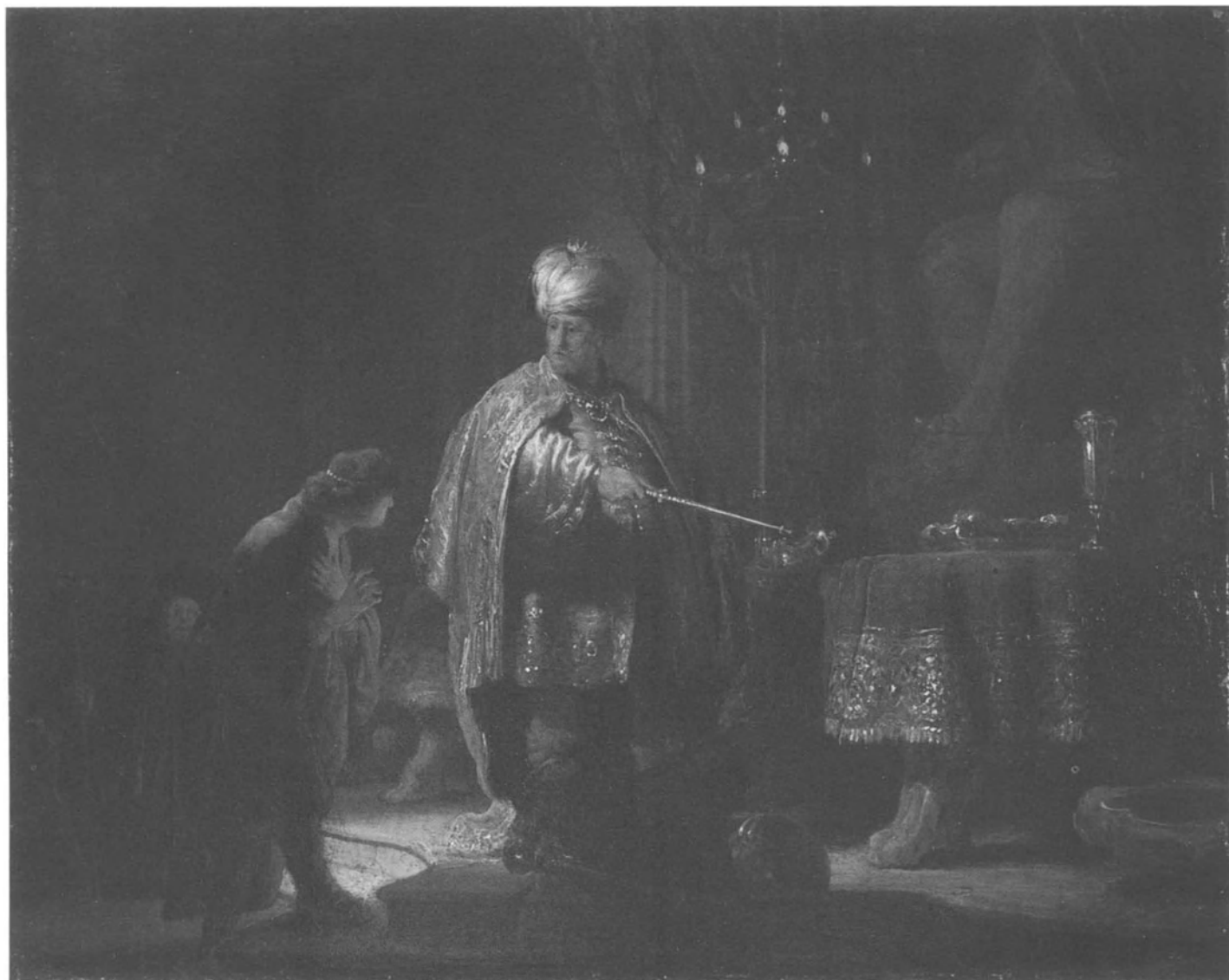
#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

### 4. Comments

The sure, free and effective manner of painting and the characteristic handling of light that entirely governs the very reticent colour scheme, added to a signature that can be seen as reliable, rule out any doubt as to the attribution and date of 1633. It must be said at once that the rendering of form is every-

Fig. 1. Panel 23.4 × 30.1 cm



where even in the lit passages, rather broader than is found in most other works from that year. Although it would be going too far to use the word 'sketch', it is evident that within the small dimensions of the panel Rembrandt found no reason to adopt a meticulously detailed treatment; quite the contrary, for the handling of paint has been geared to broadly-seen forms that are rendered partly in dark tints and partly with lively highlights that give a graphic, sketchlike effect. In this respect the manner of painting resembles to some extent that in the Moscow *Incredulity of Thomas* dated 1634 (no. A 90).

The rather broad manner of painting has left visible fragments of a preparatory sketch done over the ground. Underlying thin black lines form part of the flesh areas, though it is uncertain what material was used for these; the underlying stroke of black across Cyrus's chest would seem to indicate that here a brush was used. The hypothetical image of the preparatory stage on the panel then shows a

close similarity to drawings done in pen and wash on paper that occur frequently in the 1630s.

The component parts of the picture remind one, item by item, of Rembrandt's earlier imagined representations of a temple, starting with that in the *Judas repentant* of 1629 (no. A 15). To this is added the new motif of the large idol, set between curtains, the prototype for which Rembrandt found in a print after Maarten van Heemskerck mentioned below; characteristically, however, he shows it only partly visible. Cutting it off in this way suggests the continuation of space beyond the limits of the scene as it is actually represented, and the meandering outlines of the staging in the foreground, and the patches of light and shadow falling on it, contribute to this effect.

The picture was earlier thought to represent *Nebuchadnezzar before the golden idol*<sup>2</sup> or an unidentified episode from the story of David<sup>3</sup>. The very unusual theme of *Daniel and Cyrus before the idol Bel*

Fig. 2. After M. van Heemskerck, *Daniel and Cyrus before the idol Bel* (anonymous engraving)



was convincingly identified by J. G. van Gelder and H. van de Waal<sup>1</sup>, who independently of each other recognized it on the grounds of a series of engravings after Maerten van Heemskerck (Hollst. VIII, p. 247 nos. 534–543, our fig. 2), which illustrate the story of Cyrus's god Bel in Babylon related in Daniel, chapter 14. The second print in this series, especially, seems to have governed the choice and treatment of the subject; it shows a meeting between Daniel and Cyrus, of which there are three in the story. During the first of these (v. 4–9) Daniel declares that he worships no idols, but only the living God who created heaven and earth, and Cyrus points out that Bel too is a living God. 'Seest thou not how much he eateth and drinketh every day?' he asks. Daniel replies that Bel consists of clay within and brass without and neither eats nor drinks, whereupon Cyrus flies into a rage, summons his priests, and promises death for whoever is proved wrong. Daniel's words 'Let it be according to thy word' close this episode. Subsequently (v. 10) the king goes with Daniel to the temple, the priests retire, the king lays out food and drink, and Daniel has his servants spread the floor of the temple with ash. At their third meeting (v. 16), Daniel the following morning shows Cyrus the footprints of the priests and their wives and children, who have consumed the food and drink during the night, and thus unmasks the deceit. Rembrandt did not intend the first episode, shown in Heemskerck's first print with Cyrus enthroned; nor did he mean the third, which is illustrated in Heemskerck's fifth print (reproduced by J. Schneider in: *Zeitschrift für schweizerische Archäologie und Kunstgeschichte* 15 (1954/ 55), pp. 93–98, fig. 4), where the attention of the two

main figures is centred on the clearly visible footprints, which are not shown by Rembrandt. The artist undoubtedly, as Van Gelder assumed, followed Heemskerck's second print, that showing Cyrus and Daniel in the temple at the foot of the idol, with servants placing the meal ready and the priests withdrawing; this print has, remarkably enough, an inscription that makes a clear allusion to the exchange of words in the previous episode: 'Rex Danielem ad Belum ducit ostendens quam multa comedat bibatque'. For want of dialogue in the second episode, Cyrus is given words from the first to say. Rembrandt seems to have done something similar, to an even greater extent. Daniel's pose, with his left hand on his breast and the right raised in a demonstrative gesture, shows that he is making his provocative comment and perhaps at the same time his obeisance points to his final words 'Let it be according to thy word'. In any event one cannot contend that, as Bauch<sup>4</sup> believes on the basis of this painting, the 'Grundlage bleibt die Textstelle, die Geschichte'. The story provides the material, but this is condensed by Rembrandt into a scene that does not correspond to one particular verse. Heemskerck's second print and the inscription (which combines verses 10 and 6) already began this process, but Rembrandt went further than his prototype – the number of accessory figures is reduced to a minimum, and the two protagonists form a dramatic contrast that derives its tension from the preceding episode in the story. From the composition viewpoint Rembrandt likewise takes his distance from the print, though it unmistakably provided him with a model.

Van Gelder<sup>1</sup> wondered what may have prompted Rembrandt to choose a subject that had hardly any pictorial tradition. Bauch<sup>4</sup> thought that it must be assumed that the artist was carrying out a commission – using the singular argument that we do not know of Rembrandt ever having executed a painting without it being ordered; but this merely shifts the question from the intentions of the artist to those of the person commissioning the work. Jenny Schneider (op. cit. p. 93) assumed that in Reformation Switzerland, where it was illustrated a number of times even before the appearance of the Heemskerck print in 1565, the story had an anti-Catholic connotation. For both Heemskerck's prints and Rembrandt's painting this is an unlikely intention. One would rather have to think in terms of the significance that Daniel had as a prefiguration of Christ (to which Bauch, too, alluded), and to see his victory over the deceitful priests in a wider context. Nor can it be pure coincidence that Rembrandt's depiction of Daniel (matching artistic tradition, but not based on the biblical text) as a young man is a

quotation from his earlier painting, the Frankfurt *David playing the harp before Saul* (no. A 25), where the pose and lighting of the young David show a striking resemblance to that of Daniel of a kind seldom met in Rembrandt's work. Here if anywhere Białostocki's notion (in: *Münchener Jahrbuch der bildenden Kunst*, 3rd series, 8 (1957), esp. pp. 205ff) of 'Rahmenthemen', ('framework themes') playing a role in Rembrandt's work – in this instance the theme of the young man pleasing to God versus the mighty temporal ruler – would seem plausible.

As with the figures in other works from these years, it is impossible to point to any preliminary studies for those of Daniel and Cyrus, which is probably connected with the method of working indicated above. Even the drawing, mentioned by Van Gelder, of a figure in oriental garb in the British Museum (Ben. 207) cannot be seen as such. The eastern nature of the surroundings is emphasised by the oil-lamp, which appears to consist of two bowls with a number of spouts; this is reminiscent of the Sabbath lamp used over many centuries by the Jews (the 'sterlamp'), which however had only one oil-bowl (see: I. Shachar, *The Jewish year*, Leiden 1975, Institute of Religious Iconography, State University of Groningen, pp. 3–4).

Where the later history and the significance of the painting are concerned, it is curious to note that it was probably at one time in the possession of the then famous London actor Barton Booth (1681–1733). In his biography (Theophilus Cibber, *The Life and Character Of that Excellent Actor Barton Booth, Esq.* [London 1753], p. 51), to which our attention has been drawn by a lecture by Mr Dene Barnett, Research Fellow of Flinders University of South Australia, who was kind enough to send us a photocopy of his text), we read: 'Mr. Booth's Attitudes were all picturesque. – He had a good Taste for Statuary and Painting, and where he could not come at original Pictures, he spared no Pains or Expence to get the best Drawings and Prints: These he frequently studied, and sometimes borrowed Attitudes from, which he so judiciously introduced, so finely executed, and fell into them with so easy a Transition, that these Masterpieces of his Art seemed but the Effect of Nature.'

##### 5. Documents and sources

None.

##### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

##### 7. Copies

None.

##### 8. Provenance

\* – Probably identical with 'Een schildereytge van Daniel van Rembrant gedaen met een swarte lyst' (a small painting of Daniel by Rembrandt with a black frame), described in the inventory of the bankrupt Pieter Croon at Amsterdam on 20 February 1650 (HdG *Urk.*, no. 128; Strauss *Doc.*, 1650/1)<sup>5</sup>.

– Probably coll. Barton Booth (1681–1733), actor. Bequeathed by his widow Hester Booth née Santlow (1681–1773), actress, to her grandson Edward Eliot, ancestor of the Earls of St Germans at Port Eliot, Cornwall<sup>1</sup>.

##### 9. Summary

Partly through its excellent state of preservation, no. A 67 can be recognized as an authentic work in which the technique is plain to see, and which despite its small size contains relatively little detail. The picture seems to have had a preparatory stage done on the ground on the panel with fine black lines and broader brushstrokes of black. The theme from the Book of Daniel, chapter 14, is most unusual, and the choice and treatment of this go back to a print after Maerten van Heemskerck published in 1565. Rembrandt's interpretation of this prototype condenses the dramatic material from two different episodes of the story into a single scene.

##### REFERENCES

- 1 J. G. van Gelder, 'Een Rembrandt van 1633', *O.H.* 75 (1960), pp. 73–78.
- 2 HdG 50, Br. 491.
- 3 W. R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt. Wiedergefundene Gemälde*, Stuttgart–Berlin 1921 (Kl. d. K.), p. 20.
- 4 K. Bauch, *Studien zur Kunstgeschichte*, Berlin 1967, pp. 125–127.
- 5 Chr. Tümpel, unpublished thesis, Hamburg 1968, cat. no. 2.

**A 68 Christ in the storm on the Sea of Galilee**

1633

BOSTON, MASS., THE ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM, INV. NO. P21S24

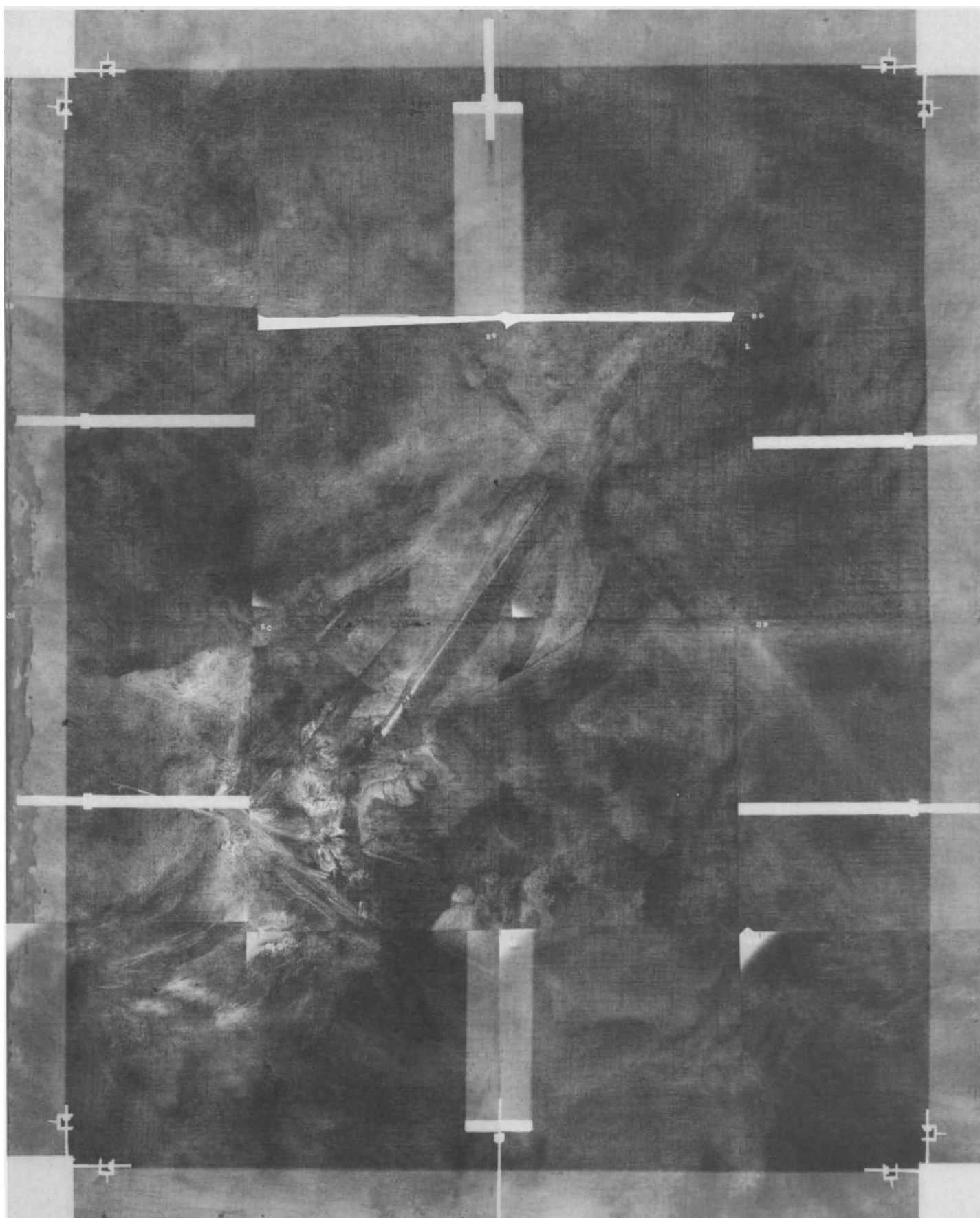
HDG 103; BR. 547; BAUCH 58; GERSON 60

Fig. 1. Canvas 160 × 128 cm





Fig. 2. X-ray





### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved and, though in certain respects unusual, authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1633.

### 2. Description of subject

The scene is based on Matthew 8: 23–25, Mark 4: 35–40 and Luke 8: 22–25.

The bows of a fishing-boat, facing towards the left rear, are raised high on a wave with a foaming crest; the mast, topped by a flag with the cross, tilts towards the right. The vessel is close to a rock, washed over by the waves, just visible on the left, and a snapped stay flails out towards the right. A shaft of light falls from the left, where blue sky can be seen through an opening in the clouds that become a dark grey towards the right. In the middle of this shaft of light are the wave and four men gathered around the base of the mast, either struggling to gain control of the split mainsail that is flapping from the yardarm, or trying to keep themselves upright by hanging onto one of the stays. A fifth figure, squatting on the bow, is trying to secure the foresail. He receives less of the light, as do a sixth and seventh figure standing in the stern of the boat; one of them looks towards the viewer, clinging onto a stay with one hand and holding his hat on his head with the other, while the other is seen from behind and turns towards a vaguely-seen eighth figure in the fo'c'sle. The remaining figures in the stern catch even less of the light: at the front a man slumps, seasick, over the rail; behind him Christ leans backwards with His head raised; to His right the helmsman struggles with the tiller, while opposite Him four figures stand with their hands clasped or, raised or with a hand on His shoulder, pleading 'Lord, save us, we perish'.

On the extreme right another boat can be seen in the distance against the dark sky.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 7 October 1970 (B. H., P. v. Th.) in daylight and artificial light and out of the frame. Sixteen X-ray films, together covering the whole painting, were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 160 × 128 cm. Two pieces, with a horizontal join at exactly half-height. The folded-over edges of the original canvas have been cut off at the time of lining. Along the edges there are old nailholes that do not match up with the pattern of cusping.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Two cusps were measured at the top, and have pitches of 8 and 8.5 cm; they extend 16 cm into the canvas. To the right the cusping pitch varies between 9.5 and 10.5 cm, with a depth of 12 cm. At the bottom the pitch is from 9.5 to 11 cm, and the depth 20 cm. On the left the pitch varies between 8.9 and 10.5 cm, and the cusping stretches 10 cm into the canvas. Threadcount: above the seam, 14.3 vertical threads/cm (13.7–15.5), 15.5 horizontal threads/cm (15.2–15.7); below the seam, 14.8 vertical threads/cm (14.2–15.5), 15.4 horizontal threads/cm (15.2–15.5). The weave shows, in both the horizontal and the vertical direction, frequently quite long thickenings. Given the horizontal seam and the slight variation in the horizontal thread density, one may assume the warp to run in this direction. Despite great similarity in thread density and weave structure with the canvas of no. C 67, the

possibility of the two canvases coming from the same bolt must be discounted because of the difference in strip-width.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light, warm grey is exposed in the acute angle between the foresail and mast, by the upper left corner of the rudder and elsewhere in thin patches.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Badly flattened during lining, otherwise generally good. Along the lefthand side is an irregular band of paint loss and in-painting. There is some insignificant paint loss in a horizontal band in the centre at half-height, no doubt connected with a crossbatten of a stretcher. Craquelure: an evenly distributed pattern in the thicker parts.

DESCRIPTION: The sky on the left next to the boat and in the whole of the righthand half is painted in flat, merging dark greys – on the right with diagonal brushstrokes of lighter grey indicating a beam of light – and at the upper left in a light blue that occasionally has horizontal strokes of dark blue. The lit area of cloud is in a light ochre colour. At a late stage an opaque grey-blue has been placed along the face of the man on the bows and along the forestay, and in the gaps between the sails, rigging and mast; this does not everywhere completely cover an underlying grey (that of the ground). The same colour is used to fill in a reserve that was evidently originally left for a bowsprit. Similarly, a dark and twisting form can be made out between the mast and the mainsail, and undoubtedly has to do with a broken part of the rigging that has been painted out.

The four figures round the base of the mast, who receive the most light, are strongly modelled, with flesh areas in brownish or pink flesh tints with red and pink accents in the light and dark red and greys in the shadows, with a variety of yellow, greenish yellow, grey-blue and broken white tints in their clothing. The man in the bows is painted somewhat more smoothly, and his pinkish-brown head and matt red and grey clothing have equally definite modelling. The manner of painting used in the figures in the stern of the boat for the most part approaches this in smoothness of execution and – where the more clearly-lit figures are concerned – also in the clearness of the cool colours used. The head of the man looking towards the viewer, in particular, is very carefully painted, while the wrinkled head of the man behind him to the right has a looser brushwork. The figure of Christ, dressed in a red-brown garment and a purple cloak, stands out by reason of the flatly-painted, pale face with a strongly emphasised eye that has a very definite white.

In the shadowed parts the boat is painted thinly in browns and black with a little red, and in the light has been rendered with clear and mainly long strokes of a thicker light brown and ochre brown with fat white highlights that are broadest on the mast and in small spots on the carefully-rendered rigging, for which a reserve was left in the surrounding paint.

The wave on the left is done with long, diagonal strokes in white, yellowish white and grey, and the foam at its crest in dabs and strokes of dry white that run into fine streaks of white. At the lower lefthand corner long strokes of grey and brown show the water swilling over a rock.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

In the radioabsorbent passages one sees mostly bold brushstrokes that only roughly match what one might expect from the surface, and that sometimes – e.g. in the shape of the

Fig. 3. Detail (1:2)

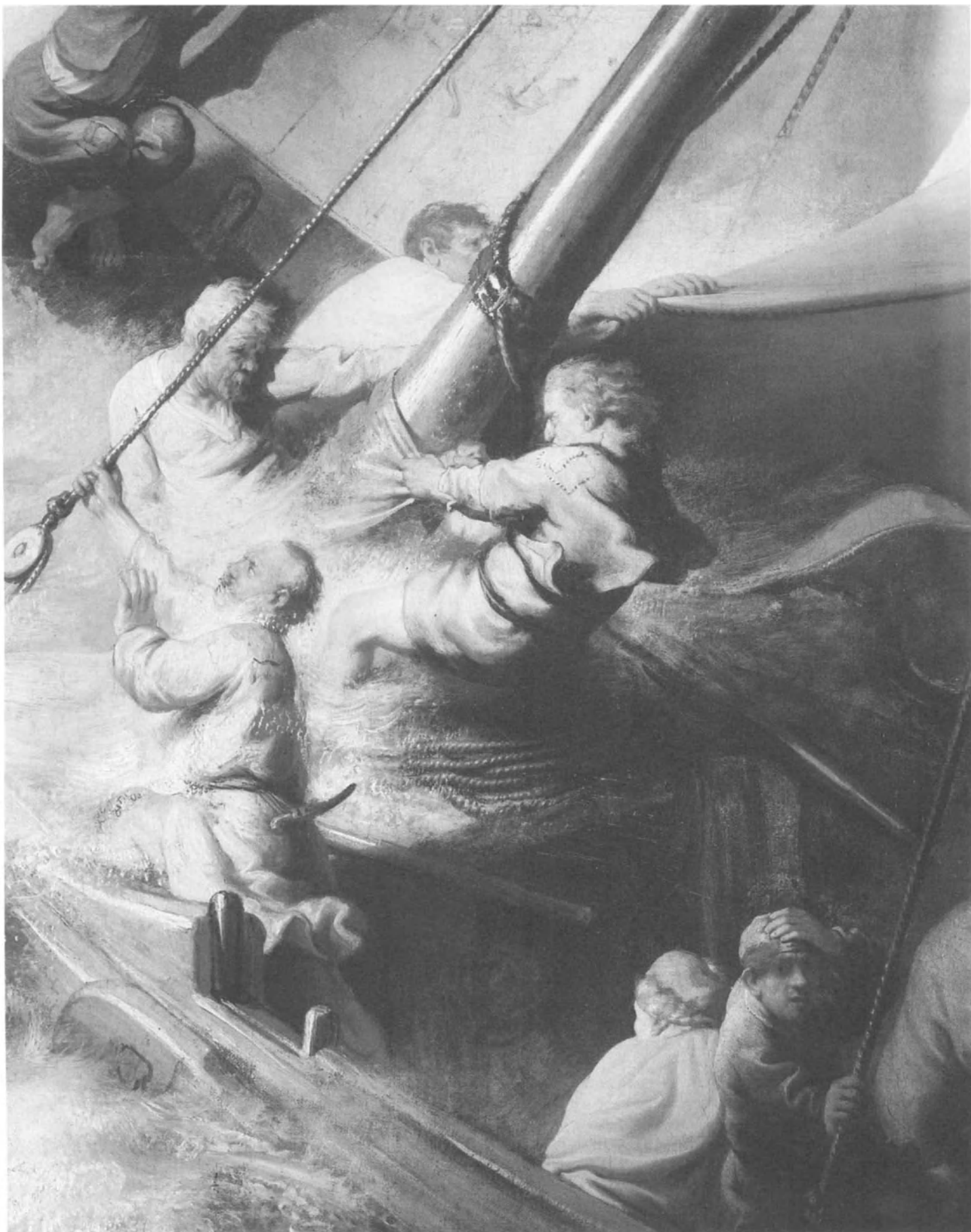


Fig. 4. Detail (1:2)



folded mainsail and the indication of a wave next to the boat on the left above a projecting boathook – differ from it. One must therefore assume that the radiographic image is to a large extent determined by a light underpainting. This would also be the reason why the patch of sky between the mainsail and mast presents a light and a dark zone. The foresail, too, has two quite different tones, which does not correspond to any difference apparent at the paint surface. The reserve left for the bowsprit that was not executed (or was overpainted?) is seen as a rectangular, dark patch with a somewhat light surrounding edge. It is evident that during the execution of the boat's rigging and of the waves there were quite a few changes made in what was in the underpainting.

In the less strongly-lit areas on the right of the picture the radiographic image is much less distinct, and only here and there can one recognize motifs seen at the surface – a vague, dark reserve for the seasick disciple leaning over the rail, and, rather light, the face of Christ. For the rest this area presents a somewhat confused image and is more radioabsorbent than one might expect; allowance ought to be made for the possibility that this passage was originally laid-in lighter and that more of the aft part of the boat was hidden behind waves. To the left of the mast reserves for the ropes of the rigging can be seen in the surrounding paint, while to the right this is not the case.

#### Signature

Along the upper edge of the rudder, in a fairly thick black <Rembrandt. f [apparently followed by four dots arranged in a square pattern]/1633>. Makes a reliable impression. The spelling without a *d* occurs in 1632 and 1633 in a number of signatures on etchings (B. 38, B. 81 (I) and B. 101), as well as in 1633 and 1634 in a number of signatures on paintings (cf. nos. A 40, A 64, A 67 and A 94); it also appears in the earliest known autograph documents from 1630–31 (see Vol. I, p. 53).

#### Varnish

A dull layer of varnish present in 1970 has been removed since.

#### 4. Comments

This painting, which can in all probability be traced back to relatively early in the 17th century and was greatly admired and fetched high prices in the 18th, stands in all respects rather on its own among Rembrandt's works from the early 1630s. The attribution, apart from the authority lent by a long-standing tradition, has to be based on pictorial qualities that, in on the one hand the refinement of the colour-scheme and on the other the matter-of-fact rendering of objects, are not seen in this combination in any other work. In part, however, these features can be ascribed to the subject being a totally unusual one for Rembrandt. The succinct characterization and concise modelling of numerous figures can be understood as the result of a narrative conception – seen repeatedly in the etchings from the early 1630s and in the background of the *Simeon in the Temple* in The Hague of 1631 (no. A 34) – that appears here in a large painting. In view of the signature as well (which can be regarded as reliable), there can be no doubt as to the authenticity of the painting. In no other painting apart perhaps from the Anholt *Diana with Actaeon and Callisto* of 1634 (no. A 92), however, did Rembrandt go so far in typing small figures seen in action; they are

Fig. 5. Detail (1:2)



branded as fishermen not only by a few fishermen's caps but, especially, by the dark colour of their skin and coarse facial features. The un-atmospheric aspect of the painting, produced by the crisp drawing and juxtaposition of various cool tints, is also unusual. The motif of the meticulously drawn fishing-boat is not entirely unique – it appears again, with substantially simplified rigging, in the etching of the *Ship of fortune* (B. 1111), also dated 1633. In the painting the rendering of the rigging broken by the storm has led to considerable changes from the first lay-in in the underpainting, as may be seen from the light areas visible in the X-rays. The light underpainting of the figures, with greatly simplified forms and bold brushwork, that can be made out in this radiographic image remind one strongly of the Munich *Descent from the Cross* (no. A 65) and *Raising of the Cross* (no. A 69) and, to a lesser extent, of that in the *Diana with Actaeon and Callisto*.

Lugt<sup>1</sup> has pointed out that the composition is

based on a print of the same subject by Aegidius Sadeler after Marten de Vos (fig. 7); although in that work the position of the boat is slightly different, the similar arrangement with the diagonal placing of the mast and the similarity of various motifs do make the connexion a convincing one. It is also possible, however, that Rembrandt knew of another composition of the same type (cf., for instance, the illustration by Adriaen Collaert after Bernardino Passeri for the fourth Sunday after Epiphany from the series *Evangelicae historiae imagines*, Antwerp 1593); the similarity with a print from the *Icones Biblicae* of Matthäus Merian the Elder from 1625/1627<sup>2</sup> points more to a common tradition than to a direct connexion. The same is true of the similarity with Rubens' predella panel of the *Miracle of S. Walburg* in Leipzig<sup>3</sup>. Benesch<sup>4</sup> moreover pointed out a similarity between Rembrandt's painting and an illustration etched by Willem Basse in Elias Herckmans' *Der Zee-Vaert Lof*, which appeared in 1634, the same book in which Rembrandt's etching

Fig. 6. Detail with signature (enlarged)



of the *Ship of fortune*, already mentioned, was included; he wondered which of the two was the earlier, and deduced, from the fact that the etching does not show the painting in reverse, that Rembrandt borrowed the idea from Basse and improved on it. The etching by Basse is however so clumsily composed, and framed so illogically narrow, that it is more likely that the relationship is the other way about, or that there was a shared prototype.

The subject, an unusual one for Rembrandt, may have formed the attraction for one of the painting's earliest known owners, the much-travelled Jacques Specx, one-time Governor General of the East Indies (see 8. *Provenance*). It is noteworthy that until the 18th century the work was known as 'S. Peter's ship'; evidently the subject was confused with Matthew 14: 25–33. It was mentioned by Houbraken<sup>5</sup> with this title as an example of the highly finished works greatly admired by that author.

A drawing in Dresden (Ben. 954) that Hofstede de Groot<sup>6</sup> regarded as a preliminary study represents a considerably later phase in Rembrandt's style of drawing, and it is not certain either that the same subject is being illustrated.

### 5. Documents and sources

- For the description of the estates of Thymen Jacobsz. Hinloopen of 1644 and Jacques Specx of 1653, see 8. *Provenance*.
- Mentioned by Houbraken in 1718<sup>5</sup>: 'Egter zyn 'er nog vele van zyne konststukken, welke in 't geheel doorschildert en uitgevoert zyn, in de voornaamste Konstkabinetten te zien, alschoon 'er eenige jaren verleden vele tot hoogen prys opgekogt naar Italien en Vrankryk zyn gevoert. En ik heb opgemerkt dat hy in zyn vroegen tyd wel meer gedult gehad heeft om zyne konststukken uitvoerig te bewerken dan daarna. Onder verscheide bewys-stalen is dit inzonderheit aan dat stuk te zien dat by den naam van St. Pieters scheepje bekend is, 't geen veel jaren in 't kabinet van den Heere Jan Jakobzen Hinloopen, voorheen Schout en Borgermeester tot Amsterdam, gehangen heeft. Want de werking der beelden, en wezens trekken zyn daar zoo natuurlyk naar de gesteltheit van het geval uitgedrukt als te bedenken is, daar benevens veel uitvoeriger geschildert als men gewoon is van hem te zien.'

(However there are still many of his works that are thoroughly and elaborately finished to be seen in the most impor-

Fig. 7. After M. de Vos, *Christ in the storm* (engraving by A. Sadeler)

tant art collections, even though over the past years many were bought at high prices and carried away to Italy and France. And I have noticed that he in his early days had greater patience to work out his paintings elaborately than he did later. This is to be seen in particular, among several proofs, in the piece that goes by the name of St Peter's ship, which for many years hung in the collection of Jan Jakobzen Hinloopen, at one time sheriff and burgomaster of Amsterdam. For the effect of the figures and the facial expressions are expressed so naturally to suit the case as one can imagine, and also much more elaborately painted than one is accustomed to see from him). For Houbraken's substitution of Jan Jacobsz. for Jacob Jacobsz. Hinloopen, see under 8. *Provenance*.

– Mentioned by Reynolds as belonging to 'The Cabinet of Mr Hope' in Amsterdam in 1781<sup>7</sup>: 'Christ asleep in the storm, by Rembrandt. In this picture there is a great effect of light, but it is carried to a degree of affectation.'

### 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching in reverse by Charles Exshaw (Dublin–London (?) 1771). Inscribed with translations in English and French of the text of Matth. 8: 24–25, followed by *Exshaw delinavit & Sculp<sup>t</sup>. Amsterdam 1760* | *The original picture painted by Rembrandt is in the possession of M<sup>r</sup>. Braamcamp in Amsterdam*. After staying in Paris Exshaw spent some time in Amsterdam. Small discrepancies point partly to a poor understanding of the construction of the fishing-boat (especially in the shape of the leeboard and the fo'c'sle), but also partly give the impression that the painting was difficult to see (in the fishermen's caps reproduced as windblown hair on the man on the foredeck and helmsman, and in the omission of the boat in the distance). This suspicion is strengthened by a comment by John Smith in 1836<sup>8</sup>: 'It was



sold much disguised by dirt in the collection of M. de Heer Braamcamp at Amsterdam.'

2. Steel engraving by James Fittler (London 1758–1835). Inscribed *REMBRANDT PINXIT. J. FITTLER A.R.A. SCULPSIT. CHRIST IN THE STORM*. Very faithful reproduction.

## 7. Copies

None.

## 8. Provenance

\*– Perhaps identical with a 'een schilderij van St. Pieters Scheepje' (a painting of S. Peter's ship) mentioned without an artist's name in an inventory drawn up in 1644 of the Hoff (country-house) of Tymen Jacobsz. Hinloopen (1572–1637), 'Groot- en Oud Bussum' (Strauss *Doc.*, 1644/3)<sup>9</sup>. In that case it would have to be assumed that the painting was transferred from the coll. Tymen Hinloopen to that of Jacques Specx (d. 1652) and then reverted to the Hinloopen family.

\*– Coll. Jacques Specx (1588/89–1652) in Amsterdam, from 1629 to 1632 Governor-General of the East Indies, from July 1633 back in the Netherlands and established in Amsterdam before April 1635; described in the description of his estate on 13 January 1653 as: '[8] Een scheepgen petri van Rembrandt' (A Peter's ship by Rembrandt)<sup>10</sup>. Specx also owned no. A 47 [Europa] and a *S. Paul* by Rembrandt.

\*– Coll. Jacob Jacobsz. Hinloopen (1644–1705) in Amsterdam; in the valuation of the estate in November 1705 described as: 'St Pieters Scheepje f. 160.-', without an artist's name<sup>9</sup>. That this did involve a painting by Rembrandt may be deduced from the statement by A. Houbraken (see 5. *Documents and sources*) that a 'St. Pieters scheepje' by Rembrandt was said to have been in the collection of Jan Jacobsz. Hinloopen, previously sheriff and burgomaster of Amsterdam; according to the plausible assumption by Dudok van Heel<sup>9</sup>, this statement is based on a misunderstanding and relates to the collection of Jacob Jacobsz. and not that of his uncle Jan Jacobsz. Hinloopen (1626–1666), who was never sheriff or burgomaster and among whose paintings – as mentioned in a poem by Jan Vos (*Alle de Gedichten*, 1662) – none is described as showing this subject.

\*– Coll. Johannes Coop (d. 1746), calico-printer of Amsterdam; sold before 1750 for 600 guilders to the following owner<sup>11</sup>. Vosmaer's statement<sup>12</sup> that the picture was in the collection of the King of Poland at Hubertsburg Castle until 1765 cannot be correct.

– Coll. Gerrit Braamcamp (1699–1771) in Amsterdam; described in this collection by Hoet (II, p. 507: 'De Zaligmaker met zyn Apostelen in 't Schip, door Rembrandt van Rhyn' (the Saviour and His apostles in the ship)) in 1752, and in the catalogue of the collection entitled *Temple des Arts* (Premier étage, 1<sup>re</sup> chambre à droite) in 1766. Sale 31 ff July 1771 (Lugt 1950), no. 172: 'Rembrandt van Rhyn. Hoog 62, en breed 50 duim [= 159.3 × 128.5 cm]. Dk. In dit stuk, van ouds vermaard onder den naam van het *St. Pieters Scheepje* ziet men Christus in het zelve, liggende in het agterste gedeelte van het Schip; wordende door eenigen zyner Discipelen met een grooten yver uit zyne slaap gewekt. De Discipelen schynen zeer beängst en bleek van vreeze, om in het Galileesche Meir, door de golven die reeds zoo veel over den Voorsteven heenen slaan, dat het Schip vol water raakt, verslonden te worden; zy zien raadeloos uyt naar allerley middelen ter behoudenis; eenigen zyn bezig om het zeil, dat reeds gescheurd is, neder te trekken, en anderen om hetzelve in deezen nypenden nood langs het benedenste deel der Mast met alle kragt heen te

haalen; daar zyn 'er welker handen aan het Wand en de Touwen der Takelagie door ontsteltenis bekneld zyn. De Stuurman zit moedeloos, met het gebroken Roer in handen, de laatste overstorting der Golven af te wagten, die het Schip nevens hen allen naar de diepte zal doen zinken. De gebeurtenis in dit yslyk Tydstip, waar in de woestheid der Zee door 't geweld der stormwinden bewoogen, de ongestuime baaren met de donkere Wolken dreigt te verëenen, wordt in dien akeligen Avondstond, door het Licht der felle Blixemstraalen, voor den aanschouwer zichtbaar, en het moest hem met de grootste ontroering en schrik vervullen, zoo hy niet tevens in het gelaat en houding des Heilands eene bovenmenschelyke bedaardheid van gemoed gewaar wierdt. 'T is vast, dat er geen aandoenlyker en tevens natuurlyker Schildery, dan dit te vinden is, zoo wegens de uitdrukking als tegenoverstelling der Hartstochten, en de Werking van Licht en Donker; Rembrand heeft nimmer de wedergâ in fraayheid gemaakt, en het overtreft in alle deelen der Kunst van Teekening, van koloriet, kragt en uitvoerigheid alle zyne andere werken' (Rembrandt van Rhyn . . . Canvas. In this work, famous of old under the title of 'Saint Peter's ship' we see Christ lying in the after part of the vessel, being awoken from his sleep by some of his disciples in great urgency. The disciples seem very distressed and pale with fear, that they will be swallowed up in the Sea of Galilee by the waves that are already breaking over the boat and filling it with water; they are at their wit's end, looking for any means of salvation; some are hauling down the sail, which is already split, and others trying with all their force in this moment of sore need to pull it round the base of the mast; there are those whose hands are clamped with fear to the stays and the ropes of the rigging. The helmsman sits dumbly holding the broken tiller in his hand, and awaits the final overwhelming of the craft by the waves that will sink it and all of them in the depths. The events in this horrible hour, where the wildness of the sea moved by the force of the stormy winds threatens to join the waves and dark clouds in one, are at this terrible evening hour visible to the viewer in the light of the livid flash of lightning, and it would fill him with the greatest dismay and fear if he did not also, in the face and bearing of the Saviour, see a superhuman quietness of spirit. It is certain that there is no more moving and also natural painting could be found for the expression of and contrast between the emotions, and in the effect of light and shade; Rembrand has never made the like in fineness, and it surpasses in every part of Art, drawing, colour, power and thoroughness, all his other works). (4360 guilders to J. Wubbels)<sup>11</sup>.

– Coll. John Hope (1737–1784), Amsterdam (see J. W. Niemeijer in: *N.K.J.* 32 (1981), p. 195 no. 194). Mentioned in the manuscript 'Catalogus van het Cabinet Schilderijen behorende tot de Nalatenschap van Wijlen mijnen Echtgenoot John Hope . . . (signed:) Philippina Barbera Van Der Hoeven, Amsterdam den 20 April 1785': 'Rhyn (Rembrandt van). Het St. Pieters Scheepje 62–50 [= 160.6 × 128.7 cm] D.' ('Catalogue of the Cabinet of Paintings belonging to the Estate of my late husband John Hope . . . (signed) Philippina Barbera van Der Hoeven, Amsterdam 20 April 1785': 'Rhyn (Rembrandt van). S. Peter's boat 62–50 Canvas'). This catalogue contains only a small portion of John Hope's paintings. The great majority of them were sold as appears from the manuscript 'Notitie der Schilderijen van Mevrouw J: Hope om te Verkopen In 't O. Z. H<sup>ten</sup> Logement den 10 & 11 Augustus A<sup>o</sup> 1785' ('Note of the Paintings of Mrs J: Hope to be sold in the O. Z. Heeren Logement on 10 & 11 August 1785'). Both manuscripts are in the RKD, The Hague.

– At their mother's death in 1790, part of the paternal inheritance including the paintings remained undivided bet-



ween the three sons of John Hope and Philippina van der Hoeven, Thomas (1769–1831), Adrian Elias (1772–1834) and Henry Philip (1774–1839). When it was divided up in 1794 the paintings went to the two youngest brothers, who were still under age and for whom Henry Hope (c. 1739–1811), an unmarried nephew of their father, acted as guardian (see J. W. Niemeijer, op. cit. p. 168). Before the French invasion of 1794 Henry Hope took the paintings to England for safety. The painting can perhaps be identified with ‘Rembrandt. Sea piece . . . £ 500.-’ in: ‘Catalogue B of pictures in the house no. 1 the corner of Harleystreet, belonging to Mr. Henry Hope, on which is ensured ten thousand pounds’ (M. G. Buist, *At spes non fracta. Hope & Co. 1770–1815*, The Hague 1974, p. 492). It seems that the paintings were at some time the property of Henry Philip Hope – perhaps when Adrian Elias settled in Amsterdam again in 1802? – and that he lent or made over a collection of about a hundred Dutch and Flemish paintings to his elder brother Thomas who exhibited then in a Gallery added to his house in Duchess Street in 1819/20 (D. Watkin, *Thomas Hope 1769–1831 and the Neo-Classical idea*, London 1968, pp. 121–122).

– Coll. Henry Thomas Hope (1808–1862, son of Thomas), who moved the contents of the Duchess Street house to the Deepdene near Dorking, Surrey, in 1849 (Watkin, op. cit. p. 36). Bequeathed to his widow, Adèle Bichat, in 1862.

– Through their daughter Henrietta Adela, who married the sixth Duke of Newcastle, a life interest was inherited in 1884 by the latter second son Lord Francis Pelham Clinton-Hope, who exhibited a collection of 83 paintings at the South Kensington Museum 1891–98 (*The Hope Collection of pictures of the Dutch and Flemish schools, with descriptions reprinted from the catalogue published in 1891 by the science and art department of the South Kensington Museum*, London 1898, no. 3) and obtained permission from Chancery to sell them in 1898<sup>13</sup>.

– Dealers Colnaghi & Wertheimer, London 1898.

– Acquired from Colnaghi through Berenson in 1898 by Mrs Isabella Stewart Gardner (1840–1924).

## 9. Summary

With its elaborate and somewhat dry drawing and predominantly cool colouring, no. A 68 stands somewhat on its own among Rembrandt’s work. The interpretation and technical execution show however enough points of similarity with the remaining oeuvre, taken together with the reliable signature and date, for the attribution and date of 1633 to be accepted. Rembrandt probably based his treatment of the unusual subject on a 16th-century print.

The painting can be traced with certainty back to about 1700, and probably well into the 17th century, and enjoyed a high reputation.

## REFERENCES

- 1 F. Lugt, ‘Rembrandt’, *Actes du XVII<sup>e</sup> Congrès international d’Histoire de l’Art*, Amsterdam 1952, The Hague 1955, pp. 71–87, esp. 74.
- 2 G. F. Hartlaub, ‘Merian als Illustrator’, *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Vereins für Kunstwissenschaft* 6 (1939), pp. 29–49, esp. 36–37, footnote 9. H. M. Rotermund, ‘Rembrandts Bibel’, *N.K.J.* 8 (1957), pp. 123–150, esp. 146–147.
- 3 E. Taverne, ‘Het blijvend beeld van Rembrandts kunst’, *Simiolus* 3 (1968–69), pp. 180–184, esp. 182–183.
- 4 O. Benesch, *Artistic and intellectual trends from Rubens to Daumier as shown in book illustration*, Cambridge, Mass. 1943, pp. 21–22.
- 5 A. Houbraken, *De Groote Schouburgh der Nederlandsche Konstschilders en Schilderessen* I, Amsterdam 1718, p. 260.
- 6 HdG 103.
- 7 *The Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds, Knight* . . . , ed. E. Malone, London 1809, II, p. 363.
- 8 J. Smith, *A Catalogue Raisonné* . . . VII, London 1836, no. 82.
- 9 S. A. C. Dudok van Heel, ‘De Rembrandts in de verzameling “Hinloopen”’, *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 56 (1969), pp. 233–237.
- 10 W. Ph. Coolhaas, *Het Huis ‘De Dubbele Arend’*, Amsterdam 1973, pp. 29–62, esp. 56. Cf. A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare* V, The Hague 1918, p. 1613; Strauss *Doc.*, 1653/4.
- 11 C. Bille, *De Tempel der Kunst of het Kabinet van den Heer Braamcamp*, Amsterdam 1961, I pp. 32, 55 note 7; II pp. 41–42, 112.
- 12 C. Vosmaer, *Rembrandt. Sa vie et ses oeuvres*, The Hague 1877, 2nd ed., p. 498 note 1.
- 13 Ph. Hendy, *European and American paintings in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum*, Boston 1974, p. 202.

HdG 130; BR. 548; BAUCH 57; GERSON 64

### 1. Summarized opinion

A work that, though poorly preserved over large areas, is undoubtedly authentic, and was probably completed during 1633.

### 2. Description of subject

In the otherwise dark and shadowy surroundings, the light falls full on the sloping cross to which Christ, His eyes raised to heaven, is nailed. With its foot set slightly to the left in the foreground, it is being raised by a number of men. In front of it a soldier in armour and helmet, standing with both feet on the foot of the cross, is hauling on a length of rope wrapped round it. To the left of Christ's feet (each of which is pierced by a nail, and which rest on a *suppedaneum*) one sees the lit upper part of the body of an elegantly-clad young man, with the features of Rembrandt, who is helping to push the cross up from behind. To the right of the cross, in the shadows, two simply-garbed men with bare arms and legs are pushing against it with all their might. In front of the cross, in the light, a spade is stuck into the ground.

Behind the main group, and to the left of the cross, rises the figure of a luxuriously-clad horseman wearing a turban and holding a martel in his right hand with its butt against his body; he is turned towards the front while his (only vaguely visible) horse stands in right profile with its head for the most part hidden behind the legs of Christ.

On the left stands a group of mainly old men; the one at the front, in widespreading clothing and wearing a fur cap, is laughing mockingly and gestures with his hands outstretched. These are evidently meant to be the high priests with the scribes and elders who mocked Jesus (Matthew 27: 41–43). To the right, and at some distance, stand the two thieves who were crucified together with Christ, one of them stooping and the other standing and nearly naked. To the right of them there is a kneeling figure. Further back still a crowd is vaguely visible.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in January 1969 (S. H. L., P. v. Th.) in good light and out of the frame, with the aid of eight X-ray films, prints of which were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, one piece, lined (stuck to a rectangular canvas), semicircular arched top, 95.7 (+ 2.2 cm wrapped over the present stretcher; to judge from the now incomplete arch, originally c. 98.2) × 72.2 cm. There are nail-holes along the edges (including the arched top).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: At the top edge of the canvas some very vague, horizontal cusping may be seen. To the right the pitch of the cusping varies between 6.5 and 8 cm, and it extends 8 cm into the canvas. At the bottom the pitch varies between 7 and 8.5 cm, with a depth of 9 cm. To the left the pitch is between 6.7 and 8.8 cm, the cusping stretching 7 cm into the canvas. Threadcount: 14.7 vertical threads/cm (14.5–15), 14.6 horizontal threads/cm (13.5–16). In the horizontal direction the weave shows a remarkably large number of longer and shorter thickenings, lying close together. There are also occasional vertical thickenings. Because of the slight variation in the density of the vertical threads, and the many thickenings in the

horizontal ones, it may be assumed that the warp runs vertically. In view of the similarity in thread density and weave structure with the canvas of no. A 80, it is very likely that the two canvases come from the same bolt of cloth.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Difficult to detect. A light brown-yellow appears to show through in the shadow parts of the face of the man with a beret in the centre (the self-portrait), and in the thinly-painted hands of the man grasping the shaft of the cross.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn<sup>1</sup> identified one reddish layer containing ochre and an oil (or resinous) medium.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Badly flattened and worn. There is however little actual paint loss and what there is strictly local, but the wearing has led to a good deal of in- and overpainting. Over large areas the craquelure has been painted in in brown (and, according to the X-ray, previously primed). Craquelure: regularly distributed, and partly painted in.

DESCRIPTION: In the very dark grey (worn and retouched) background one can see, on the left, a somewhat lighter shape (architecture?), and around the horseman there are some shadings (perhaps the remains of clouds?). The foreground is painted broadly in mainly dark browns, with sandy-coloured patches towards the right. The shaft and handle of the spade stuck in the ground are modelled carefully in a lighter and ochre-coloured brown, with a highlight in white.

Christ's body belongs, in the light areas, among the best preserved parts of the painting. It is set down in a pale flesh tint, and meticulously modelled in thin browns with some grey as the transition between light and shade. The face is done in the same colours and a little black, with some pink along the nose and along the bow-shaped, red upper lip, some black and dark red in the nostrils, and a little red to show drops of blood. The hand on the right is executed extremely carefully, with a hint of blood in red with pure white highlights, with shadows in brown and a broad, blackish-brown cast shadow on the cross. The hand on the left is done in a similar fashion, though with rather less detail. There is a restoration in the armpit on the right. The nails piercing the hands and feet are in black and grey, and picked out with a light catchlight. On the feet, too, the blood is rendered in red with highlights in white and pink.

The horseman on the left behind the cross has, in his head and turban, suffered both wear and overpainting; a blue-green and ochre-brown occur in the feather on the turban and in the jewel into which this is stuck, and in the sash; there is an ochre colour in the decorative motif on the otherwise grey tunic, on the light on the sleeve and in the loops and buttons on the shoulder that hold the cloak attached. His right hand and martel have suffered badly, as has the shadow cast by the arm. The horse's neck is painted in a fairly flat grey, and the saddle-cloth in a dark greenish colour. Where the rump of the horse should be there is a vaguely outlined area overpainted with brown, through which a light area can be glimpsed; there is paint of a similar consistency below the buttocks of the soldier in the left foreground hauling on a short length of rope tied round the cross.

The more thickly painted areas of this soldier are well preserved; they include the dark greys of the helmet and cuirass, highlighted with white, the grey sleeves with their stripey motif done in fine white strokes and dots and shadows done in black, and the brown tunic and sash indicated with black lines for the folds and with a little ochre colour. The arms and hands are worn, especially in the shadows. The legs and feet are seen vaguely, outlined in black.

Fig. 1. Canvas 95.7 × 72.2 cm

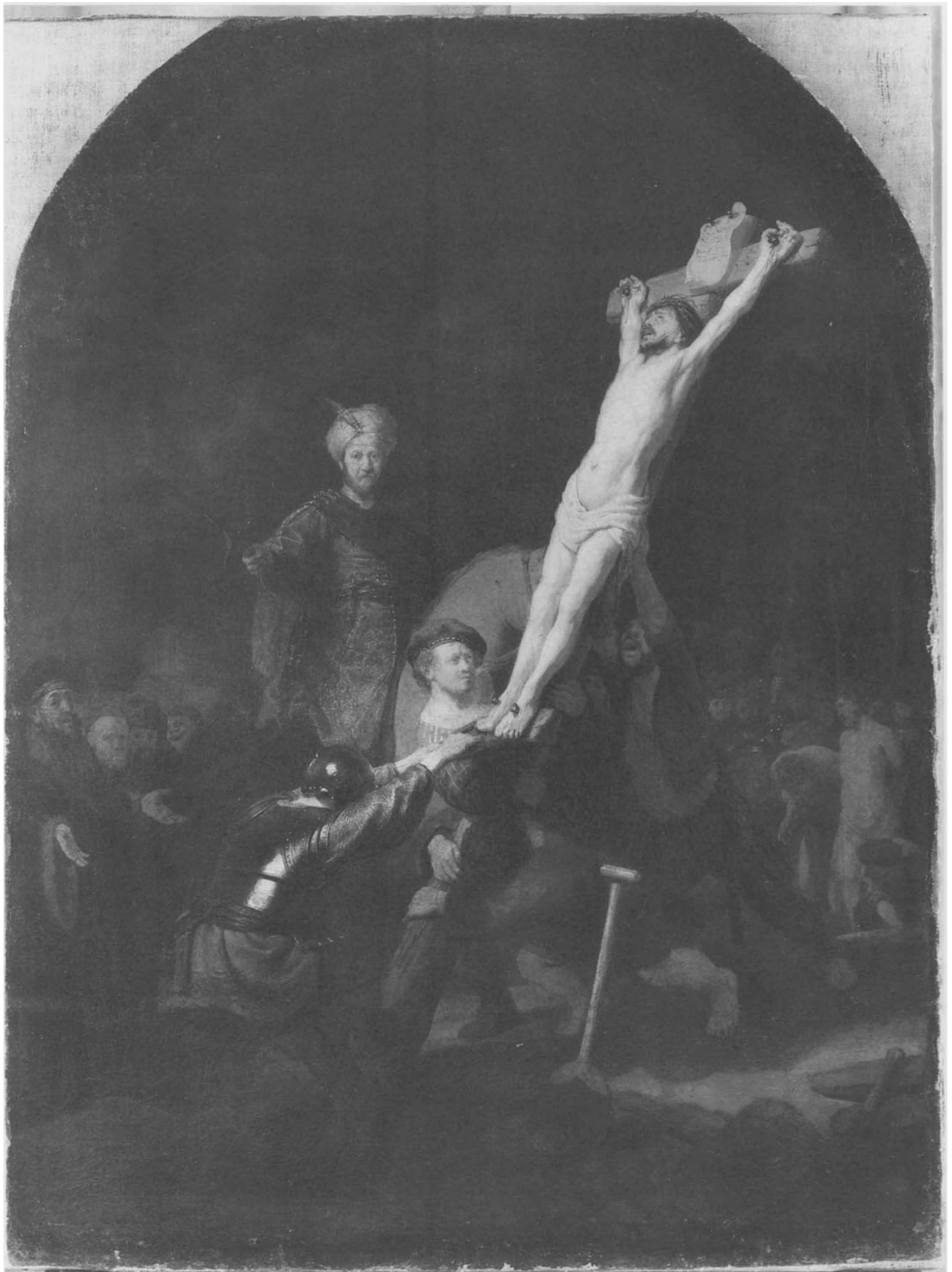
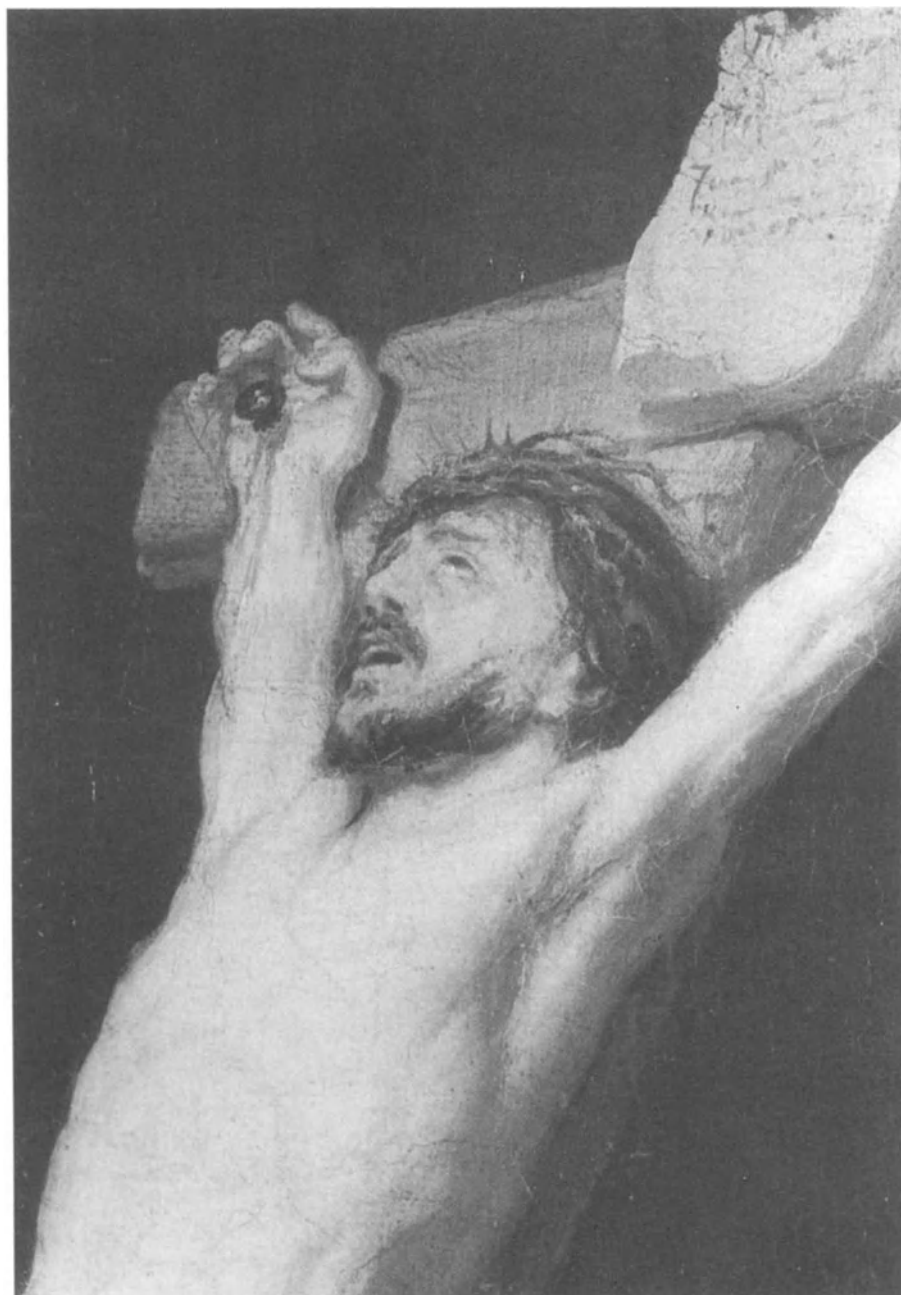


Fig. 2. X-ray



Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



The head of the man with the features of Rembrandt, in which the weave of the canvas is clearly apparent, is no longer intact in the righthand half and in the further eye; the lit areas are executed with a rather translucent flesh colour over a layer of light brown, rather thicker and yellower on the highlight against the edge of the beret. The eye on the left is indicated with some brown and grey, with a greyish white for the white of the eye, and the line of shadow along the neck and hair is in a thin brown. The cap and sleeve are emerald green in the light, with highlights in white; the pleated shirt shows fine grey shadows against white.

The two men in the shadows to the right of the shaft of the cross, and pushing against it, are done in browns and dark greys with a little internal detail in black in the faces; their hands (especially those of the one to the rear) are worn.

Of the four figures on the left, the one to the front is drawn fairly sketchily, with the face and hands in an ochrish colour modelled with grey and with black to indicate the eyes and

mouth, and clothing done in dark grey with black in the fur-trimmed edges. The heads of the other three are painted rather more vaguely, in the same manner. To the right the crowd of people and the two thieves in front of them are depicted equally cursorily (but are now worn).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The stretcher shows up very light, so that only the part of the painting inside it provides a readable radiographic image.

While some of the areas appearing light correspond entirely to the shapes worked up at a late stage of the painting, such as the fine brushstrokes in the sleeve of the soldier in the foreground, other, more cursory forms match parts of the present picture only broadly if at all. This has evidently come about through an underpainting that provided only a rough indication and was in the final execution followed freely or not followed at all. The latter is particularly true of the profile



Fig. 4. Detail (1:1)



figure of a man, seen behind the soldier on the left, who is not visible in the painting today. He is seen bending forward like the soldier in front of him. To the left of his back there is a light form that corresponds roughly with the (now overpainted) rump of the horse; the outstretched left hand of the man standing on the extreme left is seen in this as a dark reserve. Further down, part of his tabard appears to show up as light, vertical strokes.

Major alterations can be seen in Christ's head and left arm, but it is not entirely clear whether these changes are in relation to a rough underpainting or to a worked-up version. The former seems the more likely in the case of the left arm, which in an earlier version rose less steeply upwards. There is rather more detail in the head which, as Brochhagen<sup>2</sup> noted, is shown by the X-rays to have been turned more towards the viewer in

an earlier version; two eyes, looking diagonally upwards, are fairly clearly visible.

The X-ray image is a little confusing around the self-portrait to the left of Christ's legs. The highlights at the paint surface show up clearly in the beret and forehead, but in the face various light areas appear to overlap one another, and the line of the shoulders is done in bold strokes and dabs that do not match the upper layer of paint – and which can be interpreted as the preparation for a slightly different figure.

The pattern of craquelure appears light over large areas, undoubtedly as the result of a later priming done with a view to inpainting the cracks.

*Signature*

None.



#### Varnish

Around the whole picture there is a band of yellow varnish that was evidently left during a surface cleaning of the painting while it was in a narrower frame.

#### 4. Comments

Although the painting is in a far from satisfactory condition – probably due to some calamity about the middle of the 18th century (see no. A 65, 4. *Comments* and 5. *Documents and sources*) – there can be no doubt, judging from the not very numerous areas that have been well preserved, that no. A 69 is an authentic work. The way a strongly lit central area, done in a limited but effective range of colours and with a fairly extensive amount of detail, is encircled by an indication of depth and surrounding figures sketched mainly in dark greys and browns, is pictorially – just as in the Munich *Descent from the Cross* (no. A 65) – still very reminiscent of the treatment of works from the final phase in Leiden such as the *Simeon in the Temple* in The Hague (no. A 34). The composition based on two three-dimensional diagonals, with the emphasis on the one running towards the right rear, that can already be detected there is applied here again but even more dramatically; it takes shape in the sloping cross and, especially, in the strongly-lit soldier in the left foreground who, standing with his two feet against the foot of the cross, forms with his body a dramatic spatial accent in the lefthand half of the composition. The dominant, rightward-sloping cross is only vaguely offset, in the two-dimensional arrangement, by the dignitary (probably the centurion) and his horse, who are not very strongly lit and produce a static effect. It is quite conceivable that in designing this boldly asymmetrical composition Rembrandt was allowing for the *Descent from the Cross* being hung to the right of it.

During the genesis of the painting Rembrandt changed his mind on a number of points, as can be seen from the X-ray. The most radical change is the omission of an old man, shown in the underpainting, behind the soldier in the foreground. He roughly echoed the latter's contour in profile and may, like him, have been represented in the act of hauling at the cross. His appearance, lit and fairly light in tone, behind the predominantly dark form of the soldier, would have had a depth-creating effect similar to that of the figure of Mary initially planned for behind Joseph of Arimathea in the *Descent from the Cross*. Rembrandt's repeated abandonment of a motif of this kind may perhaps point to a shift in the way he rendered spatial relationships, and to an increasing preference for using a dark void in his composition rather than a lit, plastic

form. Compared to this alteration, those to the figure of Christ are of minor importance. It is not entirely clear what was done to the man helping to lift the cross who now shows Rembrandt's features, and who because of his position and relatively bright colours acts as the centrepoint of the composition. The forms that are a little hazy in the X-ray but certainly differ to some extent from what is visible today at the paint surface may perhaps indicate that at this point there was a rather different figure sketched in in a light underpainting (cf. 7. *Copies*, 1, fig. 8).

When compared to the *Descent from the Cross*, no. A 69 shows marked similarities as well as differences. Despite the different support – here a canvas – the manner of painting (so far as it can be judged) does seem very similar, as does the type of preparation where the light parts of the underpainting show up in the X-ray. Here, the old man on the left, not seen in the final execution, has been underpainted in just the same way as some passages in the *Descent from the Cross* were according to the X-ray set out in bold, light underpaintings with scant detail. One could perhaps say that in no. A 69 the rendering of form in the underpainting – such as in the horse and in some parts of Christ's body – is even more approximate. The difference is mainly a stylistic one; variations in scale are here used far more emphatically for showing how the figures are set out in depth than in the *Descent*, where Joseph of Arimathea does admittedly differ somewhat from the other figures by his size (though still remaining a little smaller than the foreground figures in no. A 69), but where the group formed by the fainting figure of Mary and the kneeling women is, though placed in the foreground, hardly any larger in scale than the remaining figures. Though it cannot be said that this difference matches any clear tendency in Rembrandt's development around 1633, one does get the impression that the design of the *Raising of the Cross* is, in this respect, different from and later than that of the *Descent from the Cross*. Its conception and execution can, with a fair degree of probability, be dated in 1633; one finds no clear evidence for a dating of 1634, as was proposed by Else Kai Sass<sup>3</sup>, in a comparison with works from that year. The only factual information on this point is that both the *Raising of the Cross* and the *Descent from the Cross* had been delivered to Prince Frederik Hendrik of Orange well before 1636, the *Raising of the Cross* possibly as a result of a commission obtained through Constantijn Huygens (see no. A 65 4. *Comments* and 5. *Documents and sources*).

Three drawings have been linked with the composition of no. A 69. One done in black chalk and wash, and now in Vienna (Ben. 83), which in its

Fig. 5. Rembrandt, *The Raising of the Cross*, black chalk (Ben. 6). Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen



main features (including the arched top) matches the painting, was long considered to be a preliminary study by Rembrandt. Since it has been convincingly attributed to Claes Moeyaert, it is an interesting document for the contact that an older Amsterdam artist had with Rembrandt, but hardly for the genesis of Rembrandt's composition (see 7. *Copies*, 1). The same is not true of the other two drawings; if these may be interpreted as they have been up to now, they contain evidence that Rembrandt was already thinking about the theme of the Raising of the Cross well before 1633. They are both composition sketches; as such they are something of a rarity, and provide us with the exceptional opportunity of following Rembrandt's train of thought. The attribution of a small black chalk drawing in Rotterdam (Ben. 6) (fig. 5) is generally agreed; it certainly is acceptable, even though strictly speaking it rests only on the similarity in the manner of drawing with three drawings of beggars in Amsterdam (Ben. 30, 31, 32), and no other composition sketches with similarly greatly simplifying chalk lines and forcefully hatched shadow areas are known of. The composition includes a leftward sloping cross that has just been lifted from the ground, with a very sketchy and rather unsuccessful drawing of the figure of Christ, and three figures pushing or pulling in the fore-

Fig. 6. After Rembrandt, *The Raising of the Cross*, pen and wash. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts



ground; one of these straddles the shaft of the cross with his legs and the one furthest to the right leans backwards as he tugs on a rope; among the figures behind the main scene, one stands with a few others on a raised area in the centre and towers well above them. The drawing is generally dated as 1627/28, and this is plausible because of the similarity noted by Bauch (1933, pp. 38-40, 186) with the chiaroscuro effects and silhouetting of figures against the sky in the Basle *David before Saul* of 1627 (no. A 9), and because the verso carries a sketch which may be connected with the second 'state' of the *Judas repentant*, which was completed in its third 'state' in 1629 (see no. A 15, 4. *Comments*).

Closely resembling the Rotterdam sketch there is a pen-and-wash drawing in the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston (inv. no. 1948.1110, our fig. 6), published by Haverkamp-Begemann<sup>4</sup> as a copy after a drawing by Rembrandt. Even if this is a copy, the succinct style comes extraordinarily close to the definitely authentic composition sketch for the second 'state' of the *Judas repentant* (no. A 15, fig. 7), which can safely be dated in 1628/29. Various features of the composition now appear in reverse compared to the previous drawing, in particular the cross (now raised a little higher, and with better foreshortening) and the man standing with his legs apart; the background figures stand further back by

Fig. 7. A. Altdorfer, *The Raising of the Cross*, woodcut (1:1)

a hillock rising behind the cross; and in the extreme right foreground stands a manacled figure, clearly one of the two thieves, with another figure, probably the other thief. As Haverkamp-Begemann already pointed out, this sketch has to be placed between the Rotterdam chalk drawing and no. A 69. In the painting the picture is set in a rather narrower frame and is seen from a closer distance, while the various groups in it are set out differently – the figures in the background on the left are closer to the front, while on the right the figures of the thieves are much further in the distance. The figures seen hauling, pushing and pulling on the cross can be individually identified, though the figure furthest to the left in the painting is no longer standing with his legs wide apart, but has both feet on the foot of the cross. The role given to the dignitary seen towering close to the cross in the Rotterdam chalk drawing, which is shared in the Boston pen drawing by a number of figures placed high up, is filled in the painting by the single horseman. Motifs that all three versions can be seen to have in common – besides the diagonally-placed and foreshortened cross – are the man hauling at the foot of the cross, the man lifting the cross from behind (quite vague in the chalk drawing, and a self-portrait in the painting), the figures pushing behind the cross, and the high-up section alongside the cross that only in the painting develops into a horseman.

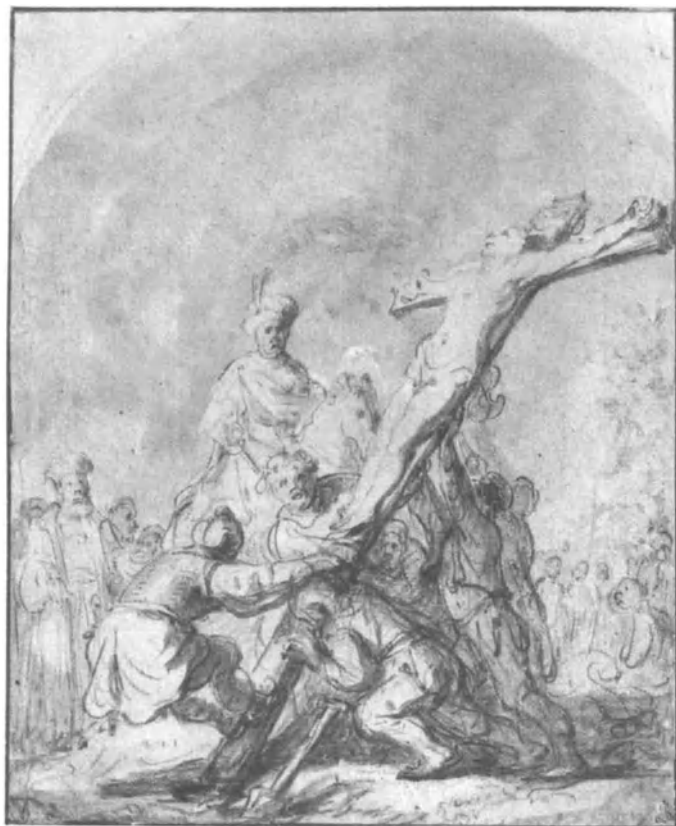
It is often assumed, among others by Weisbach<sup>5</sup>, that Rubens besides providing the prototype for the *Descent from the Cross* may have done the same for the composition of the *Raising of the Cross*, in his altarpiece in the church of S. Walburg in Antwerp done in 1610–11. This is however very unlikely. Quite apart from the fact that one knows of no print of Rubens' composition that Rembrandt might have seen c. 1630, his painting offers no clear resemblance to the Rubens in either the spatial arrange-

ment or the individual motifs. There is admittedly, as Van Rijckevorsel<sup>6</sup> pointed out, some similarity in the placing of the cross if Rembrandt's composition is compared with Rubens' oil sketch in the Louvre (this is true especially for the Rotterdam chalk drawing), but this can sooner be traced back to shared points of departure than to a direct relationship. (It is indeed improbable that Rembrandt could have had any knowledge of Rubens' modello, which was engraved by Hans Witdoeck only in 1638.) These beginnings are seen by Benesch<sup>7</sup> as a tradition stretching back through Callot and Aertsen to Altdorfer and Dürer. There are only similarities of a general kind with an etching by Callot from his *Little Passion*, to which Benesch drew attention on the grounds of the Rotterdam drawing Ben. 6. Rembrandt seems, mainly, to have made direct use of earlier German prototypes; Broos<sup>8</sup> has pointed out that the Vienna drawing (and thus no. A 69) bears a close resemblance in reverse to Altdorfer's woodcut of the *Raising of the Cross* (F. W. H. Hollstein, *German engravings . . . I*, Amsterdam 1954, pp. 238–241, no. 29, our fig. 7) belonging to the same series (thought to be by Dürer) from which the *Descent from the Cross* influenced Rembrandt's painting of the same subject (see no. A 65 under 4. *Comments*). Although in all his versions Rembrandt chooses a different layout and places the sloping cross differently in the picture area, the man hauling at the base of the cross does provide convincing evidence for this connexion; perhaps this also provides an explanation for the fact that in the Rotterdam drawing, as in the woodcut, the cross leans to the left and the composition became reversed only in a subsequent stage, probably to satisfy a preference for an upwards movement from left to right matching the normal direction of reading. It is, incidentally, interesting to note that Rembrandt appears to have already been familiar with Altdorfer's woodcuts in his Leiden years.

Apart from the drawing in Vienna, already discussed, that can be attributed to Moeyaert, Rembrandt's *Raising of the Cross* did not give rise to any imitation by artists in his immediate circle. The *Raising of the Cross* regarded by Van Regteren Altena<sup>9</sup> and Bauch<sup>10</sup> as a work by Jacob Backer dating from 1633 and now in the Museum Amstelkring in Amsterdam, undoubtedly comes from half-a-century later and has been attributed convincingly by Bakker<sup>11</sup> to Jacob's nephew Adriaen Backer; Bauch already expressed doubt that it was derived from Rembrandt's paintings.

There can be little doubt that the scene is based on Matthew 27: 37ff; in the figures shown on the left one can recognize the high priests and the scribes, elders and Pharisees who mocked Christ. That the

Fig. 8. C. Moeyaert after Rembrandt, *The Raising of the Cross*, black chalk and grey wash. Vienna, Graphische Sammlung Albertina



foremost of these slightly grotesquely-depicted men, with his outspread arms, represents, as Else Kai Sass<sup>3</sup> believed, Pilate arguing with the Jews about the inscription on the cross (cf. John 19:19–22), and is moreover a portrait (that of Constantijn Huygens), is totally unacceptable.

Finally, the significance of the self-portrait presents something of a problem. Bergström<sup>12</sup> saw in this the personification of sinful humanity, in line with the late mediaeval concept of Everyman. If such an idea is justified it might lend some support to the suspicion that one of S. Stephen's executioners in the 1625 painting in Lyon (no. A 1) also has the features of Rembrandt himself. One can feel some reluctance in accepting an interpretation of this kind, which presupposes a highly personal meaning as the motive behind Rembrandt's imagery, particularly as long as no clear iconographic tradition for it can be shown. On the other hand one has to admit that the fact that Rembrandt depicted himself as the Prodigal Son (in the painting in Dresden, Br. 30, that provided the subject for Bergström's article) does lend some support to this idea. The existence of such a tradition should however not be ruled out. If Max Rooses (*L'oeuvre de P. P. Rubens* II, Antwerp 1888, p. 69) was right in recognizing Rubens' features in the pushing soldier on the left in Rubens' *Raising of the Cross*, this would present an interesting analogy for Rembrandt's use of his own head in the same iconographic context.

## 5. Documents and sources

See no. A 65.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching in reverse by Carl Ernst Christoph Hess (Darmstadt 1755 – Munich 1828) for *La Galerie électorale de Dusseldorf* . . . , Basle 1778. Inscription: *Rembrandt pinx. – Hess f. aqua forti*. Some details differ (are clearer?) compared to the painting, for example a part of the rider's cloak draped over the hindquarters of the horse and the hint of architecture in the background. There are otherwise no significant differences.

## 7. Copies

1. Drawing in black chalk and grey wash, 23.2 × 18.7 cm, by Claes Moeyaert. Vienna, Graphische Sammlung Albertina, inv. no. 9396 (fig. 8). Considered a preliminary drawing for the painting by most authors, including Benesch (Ben. 83), but attributed to Gerbrand van den Eeckhout by Van Regteren Altena and Sumowski, to Jacob Backer by Rosenberg and to Govaert Flinck by White, Gerson and Sumowski (see W. Sumowski in: *O.H.* 77, 1962, p. 12 note 10; Sumowski *Drawings* IV, no. 977). The convincing attribution to Moeyaert was first made by C. Müller Hofstede (in: *Kunstchronik* 10, 1957, p. 152) and was confirmed by Astrid Tümpel (in: exhibition cat. *The Pre-Rembrandtists*, Sacramento, Cal., 1974, p. 37, fig. 60). The numerous differences between the drawing and painting would seem to come mostly from liberties on the copyist's part and not from his working after the painting in an earlier state. The underpainted profile figure behind the soldier on the left, visible in the X-ray, is missing in the drawing, as is the earlier version of Christ's head. It is possible, however, that the head and shoulders of a man seen in the drawing to the left of Christ's feet do correspond to a figure visible in the painting before the young man with Rembrandt's features was (as the X-rays suggest) painted there over the preparation for a different figure.

A number of painted copies of no particular interest are known to exist.

## 8. Provenance

See no. A 65.

## 9. Summary

Although large areas of no. A 69 are poorly preserved, it is possible on the grounds of brushwork and of the available documentary evidence to discard all doubt as to its authenticity. The changes in the design as shown in the X-rays were not as radical and as numerous as in the *Descent from the Cross* (no. A 65). Two connected drawings (one of them appearing to be only a copy after a lost drawing) show, however, that Rembrandt had been preoccupied with the subject since about 1628. For some features of his composition he drew on a woodcut by Albrecht Altdorfer. The painting was probably designed somewhat later than the *Descent from the Cross*, and completed in 1633. Though there is no firm evidence of its having been commissioned by

Prince Frederik Hendrik of Orange (unlike the subsequent paintings from the Munich Passion series), it is quite probable that it was ordered by the Stadtholder.

## REFERENCES

- 1 Kühn, p. 201.
- 2 E. Brochhagen, 'Beobachtungen an den Passionsbildern Rembrandts in München', *Minuscula discipulorum . . . Hans Kauffmann zum 70. Geburtstag 1966*, Berlin 1968, pp. 37-44, esp. 39-40.
- 3 E. Kai Sass, *Comments on Rembrandt's Passion paintings and Constantijn Huygens's iconography*, Copenhagen 1971 (Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, Historisk-Filosofiske Skrifter 5, 3), esp. pp. 12-31.
- 4 E. Haverkamp Begemann, '[Review of] Otto Benesch, *The Drawings of Rembrandt . . .*', *Kunstchronik* 14 (1961), pp. 10-28, esp. 19; W. Sumowski, 'Rembrandtzeichnungen', *Pantheon* 22 (1964), pp. 233-248, esp. 234-236.
- 5 W. Weisbach, *Rembrandt*, Berlin-Leipzig 1926, pp. 130ff.
- 6 J. L. A. A. M. van Rijkevorsel, *Rembrandt en de traditie*, Rotterdam 1932, pp. 99-103.
- 7 O. Benesch, *Rembrandt. Werk und Forschung*, Vienna 1935, p. 13.
- 8 B. P. J. Broos, 'Rembrandt borrows from Altdorfer', *Simiolus* 4 (1970), pp. 100-108, esp. 100.
- 9 I. Q. van Regteren Altena, 'Een vroeg meesterwerk van Jacob Backer', *O.H.* 42 (1925), pp. 141-147.
- 10 K. Bauch, *Jacob Adriaensz Backer*, Berlin 1926, p. 20, cat. no. 23.
- 11 B. Bakker, 'De Kruisoprichting in Amstelkring', *De Kroniek van de Vriendenkring van het Rembrandthuis* 20 (1966), pp. 83-90.
- 12 I. Bergström, 'Rembrandt's double-portrait of himself and Saskia at the Dresden Gallery', *N.K.J.* 17 (1966), pp. 143-169, esp. 164-166. Cf. G. Lengel, 'Beiträge zu den Bildern Rembrandts in der Alten Pinakothek in München', *Das Münster* 20 (1967), pp. 52-58, esp. 52; H. von Einem, 'Bemerkungen zum Christusbild Rembrandts', *Das Münster* 25 (1972), pp. 349-360, esp. 349.

NEW YORK, N.Y., THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, ACC. NO. 32.100.23  
BEQUEST OF MICHAEL FRIEDSAM, 1931. THE MICHAEL FRIEDSAM COLLECTION

HdG 196; BR. 467; BAUCH 257; GERSON –

### 1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved and authentic painting, reliably signed and dated 1633.

### 2. Description of subject

A woman, seen lifesize down to the knees, stands in front of a masonry arch in a wall on which the light falls mainly on the right. On the left the wall is plastered at the bottom, with vague indications of brickwork higher up. Objects seen leaning against the wall should perhaps be interpreted as spears.

The woman's body is turned a little to the left, and her head very slightly to the right; she looks straight at the viewer. Her luxuriant dark, curling hair falls wide over the shoulders. On her head she wears a partly-gilded and richly-worked helmet with an ostrich feather. A greyish undergarment with braiding is almost entirely covered by a cuirass with a richly-decorated, dark red skirt hanging down from it and slightly open at the front. A narrow, blue-green bandolier, with a gold chain set with jewels, is worn over her right shoulder. Around her neck she has a blue-green neckerchief and a rope of pearls, and she wears large, pear-shaped pearl eardrops.

Her right arm is covered by a wide sleeve projecting from under the armpiece of the cuirass; in a steel-gloved hand she holds an oriental sword, pointing downwards. Her left arm is entirely hidden behind a shield; this is ornamented with a medusa-head in high relief, and the name 'Bellona' can be made out along the lower edge. She wears a long cloak, visible on both sides of the body and, to the right, partly draped over a chair.

The light falls obliquely from the left.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in October 1971 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good daylight and out of the frame. Nine X-ray films, together covering the entire painting, were received later, as well as mosaic prints from neutron-activation autoradiographs.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 126 × 96 cm. Single piece.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: At the top and bottom edges there are minor distortions of the canvas. To the right the pitch of the cusping varies between 7 and 10 cm, and it extends 10 cm inwards. On the left the pitch varies between 6.5 and 8.5 cm, with a depth of 15 cm. Threadcount: 13 vertical threads/cm (12.5–13.2), 12.2 horizontal threads/cm (11.5–13). There is no clear difference in yarn quality between the horizontal and vertical threads. In view of the slighter variation in density of the vertical threads one tends to assume that the warp runs vertically, and this would be in line with the absence of any appreciable cusping at the top and bottom edges. This means that the canvas would have been cut along these edges from a taller strip of canvas.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Not seen.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Microscope examination of ten cross-sections carried out by Mrs C. M. Groen (cf. Introduction, Chapter II, fig. 27) showed the ground to consist of two layers, the lower one being reddish and containing red ochre, the top one being grey and containing lead white, some ochre and a very fine black pigment (possibly lamp black).

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Generally in a reasonably sound state. A few retouches can be seen, mainly in perhaps somewhat overcleaned shadow areas such as the band of shadow over the cuirass on the right, and along the lower edge of the painting. The shadow parts of the face are slightly overcleaned, and there are retouches around the eyes. Craquelure: an irregular but evenly distributed pattern of small cracks covers the entire surface.

DESCRIPTION: In the light areas the head is for the greater part painted with no clearly apparent brushwork, in a flesh tint with little differentiation. The shift towards and into the shadows is similarly devoid of abrupt contrasts, other than just beneath the nose where the lights on the upper lip form a sharp border with the shadow cast by the nose.

The structure of the eye on the left cannot be properly judged because of a certain amount of wearing in the dark areas and an overpainting in its right corner. The upper limit is formed by a dark line, which by the iris is almost black; the lower limit is built up from strokes of pink. The iris is brownish with towards the bottom right a touch of a ruddy colour, opposite which the catchlight is placed against the black pupil (which is not completely circular). Around the eye, by the eyepouch and at the eyebrows the convexity of the eye is suggested by curving brushstrokes. The eye on the right has the same structure, and here again quite strongly accentuated, curving strokes and shadows combine to give an impression of convexity. The quite heavy cast shadow from the nose, which continues upwards into the shadow beside the eyebrows and merges downwards into the shadow of the mouth, contains internal detail to suggest the curving surfaces of the nose and wing of the nose. The shadow continues subtly in the eye-socket and along the outline of the face. Here, and around the chin, light greyish paint has been used for the reflections of light which accentuate the plastic roundness of the forms. The quite sharply-edged, dark cast shadow of the helmet on the forehead is painted in a fairly thick brown; a little black seems to show through at the transition to the light.

The contours of the lips are done vaguely; the mouth-line is set down with a few strokes in black and dark red, lending the whole a strong three-dimensional effect. The ears are painted extremely cursorily; on the left the pear-shaped pearl eardrop is picked out with a few catchlights, while the pearl on the right is worked up hardly at all. The hair is in various shades of brown and black; in the darkest areas the paint is partly translucent, in lighter passages more opaque, and everywhere it is applied with effective, curling strokes.

The helmet is painted forcefully, with the brushstrokes following the forms, and with paint that ranges from a thickly applied white on the highest lights to various tints of grey in the thinner shadow areas; in the latter, on the top of the helmet, there is a reflection of the blue-green of the plume. The highest lights in the gilded crest are shown with thickly applied yellow paint. The plume is painted quite heavily in a blue-green, using short strokes that give only a very limited impression of the substance of the feather.

The neckerchief is painted in the same colour as the plume, with long, thinly-applied brushstrokes using black for the shadows in the folds and ochre-yellow for the squiggly decorative pattern. The bandolier, too, is done in the same colour; the chain lying on top of it is painted with thick ochre-yellow and yellow, with here and there a contour line in black. The jewels – blue, black and red – have streaky highlights in white.

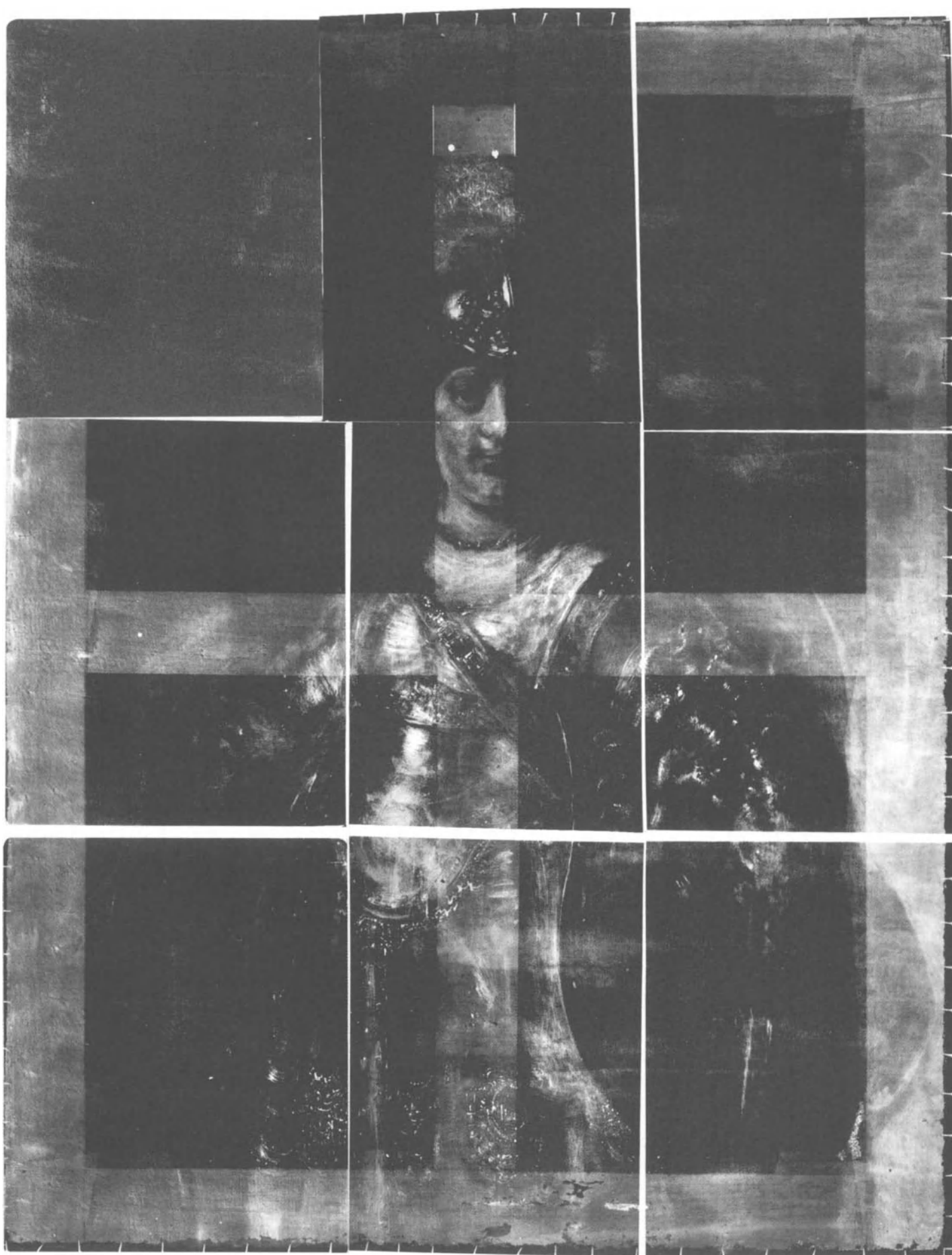
The cuirass is in greys, painted with marked differences in tone and with the highest lights painted the thickest. Reflec-



Fig. 1. Canvas 126 × 96 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



tions of light play an important part, and at the gorget have a flesh-coloured tint. The ornamentation is rendered with a squiggly pattern of dots of white, and the gold lower edge is similar in execution to the chain. The skirt is painted in a wine red, quite thin especially in the lighter parts and done with a deft touch. The edge has a yellow-brown basic tone over which touches of yellow, grey, white and black are placed to represent the gold embroidery. The undergarment is grey, and at the sleeve has decoration done with squiggly strokes in ochrish tints. The armour-clad hand, with the form rendered very summarily, is in a brownish grey with small, dark lines to show the outlines and joints.

The shield is done with bold and readily visible brushstrokes. In the dark areas, which are the thinnest, there is a little brown showing through. The whole is modelled powerfully in greys and white, with a strong suggestion of plasticity and effective rendering of the material.

The background is painted thinly, with the architectural features shown in an alternation of cool and warm greys, applied with broad and quite long brushstrokes, without a clear impression of depth.

Along the top edge of the canvas there is a fairly wide band of dark grey, and narrower, irregular strips are painted along the left- and righthand edges; one cannot be certain that these form part of the original paint layer.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** In view of the drastic and repeated changes of form evidenced by the X-rays and autoradiographs (see below), it is to be expected that samples taken in the relevant areas show an unusually complicated structure. Eleven cross-sections were prepared by Mrs C. M. Groen.

1. From a sample taken at the righthand edge at 47.5 cm from the bottom. Shows four layers on top of the ground. The bottom one is greyish and contains lumps of white lead, dark brown pigment, ochre, some red ochre and black (possibly the light paint of an early version of the background as seen in the X-rays). The second is dark and contains a mixture of black, ochres, white lead and some coarse, very bright red pigment (possibly connected with the shape showing up dark in autoradiograph ZP 8, fig. 6). The third is light grey layer containing lumps of white lead, a very fine black pigment (possibly lamp black), some ochre and dark brown pigment, and occasional blue particles (the paint of the stone arch). The top layer is an even black layer (the strip painted along the edge). The cross-section does not provide evidence of the strip along the edge being a later addition.

2. From a sample taken at 6.5 cm from the righthand edge and 51.7 cm from the bottom, where autoradiograph ZP 8 (fig. 6) shows a darkish shape. Shows two layers but does not include the ground. The bottom layer is grey with red particles (vermilion), white lead, some ochre, black and dark brown (possibly connected with the shape just mentioned). The top layer is grey and contains white lead, some black and brown pigment and some glue particles (the background). In between these layers there is a thin layer of translucent brown, probably oil.

3. From a sample taken in the shield at 19 cm from the righthand edge and 51.9 cm from the bottom. Shows two layers on top of the ground. The lower one is a dark brown, possibly organic, and also containing some black and white particles (possibly belonging to a monochrome underpainting). The top layer is a pure black (the shield in shadow).

4. From a sample taken in the masonry arch at 36.8 cm from the top and 6.1 cm from the righthand edge (see Introduction, Chapter II, fig. 27). Shows two layers on top of the ground. The lower one is a grey and contains lumps of white lead, ochre, black and brown particles, some blue and bright red

and possibly some particles of glass (an earlier version of the background as suggested by a lightish area in the X-ray?). The top one is another grey layer, containing black, some white lead, brown pigment and occasional blue crystals.

5. From a sample taken in the masonry arch at 4 cm from the righthand edge and 40.5 cm from the top. Shows one layer on top of the ground. It is a grey containing lumps of white lead, a dark brown pigment, some black and grey particles and possibly some glass.

6. From a sample taken at the lefthand outline of the face at 44.7 cm from the top and 44.3 cm from the lefthand edge; this may involve the overlapping of areas of flesh tint and hair. Shows five layers on top of the ground. The bottom one contains a translucent brown pigment in a colourless binding medium (possibly belonging to an underpainting). The second layer is yellowish and contains mainly what could be a yellow ochre, some translucent dark brown pigment and some white (probably the underpainting of the head). The third is a thin layer of white and some red pigment (probably the first lay-in of the flesh tint). The fourth is a dark brown layer and contains a translucent, possibly organic brown pigment with some glass particles (the hair). The fifth is a bright flesh tint and contains white lead, some bright red and black pigment (a final touch to the contour of the jaw, clearly showing up as such in the X-ray).

7. From a sample taken in the double chin at 49.1 cm from the top and 47.2 cm from the lefthand edge, shows four layers on top of the ground. The bottom one is a thin brown and contains a fine translucent brown pigment in a colourless binding medium (again the underpainting). The second is a nearly white layer consisting of white lead with some red particles and an occasional blue one (flesh tint). The third is a thin layer of translucent brown pigment (shadow tint). The fourth is a light layer of mainly white lead with some bright-red, black, ochre and a very little blue and possibly organic red (flesh tint).

8. A sample taken near no. 7 showed practically the same structure and composition.

9. From a sample taken in the blue-green feather at 17.3 cm from the top and 46.5 cm from the lefthand edge. Shows one layer on top of the ground. It consists mainly of azurite, with some dark brown pigment and white lead and occasional red particles.

10. From a sample taken in the lefthand sleeve at 41.9 cm from the bottom and 19.7 cm from the lefthand edge. Shows two layers on top of the ground. The lower one is a green layer consisting of azurite with translucent brown particles in a brown binding medium (the first blocking-out of the sleeve as seen in autoradiograph ZP 6, fig. 5). The top one is a dark brown layer containing coarse and fine black particles and some ochre (the top layer of the greyish shadow on the sleeve).

11. From a sample taken in the righthand breast at 62.5 cm from the top and 52.6 cm from the lefthand edge, where autoradiograph ZP 6 (fig. 5) shows the emission of copper in a blue-green area. Does not include the ground, and shows two layers that are however not distinctly separated. Both layers contain white lead, coarse azurite particles, some dark brown pigment, black and a little ochre, as well as some glass. The grey paint of the cuirass that one would expect in the top layer was missing in the sample.

#### *X-Rays*

Interpretation of the radiographic image is hampered by the light bands caused by the stretcher and its cross-battens.

In the background on the right, which shows up fairly light, one can make out the vague outline of the present shield.

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)

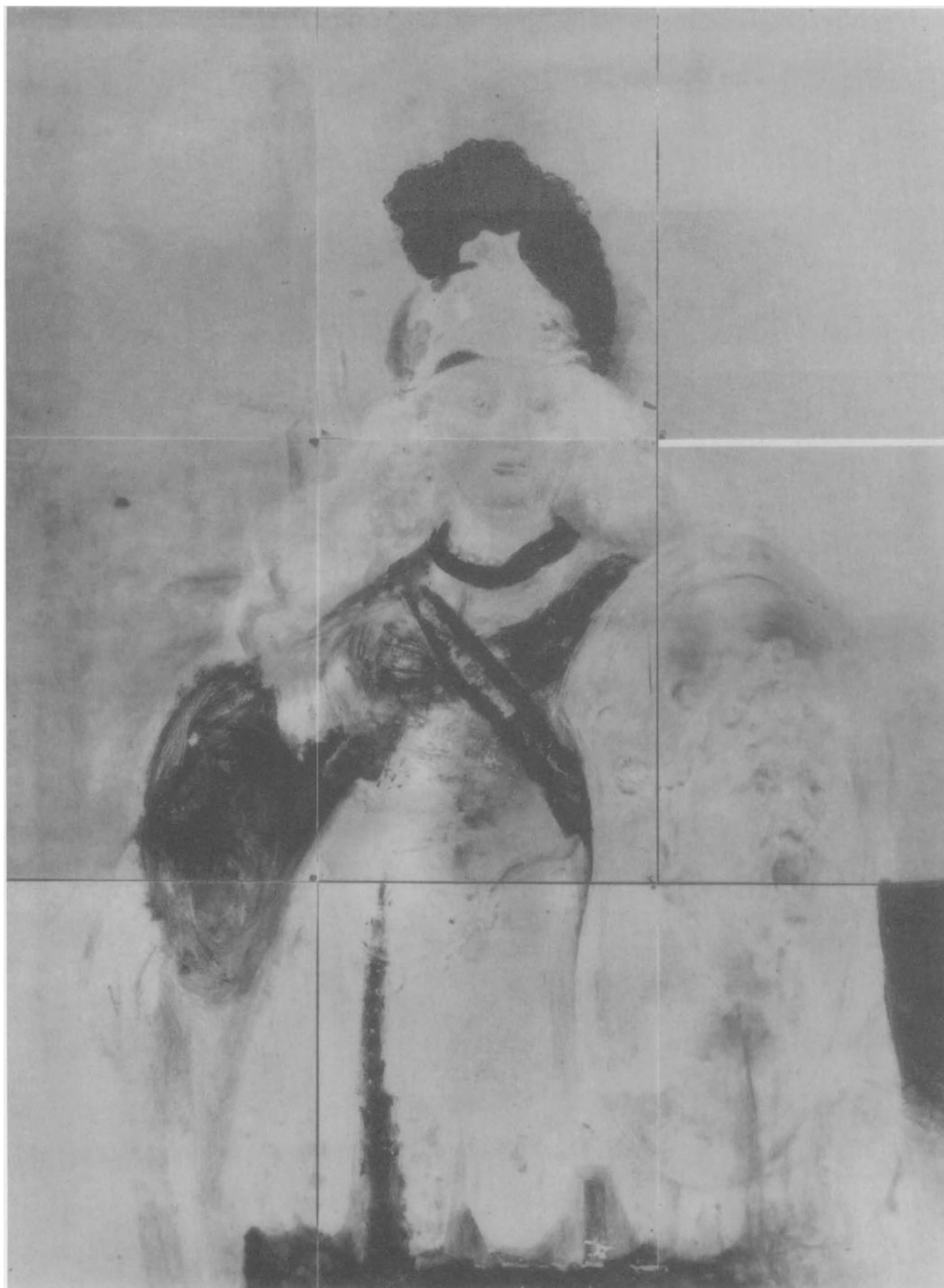




Fig. 4. Neutron activation autoradiograph ZP 3



Fig. 5. Neutron activation autoradiograph ZP 6





Within this there is however a dark reserve for a narrower shape inside which (interwoven with the light traces of the medusa-head) there is the light image of a hand from which light edges (evidently those of a sword) run slightly diagonally downwards. Obviously this was, perhaps only in a first lay-in, the left hand (with the arm seen foreshortened) resting on a sword. In that stage the shield was seen, sideways-on, at the left side of the figure; this is shown by the presence of a number of curved lines. The same slightly elliptical shape is clearly visible in the autoradiographs nos. ZP 6 and ZP 8. Furthermore there are various forms seen to the right of the figure, along the contour of the present shield, that are difficult to interpret. In a part of the background showing up light along the righthand edge there is a darker, convex reserve that must be connected with a motif that neither ties in with the presence of the present chair nor seems to form part of the shield. To the left this shape is bordered, along a fairly taut and slightly curved contour, by an even darker area that may – like the foregoing – be connected with the costume at the stage when the shield was not yet in this position.

The heavy brushstrokes, appearing light in the X-ray, that are visible along the lefthand contour of the present shield are presumably connected with this radical change in the composition. They do not match the present distribution of the light, and should perhaps rather be understood as corrections to the initial lay-in.

There are also, adjoining to the upper left, light and broad brushstrokes, both long and diagonal and short and horizontal. Their significance is not clear; one can assume that they belong to the underpainting, since they are of the same kind as the energetic strokes used (evidently in the underpainting) to sketch in the sheen of light on the cuirass.

The gorget and neckerchief each have the same tonal value in the X-ray, and run entirely one into the other; the plume, too, (painted in the same blue-green colour as the neckerchief) shows up quite light. None of the detail in the background can be seen.

#### *Neutron activation autoradiographs*

Autoradiograph ZP 3 shows the emission from, mainly, umber. Many shadow areas, mostly in the face and the green passages, show up dark, as do for example the lances on the left behind the shoulder, the train lying on the chair and the shadowed band on the left along the skirt. Moreover there is a dark vertical band visible that indicates that at the front the lobed skirt was painted as hanging open over a smaller width and from higher up. To the right of the present shield there is a shape appearing as a somewhat light zone, probably that of the shield seen in a position further to the right.

Autoradiograph ZP 6 reveals mainly the emission from copper in the blue-green areas. These appear to be present even where the breasts are now covered by the cuirass. In some areas it would seem, from the broad brushwork in the approximative rendering of form, that the blue-green paint can be looked on as belonging to a rough, first lay-in; this applies to the sleeve on the left and to the long skirt, including the split in the centre. The backrest of the chair is quite distinct, other than low down where the transition to the train of the skirt is a little unclear. A number of brushstrokes running together to a point pass through the lower half of the shield almost vertically, and may be connected with an earlier outline to the skirt in an earlier stage when the shield was still over to the left.

Autoradiograph ZP 8 shows mainly the emission from phosphorus, as an ingredient of the bone black used in the underpainting. At some places the character of the underpainting is

clearly suggested – in the lock of hair on the left (which runs slightly different from that in the final execution), in the cast shadows of the lobed skirt on the long skirt, and to the lower right in the skirt. To the left there is a distinct reserve in the dark underpainted background for the shield in its initial position.

#### *Signature*

At the lower left, in the background next to the sword, in grey <Rembrandt f: 1633>. Makes a reliable impression.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

The stance of Bellona, the goddess of war, with her right arm (which seems rather short) held slightly away from the body, and her extensively-ornamented dress including a cuirass moulded to her female form give the modern viewer an impression of awkwardness – commented on by Rousseau<sup>1</sup> – and may even seem slightly risible. The woman's chubby face, with her heavy-lidded eyes and double chin, adds further to this effect. It may be these impressions that prompted Gerson<sup>2</sup> to regard the painting as 'too dull in expression and design and too awkwardly composed to be by Rembrandt himself'. It would be wrong, however, to let an anachronistic view of what constitutes ideal beauty and decorum play a part in assessing the authenticity of the work. There is, rather, reason to suppose that a number of the features just named had a wholly favourable effect on the artist's contemporaries. We must therefore use other criteria when judging whether the painting is authentic or not.

When the manner of painting of the head is compared with that in portraits from the same period, it is noticeable that this is relatively broad, and that there is comparatively little subtlety in the treatment especially of the lit areas. It has to be remembered, however, that we are dealing here not with a portrait, but with the depiction of an imaginary figure; this makes the broader approach to the head rather more understandable. A strong effect of plasticity is achieved in the head, the shadow effect of the nose and mouth being heightened by the strong reflections of light in the area of the chin and along the righthand outline of the face. Rembrandt was to tackle lifesize female figures of this type several times during the next two years – in the Leningrad *Flora* of 1634 (no. A 93), the Madrid *Sophonisba* of 1634 (no. A 94), the London *Flora* of 1635 (Br. 103) and the *Minerva* of 1635 (Br. 469). The broad treatment of the head can be seen to a greater or lesser extent in all of these, while the effect of plasticity is attained in basically the same manner. In both the rather

Fig. 6. Neutron activation autoradiograph ZP 8



Fig. 7. Detail with signature (1:2)



unsubtle treatment of the lit flesh areas and the way the shadow side of the face is rendered (the effect of plasticity and depth is obtained by an interplay of own and cast shadows and of reflected light) there are striking resemblances and one can see a similar handling of paint. The rounded facial features and double chin in all the paintings mentioned are also very similar. One feels inclined to assume that a contemporary ideal of female beauty, all traceable in Rubens' work, is at the basis of these depictions of goddesses and heroines.

The treatment of accessories is relatively broad here as well as in comparable works. The ornamentation on the cuirass and skirt is not handled with much subtlety, and the treatment of the skirt in particular shows a great similarity to, for instance, the cloak in the Ottawa *Young woman at her toilet* of 1632/33 (no. A 64). In its stance the figure shows a resemblance to the New York *Man in oriental dress* of 1632 (no. A 48), and to the etching of a *Man with a plumed cap and lowered sabre* of 1634 (B. 23). The motif of the downward-pointing oriental sword recurs in the last-named work, and there is likewise an impression of the arm in question being a little too short. In no. A 70 the arm and sword are for the most part in shadow, so that they are seen mainly in silhouette against the background, which is kept lighter at this point. This can be termed characteristic of Rembrandt's manner of working in the 1630s. If the *Bellona* has to be described as less well-balanced than the slightly later comparable works mentioned above, the main reasons for this can be found in the lack of subtlety in the working-up of the – somewhat overcleaned – face, the exaggerated detail of the clothing, the slightly shrill colour contrasts, and a distribution of light that sets up strong competition between the face and the very bright light on the cuirass. The similarities of approach and manner of painting with authentic works from the period 1633–1635 are however so

convincing that there can be no doubt about no. A 70 being an autograph work. This conviction is borne out by the reliable signature and date.

The adverse features just listed do however bring one to look more closely at the position no. A 70 occupies between the 1632 *Man in oriental dress* on the one hand and the *Sophonisba*, *Minerva* and the two *Floras* of 1634/35 on the other. A comparison with the *Man in oriental dress* of 1632 makes it clear that in the *Bellona* Rembrandt was taking a new path. The lighting scheme of the former, with the pyramid shape lit only on the head and lefthand shoulder while the rest of the body is lost in shadow, has been totally abandoned and gives way to an arrangement that places almost the whole of the body in bright light. This has direct consequences on the use of colour. The greys, browns, ochres and yellows that predominate in the *Man in oriental dress* are replaced by a colour scheme in which these colours are not only given a brighter tonal value, but are joined by red lake, blue-green and brilliant white. In the *Sophonisba*, *Minerva* and the two *Floras* this full lighting and use of brighter colour is kept only partially, while the effect of light and shadow in the clothing and accessories does far more to help create a three-dimensional impression.

The *Bellona* therefore has to be seen as a first attempt, and not a particularly successful one. When trying to explain the change in approach one may think of external influences, and Rubens' name – mentioned already in connexion with the ideal of female beauty – comes to mind. Direct Rubens influence appears to be unlikely however and it may well be that Jacob Adriaensz. Backer acted as an intermediary. Backer, Rembrandt's junior by two years, arrived in Amsterdam precisely in 1633, after having been trained in Leeuwarden by Lambert Jacobsz. in what Kurt Bauch (*Jacob Adriaensz. Backer*, Berlin 1926, pp. 14–15) has convincingly shown to be a Rubenesque tradition. It seems quite possible that Backer's large-scale compositions with half-length figures, such as the *John the Baptist admonishing Herod and Herodias*, dated 1633, in the Fries Museum, Leeuwarden (Sumowski *Gemälde I*, no. 5) – far from betraying, as is sometimes thought, Rembrandt's influence – impressed Rembrandt and prompted a more colourful treatment of draperies, a bright, even lighting of the figure and even the choice of the female type or model seen in the *Bellona* (cf. also no. B 8, 4. *Comments*).

The sequence of the painting's production must, to judge from the X-rays and the neutron activation autoradiographs, have been quite complicated. Not all the traces of earlier forms that are apparent can be clearly interpreted, but it is plain that the figure

initially – probably only in an underpainting – held the shield in the right hand and the sword in the outthrust left hand, which must have produced a strong three-dimensional effect, much as in the etching of *The Persian* dated 1632 (B. 152). One has to assume that even after the shield – perhaps after having earlier been a little further still to the right in an underpainting – ended up in its present position, the costume looked different to what it does today. In autoradiograph ZP 6 the same substance appears dark both above and below the gorget, showing that the cuirass covering the breasts is painted over the same paint containing a pigment containing copper that is now still visible in the neckcloth; the X-ray even suggests that (possibly at an even earlier stage) the whole area below the pearl necklace that now consists of the neckcloth and the gorget was executed in a continuous kind of radioabsorbent paint. Yet the breastplate, too, did not always have its present form: not only is it intersected in the X-ray by a thin white line level with the waist, but in autoradiographs ZP 3 and, especially, ZP 6 the split in the lobed skirt appears darker as a narrower shape running further upwards, and probably done in a green-blue paint. From this it may be deduced that in an earlier stage the breastplate did not extend as far down as it does today, and probably was not present at all, the figure then probably wearing a bodice of a cloth material. It may be that in this connexion the heavy brushstroke, seen in relief at the paint surface and showing up light in the X-ray, running obliquely across the hip to the right should be understood as an indication in the underpainting of a skirt hanging open in the shape of an inverted V. The noticeably thick light underpainting for the glisten of light on the cuirass, as apparent in the X-ray, can probably be explained by the fact that the cuirass was painted in a later stage on top of a costume laid in differently. Finally, the righthand outline of the figure and the adjoining area of background must have undergone a number of changes the sequence of which can be only tentatively reconstructed. In the X-ray the background along the edge appears remarkably light, and one can see (from right to left) a less light, convex shape and a dark reserve. These shapes are probably connected with the first lay-in, where on the right there was still the outthrust hand with the sword. The forms just described might then correspond to a bulging cloak (for a motif of this kind, cf. the etched *Self-portrait* B. 7), and a hanging sleeve on the woman's left arm. At all events there was no reserve left at that stage for the chair that is now seen on the right, and on which the train of the cloak is draped, and the train did not – as it does now and as can be seen in two of

the three autoradiographs – hang down diagonally almost to the bottom righthand corner of the painting. The background must have been toned down at a later stage, and the addition of the chair and the cloak draped over it was perhaps made later still.

One can only guess at the reason for all these changes. One can find for a major alteration – the switching of the sword and the shield – one very trivial explanation: Rembrandt may have used as a prototype a print which showed the goddess in reverse, and it dawned on him only later that the sword needed to be shown correctly (i.e. held in the right hand). He must in any event have used a common Minerva type, although the immediate prototype – probably a print – has still to be identified. Jacopo Sansovino's statue of Minerva (as the goddess of war) at the Loggetta in Venice shows, for instance, almost the same items of costume and attributes.

As an iconographical subject the goddess of war Bellona – another of the forms in which Minerva appears – is not very common in the pictorial arts. Van Mander makes no mention of her in his comments on the *Metamorphoses*, though Vincenzo Cartari (one of Van Mander's sources, and certainly known in Holland) does so in his *Imagini delli dei de gl'antichi*. In Dutch literature of the period Bellona occurs frequently as a personification of war. Whether Rembrandt was commissioned to paint a theme of this kind, and if so what function the painting might have had, are questions that cannot be answered for the present.

Whether Saskia acted as the model for this, as has often been suggested, is extremely doubtful. The *Portrait of Saskia* annotated by Rembrandt himself – a silver-point drawing from 1633 in Berlin (Ben. 427) – hardly gives one reason to believe so.

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

– Possibly coll. Comte de Baudoin, sale Paris 4ff May 1797 (Lugt 5587), no. 37: 'D'après Van-Rhyn, dit Rembrandt. Pallas, couverte de son armure, tenant une lance de la main droite, & du bras gauche soutenant son bouclier: hauteur 40 pouces, sur 32 de large [= 108 × 86.4 cm]. T[oile]. (25.1 livres).

## 8. Provenance

– Coll. Duke of Buckingham (Stowe), sale London (Christie's) 15 August–7 October 1848, no. 424: '... This picture

was purchased by the Late Marquis of Buckingham, on the recommendation of Sir Joshua Reynolds.' (£53.11s. to Roe).

– Coll. W. W. Pearce, London, 1872.

– Coll. Comte de l'Espine, Brussels.

– Coll. Baron de Beurnonville, sale Paris 3ff June 1884, no. 294 (20 000 francs to Féral); sale Paris 30–31 January 1885, no. 70 (12 000 francs).

– Dealer Ch. Sedelmeyer, Paris (*Catalogue of 100 paintings* VIII, 1902, no. 32).

– Coll. Sir George Donaldson, London.

– Coll. Michael Friedsam, New York, 1931.

### 9. Summary

Despite a certain amount of clumsiness and lack of subtlety, no. A 70 fits well into Rembrandt's work between 1632 and 1635. Particularly if account is taken of his further development in depicting lifesize female figures, such as the Leningrad *Flora* of 1634 (no. A 93), the Madrid *Sophonisba* of 1634 (no. A 94), the London *Flora* of 1635 (Br. 103) and the *Minerva* of 1635 (Br. 469), there can be no doubt as to its authenticity: the way the handling of chiaroscuro in the face serves the rendering of form is wholly similar. A reliable signature and date reinforce this opinion. From the X-rays (and the autoradiographs) it can be seen that there was a radical change to the composition, with the positions of the sword and shield being reversed.

### REFERENCES

- 1 T. Rousseau, Jr (with technical notes by M. Pease), 'Report on an early Rembrandt', *The Metropolitan Museum of Art Bulletin* 6 (1947), pp. 49–53.
- 2 Br.-Gerson 467.

### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved work which can be regarded as authentic. It carries a confidence-inspiring signature and the date 1633. It is uncertain whether the present format is original.

### 2. Description of subject

Bust of a man with curly hair, in front of a neutral background, with the body almost in profile and the head turned three-quarters towards the viewer, on whom the gaze is fixed. He wears a dark red cloak, and a gold chain with pendant hangs over his shoulders. A further chain hangs down from the pendant. A gorget is vaguely visible, partly hidden beneath the cloak.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in September 1968 (S. H. L., E. v. d. W.) in good daylight and out of the frame. An X-ray film of the head and shoulders was available, and a copy film of this was received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 61 × 48.1 cm. Thickness varies from 0.5 to 0.7 cm. Three planks. The panel has splintering at the lefthand edge. Where the edge of the panel is visible at the back (see below), there are no definite traces of bevelling to be seen. This raises doubts as to whether it still has its original format. The back has been planed flat, and fitted with an unusual reinforcing structure that is no longer intact. An oak rim, about 7 cm wide and c. 1 cm thick, is stuck onto the edge of the oval panel; at top and bottom this has saw-cuts in the direction of the centre, reaching down to the panel, at intervals of c. 1.5 cm. The rim has gaps on the left and right, about 7 cm wide, at half-height; from traces of glue it is evident that a horizontal batten of this width was once fixed across the full width of the panel and let into the oval rim. At right angles to this batten (subsequently removed), and still present, are two oak battens 4.6 cm wide reaching out to the oval rim. Further changes have been made to this construction: to left and right, at both top and bottom, pieces have been removed from the glued-on rim. The exposed rear surface of the panel still shows shallow saw-marks that match, in direction and spacing, those elsewhere on the rim. The absence of bevelling along the edge of the panel itself, already mentioned, can be seen at these points.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: According to information kindly supplied by Prof. Dr J. Bauch, Hamburg (letters of 5 March and 28 April 1981), dendrochronology examination of the lower edge of the centre plank showed 279 annual rings heartwood, datable as 1322–1600; since the youngest annual rings may be expected to be on the boundary between heartwood and sapwood and (in view of the age of the tree) allowance has to be made for 20 annual rings of sapwood, the felling date can be put at 1620 or soon after.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish, light tint is visible in the numerous translucent areas.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good. Craquelure: none seen.

DESCRIPTION: A characteristic feature is that over large areas broad strokes of a ruddy brown underpainting have been left visible. In the background in particular, these strokes, of more or less translucent paint, are readily apparent; they run in various directions, and most of the background has been dealt with in this way. Only here and there, mainly on the left by the contour of the back, does the paint – grey in colour – cover more fully; this grey recurs in a slightly lighter shade at the chin and neck. Yet even here the brown underpainting contributes occasionally to the overall effect. A broad band of a darker, opaque grey runs along the righthand outline of the body.

In the face the light paint of the lit areas stands out as obviously having been placed on top of the brown underpainting at a late stage. This method of working is especially evident in the forehead and chin, where the lit areas sit like opaque islets and peninsulas on the reddish-brown underpainting which is left visible to show shadows, as for instance in the wrinkles. The relatively coarsely brushed underpainting is also clearly visible in the eye-socket in the lit half of the face, from the pupil to the bridge of the nose, in the bridge of the nose itself and in large parts of the shadow side of the face. The reflections of light in the shadow side of the face are placed on top of it, with a slightly opaque paint; this extends, applied very thinly and covering only here and there, over a large part of the shadowed half of the face. The lit parts are painted with thin, supple strokes, in colours containing a noticeably large amount of pink. Because of this and of the warm brown colour of the underpainting, the whole painting takes on a ruddy appearance, all the more so since red is used in the cloak as well.

The eyes are painted deftly, that on the left giving the impression of being worked up only locally on top of the sketchlike underpainting. A minimal, greyish catchlight is placed on a black pupil that has been set down casually, and a little white is used between the iris and the corner of the eye; the rest of the white of the eye is indicated with a grey paint that is partly opaque. The eye on the right (which has ended up rather large) has very little detail. The opaque pupil is surrounded by a flat and slightly transparent grey, and has no catchlight.

While pink and a very light, almost white flesh colour predominate in the lit flesh areas, the part along the jaw is painted as a band tending towards a green, using small and thick dabs of the brush. The mouth is sketched in a relaxed manner, translucent in places and with some touches of pink on the lower lip; the upper lip is executed in a translucent red, with translucent greys. The bow-shaped mouth-line is in a reddish black. The dark nostril has apparently been left as part of the monochrome underpainting.

The hair has been given a woolly appearance by using brushstrokes that follow the curls; for the most part these are quite obviously part of the underpainting: the grey of the background, where it has been strengthened here and there with opaque paint, lies on top of the hair at some points. Here and there the effect of plasticity has been enhanced with curved strokes of black and grey. Occasionally, in particular at the place where to the right of the head the background of the hair and the contour of the cheek meet, a patch of the ground has been left virtually unpainted.

Besides the colour of the light ground, a red colour tending to violet shows through the predominantly black paint used for the cloak, and is rather stronger at the outline of the back and along the righthand contour of the body. The black has been applied as a thin layer, with the indication of form emphasized here and there with a few strokes of thicker paint. A few



Fig. 1. Panel 61 × 48.1 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



narrow, thick strokes of pink suggest a sheen of light on the cloth. By the outline of the back, above the last link of the chain, the cloak appears to have been extended to the left over the grey of the background. The chain is done for the most part in a dark ochre-yellow, with a little lighter yellow and brown. The gorget is indicated roughly with strokes of greyish paint and with small flicks of grey for the edges and rivet-heads.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

In the available film of the central area, the radiographic image shows what one expects from examining the paint surface. The opaque parts of the background show up clearest along the contour of the body and head. The correction in the left shoulder-line, noted at the paint surface, appears rather lighter.

The reinforcing structure, and a mark 'M[usée] R[oyal]/No. 950' in red paint, both on the back of the panel, are clearly visible.

#### *Signature*

In fairly thick black paint over the evidently already dry area of translucent underpainting in the right background, level with the gorget <Rembrandt. f (followed by a vertical stroke with a dot under it)/.1633.>. The name is written in letters that gradually get larger. The writing seems spontaneous, and the inscription makes a reliable impression.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### **4. Comments**

Stylistically, the painting is quite close to a number of Rembrandt's busts of the early 1630s, especially in the way the subtle treatment of light and shade suggests the modelling of the face and, more generally, in the effect of space and plasticity created by the chiaroscuro. Although the technical means used

Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1)



are also in accordance with what one usually sees in Rembrandt's panels from this period, the execution is of an uncommonly sketch-like nature. The strikingly reddish underpainting has been left visible to an unusually large extent in most of the background, the face and the dress, and where opaque paint has been used for the working-up this produces an indication of plasticity in some areas only. These peculiarities become particularly evident when one compares the picture with the *Self-portrait in a cap*, likewise dated 1633 and likewise now in the Louvre (no. A 72). In this work, the manner of painting in the lit parts of the face is far more forceful, the contours contribute more to a suggestion of plasticity, the colour scheme shows an effective alternation of cool and warm tints, and the body, though showing little detail, presents a stronger suggestion of depth. One may wonder whether no. A 71 should perhaps be considered an uncompleted picture, yet all areas have been attuned to each other to such a degree that one cannot believe that work was abandoned halfway through. One must rather assume it was intended as a sketchlike 'tronie' and, given the competent and sensitive execution and the stylistic similarities to works by Rembrandt, there is no reason to doubt his authorship. The signature and date of 1633 may serve as confirmation of this.

Among Rembrandt's works from this year, the Amsterdam *Bust of a young woman* (no. A 75) resembles no. A 71 most in its occasionally thin and somewhat superficial treatment. Among Rembrandt's self-portraits this one stands out not only by its sketch-like execution but also by the fact that it shows the artist bare-headed, as he has portrayed himself earlier in a few paintings and quite numerous etchings. Very similar versions are hidden under the Glasgow *Portrait of the artist* of 1632 (no. A 58) as well as under the Berlin *Bust of Rembrandt* which we attribute to another hand (no. C 56), as is shown by the X-rays of both paintings.

It is doubtful whether the panel was originally oval – the only evidence that would be sufficient to prove this (bevelling running all round the oval) is lacking. The splintering seen on one side could indicate subsequent sawing of the panel, and the brushstrokes in the background that occasionally come to an abrupt end at the present edge of the panel also seem to provide evidence for this. The remarkable cradle is of the same construction as that on the Milan *Bust of a young woman* (no. C 57), which was with no. A 71 in the Musée Napoléon from 1806; the cradles seem to be a good deal older than that, but the two paintings are not known to have been in the same collection previously as the close resemblance of these structures might suggest.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

Hofstede de Groot<sup>1</sup>, probably confusing no. A 71 with no. A 72, mentions prints by Claessens, F. Smith and Weisbrod. We know of no prints reproducing no. A 71.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

– Musée Napoléon (inv. no. 935) as 'Ancienne Collection'; described as 'Conquêtes de 1806' by Demonts, who however confused this *Self-portrait* with the one brought from Kassel in that year and returned in 1815<sup>2</sup>.

#### 9. Summary

The painting shows a remarkable amount of uncovered ground and underpainting, so much that one wonders whether it may be uncompleted. The balance achieved in the distribution of the light values seems however to preclude this. In its rather sketchlike execution it stands somewhat on its own among comparable works by Rembrandt such as the Paris *Self-portrait in a cap*, also dated 1633 (no. A 72). The way paint is used, which is thoroughly Rembrandtesque, and most of all the way the handling of light helps to bring about a suggestion of plasticity, make an attribution to Rembrandt acceptable. This is supported by the authentic-seeming signature and date. It is possible that the painting was originally rectangular.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 HdG 566.
- 2 Musée National du Louvre, *Catalogue des Peintures III*, Paris 1922, p. 25 no. 2552; J. Foucart, *Les peintures de Rembrandt au Louvre*, Paris 1982, p. 32.

**A 72 Self-portrait in a cap**

PARIS, MUSÉE DU LOUVRE, INV. NO. 1745

1633

HdG 567; BR. 19; BAUCH 305; GERSON 142

Fig. 1. Panel 70.4 × 54 cm



Fig. 5. X-ray





### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved and authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1633.

### 2. Description of subject

The figure, seen almost to the waist, is placed in front of a light wall and, lit from the upper left, casts a shadow on it. The body is turned three-quarters to the right, and the head seen almost square-on and tilted slightly to the right. His gloved left hand rests on the chest, with the fingers holding a gold chain that hangs over the chest and shoulders. He wears a black cap decorated with a small gold chain, and a black cloak under which a red doublet and white shirt are just visible.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in October 1971 (S. H. L., E. v. d. W.) in reasonably good daylight and out of the frame. An X-ray film of the head and part of the shoulders was available during the examination, and a copy-film was received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 70.4 × 54 cm. Thickness 0.3 cm on left, 1.0 cm on right. Single plank. Back bevelled irregularly all round, matching the varying thickness of the panel.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: According to information kindly supplied by Prof. Dr J. Bauch, Hamburg (letter of 5 March 1981) dendrochronology examination of the bottom edge showed 170 annual rings heartwood, though dating was not possible. It was however found that the wood came from the same tree as that of the panels used for the Dresden *Portrait of a man*, also from 1633 (no. C 77), and for the (undoubtedly considerably later) *Landscape with a castle* in the Wallace Collection, London (Br. 451).

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown shows through in numerous places, e.g. in thin patches in the hair, in the shadow areas of the head and occasionally at the contours, as beside the righthand shoulder.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: A sample taken (by the Laboratoire des Musées de France, Paris, in September 1969) from the righthand edge shows a thin layer – incomplete in the sample – containing chalk (calcium carbonate).

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good, somewhat rubbed in the thin parts. No craquelure seen.

DESCRIPTION: The lively background, in greys that are only partly opaque, is painted for the greater part with diagonal strokes running down to the right; at the bottom left they follow the line of the shoulder, and to the left of the cap follow the outline of the latter. The background is lightest to the right of the further shoulder. A marked paint relief in the cast shadow in the lower righthand corner suggests that this area comprises a thin, dark layer placed over a more impasto layer of light paint. This change would then have to have been made during the course of the work, because the signature, placed in the cast shadow, was set down when the undermost, thick layer of paint was still wet: the brushstrokes used for the signature cut through the relief of this paint at some points. To

the left of the cap the background paint overlaps the hair a little, indicating that in the hair the underpainting was (for the most part) left visible; this assumption is borne out by the fact that the treatment of the hair area is sketchy and translucent. At a number of other places it seems as if the paint of the background also overlaps the black paint of the cap and clothing on the shoulder; this can perhaps be explained by the fact that the paint of the background was still wet when the black paint was set next to it, for elsewhere the contours of the figure plainly lie on top of the background that was evidently completed at an early stage.

The paint structure of the face, built on a translucent brown underpainting, can be readily followed, and at a number of places the underpainting has been left partly uncovered. This is true of the hair area already mentioned, of the eye-sockets and eyebrows, the areas of shadow by the mouth, the nose and throat, and of large parts of the shadow side of the face. The brushwork in the lit side of the face varies in character, but consists for the greater part of small but lively strokes that produce an animated and compact surface structure. The flesh colour ranges from a pink on the forehead by the eyes and nose to a yellowish tint tending towards a grey in the lower half of the face. The eyes are painted relatively translucently, with opaque, irregularly shaped black pupils. The lips are painted thinly, and in the upper lip the brushstrokes are vertical. The mouthline, built up from a variety of strokes, is done in black and a carmine-like red. The same paint is used to indicate the visible nostril.

While the hair on the left is noticeably translucent, done with a free brushwork that follows the curls, the paint used in the right of the head covers more fully. Curved strokes lie on top of the background along the whole outline of the hair to the right. Here the paint is (as it is around the mouth and chin) rather greyish, whereas the hair is for the most part in a brown-black tint. At the boundary with the cap this colour tends towards a greenish tint, possibly through the effect of the remains of old varnish.

The cap and cloak are painted with broad strokes of a thin black, with a little thin grey to show the lights. The chain hanging over the shoulders and chest is shown, in the shadows and on the left shoulder in ochre colours, with in the highest lights flicks of light yellow with a trace of white. The gloved hand is indicated with a few broad strokes of grey-brown, with black between the fingers and, on the back of the hand, a few lines in a coarsely-applied carmine red.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: In a cross-section of a sample (taken by the Laboratoire des Musées de France, Paris, in September 1969) from the righthand edge in the background a multiplicity of pigments was found – fine grains of brown, red and yellow pigments and coarser grains of white and black pigments. In view of the unusual composition of this mixture, it could be seen as material used for the underpainting and including left-over remains of paint. Microchemical analysis showed oil and proteins (possibly egg white or egg yolk).

#### *X-Rays*

The radiographic image corresponds largely to what might be expected from examining the surface. The areas where ground and underpainting are seen show up dark, and the short brushstrokes in the lit part of the face form a pattern that produces a clear, gradual shift of tone. The reserve left for the cap in the background is on the left considerably more cramped than the present form, and has a different outline. On the right, level with the throat, there is a dark reserve for the cloak or hair (?), rather larger than the present edge of the cloak, and one has to assume that an autograph retouch was

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 4. Detail (1:1)



made in the background. The reserve left for the hair has, especially to the right of the head, a simple, taut contour.

#### *Signature*

On the right, in the cast shadow in the background and in grey tints, <Rembrandt. / f (followed by three dots arranged as a triangle) 1633>. The inscription appears to have been placed in the paint while this was still wet. The upper line slopes downwards slightly to the right, and the lower one even more so. In its cursoriness and layout the inscription differs somewhat from other signatures, though there is no cause to doubt its authenticity. In the more recent Rembrandt literature<sup>1</sup>, it has been thought possible that the date should be read as 1634; there is however no doubt that the last figure is a '3'.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### **4. Comments**

The execution of no. A 72, in both its technical structure and the sometimes free and sometimes very careful handling of paint, prompts no doubt as to the authenticity of the painting. The characteris-

tic way the lighting contributes to the plastic shaping of form is also wholly in accord with what we know of Rembrandt's work from the early 1630s. The bevelling on the back is evidence that the panel was oval from the outset.

The design of the painting reveals an interest in an animated composition that may have been inspired by Flemish prototypes. The broad sweep of parts of the costume, the lively contours of which are accentuated by the contrast with a fairly light background, enhance the suggestion of plasticity and animation that imbues the figure. This is also helped by the slight tilt of the head, and especially by the diagonal line of the shoulder and arm on the right. The introduction of the shadow cast by the figure on the rear wall increases the feeling of depth in the whole picture. One gets the impression that Rembrandt was here trying out, on the relatively simple subject-matter of a bust, the possibilities of a spatially dynamic idiom.

The frequent glimpses of the ground in the hair

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (slightly reduced)



and face, and the occasional wet-in-wet merging of the contours, give the impression of the painting having been produced with great energy and directness (apart from the change in the cap, which in itself is indicative of Rembrandt's interest in the rhythm of the contours). The cursoriness with which the signature has been written in the wet paint of the background is in line with this.

### 5. Documents and sources

None.

### 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Carl Wilhelm Weisbrod (Stuttgart 1743 – Vreden 1806), signed *CWd 1771* and inscribed: *Rembrandt pinx | Du Cabinet de Mr. le Duc de Choiseul | De la grandeur de 26 pouces sur 20*; No. 96 in: [P. F.] Basan, *Recueil d'estampes gravées d'après les tableaux de Monseigneur le Duc de Choiseul*, Paris 1771. Reproduces the painting in reverse.
2. Etching and engraving by Lambert Antoine Claessens (Antwerp 1763 – Reuil 1834) for *Musée Français*, 1803–1809, inscribed: *Rembrandt pinx. – Chery, del. – Claessens, Sculp.* In the same direction as the original.
3. Etching by Alexis Chataigner (Nantes 1772 – Paris 1817) for *Le Musée Napoléon I*, 1804, inscribed: *Rembrandt. | Dessiné par Frezel. – Gravé par Chataigner. | Tête de jeune homme*. In the same direction as the original.

### 7. Copies

None.

### 8. Provenance

Hofstede de Groot<sup>2</sup> wrongly identified no. A 72 with a painting in the collection of Charles I of England (see however no. A 33), and with a painting successively in the possession of Hyacinthe Rigaud and the Comte de Vence (see however Br. 38).

– Coll. Duc de Choiseul, sale Paris 6–10 April 1772 (Lugt 2020), no. 10: 'Rembrandt. Ce Tableau, de forme ovale, représente le portrait de Rembrandt étant jeune; il est coëffé d'une toque & orné d'une chaîne d'or; on peut le regarder comme de son meilleur temps. Il porte 20 pouces de large sur

2 pieds 2 pouces de haut [= 54 × 70.2 cm] B[ois].'<sup>3</sup> (600 livres to Lebrun).

\*– Coll. Duc de Brissac, confiscated under the Revolution in 1794<sup>3</sup>.

### 9. Summary

Because of the manner of painting and its stylistic features there can be no doubt of the authenticity of this painting. In it, Rembrandt seems to explore the possibilities of introducing movement into the composition of a bust; this may have been inspired by Flemish prototypes. One may assume that the oval form of the panel is the original one.

### REFERENCES

- 1 HdG 567; Br. 19; Bauch 1966, 305; Gerson 142.
- 2 HdG 567.
- 3 *Catalogue sommaire illustré des peintures du Musée du Louvre. I. Écoles flamande et hollandaise*, Paris 1979, pp. 111, 192; J. Foucart, *Les peintures de Rembrandt au Louvre*, Paris 1982, pp. 28–31.

**A 73 Bust of a man in oriental dress**

1633

MUNICH, BAYERISCHE STAATSGEMÄLDESAMMLUNGEN, ALTE PINAKOTHEK, INV. NO. 421

HDG 348; BR. 178; BAUCH 155; GERSON 152

Fig. 1. Panel 85.8 × 63.8 cm





Fig. 2. X-ray





### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved and authentic painting, reliably signed and dated 1633. It appears to have originally been rectangular.

### 2. Description of subject

A man is seen almost to the waist; he has the upper part of his body turned a little to the left and his head in almost full left profile, facing the light. The cloak over his right shoulder and upper arm suggests that this arm is slightly raised. In his left hand, held in front of his chest, he grasps a heavy and richly-worked golden staff, topped with a knob. His turban, which presses down the top of the ear, is adorned with jewels, pearls and a feather. Loose ends from the turban hang down the neck onto the shoulders. The face is shaven to form a chinstrap beard. A gold earring with a horizontal crescent pendant, the inner edge of which is irregular, hangs from his ear. He wears a green undergarment over a white shirt of which the edge is just visible at the throat, together with a cloak trimmed with gold brocade that is held closed by a gold chain across the chest.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in January 1969 (S. H. L., P. v. Th.) in good light and out of the frame. Seven X-ray films, together covering the whole picture, were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 85.8 × 63.8 cm. Thickness max. 1.2 cm. Three vertical planks, widths from left to right 16.1, 23 and 24.7 cm respectively. At the top, left and bottom the back shows the vestiges of bevelling with a straight ridge, with maximum widths of 4, 1.9 and 3.8 cm respectively; from this it may be concluded that the panel was perhaps originally rectangular.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) has shown that the centre plank has 131 annual rings of heartwood, dated 1467–1597, the righthand plank 128 annual rings, dated 1484–1611, and the lefthand plank 175 annual rings, dated 1434–1608. The centre and lefthand planks are from the same tree, with an earliest possible felling date of 1626<sup>1</sup>. Growing area: Northern Netherlands.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Yellow-brown, apparent at many points.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn<sup>2</sup> identified chalk, white lead and some ochre with glue and oil (or resin). He distinguished one whitish-grey layer 0.2 mm thick; as however, the ground is visible as the usual yellowish brown, it might well be that a 'primuersel' which usually covers a chalk and glue priming was overlooked. The oil and the small amount of ochre Kühn found may originate from this second ground layer (cf. Vol. I, Chapter II, pp. 17–19).

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good. The grey paint of the background has disintegrated slightly at some places on the left, in the darkest area. There is a stopping in the shadow part of the cloak below the hand. A small damage can be seen on the upper lip, beneath the nostril. Craquelure: readily visible on the knob

and shaft of the staff, and in the shadow between the fingers, but scarcely seen elsewhere.

DESCRIPTION: The light areas are thickly painted and often given a relief with brushwork that can readily be followed and varies greatly to suit the rendering of materials. The shadows and dark background are done thinly.

The grey background is lightest on the right behind the head, and round the head runs into a dark grey that fills the whole of the lefthand side. In the lighter part the brushstrokes are predominantly parallel, running downwards; in the dark area the brushwork is visible hardly if at all. An opaque zone of dark grey, in which a little ochre colour occurs, runs along the outline of the cloak to the left; this is probably an auto-graph retouch done to fill in the background in the reserve for the cloak that had been made too wide.

The lit part of the head is painted with strokes of flesh-coloured paint which, especially round the eye, stand out clearly to reproduce the wrinkled skin. At the nose and chin the strokes are broader, and merge more one into the next to create plastic modelling. The wing of the nose has been given a shadow with fine strokes in shades of grey placed on top of the flesh colour. The shadowed underside of the tip of the nose is rendered with a strong stroke in an ochre colour that is probably partly covered by the flesh-coloured touches of paint on the wing of the nose. The cast shadow from the nose is grey, and the almost lozenge-shaped nostril is dark grey. The contour of the chin is strengthened with a line made up from short strokes of grey, placed on top of the flesh colour.

The eye is bordered by straight, repeated brushstrokes in black that indicate the lower edge of the eyelid and suggest the eyelashes. The oval, black pupil is set in a partly translucent brown-grey iris, which to the right is adjoined by greyish-white, likewise partly translucent paint showing the white of the eye. In the acute angle between the pupil and the straight line of eyelashes there is a long white catchlight. Slightly further to the left, on the upper eyelid, a broad highlight is shown in a light flesh colour; diagonally opposite this a line of moisture done in white runs along the bottom edge of the eye. The placing of these highlights contributes to the suggestion of plasticity in this area. The bushy eyebrow is done with strokes of grey running obliquely downwards, and with a few touches of an ochre colour.

The ochre colour appears again in the mouth area, in the flesh colour above and below the corner. Along the upper lip, shown with modelling strokes, the mouth-line is drawn using thin lines of grey and a few lines of opaque brown. The hairs of the beard are depicted with curling and sinuous strokes of greyish whites and greys, with a little ochre and dark grey. On the side nearer the throat, the underlying ground contributes visibly to the overall effect. The adjoining, shadowed part of the neck is done in a thin, opaque grey placed along the translucent area, and has a wavy border along the underside of the beard. The lit part of the throat is painted with broad, bold strokes, done quite thickly in a slightly ochrish and reddish flesh colour. The fleshy ear is modelled with quite broad strokes in a subdued flesh colour, with a tinge of red at the upper edge of the earlobe; the shadow is a slightly translucent grey placed over the yellowish-brown ground.

The turban is painted fluidly over the ground (which shows through in many places) in greys, white, yellow and a little green, with long brushstrokes that suggest thin cloth tugged into folds. Glancing brushstrokes are placed over this in the light. The gold of the chain is rendered with short, thick strokes in an ochre colour and yellow; the jewels are also painted thickly, in very dark grey paint and a wine red. The pearls, in grey with white catchlights, have translucent grey

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1)



cast shadows; they are separated one from another by small dots of yellow paint, representing gold beads. The feather in its gold holder is executed with long, sweeping brushstrokes in grey and a very dark grey. The gold earring consists of thick rims of paint of an ochre colour and yellow; the tiny crescent is painted translucently.

The lit part of the cloak over the shoulder is set down in an opaque grey which becomes thinner towards the part that catches less of the light, so that the underlying ground affects the colour in that area. The pattern of the material and the brocade edging is applied on this layer with innumerable impasto touches and dots of paint in light yellow and ochre colour, interspersed with a little white and grey, the thick paint being occasionally modelled with the brush to give the desired shape. In front of the chest the cloak is executed principally, in the light, with yellow highlights on a dark grey underlayer in which the ground contributes to the overall effect. In the shadows the cloak is done with fairly coarse brushwork, in greys over the contributing ground, and here and there is worked up with thin strokes of ochre colour, grey-white, dark grey and, in a few patches, a pale reddish purple. At the bottom, especially, broad brushstrokes that evidently belong to an underlying layer of paint are visible. On the right the shoulder area has been extended out over the paint of the background with a line of grey and a few transverse short lines; this correction (which seems to form part of the original painting) does not continue through to the edge of the panel. The gold chain linking the two sides of the cloak is painted with thick strokes of yellow and ochre; in the similarly thick and opaque paint of the cast shadow the underlying layer can however still be sensed to some extent.

The green undergarment is painted over the ground (which can be glimpsed here and there) with short strokes of fairly thick and opaque paint that suggest the pattern of the cloth. The colouring ranges from a light jade green to a greenish ochre. The green is absent in the shadow area, where the material is portrayed in an opaque and almost black paint.

The back of the hand, where it is in shadow, shows a fairly even grey through which a warm tint shows and where there is hardly any brushwork to be seen. In the ochre colour of the fingers, seen in the light, the modelling is relatively more pronounced, especially in the thumb where a flesh colour is

also used. The lines of shadow between the fingers are in a thick and very dark grey.

The knob on the staff is formed from a jumble of strokes of ochre-coloured and yellow paint over touches of black; a little dark red is used on the underside of the knob on the left. The gold casing around the shaft is indicated with ochre colour alone, which takes on a greyish tint at points where the paint has been thinly applied.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The X-ray image corresponds to a great extent to what the paint surface lead one to expect from a painting in which the paint used is for the greater part comparatively little radio-absorbent. In the costume it is mainly the highlights that show up light. In the flesh parts one is struck by the heavy touches on the forehead showing up much lighter than most of the rest of the face. The hand, on the contrary, appears only very vaguely. The execution on the whole makes an impression of having been straightforward and without hesitation.

#### *Signature*

Done with dark paint in the left background by the edge of the panel, at some distance from the shoulder contour (<Rembrandt. f./1633.>). The writing is sure and regular, and matches that of others from the same period that can be looked on as authentic.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

### 4. Comments

Technically and stylistically the painting shows a large number of features common to 'tronies' painted on panel by Rembrandt during his early years in Amsterdam. It exhibits a rich variation, both in the alternation of opaque impasto and thin translucent areas that relate to the lighting and in the handling of paint matched to the rendering of materials. Equally typical is the decrease in the crispness of forms towards the edges of the picture, a principle that has led to the modelling of the hand being treated far more broadly than that of the face. The presence of the convincing signature and date confirms the work's authenticity. The remnants of straight bevelling along three edges at the back suggest that the panel was originally rectangular. This idea finds support from the existence of a later copy of rectangular format (see 7. *Copies*, 1, fig. 5). The latter shows the figure in the centre of the picture area; this suggests that the original panel was reduced in size more on the right than on the other sides, which is in keeping with the absence of bevelling along that side.

It has repeatedly been suggested that the painting was a preliminary study. Hofstede de Groot<sup>3</sup> thought that it might be linked to the figure of Belshazzar in the London painting of *Belshazzar's feast* datable in 1635 (Br. 497); Gerson<sup>4</sup> thought in

Fig. 5. Copy 1



terms of a preliminary study for an unspecified biblical subject. The painting ought rather to be seen as standing on its own, since it is a carefully done and fully completed work. Nor should it be seen as a portrait, as has been suggested. It undoubtedly belongs in the same category as a *Man in oriental dress* of 1632 in New York (no. A48), where one can assume that a model was decked out as a Turkish potentate (see that entry under 4. *Comments*). In this case too the attraction of the image will have lain in the motif, one that offers every opportunity for a virtuoso presentation of a powerful, stern head and a costume that to western eyes was stupefyingly rich. Throughout his life Rembrandt portrayed eastern characters like this in his Old Testament pictures. No. A73 represents, to judge from the gold crescent hanging from the earlobe, an Osman or, as was thought in 1785 (see 8. *Provenance*), a Persian dignitary.

Rembrandt could have seen numerous profile heads of eastern types in the prototypes known to him, such as the prints of Lucas van Leyden where one also often encounters the facial type with a straight nose. The man leaning on the wall in the background of the famous engraving of the *Adoration of the Magi* (B. 37; Hollst. X, p. 89) can be seen as a possible source in respect of the pose, facial type, shape of turban and general lighting. Campbell<sup>5</sup> has pointed to 16th-century woodcuts such as the portrait of Sultan Baiazetes II by Tobias Stimmer in

Paolo Giovio's *Vitae illustrium virorum* (Basle 1575), which do indeed show so many resemblances to no. A73 in the way the figure is presented that they can be considered as a prototype for Rembrandt alongside the work of Lucas van Leyden.

Characteristic for Rembrandt's development is the way he has here interpreted such prototypes – the marked turn of the figure and the energetic rhythm of the curving contours give the figure an entirely fresh formal meaning. This differs markedly, too, from the thematically related painting of 1632 in New York, where the accent is placed on an appearance of bulkiness in the light.

The type and posture of the figure and the vigour they express were evidently something Ferdinand Bol had in mind when he designed the figure of C. Fabricius in his picture of *Pyrrhus and Fabricius* of 1656 for the Amsterdam Town-Hall (Blankert *Bol*, cat. no. 52, cf. nos. 49–51, 53).

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

1. Canvas 77 × 63 cm, dealer R. Larsen, Brussels, 1936, as Ferdinand Bol (according to photograph in the Kunsthistorisch Instituut of the University of Amsterdam) (fig. 5). Judging from the photograph, a copy of later date which reproduces the original in a somewhat simplified form and without the hand. The rectangular format and the figure's position in the centre of the canvas support the idea that the panel of no. A73 was originally rectangular and somewhat wider on the right.

#### 8. Provenance

\*– Coll. Johan van der Linden van Slingeland, sale Dordrecht 22ff August 1785 (Lugt 3936), no. 327: 'Door denzelven [Rembrandt van Rhyn]. Op Paneel, hoog 32, breed 24 duim [= 83.2 × 62.4 cm]. Een Perziaan halverlyf in Profil, hy heeft een Tulband, met edel Gesteente en Paerlen versiert, op zyn hoofd, en is omhangen met een goud bewerkte Mantel, en een Stok in zyn linkerhand; ongemeen konstig en kragtig' (By the same . . . A Persian halflength in profile, he has a turban decorated with jewels and pearls on his head and is draped with a gold, embroidered cloak, and a staff in his left hand; uncommonly artful and vigorous) (250 guilders to Leijtsche).

– Probably bought by the Wittelbach prince Duke Karl August (1746–1795) for the 'Zweibrücken Collection' in his castle of Carlsberg near Homburg. In 1793 the collection was transferred to the gallery of the Elector Palatine Carl Theodor in Mannheim; in 1799 the French added the Zweibrücken Collection to the Elector's Bavarian collection in Munich<sup>6</sup>.

### 9. Summary

The painting, reliably signed and dated, exhibits the style and technique used by Rembrandt in his figures done on panel around 1633. One is struck by the virtuosity of the painting of sumptuous clothing, and by the pronounced energetic rhythm of the contours. There is evidence to show that the panel was originally rectangular and somewhat wider on the right than it is now.

Thematically the painting is close to a 16th-century type such as can be found in Lucas van Leyden and Tobias Stimmer.

### REFERENCES

- 1 Bauch, Eckstein, Meier-Siem, p. 491.
- 2 Kühn, p. 197.
- 3 HdG 52.
- 4 Gerson 152, Br.-Gerson 178.
- 5 C. G. Campbell, *Studies in the formal sources of Rembrandt's figure compositions*, typescript dissertation, University of London 1971, pp. 187-188.
- 6 *Katalog der älteren Pinakothek*, Munich 1936, pp. XIX-XXVII.

HDG 369; BR. 183; BAUCH 153; GERSON 136

### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved, authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1633.

### 2. Description of subject

An old man, wrapped in a cloak, is seen almost to the waist. He has a mass of curling hair and a beard and moustache. The light falls from the left. His arm, in shadow, is held in front of his body which is turned to the left. The head, tilted slightly forward, is turned rather more towards the viewer, while the glance is directed well towards the side.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 5 May 1969 (J. B., B. H.) in very good daylight.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Paper, stuck on a cradled panel, 10.6 × 7.2 cm. The paper is slightly wrinkled at some places.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A very light yellow-brown can be seen alongside the neck between the hair and cloak, above the lit part of the beard on the right by the ear, slightly in the hair, and showing through in the background.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good. Craquelure: none seen.

DESCRIPTION: The painting is executed in brown, a slightly lighter greyish brown, ochrish yellow and white. The background is painted in greyish brown, with lively, short and relatively broad strokes running in various directions. The paint is lightest at the lower left and to the right of the head. The light yellowish-brown ground contributes to the colour effect everywhere.

The modelling of the face is achieved by means of small strokes, the paint applied more thickly as it becomes lighter in tone. The brushstrokes are evident everywhere, and often lie over a thinner and darker brown that can be regarded as an underpainting. In the shadow of the cheek this darker brown is wholly exposed.

The eyes, done with small touches of paint, are executed only summarily but with a strong suggestion of form. In that on the left the brown iris and dark brown pupil can still just be distinguished one from the other, but on the right they consist of a single stroke of dark brown, which stands out a little against the white of the eye, also done in brown.

The nostril is a dark brown. The mouth (placed quite low) is indicated vaguely between the small strokes used for the moustache, some of which in a very light paint are placed close up to the nose. The beard is executed with slightly curving strokes, for the most part in light paint, while the hair has boldly curling strokes in dark brown, a lighter brown and ochre yellow. The dark brown continues along the neck and at the cheekbone, and merges almost imperceptibly into the cloak and along the contour of the back into the area of shadow on the arm, where a slight suggestion of folds can however just be made out. The folds in the light are painted forcefully, using relatively long brushstrokes.

A very dark brown painted border runs along the bottom

Fig. 1. Paper stuck on panel 10.6 × 7.2 cm (1:1)



edge, and narrower ones along the righthand edge and top. On the left a similar border appears to have been partly cut away, and can be seen only in the lower half and at the very top.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

None available.

#### *Signature*

In dark brown, relatively large, at the upper left <Rembrandt> and at the upper right <.1633.>. Although the placing and relatively large size are unusual, there is no reason to doubt the authenticity.

#### *Varnish*

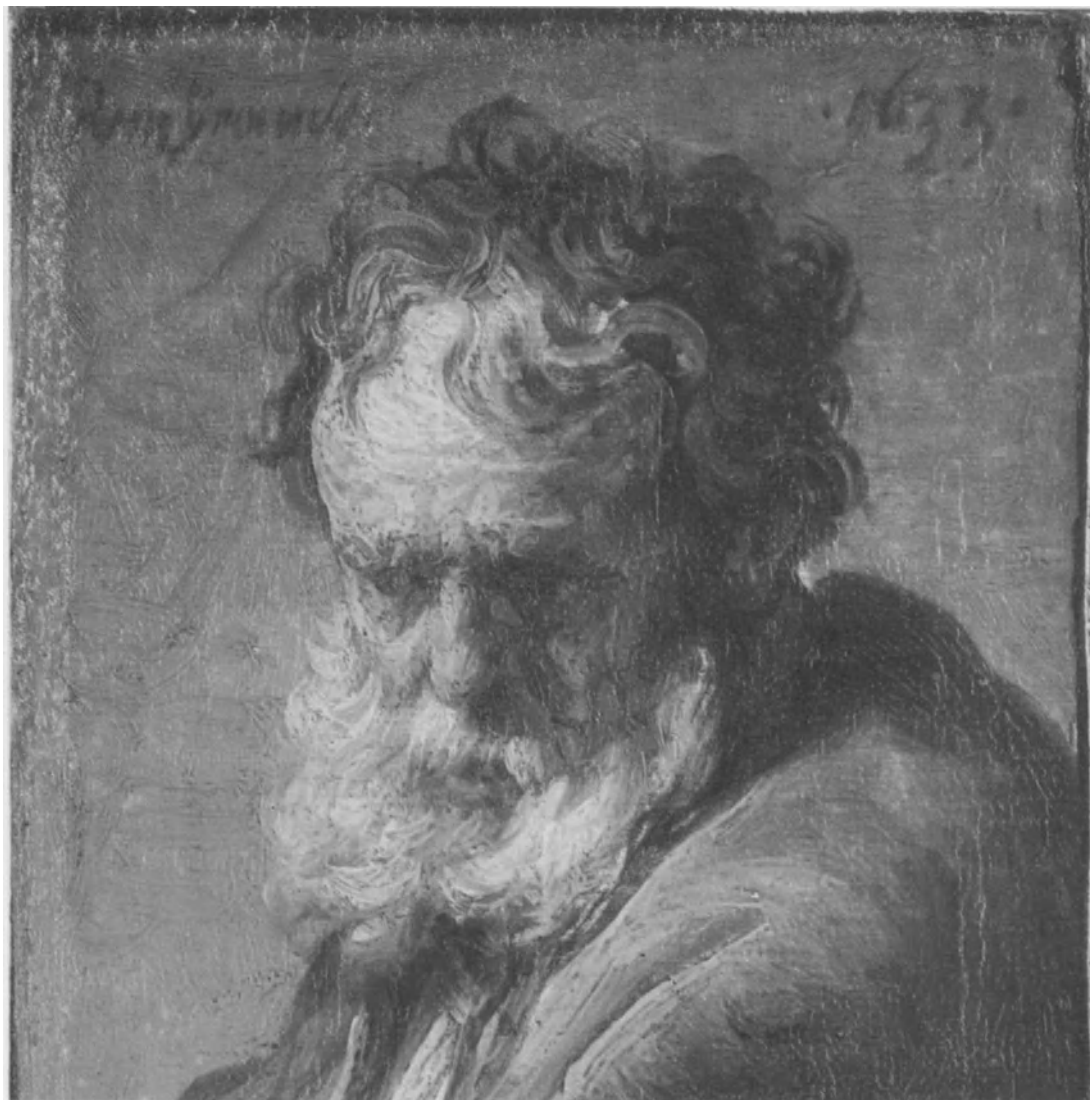
No special remarks.

### 4. Comments

This little painting is outstanding for its homogeneous and confident execution. The head is modelled with care and thoroughness, with small brushstrokes in varying tints, the partial overlapping of small strokes of paint contributing to the effect of plasticity which elsewhere is created in more strongly contrasting colour using broader strokes. The chiaroscuro and plasticity, and the lively brushwork used to achieve these, make the attribution to Rembrandt entirely acceptable. Gerson<sup>1</sup> rightly pointed to a similarity in execution with the drawing of *Christ and His disciples* of 1634 in the Teylers Museum, Haarlem (Ben. 89).



Fig. 2. Detail (2:1)



In its motif no. A 74 comes close to a number of etched and drawn heads of old men dating from the years 1630/31, particularly etching B. 260 of 1631 (fig. 3), wrongly attributed by Münz (Münz 41) to J. G. van Vliet and showing a similar pose and handling of light. A print of the first state in Amsterdam moreover shows corrections done in pen and brown ink that provide more detail and has more shadow to the arm, in a way that is strongly reminiscent of no. A 74. Van Regteren Altena (in: *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 9, 1961, pp. 3–10) attributes these corrections to Rembrandt. One might term no. A 74 a variant (at indeed the same scale) of this corrected print.

In the light of the connexion with the etchings and drawings from the years 1630/31, and especially of the similarity with the corrected print of etching B. 260, the date of 1633 on this painting does seem a little surprising. One has to remember, however,

that the graphic freedom of the brushwork does not argue in favour of an earlier dating, and can be interpreted as anticipating what we see, in this respect, in Rembrandt's work from 1634. Besides the connexion already mentioned with the Haarlem drawing (Ben. 89) dated 1634, there is evidence for this in, for instance, the resemblance in rhythm and graphic quality to some of the heads in the Moscow *Incredulity of Thomas* of 1634 (no. A 90), and especially to the head of Thomas himself. This makes a dating in 1633 acceptable; one would then have to assume that for the subject matter of this little grisaille Rembrandt returned to a motif that had occupied his attention in model studies during the years 1630/31. There are insufficient grounds for the doubt expressed by Gerson<sup>1</sup> as to the authenticity of the date and signature (the latter he even termed 'spurious'); although they are, in relation to the extremely small format, unusually large and

Fig. 3. Rembrandt, *Bust of an old man*, 1631, etching (B. 260 I) with artist's corrections in pen and brown ink (reproduced in reverse; 1 : 1). Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet



have an unusual placing in the two upper corners, the letters and figures would seem to have enough similarity to authentic Rembrandt signatures.

The unusual format of no. A 74, and the fact – not previously mentioned in the literature – that it is on paper, raise the question of what function it was meant to serve. Among Rembrandt's grisailles the *Ecce homo* of 1634 in London (no. A 89), also done on paper, evidently served as a preparation for the etching of equal size of 1635/36 (B. 77). A second, the Amsterdam *Joseph telling his dreams*, probably of 1633 (no. A 66) may have been intended for an etching as well, and was used for a much smaller one in 1638 (B. 37). It is however difficult to imagine that no. A 74, with its very small size, and simple motif, was a preparation for an etching. Gerson<sup>1</sup> regarded it as 'a fragment of a grisaille sketch and as such related to the powerful drawings of the 1630s' (referring in this connexion to the Haarlem drawing of 1634). The painting does indeed – because of the support, the subject matter and the monochrome treatment – have something of the nature of a drawing; but one must question whether it is a fragment. The composition points rather to its being a self-contained work, and the way the brushstrokes come to an end against the brown border (which may or may not be original) supports such an assumption.

Compared to the grisailles that were not uncommon in the Northern Netherlands in the 17th century – for instance in the work of Adriaen van de Venne, Benjamin Cuyp and Jan van Goyen – no. A 74 is unusual in being so small, and in its subject matter. In these two respects it can to some extent be compared with a work done by Rembrandt in another medium – the pen and wash drawing of a *Half-length figure of an old man* which he contributed in 1634 (with the motto: 'Een vroom gemoet/Acht eer voor goet' – An upright soul prizes honour above wealth) to the *album amicorum* of Burchard Grossmann (The Hague, Koninklijke Bibliotheek; Ben. 257; Strauss *Doc.*, 1634/6). If, as is quite probable, no. A 74 can be looked on as an independent work, it may have had a comparable purpose, and this could explain the prominent signature and date.

##### 5. Documents and sources

'Een out Mannehoofd op pampier door Rembrandt . . . 1-10-0 [guilders]', which may or may not be identical with no. A 74, was described in an estate (of a Mrs van Sonsbeeck?) that was valued by the painter Anthony de Waardt (The Hague 1689-1751); see A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 24 (1906), p. 238.

##### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

None.

## 8. Provenance

- Fr. Szarvady sale, Paris 21 February 1874, no. 39.
- Sale Paris 1900 (anonymous).
- Dealer F. Kleinberger, Paris.
- Coll. Baron Léon Jansen, Brussels<sup>2</sup>.
- Coll. Andrew Mellon, Washington.
- Coll. Paul Mellon, Washington, by whom sold c. 1955 to the present owner.

## 9. Summary

In its format this small painting is exceptional among Rembrandt's work, but in its technique – a grisaille on paper – it is not. There is a clear connexion with etchings and drawings of similar subjects from the years 1630–31, in particular with the print, corrected in pen, of etching B. 260 of 1631. This connexion, combined with the sureness of execution, makes the attribution to Rembrandt convincing. Though the subject is close to that of earlier work, the date of 1633 shown is quite acceptable, and there is no reason to doubt the authenticity of the signature and date. The work can best be compared with a contribution Rembrandt made to an *album amicorum* in 1634.

## REFERENCES

- 1 Gerson 136, Br.-Gerson 183.
- 2 HdG 369.

### 1. Summarized opinion

An only moderately well preserved, authentic work, probably dating from 1633. It appears to have originally been rectangular.

### 2. Description of subject

A young woman is seen to the waist, with the body almost in profile facing the right, and the head turned towards the viewer.

Over a pleated shirt reaching up to the throat she wears a dark overgarment trimmed with gold embroidery along the upper edge. A string of pearls circles the throat, and a transparent eardrop hangs from her right ear. In her dark, curling hair she wears a rope of pearls and an ostrich feather. The back of the head is adorned with a gauze veil hanging down from a diadem; this is gathered up above the ears, and from here falls down the back. The light falls from the left, and the body casts a vague shadow at the bottom right onto the rear wall, which darkens towards the left.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in February 1974 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good daylight, and again on 9 January 1979 (J. V., E. v. d. W.) in good artificial light, with a UV lamp and binocular microscope. Four X-rays available, together covering the whole of the painting.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 65.6 × 49.5 cm, filled out to a rectangle 69.9 × 53.4 cm and the whole cradled. The oval has a thickness of c. 0.6 cm. Three planks, width (l. to r.) c. 11.5, 26 and 12 cm. The two joins run slightly obliquely towards the top right. The middle plank has a crack running almost the full height, at about 3 cm from the right-hand join. Back of the oval planed flat, with traces of a straight bevelling at top and bottom; from this it may be concluded that the panel was once rectangular, was later made into an oval, and subsequently filled out to a rectangle again. This was done using fragments of a panel carrying a painting that probably dates from the 17th century (see *X-Rays* below).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown, clearly visible by the neckline and contributing to the colour between the pleats in the shirt.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Two cross-sections prepared by Mrs C. M. Groen from samples taken along the upper left edge both show two ground layers, the lower one consisting of chalk and glue, the top layer consisting of white lead probably in an oily medium; in one of the samples the latter layer contains some brownish particles.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: On the whole, there is wearing in the thin parts, such as the shadowed side of the face and the righthand background. Recent retouches are apparent under UV light, and occur in the hair on the left above the forehead, in the shadow side of the face on the right and, especially, in the corner of the righthand eye, below this in the area close to the contour of the face and corner of the mouth, as well as in

the left eyebrow, the upper border of the left eyelid and in the background and clothing. Other retouches, which can be made out with less certainty, are found in the edge of the hair at the forehead, in the area of hair at the left above the forehead, in the shadows on the forehead, below the right eye and along the nose, in the lips, in the zone outside the facial contour on the right, alongside the outline of the neck on the left and in the veil level with the neck and shoulder. Craquelure: none seen, other than in the retouches.

DESCRIPTION: In the lit part of the face the pale flesh-coloured paint is applied fairly thickly with clearly visible brushstrokes that follow the form of the face and neck. At a few places, in particular in the nose, the brushwork is however random. Pink has been used in the cheeks, eyelids and the wing of the nose.

The woman's right eye is painted accurately and with a fair measure of plasticity; the black pupil and grey iris are given a pure round shape. A light grey catchlight has been placed in the iris exactly along the contour of the pupil, roughly opposite the lightest part of the iris. The white of the eye is done in opaque white on the left and is greyish and somewhat translucent on the right. The dark underedge of the top eyelid does not continue, on the right, into the corner of the eye, which is rendered unclearly in red (and is probably no longer intact). The curve of the eyelid over the eyeball is indicated clearly by highlights. In the brown shadows around the eye the light ground contributes to the tone. The eyebrow is done fairly translucently (tiny blue-grey lines of hair appearing to be later additions). The eye on the right has been considerably retouched, and consequently can hardly be properly assessed. The structure is now very unsure, the colour a muddy grey and a greenish brown, with a few touches of red in the corner by the nose.

The light flesh colour of the forehead runs towards the right, via a greyish flesh tone, into the far more thinly painted brownish shadow. In the light area, above the eyebrow, thick strokes of white have been used alongside the strokes of pink to show the highest light. Brilliant white highlights are also placed on the ridge of the nose and by the tip of the nose. The lips show, beneath the brownish red now visible, a much more subtle pinkish red. Other than at the right (where it is no longer original) the mouth-line is built up from small strokes of black. The chin, which is modelled by the light, has an alternation of warm and cool flesh tints.

The earlobe is painted quite thickly, while the rest of the ear is done thinly and rendered very summarily. The hair has a brownish basic tone. The rather negligently-done curls in grey and brown extend over the flesh colour of the forehead. The rope of pearls with ornament and diadem are indicated in cursory fashion, while the gauze veil is executed with strokes of light grey that become rather confused especially towards the bottom. In the shadow on the right the veil is indicated sketchily in a brown which seems to form part of the underpainting. The ostrich feather is painted somewhat less sketchily in a little grey placed over a brown, with scant rendering of the material.

The pleats in the shirt are painted with fine strokes of white paint between which the yellowish ground is everywhere nearly exposed. Towards the shadow side these strokes become grey, and in the shadow itself they consist of a translucent brown paint. The large pearls of the necklace each have a thick, white catchlight; between the pearls there are dots of a vivid yellow. This yellow recurs, together with an ochre colour, in the upper edge of the overgarment, where the gold embroidery is suggested with spots and smears of paint. There is very little structure to the execution, especially in the half-shadow where the paint has merged in part with the white paint of the shirt. The

Fig. 1. Panel 65.6 × 49.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray

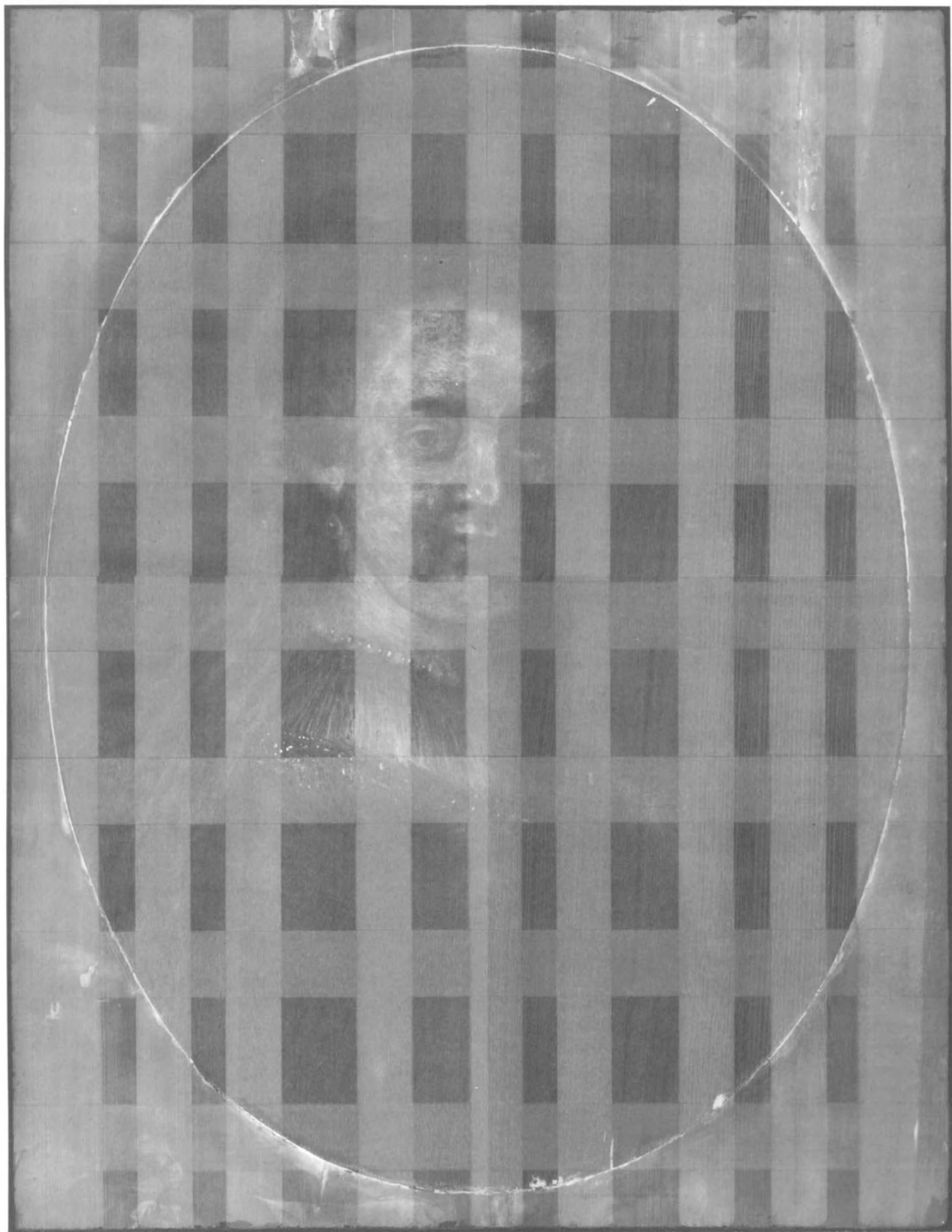




Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)



overgarment now appears as an undifferentiated, very dark shape, although it is possible to detect some structure; on the shoulder it is heightened with broad strokes of a bluish grey that produce little suggestion of plasticity.

The cast shadow in the background is painted, in a somewhat translucent dark brown, with brushwork that is quite easy to follow; above this, beside the contour of the body, thicker, grey paint has been used. Further towards the edge of the painting the brown of the cast shadow extends upwards and then spreads out into a translucent area containing vague cloudy shapes. Above the head, and especially to the extreme left, a fairly closed and opaque dark grey predominates.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Two cross-sections, prepared by Mrs C. M. Groen from samples taken in the background along the upper left edge, both show on top of the ground a layer containing a mixture of black, some ochre, red ochre and white pigment. In one of these there is a layer of varnish covered by a paint layer that obviously belongs to an overpainting connected with the enlargement of the panel.

#### X-Rays

The distribution of light areas corresponds to a large extent with that of light in the painting. The small brushstrokes in the head form a rhythmic pattern in which a diagonal movement (from top left to bottom right) predominates.

The forehead is bounded at the top in a curve, while in the paint surface the hair is seen to have been painted partly over a light paint.

The grain of the oval panel runs somewhat diagonally, particularly in the righthand half, diverging towards the top right. The two joins exhibit the same divergence, and run parallel with each other.

The pieces of wood used to enlarge the oval panel show the vestiges of painting, and at the lower left a figure with the right hand raised can be clearly made out. From the style of the painting one gets the impression that these fragments come from a 17th-century panel.

#### Signature

In dark grey over the lighter grey and brown of the background on the right, level with the chest (*Rembrandt, fl. 1633*). The weak rhythm and hesitant writing do not carry much conviction.

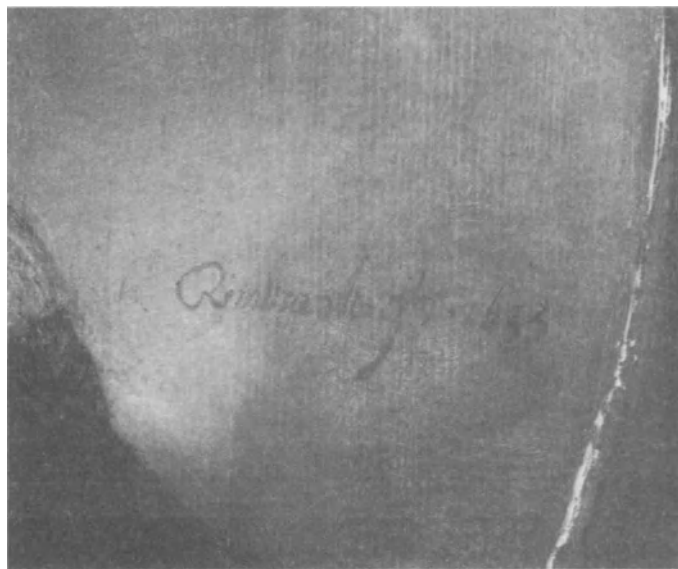
#### Varnish

The light areas have been selectively cleaned, while over the remaining parts of the oval panel there is still a fairly heavy layer of yellowed varnish. There is a thick, enamel-like varnish on the added sections.

#### 4. Comments

In this painting the execution of the head does not differ significantly from the way in which Rembrandt painted similar busts in the early 1630s. The use of opaque, quite thickly applied paint in the light and thin, translucent paint in the shadow, the marking of the highest light with strong highlights, allowing a light ground to contribute to the overall effect in the shadows, the building up of the mouth-line with small brushstrokes and the cursory depiction of the ear all match his manner of working. Less typical are the virtual absence of any rendering of

Fig. 4. Detail with signature (reduced)



material in the ostrich feather and the rather ineffective treatment of the pleated shirt. The pictorial cohesiveness is impaired by the poorish state of preservation, and especially by disturbing overpaintings, particularly in the corner of the mouth and the lower lip on the right. Possibly these features may add to the impression of an incongruence between the lit side of the face and the shadow side which is seen slightly more frontally, something that in itself is not uncommon with Rembrandt.

One may note close correspondences with other works from the early 1630s. The 1633 *Self-portrait* in the Louvre (no. A 71) shows remarkable resemblances in the treatment of the eyes and chin. The radiographic image of a work like the *Nivaa Portrait of a 39-year-old woman* of 1632 (no. A 62) has the same structure as that of no. A 75, and reveals the same rhythmic pattern in the brushwork. These features and similarities are reason enough to make this painting acceptable as an authentic work. Although the authenticity of the signature is extremely doubtful, the date of 1633 may well be correct and have been based on an original inscription that could have been lost when the panel's format was altered.

The painting must originally have been not oval but rectangular: one can conclude this from the traces of straight bevelling to be found on the back of the panel. From the oblique line of the parallel joins one sees that the oval must have been sawn slightly askew from an originally rectangular panel, on which the woman was seen quite upright, as she is in an old copy (see 7. *Copies*, 1). The oval was at some point transformed into a rectangle by the addition of pieces of wood (still present but now hidden by the frame). When this happened is unknown. Hofstede de Groot<sup>1</sup> described the painting

in 1893 as oval ('perhaps cut out at some time or other'), but the added portions may already have been present, and masked by the frame. The descriptions and illustrations given by Bode<sup>2</sup> in 1897 and 1899 and by Valentiner<sup>3</sup> in 1909 likewise provide no clues (though the reproductions they give do show the painting before the obtrusive overpainting of the corner of the mouth). Bredius<sup>4</sup> showed the painting in 1935 as being rectangular; later illustrations were once again oval.

The identification of the woman as Saskia van Uylenburgh was refuted by Hofstede de Groot in 1893<sup>1</sup>, but since Bode<sup>2</sup> it has been generally accepted. The only documented portrait of her is Rembrandt's silver-point drawing with autograph annotations in Berlin, also from 1633 (Ben. 427). In this drawing Saskia looks younger and slimmer than the woman in the painting. Leaving aside the question of who might have been the model, it is clear that the painting must be looked on not as a portrait, but rather as a *tronie* of a young woman in archaic clothing. The facial type, with bulging eyes and forehead, is like that used by Rembrandt in his large mythological figures of 1633 (the New York *Bellona*, no. A 70), of 1634 (the Leningrad *Flora*, no. A 93, and the Madrid *Sophonisba*, no. A 94), and of 1635 (the London *Flora*, Br. 103, and the *Minerva*, Br. 469).

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

1. Canvas, 58 × 48 cm, signed and dated <Rembrandt f. 1634>, Madrid, Museo Lázaro Galdiano (E. Valdivieso, *Pintura holandesa del siglo XVII en España*, Valladolid 1973, p. 346, pl. CXXXVI, fig. 224). A fairly old copy in which the woman is portrayed in a narrower, rectangular frame and upright, probably matching the original appearance of Rembrandt's painting.

## 8. Provenance

– Probably bought by Thomas, Earl of Elgin (1766–1841), according to a letter dated 21 January 1933 from Lord Elgin to Duveen, quoted in notes by I. de Bruijn (Rijksmuseum, Department of Paintings).  
 – Sold by Lord Elgin, Broom Hall (Scotland) to Duveen Bros., Paris.  
 – Bought from Duveen in December 1932 by I. de Bruijn, Spiez (Switzerland).  
 – Given by Mr and Mrs I. de Bruijn-van der Leeuw to the Vereniging Rembrandt in 1933 on the 50th anniversary of its founding, for placing in the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum. Made over to the latter in 1961.

## 9. Summary

The suggestion of depth around the figure and the plasticity of the figure itself are achieved by a varying use of opaque thick and translucent thin paint, by brushwork that contributes to the modelling, and by a carefully thought-out distribution of light and dark. The confidence-inspiring signature and date are further arguments for accepting this painting as an authentic work by Rembrandt from 1633, though it has suffered from wear and shows disturbing overpaintings. The panel must originally have been rectangular, and the present oval was sawn slightly askew from it. The common identification of the woman shown as Saskia is based on weak evidence.

## REFERENCES

- 1 C. Hofstede de Groot, 'Hollandsche kunst in Schotland II: Broom Hall bij Edinburgh', *O.H.* 11 (1893), p. 223.
- 2 W. Bode, 'Die Bildnisse der Saskia van Uylenborch als Braut und junge Gattin Rembrandts', *Jahrb. d. Pr. Kunsts.* 18 (1897), pp. 82–91, esp. 86. W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt III*, Paris 1899, no. 152.
- 3 W. R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt. Des Meisters Gemälde*, Stuttgart-Leipzig 1909 (Kl. d. K.), p. 128.
- 4 Br. 94.

HDG 608; BR. 97; BAUCH 474; GERSON 134

### 1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved work (though altered in format), authentic and reliably signed and dated 1633.

### 2. Description of subject

A young woman is seen almost down to the waist, the body in left profile and the slightly forward-tilted head turned three-quarters towards the viewer. The light falls from the left on her head and shoulders, and her smiling face is partly in the shadow of a red hat with a broad slashed brim and an ostrich feather held by a gold chain, worn over hair which hangs down on both sides of the face. An eardrop is worn in the visible ear, and a string of pearls round the neck. A blue dress of figured material, ornamented with small bows and braiding, leaves part of the shoulders and bosom bare; over them she wears a thin white scarf. She holds her gloved right hand before her breast.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 20 May 1970 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in moderately good artificial light and in the frame, with the aid of an ultraviolet lamp.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 52.4 × 44 cm. Thickness c. 1 cm. The main component is formed by a somewhat irregularly octagonal panel made up of three planks. The righthand join runs slightly obliquely (top 10.4 cm and bottom 8.3 cm from the righthand edge), and is reinforced at the back with a batten: the lefthand join could not be seen, but was noted during dendrochronology examination (see below). In the four corners the octagon is filled out to make a rectangle by means of four oak triangles glued to the central octagonal panel with rebated joints; these joints, too, are strengthened with small battens at the back. At the back the main panel is bevelled at the left, right and bottom over a width of 2.5–3 cm, c. 3.5 cm and c. 1.5 cm respectively; along the entire upper edge (including the added sections) there is a rebated profile similar to that at the joints of the triangular additions to the main panel. In the middle of each side, close to the edge, a small hole runs right through the panel and the various layers of the painting.

The grain is vertical everywhere, though in the main panel it runs somewhat obliquely towards the upper left. A similar path is followed by the righthand join. It is likely that the original panel is tilted slightly to the left. One can reasonably assume, on the evidence of the straight line of the remaining bevelling, that the panel was originally a rectangle; the irregularity of the octagon that today forms the main panel indicates that this cannot have been the original shape. It must have been sawn into an octagon at some time, and then later have been restored to a rectangle. Furthermore, part of the panel must have been lost along the top, where there is no trace at all of the original bevelling (the present edge cuts through the plume of the cap), and – if the original panel is in fact slightly askew – narrow, tapering strips must also have been lost at the left, right and bottom.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) showed, measured at the lower edge of the centre plank of the main panel, 222 annual rings

heartwood, datable as 1387–1608. Earliest possible felling date 1623; because of the age of the tree, allowance must be made for about 20 years of sapwood, and a felling date of 1628 onwards is probable. Growing area: Northern Netherlands.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish brown is clearly visible at the border between the scarf and the hair, and the same colour shows through in many other places.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn<sup>1</sup> found a white chalk ground in a cross-section of a sample taken from the bottom edge. On top of this he found a layer consisting mainly of an unidentified medium and a thin white layer containing chalk and white lead. These layers – the two lastnamed obviously being the 'primuersel' – showed different degrees of fluorescence.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: On the whole reasonably well preserved, though one gets the impression that the painting has in the past been overcleaned. From the fact that certain brushstrokes, e.g. in the light area of the neck, are rather isolated it might be deduced that glazes have suffered or even disappeared. The lights on the edge of the cap may also have lost their red glaze. When the wood sections in the corners were affixed and painted there may presumably, in view of the continuous nature of the paint layer, have been some overpainting of the background on the main panel, though this is nowhere evident. Ultraviolet fluorescence reveals fairly recent retouching in the hair along the lefthand contour of the face, level with the cheekbone, in the background to the left of the plume, in the edge of the ear, in the cast shadow of the chin on the throat and in a vertical band in the hair on the right. Craquelure: none seen.

DESCRIPTION: In the lit areas of the head and scarf the paint relief is partly determined by a broad light underpainting. In the scarf one can make out freely-applied brushstrokes running parallel from the upper left to the lower right, beneath the strokes used to indicate the folds. In the head there are, at the bridge of the nose and the outline of the cheek as well as in patches of wearing in the shadow that falls across the nose, light strokes that do not tie in with the present distribution of light and shade. In the clothing, too, and especially in the shoulder and shadowed upper arm, there are very freely brushed strokes that do not follow the present forms accurately and likewise seem to belong to an underpainting. Here and there brown tones and lines visible in thin places (such as in the shadow of the nose and in the eye on the right) are probably also part of the initial lay-in that has remained exposed.

The painting exhibits a very free treatment in the widely varying use of paint that ranges from very thin and tending towards translucency – in parts of the shadow passages and occasionally in the background – to an impasto in the light accents. With the strong red in the hat and in the lips, the green-blue in the clothing and the ubiquitous bright yellow of the jewellery, no. A 76 can be termed a colourful painting; this is made particularly striking by the scale of the figure in a relatively narrow frame.

The dark background is translucent at various places, but elsewhere is done with a lively brushstroke in opaque greys, particularly along the edge of the hat. Gaps are left here and there between the grey paint and the paint of the hat, in which transparent brown tones can be glimpsed – probably parts of the underpainting.

A similarly free treatment is apparent in both the lit side and shadows of the face. In the shadow cast by the hat the grey

Fig. 1. Panel 52.4 × 44 cm



paint, tending towards a green, has been applied with an animated brushstroke; though by no means thin everywhere, this paint allows the ground to show through at some points, especially in the eyebrows and eye-sockets. In this area, subtle flesh-coloured areas of reflected light have been added. The transitions to the lit parts of the face are quite distinctly marked, although the tones occasionally run one into another. The lit part of the face has been painted with a clearer and mostly short brushstroke, and the paint shows for the most part a somewhat coarse relief, which may – as has been said – perhaps be partly caused by a local underpainting in a light paint. The brushstroke follows the structure of the form. The highest lights are applied boldly; the righthand side of the face, in shadow, is painted more thinly. The lights around the dimple in the cheek are placed, over grey-brown flesh tints (which become reddish at the cheek), with light strokes and touches that do not merge with their surroundings. The colour of the shadows in the lit side of the face varies, from brown beneath the nose to grey in the corners of the mouth and below the bottom lip.

In the green-blue dress the paint has been applied with a widely varying thickness, and at some places such as the transition to the shadow areas the ground shows through. In the shadow part of the upper arm one can see, in relief beneath the dark paint, strokes that seem to show a decorative pattern. On the shoulder in the light the ornamental motifs are depicted with quite thickly applied, drawn-out strokes. On the breast, where the motifs are done in blue, a wet-in-wet technique has been employed. The bows are given relief with quite strong shadows in dark grey. Buttons, and a line of braiding that runs from the shoulder down onto the chest, are picked out with thick blobs of a light yellow paint. The glove is done in a fairly flat brown, with free strokes of thicker light brown paint for the lights and dark lines to show the shadows.

The hair is painted thinly, here and there translucently with small strokes in a brownish black to show the curls. The red hat is painted with thin red lake tints in thick, squiggly and curving strokes to suggest the lights along the edge. The chain lying on the hat is indicated with thick yellow highlights, the tips of some of which appear to have been broken off. The plume, shown with strokes of a light grey-green paint, is given small, squiggly edges on the side towards the light; the upper part is done with merging strokes, showing very little structure. SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn<sup>1</sup>, analysing white paint from the clothing, found white lead with traces of copper and silver, a little smalt and lead-tin yellow. Yellow paint from the chain he found to contain a mixture of yellow ochre, lead-tin yellow and white lead. Blue paint from the garment contained azurite and white lead. In brown paint directly on the ground at the bottom edge of the picture Kühn found smalt, azurite, white lead, a little brown iron oxide pigment (probably umber) and some black pigment. In view of the unusual composition of this mixture, it could be seen as material used for the underpainting and including left-over remains of paint.

#### X-Rays

None available.

#### Signature

In the left background, next to the breast in grey (<Rembrandt. f [t] / 1633>). The signature is difficult to read since the paint closely matches that of the background, and it is visible mainly in relief. Because of this one also cannot tell clearly whether there is a further mark after the *f*, as is regularly found in 1633 signatures. With its rather narrow letters, the signature fits in well among others from that year.

#### Varnish

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

As explained under 3. *Observations, Support*, the panel was at some time reduced to an octagon, and was subsequently filled out again to make a rectangle of about the original size, though probably slightly smaller at the top than it once was and moreover tilted very slightly towards the left.

From the technical and stylistic viewpoints the painting fits in well among Rembrandt's work from the early 1630s. Translucent brown paint has been used on a yellowish ground to produce a first lay-in in tone; in the light areas this colour range has been extended with light paint containing white lead. When the painting was being worked up use was made – as is usual with Rembrandt – of paint of varying consistencies from very thin to thick and impasto in the highest lights to suit the material being rendered and the intensity of the lighting. The upper paint layers leave part of the underpainting and ground exposed. The brushwork is free and subtle, the tense edges of the strokes in the thicker paint making a lively contrast with a flat or thinly merging and translucent treatment elsewhere. The tension between the relative autonomy of the brushwork on the one hand and the suggestion of reality on the other encourages the viewer to shift his attention backwards and forwards between the illusion provided by the image and the physical reality of the paint surface.

Although the colour range is more variegated than usual, with the extremes formed by the grey-green and blues of the clothing and plume at one end and the warm red of the hat at the other, it is not atypical. A comparable colour-scheme can be seen in the New York *Bellona* of 1633 (no. A 70) and the Ottawa *Young woman at her toilet* (no. A 64). Contours that while enhancing the plasticity have a rhythm of their own, the obviously deliberate reticence in the use of detail (especially towards the edges of the composition), and an effective and adventurous lighting that devotes special attention to the effect of reflected light, are all features characteristic of Rembrandt's approach, and the execution has everywhere the stamp of authenticity. The unusually free brushwork is exceptional in a painting of this size, and prompts the notion that it should be seen as a *tronie* rather than as a portrait in the true sense of the word. This is also evident from the clothing, which has a number of archaic features and may have suggested theatrical associations.

The painting has been generally regarded as a portrait of Saskia van Uylenburgh – to whom he



Fig. 2. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 3. Rembrandt, *Death appearing to a young couple*, 1639, etching (B.109)

was engaged in 1633, and was to marry in 1634 – and as a document of the artist's view of his beloved. This belief has been prompted mainly by the charm of the smiling or laughing expression on the girl's face. Indeed there are sufficient facial resemblances with one of the few known portraits of Saskia – the Berlin silver-point drawing (Ben. 427) also dated 1633 – to make the identification of the model plausible. What is more, a laughing face was around 1600 expressly linked with the laughter of a young engaged couple; Carel van Mander (*Den Grondt der Edel vry Schilderconst*, in *Het Schilder-Boeck*, Haarlem 1604) mentions as a precept for 'depicting the emotions of lovers' that they be shown 'with a friendly laughing glance' (VI, 7), though this relates to the picture of a couple. Elsewhere he says that a laughing mouth is a sign of being in love (VI, 25), and advises portraying a happy heart that banishes sadness by having the eyes half-closed, the mouth a little open and laughing pleasantly (VI, 28).

One may wonder, however, whether the painting is not meant to show more than a young woman in love, irrespective of whether the sitter can be identified as Saskia. The question is all the more apposite since the girl is not shown in contemporary clothing,

Fig. 4. Attr. to H. G. Pot, *Vanitas*. Boston, Museum of Fine Arts

and her laugh should not too readily be taken at face value (cf. H. Miedema in: *Simiolus* 9 (1977), pp. 205–219, esp. 211). The suspicion that the painting has a more general meaning at another level is strengthened by Rembrandt's etching of *Death appearing to a young couple* of 1639 (B.109) (fig. 3) where a young couple clad in archaic dress meet Death, with the young man seen in profile and smiling. The young woman's clothing, with a wide plumed hat, is very like that worn by the laughing young woman in no. A 76. The etching is evidence that a costume like this, taken together with a merry smile, prompts the idea of *Vanitas*. Contemporary literature gives some reason for the assumption that laughing may here stand for fleeting happiness. That the Dresden painting is indeed associated with the idea of the fleetingness of life is plain from a remarkable borrowing from it: in a *Vanitas still-life* in Boston (Museum of Fine Arts, acc. no. 48.1165; reproduced in: exhibition cat. *Rembrandt after three hundred years*, Chicago 1969, p. 120, attributed to Gerard Dou; later to Hendrick Gerritsz. Pot, our fig. 4) there has been placed (probably by another hand) a female figure which with a few discrepancies – the facial expression seems to be one of pain rather than enjoyment – is a copy in reverse of that in Rembrandt's painting.

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Johann Anton Riedel (Falkenau-bei-Eger 1736–Dresden 1816). Reproduces the painting in reverse and with the figure in a frame slightly larger at the top and towards

the light. This may be an indication that the painting is being shown in its original format. The author was from 1755 *Unterinspektor* and from 1757 *Inspektor* of the Elector's collection of paintings.

### 7. Copies

Hofstede de Groot<sup>2</sup> listed two copies whose age he did not mention; one was in private ownership in London, the other in the H. D. Roussel sale in Brussels, 23–24 May 1893, no. 62: panel 50 × 43 cm.

### 8. Provenance

Recorded in the Königliche Gemäldegalerie in Dresden since 1817, but probably there some time previously (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*).

### 9. Summary

No. A 76 is, on the grounds of the execution, convincingly an authentic work. The signature, though hard to make out, also makes an authentic impression. In all four corners new sections have been added to a panel that was an irregular octagon, but the original format was probably also rectangular; it was probably a little larger at the top and perhaps also on the lefthand side. Because of the clothing, it is hard to regard the painting as a portrait in the proper sense of the word, and it can rather be seen as an allegorical picture. The smile, in combination with the luxurious dress, could indicate the *Vanitas* theme.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 H. Kühn, 'Untersuchungen zu den Pigmenten und den Malgründen Rembrandts durchgeführt an den Gemälden der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Dresden', *Maltechnik/Restauro* 83 (1977), pp. 223–233, esp. 229.
- 2 HdG 608.

HDG 933; BR. 408; BAUCH 532; GERSON 139

### 1. Summarized opinion

An authentic work, well-documented and well preserved (though probably reduced in size at the top); the (authentic?) inscription gives its date, surely correctly, as 1633.

### 2. Description of subject

In a room with a wainscoted rear wall parallel to the picture plane, the elderly Jan Rijcksen sits at a table with compasses in his hand. The table is lit from a window just visible on the left. His upper body and head are turned towards the viewer. To the right of him his wife stands with her left hand on the latch of the door through which she has just entered; from behind the backrest of his chair she leans over his shoulder, and offers him a folded letter. Her mouth is slightly open with the tongue against one of the lower teeth, giving the impression of her speaking. In a dark niche above the man's head can be seen a book, lying flat, and a bottle.

On the partly curling pages of a book lying open on the table can be seen, alongside an indication of (illegible) writing, part of a drawing, presumably that of a ship. Similar drawings are more fully visible on a sheet of paper lying on the table, in part very fuzzy and evidently showing through the paper; this also bears the artist's name and the date 1633. The folded letter in the woman's right hand carries the partly-visible inscription 'Den (? eersa . . .)/ende . . ./Jan rykensch./ . . ./Tot [placename hidden by the thumb]/port'.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 4 October 1972 (J. B., S. H. L.) in moderately good daylight and in the frame. Reduced negatives of 12 X-rays, together covering the whole painting, were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 111 × 166 cm including edges, 0.7 to 1 cm in width, originally folded over and now unfolded and painted with non-original paint, along the lefthand and righthand sides and the bottom. Single piece.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: No cusping is to be seen at the top edge of the canvas. The right hand side has cusping varying in pitch from 9.5 to 12 cm and extending 20 cm into the canvas, while the bottom has cusping varying between 9.5 and 10 cm, with a depth of 17 cm. The lefthand side has cusping with a pitch of 9.5 to 12.5 cm and a depth of 17 cm. Threadcount: 10.7 vertical threads/cm (10–11.5), 12.7 horizontal threads/cm (12–13.5). The vertical threads have numerous quite short thickenings. Because of the numerous vertical thickenings and the format of the canvas, it may be assumed that the warp runs horizontally. The total absence of cusping at the top suggests that a strip is missing from the canvas; this would, to judge from the depth of the cusping at the bottom, have been at least some 17 cm wide, which is in line with the print by J. P. de Frey (see 4. *Comments* and 6. *Graphic reproductions*). The thread density and character of the weave are so close to those of the support of *Isaac blessing Jacob* by Govaert Flinck in Amsterdam (Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 8) that it would seem that the two canvases are from the same bolt of cloth.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Presumably light, as visible in thinly-painted

areas in the background. Brushstrokes visible on the left beneath the patchy browns of the wainscot may however indicate that this light colour is connected with an underlying layer of paint (see under *X-Rays*).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: The paint layer has been badly flattened during lining. In the thickly-painted areas, such as the lit flesh parts, all the relief has been pressed flat, and to a great extent this is so in the impasto along the edge of the man's white collar as well. Otherwise the condition is very good, apart from a few strictly local damages – a small tear at the top righthand corner and a little paint loss to the left of this and close to the lefthand edge in the sheet of paper (see *X-Rays*). Craquelure: in many areas there is a fairly dense network of rather irregular pattern and uneven size. In the woman's face – most pronounced in the upper half – there are also irregular shrinkage cracks of limited length and irregular shape; similar cracks are seen here and there in the man's head.

DESCRIPTION: The background is to a great extent painted in fairly flat, dark greys, browns and grey-brown. In the patchy brown of the wainscot, where underlying light brushstrokes are visible here and there, a hanging purse is indicated with lines of dark brown. The lit window recess on the left is done in a lighter, slightly yellowish brown with rather thicker, lighter strokes and (as an indication that the plaster has crumbled and revealed the bricks) a few horizontal strokes of a warm orange-beige. The books are painted with mainly long strokes in dark browns, black and brown-grey and rather thicker mouse-grey and yellowish brown, with a few flat, broad strokes of brownish yellow for the sheen at the top of the upright book. The tablecloth is in a fairly flat bluish-green of uneven intensity, occasionally done with a dry brush (against and on top of the black cast shadow of the horizontal book) and to the left and downwards merging into an almost black shadow.

The clothing of both figures is executed in a fairly thin dark grey to black, with a small amount of internal detail and shadows in black and, especially on the woman's strongly modelled right sleeve, a sheen of light done in greys. In her clothing the often unsharp but highly effective contour on the right (where there is a purse shown in dark brown) lies on top of the brown of the door; to the front, along her jacket, a narrow fur-trimmed edge is shown by a vaguely-outlined brown.

The man's head is modelled forcefully in quite thick paint, using a great deal of red and pink, with warm shadow tints. In the lit area of forehead, between thick strokes of a creamy flesh colour into which pink is mixed to the left and right of centre, wrinkles are indicated in a thinner orange-brown which, towards the right, merges into the flat brown of the shadow area. The nose and cheeks are modelled, with no apparent brushstrokes, in a variety of tints with a great deal of pink to pinkish red. The shadow cast by the nose is indicated with a flat, carmine red. A thin grey lies along the lefthand contour of the jaw and chin, and along the righthand contour by the cheekbone. The eyes are done carefully, with light pink highlights on the pink eyelids and small, light grey touches over the irises to show the lashes. In the midst of the moustache and beard, done in white, greys and a little yellow, the mouth is indicated by means of a dark cast shadow, with a red covered with a little grey for the lower lip. One or two curved scratch-marks heighten the effect of the sinuous brushstrokes used to show the hair, painted in the same tints as the beard. Below the outline of the collar, done in a lively manner with occasional

Fig. 1. Canvas 111 × 166 cm



impasto, the black of the clothing is set over an earlier contour that runs slightly lower (cf. *X-Rays*).

The woman's head is less thoroughly executed, and rather more yellow in tint than the man's; pink is used in more isolated patches on the cheek and the full lower lip, on which there is a greyish catchlight. In the opening of the mouth, against black, one sees a reddish-grey tongue and a grey indicating a single bottom tooth. The cap is done very deftly in light greys, with sparkling accents of light.

Of the hands, the most thoroughly dealt with is the man's left hand, which rests on the table and is done in flesh tints and browns; the most summarily done is the left hand of the woman, in greyish-brown flesh colours. Her right hand is painted with relatively broad strokes in a pinkish-grey flesh colour, with some pink on the thumb, a yellow highlight on the ball of the hand and a dark, carmine-like shadow on the palm along the fingertips.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The architecture, seen fairly distinctly in the picture, is with the exception of the lefthand edge of, and some vertical internal detail in, the door not visible in the radiographic image; this is equally true of the lit side of the window recess. Instead of this the available prints show, in many places in the background, irregularly-shaped light areas that have the appearance of underpainted passages but cannot be interpreted as forms. The books and papers are in fact recognizable in the light areas, but were evidently somewhat different in shape in the underpainting, and there is no reserve for the cast shadow on the pile of paper on the left. This whole area is lacking in contrast.

The man's head shows more contrast than that of the woman; his collar is seen in a version reaching further downwards and to the left, which should probably be looked on as an underpainting. The reserve left for the righthand contour

Fig. 2. X-ray



of the woman's clothing in the somewhat lighter rear wall is less clearly articulated and is set more to the left than the painted outline, which has evidently been placed over part of the background. Some paint loss shows up dark close to the upper edge just in from the righthand edge, and close to the lefthand edge in the horizontal sheet of paper.

#### *Signature*

In black that, where it is thin, becomes brownish, placed over the white of the sheet of paper lying on the table (<Rembrandt. *f*:/1633.>). The *f* has at the top a loop that continues into the crossbar through the stem, as is the case in numerous signatures – including those on etchings – from these years. The style of writing makes a remarkably uncertain impression, however; the *R*, for instance, is hesitant and apparently has a break in the bowl, and the *a* and *d* have been gone over again. A further strange feature is that the inscription on the paper

is not shown in perspective, as Rembrandt tended to do in comparable cases (cf. nos. A 52 and A 54). See also 4. *Comments*.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### 4. *Comments*

Apart from the signature, which seems to be not entirely above suspicion (see below), there are in particular two items of evidence that make no. A 77 a reliably documented work from Rembrandt's Amsterdam years – the inclusion in the estate of one Cornelis Jansz. Rijckx in 1659 of a painting of the deceased's parents by Rembrandt (see 5. *Documents and sources*), and the letter shown in the picture



Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)

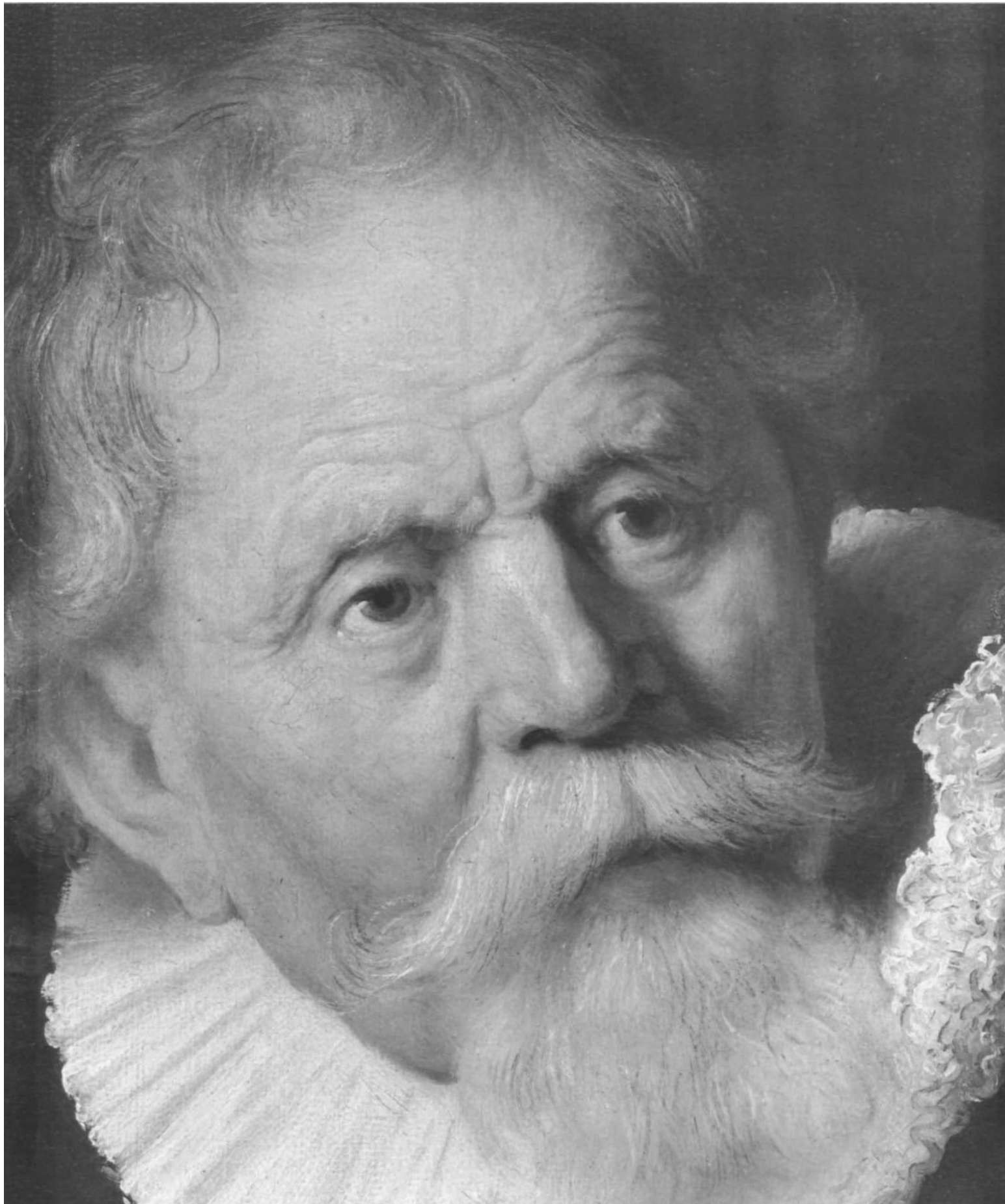


Fig. 4. Detail (1:1)



addressed to 'Jan rykensz'. It is thus very valuable as evidence of his manner of painting in large-scale portraits.

Chiaroscuro contrasts, with the resulting suggestion of plasticity, are to a great extent concentrated in the two heads and collars and, to a lesser degree, in the hands. The lit side of the window recess, which might well have been a competing centre of light, presents only a subdued contrast against the darker rear wall, and only the lit sheet of paper on the tablecloth shares in the highest light intensity. For the rest, the matt browns and greys of the background provide a neutrally-coloured ground for the flesh tints in which – especially in the man's head – there is a noticeably large amount of red, and for the strong white and black of the clothing. The application of paint matches this distribution of interest: the background is painted predominantly in fields, using a few broadly brushed accents that delimit the planks of the wainscot and door. The figures stand out against these areas of varying darkness of tone, which are separated by vertical (though never ruler-straight) lines. The heads, and to a lesser extent the collars and hands, are modelled strongly with often apparent and animated brushwork, and have been given a fair amount of detail. In the man's head the dark cast shadows suggest deep hollows that lend an effective impression of depth to the face, and at the same time the design of the hair, the wrinkles and the contour of the collar offer an intriguing play of lines of strongly rhythmic quality. In the woman's head the contrasts are partly moderated by subtle reflections of light, but here too a strong plastic suggestion of curves is coupled with an interplay of curved and intersecting lines. The depiction of form in the clothing is about as general as that in the background, but the outlines are marked by a lively pattern that, through scarcely apparent convexities, enhances the overall plasticity of the forms. This is most evident in the righthand outline of the woman's figure, which presents a series of 'steps' and which – together with the cast shadow on the open door, acting as a mirror-image – reinforces the suggestion of depth. In general the spatial effect is understated; yet despite the muted emphasis it is, because of the pose of the woman (who provides, with her arms a spatial diagonal), quite evident: her outstretched left arm and the open door give the room a full, gaugeable depth, while her right hand is stretched over the chair and the man's shoulder towards the front, reaching almost into the extreme foreground. The light falling from the left creates, in the lefthand bottom corner, a hazy arc of shadow along the edge of the tablecloth that continues horizontally towards the right and is interrupted by the armrest

of the chair, which echoes the diagonal pose of the woman. The background, painted with great reticence, supplies in particular – apart from its significance in creating depth – a discreet vertical articulation.

One has to make allowance, in all this, for the fact that the background above the sitters' heads presumably originally occupied a larger area, and that the discreet hint of the rear wall will thus have made a rather more pronounced effect. Münz<sup>1</sup> has pointed to the etching, dated 1800, by Johannes Pieter de Frey (fig. 8) which reproduced the painting in a taller format and a reduced copy in a private collection is reported<sup>2</sup> also to show more at the top of the composition (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 1 and 7. *Copies*, 1). It is noticeable that the painting was, as De Bruyn Kops<sup>3</sup> pointed out, already being mentioned with its present dimensions in the Jan Gildemeester sale on 11 ff June 1800 (see under 8. *Provenance*). Yet it remains very likely that the etching reproduces the original proportions of the painting. Not only do both the lay-out and the effect of depth come better into their own in the wider framework, but the weave of the canvas also provides physical evidence of a reduction in size. While cusping is seen along the left, right and bottom edges, it is entirely absent at the top, which would already in itself justify the assumption that a strip of c. 17 cm was cut away here (see 3 under *Support*). This reduction probably took place before 1800, when the painting was owned by Gildemeester; all or most of the paintings in his collection appear, to judge from a painting by Adriaan de Lelie<sup>3</sup>, to have been reframed in the fashion of his times. One would then have to assume that De Frey's etching was made earlier but was provided with an inscription and date only in 1800, perhaps at the behest of the new owner of the painting, Pieter de Smeth.

It may be that a presumed reduction of the canvas at the top is connected with the presence, on a sheet of paper on the table, of a signature and date that for a variety of reasons are not entirely convincing (see above under *Signature*), and our suspicions of which have been excited by the comments of handwriting experts (Mrs R. ter Kuile-Haller and Ir H. Hardy of the Forensic Laboratories, Rijswijk). This inscription is seen in its present position in a copy of 1800 by Wybrand Hendriks (see 7. *Copies*, 2) and a mezzotint of 1802 by Hodges (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*), which both reproduce the painting in its present format. De Frey's etching, which shows the painting as larger at the top, however has the ship drawings on the same sheet of paper but not the signature – yet the same artist in, for example, his etching of the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* (no. A 51)

carefully reproduces the signature on a sheet of paper on the wall. It is thus conceivable that the authentic signature was at the top of the painting, and that the present inscription – imitating the original – was added only when the upper part was removed.

There is no problem about placing the painting in Rembrandt's work. A comparison with the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* of 1632 reveals all kinds of similarities in design, in particular in the concentration of light and interest on the heads, and the vague indication of the architectural setting, in which verticals predominate. One difference here seems to be that the indication of depth in no. A 77, though just as discreet, is more readily apparent and is in particular more clearly related to the figures. The greatest difference, however, lies in the execution of the heads and hands. Though one may assume that the *Anatomy lesson* has a paint surface that has been less well preserved, it never seems to have had the marked linear rhythm in the drawing nor the plastic modelling that mark especially the man's head in no. A 77, nor the rich play of reflected light seen in the woman's head. In this respect, the double portrait appears to represent a more mature phase than the *Anatomy lesson*. In the lifesize, full-length portraits done somewhat later, in particular those of Johannes Elison and his wife (nos. A 98 and A 99) and Marten Soolmans and his wife (nos. A 100 and A 101), the trend towards greater freedom in the brushwork was to continue. This is true not only of the setting, but also of the heads and hands, which though they do, in a similar manner, attract the most attention through their light and colour values, nevertheless have a rather more general modelling and a less detailed depiction of form.

In its conception no. A 77 occupies a quite unique place in Amsterdam portraiture of the early 1630s. The strong accent on the fleeting moment – the woman has just come into the room, is still holding the door-latch and leans over her husband's shoulder and speaks to him as he looks up from his work – is unprecedented. The handing over of a letter as a motif for a portrait composition was probably borrowed by Rembrandt from the same group portrait by Nicolaes Eliasz. – the *Governors of the 'Spinhuis' (Women's House of Correction)* of 1628, now in the Amsterdam Historical Museum (no. A 44 fig. 7) – which may also have provided the pose for his young man in the Leningrad portrait of 1631 (no. A 44). It is precisely the comparison with a prototype like this, however, that reveals the extent to which he exploited the motif to achieve a diagonal, three-dimensional effect, and to create an action in which both figures take part. One gets the impression that Rembrandt was applying here, in a

group portrait, the same conception of space and drama that he developed as a history painter. Indeed he was, shortly afterwards, to use the motif of outstretched arms with a comparable effect in *Belshazzar's feast* (Br. 497). This dramatization of a portrait is also seen in the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp*, the *Berlin Portrait of Cornelis Anslo and his wife* (Br. 409), and a pair of portraits in Cincinnati and New York (nos. A 78 and A 79). In the present case it works even more effectively since any direct eye-contact with the viewer is avoided. The novel element Rembrandt thus introduced in marriage portraiture has been commented on by Smith<sup>4</sup>, who relates the theme of the woman interrupting her husband's work to contemporary conceptions about the wife's rôle in domestic life and a learned husband's obligations towards her.

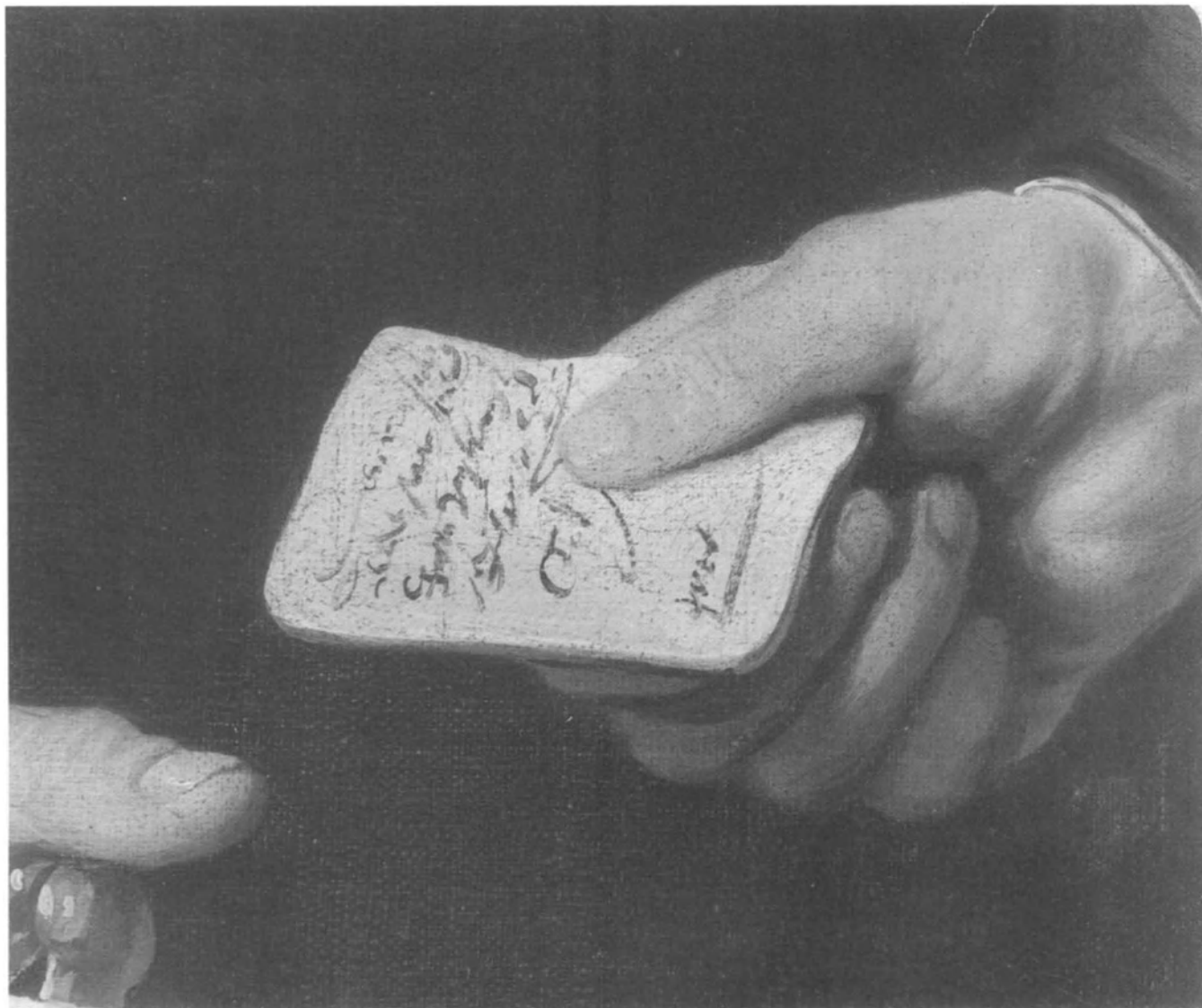
The identification of the couple portrayed is due to Dr I. H. van Eeghen. At first she had read the name in the address on the folded letter as 'Jan Heykens(z.)', and therefore identified the man as an Amsterdam citizen of that name who moved to Alkmaar in about 1616<sup>5</sup>. Shortly afterwards a discovery in the Amsterdam municipal archives convinced her, however, that the sitter must be a shipbuilder named Jan Rijcksen (Reijckx)<sup>6</sup>. It is unnecessary to assume, with this author, that the letter in the picture in fact carries the name 'Heijkens' and that the first letter was mutilated during a restoration; the paint is intact at this point, and her interpreting the first letter as a cursive *H* instead of a cursive *r* (which in 17th-century writing somewhat resembles a modern script *w*) is probably due to a misreading (as the shaft of an *H*) of what is actually part of the weave of the canvas.

In 1631 the wealthy shipbuilder Jan Rijcksen was the highest-rated taxpayer on the Rapenburg in Amsterdam. He is known to have been two years old when his father died in November 1563, and would thus have been 72 when the double portrait was painted. In 1585 he married Griet Jansdochter, whose father Jan Grebber was likewise a shipbuilder. The couple were Roman Catholics. He died in January 1637, his wife surviving him for an unknown number of years. Of their three children, a daughter died young, as did his son Harder who was unmarried when he died soon after his father, in April 1637. The youngest son Cornelis was still living on the Rapenburg when he married, late, in 1654; on his death in 1659 his estate included the double portrait of his parents and a portrait of his brother Harder, both by Rembrandt<sup>6</sup>.

##### 5. Documents and sources

The inventory drawn up on 7 November 1659 of the estate of the son of the sitters, Cornelis Jansz. Rijckx, who was buried

Fig. 5. Detail (1:1)



on 6 November 1659 and had lived on the Rapenburg in Amsterdam, mentions in addition to a number of other paintings two works by Rembrandt<sup>7</sup>:

‘een schilderije van des overledens vader en moeder geschildert door Rembrandt van Reen’ (a painting of the deceased’s father and mother, painted by Rembrandt van Reen) and

‘een dito achtkant van Harder Oom gedaan door Rembrandt’ (a ditto octagonal of Uncle Harder, done by Rembrandt).

The first of these works is certainly identical with no. A 77, as can be seen from the address on the letter in the picture; the false assumption by Hofstede de Groot, who interpreted this entry in the inventory as relating to two portraits (HdG 66ga and 66gb), has been corrected by Dr van Eeghen<sup>6</sup>.

The second work could well have been an octagonally-framed oval portrait of the unmarried brother of the deceased, who died earlier. Of the oval male portraits we know by Rembrandt and his workshop, two show bachelors – no. A 60 (where the sitter is turned to the left; see 4. *Comments* in that entry) and no. C 78 of 1634 (where the sitter is seen almost square-on).

## 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Johannes Pieter de Frey (Amsterdam 1770–

Paris 1834), inscribed: *Rembrandt van Rijn pinx 1633 – J. de Frey f. aquaforte 1800* / (left) *Het afbeeldsel van eene scheepsbouw-meester / en zijne vrouw / naar het schilderij van Rembrandt van Rhijn / berustende in het Kabinet van den Heere / M’ Pieter de Smeth / J. de Frey excudit Amstelodami* – (right) *Un architecte de la marine / et sa femme / D’après le Tableau Original de Rembrandt / van Rhijn que se trouve dans le Cabinet / de Monsieur Pierre de Smeth / chez J. de Frey à Amsterdam* (fig. 8).

It shows the picture considerably larger at the top than the painting is in its present state. On the suspicion that these were the original proportions, see 4. *Comments*.

2. Mezzotint by Charles Howard Hodges (London 1764–Amsterdam 1837), inscribed: *Rembrandt, pinx. 1633. – C. H. Hodges Sculps. Amst. 1802. / De Scheeps Bouwmeester. / Deeze Prent gegraveerd naar het Capitaal Schilderye van Rembrandt, in het Cabinet van den Heere / P. de Smeth te Amsterdam berustende, werdt aan Zyn Ed: met hoogachting opgedraagen door de Uitgeevers, / Groote van het Schildery, hoog 43. breed 66. duim. [= 110.5 × 169.6 cm] – C. H. Hodges en E. Maaskamp (Charrington 78). Shows the present proportions.*

## 7. Copies

1. A reduced copy, measuring c. 50 × 69.5 cm as Christopher



Fig. 6. Detail (1:1)

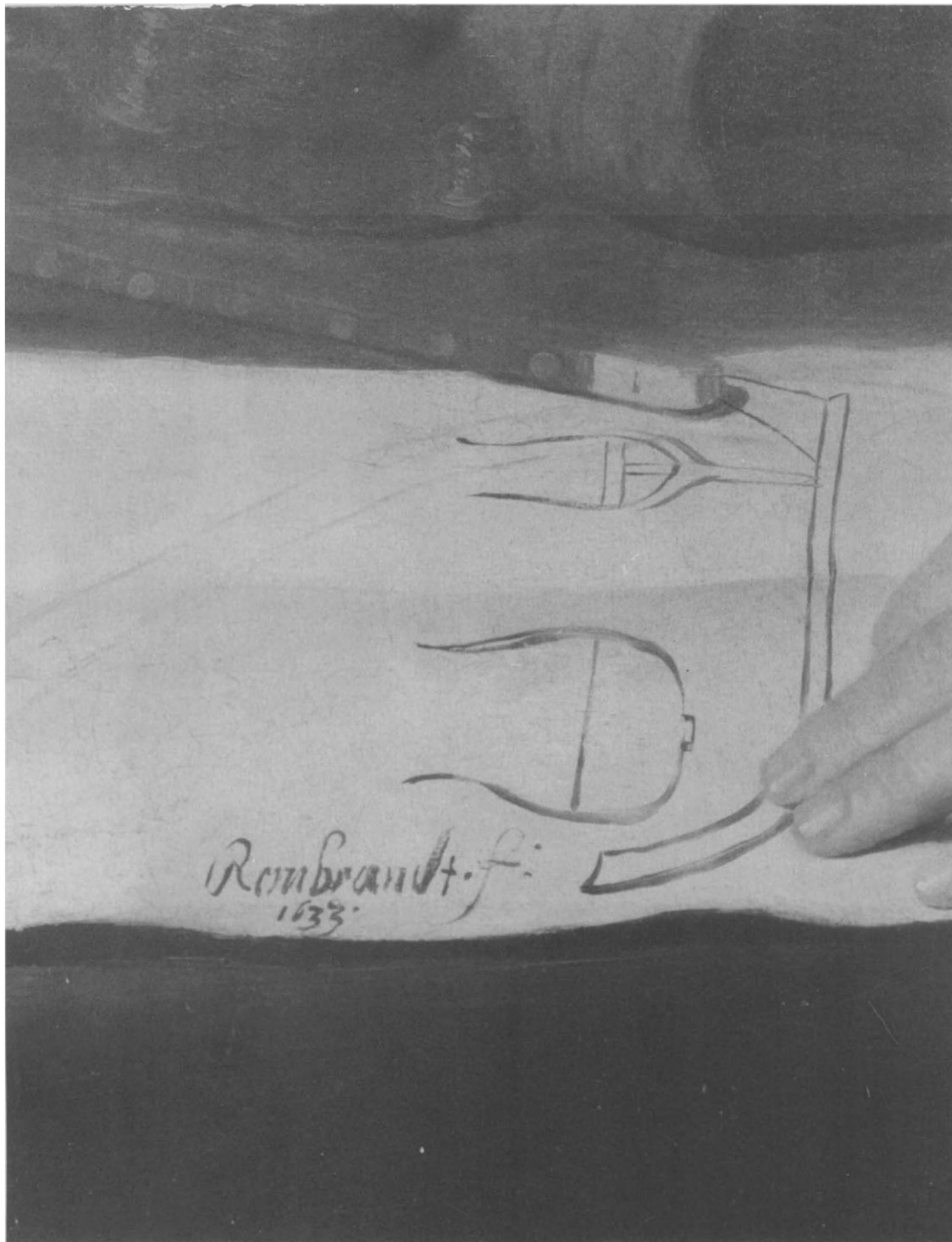
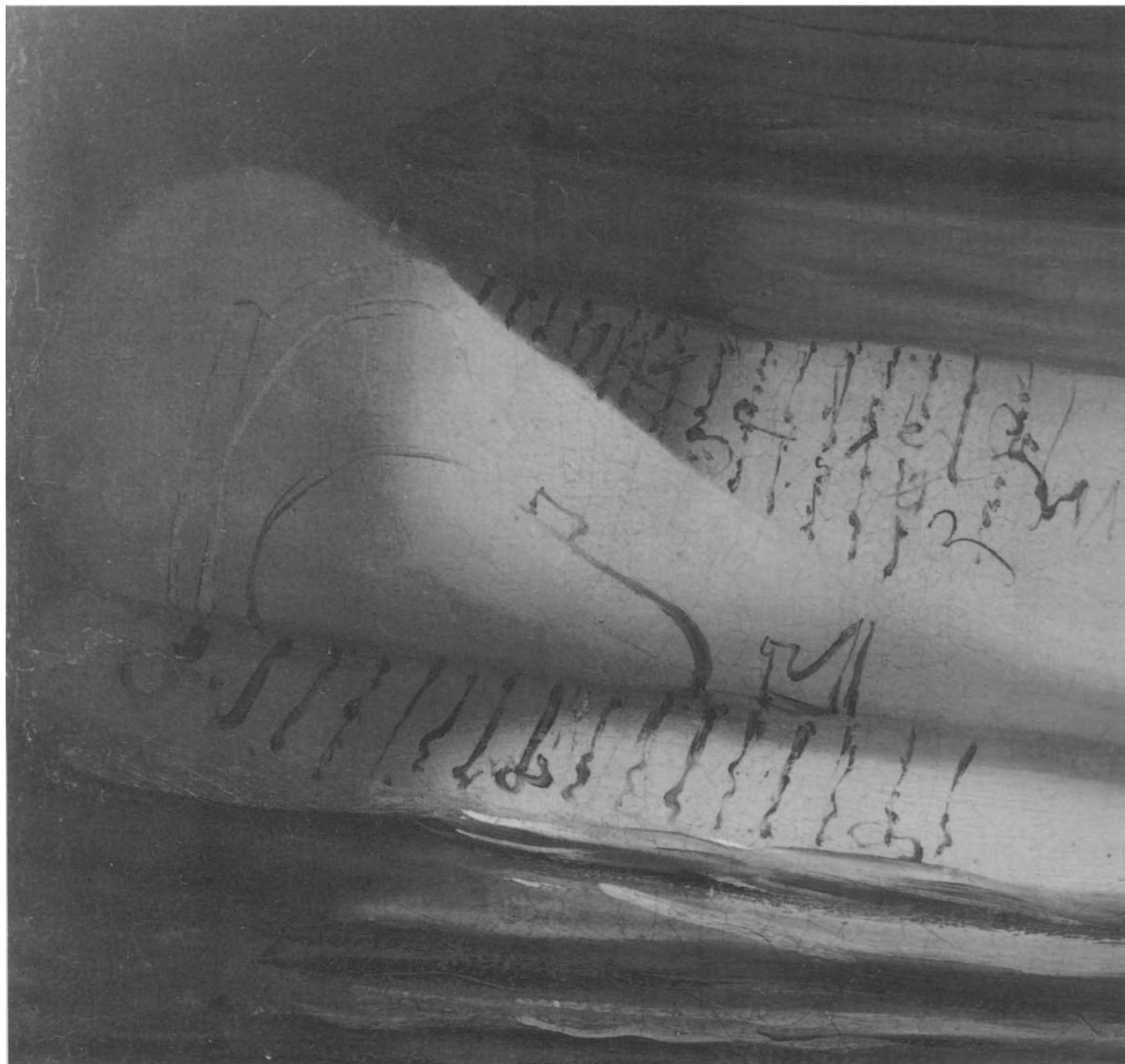




Fig. 7. Detail (1:1)



White kindly informs us, was in the collection of Mrs Kieran, Louth, Eire in 1951. It is said to show more at the top of the composition<sup>2</sup>.

2. Watercolour over black chalk on paper, 36.5 × 52.8 cm, by Wybrand Hendriks, Amsterdam Historical Museum. Inscribed on the back: *Rembrand Pinx' / W: Hendriks f 1800 / Origineel is bij den Heer Gildemeester / verkogt voor f. 8050*. Reproduces the painting as having its present format.

#### 8. Provenance

– In the possession of Cornelis Jansz. Reijckx, son of the couple portrayed, at his death in November 1659 (see 5. *Documents and sources*). It is not known whether the painting then stayed in the family<sup>6</sup>.

– Coll. Jan Gildemeester Jansz., sale Amsterdam 11–13 June 1800 (Lugt 6102), no. 180: 'Rembrand. hoog 43, breed 66

duim [= 110.5 × 169.6 cm]. Doek. Het afbeeldsel van een scheeps bouwmeester en zyne vrouw. Dezelve zyn levens-groote, en tot de kniën verbeeld, vertoonende hoog bejaarde lieden: de man zit in een armstoel voor een tafel, waar op een vel papier ligt, met eenige scheepsbouwkundige schetzen, rustende met zyn linkerhand op het zelve, hy wend zich ten halve naar zyne vrouw, die achter hem staat, en met de linkerhand de klink van de deur vast houdt, terwyl zy met de andere hand een brief toereikt, welke hy gereed is aan te neemen, hebbende zyn passer over de voorste vinger van die hand hangen: beiden zyn zy in 't zwart gekleed, met witte kraagen, eenvoudig maar deftig, naar den smaak van dien tyd: de vrouw heeft een wit kamerdoeks mutsje op, de man is blootshoofds met gryze hairen, baard en knevels: op de tafel liggen nog eenige boeken en papieren. Dit stuk is uitmuntend; men vind hier in dat doorkneet en beärbeid penceel, dat betoverend licht en bruin, 't welk Rembrand karakteriseert, en die al de volmaaktheden

Fig. 8 Etching by J. P. de Frey



zyner kunst hier vereenigd heeft.' (Rembrandt . . . Canvas. The depiction of a shipbuilder and his wife. They are lifesize, shown down to the knees, and are very aged persons: the man sits in an armchair before a table on which lies a sheet of paper with some ship's architect's sketches on which he rests his left hand. He is half-turned towards his wife who stands behind him holding the door-latch with her left hand while with the other she holds out a letter; he is preparing to take this, letting his compasses hang over the forefinger of his hand: they are both clothed in black, with white collars, simple yet dignified, in the taste of their time: the woman wears a white cambric cap, while the man is bareheaded with grey hair, beard and moustaches: on the table are further papers and books. This work is outstanding; one finds here that skilled and proficient brushwork, that magical light and dark, that is characteristic of Rembrandt and has here brought together all the perfections of his art). (8050 guilders to Jan Spaan).

– Coll. Pieter de Smeth van Alphen, sale Amsterdam 1–2 August 1810 (Lugt 7842), no. 82: 'Rhyn. (Rembrandt van). hoog 43, breed 66 duimen. Doek. Een Scheepsbouwmeester met zijne Vrouw, welke haren Man, zittende voor eene Tafel, met de eene hand eenen Brief toereikt, houdende met de andere de Klink van de Deur; voor den Scheepsbouwmeester liggen Boeken en Papieren; hy houdt eenen Passer in de hand.' (Rhyn. (Rembrandt van) . . . Canvas. A shipbuilder with his wife, who with one hand gives her husband, seated at a table, a letter while with the other she holds the door-latch; before the shipbuilder there are books and papers; he holds compasses in his hand). (16,500 guilders to Lafontaine).

– Sale of Schmidt [=de Smeth, read Lafontaine] coll., London (Christie's) 12 June 1811 (Lugt 8021), no. 63: 'Rembrandt. The surprising Chef d'oeuvre of Rembrandt. The Portrait of the Master Ship Builder, known throughout Europe as the finest Performance in his second manner, when quitting the elaborate style of his Master he discovered that breadth was necessary to render the true effect of Nature. The Shipwright is represented in his Closet, a Table before him covered with Sections and Naval Architectural Designs, he is interrupted by his Wife who delivers a letter in haste; her hand upon the Latch of the Door, which gives a spirit and movement to the figures; the handling and colouring of the heads, remind the Spectator of the glowing style of Rubens. It is a truly wonderful performance, far above all Praise! A

Mezzotint of this Picture is dedicated to its late Proprietor Mr. Schmidt of Amsterdam'. (Lord Yarmouth for the Prince Regent 5250 guineas).

– Coll. the Prince Regent, later George IV.

## 9. Summary

No. A 77 is among the best documented of Rembrandt's works. Although the paint layer is badly flattened, it is otherwise very well preserved, and the work yields valuable information as to Rembrandt's handling of lifesize figures in an interior. This involves strong modelling of the lit flesh areas, and a relatively vague indication of the surroundings that is however clearly related to the figures portrayed. The treatment of the subject is borrowed from the Amsterdam group portrait, but it owes its three-dimensional and dramatic effect to Rembrandt's re-interpretation of this tradition. It is probable that a reduction in size at the top, which would have taken place around 1800, has detracted slightly from the overall effect.

## REFERENCES

- 1 L. Münz, 'The original shape of Rembrandt's "Shipbuilder and his Wife"', *Burl. Mag.* 89 (1947), pp. 253–254.
- 2 C. White, *The Dutch pictures in the collection of Her Majesty the Queen*, Cambridge etc. 1982, no. 160.
- 3 C. J. de Bruyn Kops, 'De Amsterdamse verzamelaar Jan Gildemeester Jansz.', *Bulletin van het Rijksmuseum* 13 (1965), pp. 79–114, esp. 111–112.
- 4 D. R. Smith, 'Rembrandt's early double portraits and the Dutch conversation piece', *Art Bull.* 64 (1982), pp. 259–288, esp. 269–281.
- 5 I. H. van Eeghen, 'Een brief aan Jan Heykens', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 56 (1969), pp. 196–198; *ibidem*, p. 243.
- 6 I. H. van Eeghen, 'Jan Rijcksen en Griet Jans', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 57 (1970), pp. 121–127.
- 7 A. Bredius, 'Rembrandtiana', *O.H.* 26 (1908), pp. 219–224, esp. 224; Van Eeghen *op. cit.* (5); Strauss *Doc.*, 1659/10.

**A 78 Portrait of a man rising from his chair** (companion-piece to no. A 79)

1633

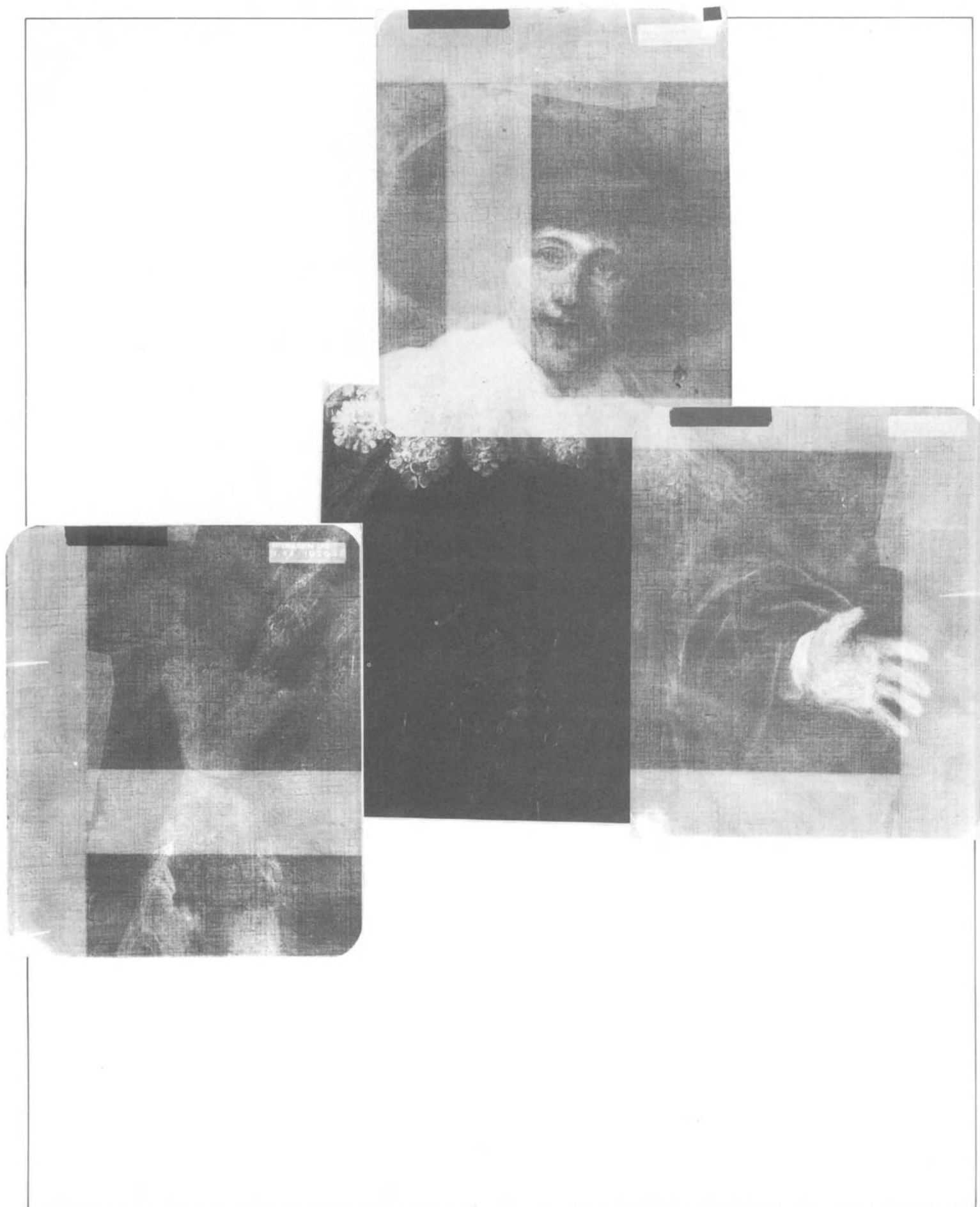
CINCINNATI, OHIO, THE TAFT MUSEUM, NO. 1931.409

HdG 736; BR. 172; BAUCH 366; GERSON 140

Fig. 1. Canvas 124 × 98.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



### 1. Summarized opinion

A fairly well preserved, authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1633.

### 2. Description of subject

A fairly young and stylishly-dressed man, seen knee-length, stands facing slightly to the right, his head turned almost square-on to the viewer. His right hand, holding what appears to be a glove, seems still to be placed on the arm of a folding chair from which, to judge from the forward-leaning upper part of the body, he is just rising. With his open left hand he makes a gesture that can be understood as relating to the woman portrayed in the companion-piece (no. A 79). He wears a black, wide-brimmed hat and a wide lace collar and cuffs over a black costume. This consists of a doublet, hanging slightly open, breeches of the same, figured material, and a cloak that hangs draped over his left shoulder and arm and, behind his back, over the chair; along the waist the doublet is trimmed with a line of large, black rosettes with gold aiguillettes. A dark red shirt can be glimpsed beneath the open doublet and in the long, lengthwise slash in the sleeve. The light falls from the left, striking the rear wall most strongly to the left of the figure.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 9 June 1972 (J. B., S. H. L.), by artificial light and in the frame on the wall, with the aid of four X-ray films (of the head, the two hands and the chest area, each 30 × 40 cm and made by the Intermuseum Laboratory, Oberlin, Ohio), copyfilms of which were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 124 × 98.5 cm (sight size). Single piece. The edges are covered with stuck-on paper.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: There is slight distortion apparent at the top of the canvas, which is perhaps secondary cusping. To the right there is cusping with a pitch of 12 cm, extending 10 cm into the canvas. The bottom cannot be studied, as there is no X-ray. Along the bottom of the X-ray of the hand on the left, cusping can however clearly be seen and one may conclude from this that there is marked cusping along the bottom. Threadcount: 11 vertical threads/cm (10.4–11.5), 11.5 horizontal threads/cm (11–12). The weave shows coarse, long and short thickenings, which are more numerous in the horizontal direction than in the vertical. Mostly because of the weave structure (with many thickenings in the horizontal direction) one could suppose the warp threads to run vertically. Similarities in thread density and weave structure suggest that the canvases of nos. A 78 and A 79 come from the same bolt of cloth; in these two canvases the density of the vertical threads is most alike, and from this one may take it that the warp is vertical. From the only slight and rather irregular distortion of the weave at the top edges of the two companion-pieces it may be suspected that they were prepared as a single piece, with these two edges contiguous.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light tint is visible in a number of brush scratches in the background at the upper left and bottom right, and elsewhere in thin patches.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Consists, according to an examination by

the Intermuseum Laboratory (January 1962), of two layers: the lower is red (containing an iron-bearing red ochre inert), the upper a middle-value grey neutral, together making up a thickness of c. 0.5 mm.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Though rather flattened during lining, it can be described as in good condition. There are a few local paint losses and subsequent restorations, especially in the right background next to the collar level with the beard and in the dark area of the legs, and to a lesser extent in the knees and along the righthand side of the painting. Craquelure: an evenly-distributed, irregular pattern, varying slightly in size from one passage to another.

DESCRIPTION: There does not seem to be any great variation in thickness, and there is nowhere a clear relief. The background is in fairly flat greys, lightest to the left of the figure and darker to the top and right.

The head is done with no clearly-apparent brushstroke, in opaque paint of almost uniform thickness; in the light this is a warm flesh colour with a little thin pink on the cheeks and forehead, with a grey glaze along the jaw on the left, while in the shadow it is a fairly opaque brown that here and there allows some of the light ground to show through. The eyebrows are in thin greys with, on the right, a little brown. A strong white highlight is placed on the tip of the nose, the lefthand nostril is shown in dark brown and the other as a patch of black in the brown cast shadow. The regularly-shaped eyes are done with firm strokes, the upper lids in brown (with some black in the line of lashes) with the lower edges in pink running into the pink corners of the eyes (where there is a dot of white on the left). Against the greyish white of the whites of the eyes, the irises are outlined fairly sharply, and painted in browns with the lightest shade towards the bottom right, opposite the catchlights placed over the edge of the black pupil. The catchlight in the lefthand eye is thickest at the top and becomes vague at the bottom. The mouth-line consists of a bold band of black; the upper and lower lip are painted in a bright red, the latter running into a pink along the lower edge. The moustache is in greys, on the left done wet-in-wet with the pink of the cheek. The tuft of beard beneath the lower lip is in a thin and slightly translucent grey, while that on the chin is in dark grey with strokes of black. The hair is shown with strokes of black in the shadow cast by the hat, and elsewhere in wavy strokes of dark brown and dark grey, the paint thinner on the right than on the left.

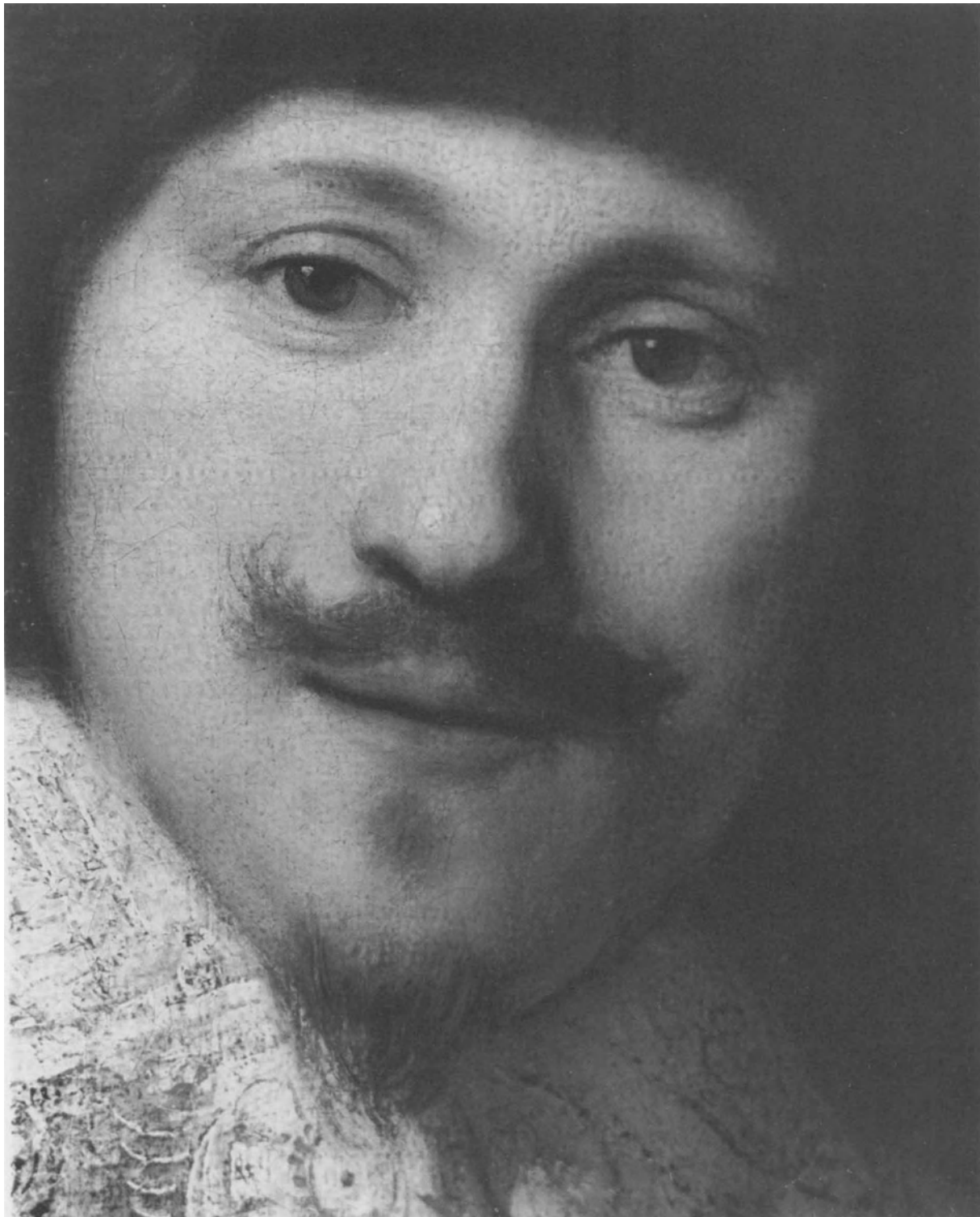
The collar is done in the light in white of varying thickness, with the pattern indicated in light grey and black and the shadows in greys. The cuff on the left is in opaque light greys with thick white edges, the lace pattern in grey and black, while that on the right (only partially visible) is indicated with a strong stroke of white and an area of grey (in the shadow).

The hand on the right, which catches the full light, is painted quite thickly and has lively modelling in a warm flesh tone, with pink in the fingertips and the patches of horny skin at the base of the fingers, a grey and brown glaze in the half-shadows, and brown and a little grey in the cast shadow of the thumb and on the shadow side of the fingers. Along the cuff there is a brown cast shadow bordered by a thick, cream-coloured edge. The hand on the left, which receives less light, is painted fairly evenly in a subdued flesh colour, with here and there a grey glaze and brown shadows.

The dark hat and costume are in black and, on the sheen and rendering the figured material, in greys; in the light there is a fair amount of careful detail. The aiguillettes are painted



Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



in yellow-brown with long, thin white highlights. The shirt seen beneath the doublet is in a dark brown in the slash in the sleeve, with spots and strokes of wine-red and ochre-yellow plus a little light blue and white, while at the front of the body it is in wine-red.

The whole area to the left of the figure is treated quite broadly; the dark brown-grey glove has one or two strokes of lighter grey, the cloak is in a broadly-brushed dark grey, the backrest of the chair in a flat, dark wine-red that recurs in the fringe and, somewhat duller and browner, in the seat.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

Of the copyfilms available, which vary widely in their degree of contrast, that of the head shows a remarkable amount of white in the lit face, where the moustache is not visible as a dark reserve. The X-ray of the hand on the left shows the hand itself as a quite dark patch set in a very roughly-done reserve in a light form that continues downwards to right and left; from this one can conclude that the glove has a light underpainting. The X-ray of the hand on the right shows, apart from the light hand itself (with the light zone along the cast



shadow of the cuff clearly visible), the highlights of the sheen on the cloak.

#### Signature

At the right, about 31 cm from the bottom edge, in dark brown <Rembrandt.f (the f partly masked on the right by the paper stuck along the edge) / 1633.>. There is a diagonal line below the date; this feature recurs in a few other signatures from 1633 (see nos. A 82 and A 84), one from 1632 (no. A 61) and one from 1634 (no. A 103). The firmness of the script and the similarity to other signatures from the same year make the signature and date appear reliable.

#### Varnish

Remains of old varnish are clearly apparent, mainly in the face and collar.

### 4. Comments

The treatment of the contours, often offering convex curves that meet at a point (e.g. where the collar is placed over the background and where the outline of the backrest of the chair bends downwards before disappearing behind the sleeve), added to the three-dimensional and plastically highly effective use of light in the background and costume, presents a picture that is wholly consonant with that of Rembrandt portraits from the early Amsterdam years. This conclusion is strengthened by the reliable-seeming signature and date of 1633. The fact that the treatment and character of the face holds little interest need not detract from the correctness of the attribution, nor need the relatively even application of paint, which is opaque almost everywhere. The latter seems, indeed, to be typical of a number of largescale portraits painted on canvas, starting with the Leningrad *Portrait of a man at a writing-desk* (no. A 44) and the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* (no. A 51). In this group, a freer and bolder handling of the brush must rather be sought in portraits of older models, like that of the *Shipbuilder Jan Rijksen and his wife* (no. A 77) and the *Minister Johannes Wtenbogaert* (no. A 80). No. A 78 moreover shares with these two paintings (particularly the latter) the very broad treatment of the accessories at the periphery of the picture.

The composition of this male portrait, with the man rising from a chair, leaning markedly to the right and gesturing, is unique in Rembrandt's work. It is plainly designed to take account of the presence of a companion-piece. This can, with certainty, be seen in the New York *Portrait of a woman in an arm-chair* (no. A 79), although nothing is known of a common pedigree. This painting is the same size as the man's portrait, and furthermore provides a convincing compositional counterpoint to the motif of the man's movement. Both paintings draw the attention to the fairly detailed (though, in the ren-

dering of materials, reticent) and fashionable clothing, and its bulky appearance; both have accessories rendered cursorily at the edges (the chair on the left in the man's portrait, and the table on the right in the woman's); and seen together they provide a clearly intentional contrast between the active gesture of presentation on the part of the man as he stands up and the broad expanse of the seated woman. It seems a likely assumption that the pair of portraits were commissioned on the occasion of the sitters' marriage. If so, the way the relationship between the man and woman is portrayed is still exceptional. For the woman Rembrandt has chosen a pose he himself had used earlier – that of Frans van Loenen, the uppermost figure in the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* is here repeated faithfully, in the body turned slightly left and leaning slightly backwards, the head turned a little to the right, and in the pose of the right arm. A motif that was designed as the crowning point of a pyramidal group here forms, in itself, a slightly asymmetrical pyramidal volume. The motif of movement in the forward-leaning man reminds one most of similar motifs in a number of men's portraits by Lorenzo Lotto, where they however seem to express a lyrical mood rather than, as here in Rembrandt, to capture an instant of action. This suggestion of the fleeting moment in the man's portrait, and the contrast it creates with the woman's static pose, does not recur to the same degree in Rembrandt's single portraits, yet it is reminiscent of a similar contrast in a double portrait from 1633, that of the shipbuilder Jan Rijksen and his wife (no. A 77).

In the absence of any information as to the early provenance of the two paintings, there is no clue to the identity of the sitters. An identification as the portraits of Constantijn Huygens and his wife<sup>1</sup> has insufficient foundation.

### 5. Documents and sources

None.

### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

### 7. Copies

None.

### 8. Provenance

- Coll. Earl of Ashburnham, sale London (Christie's) 20 July 1850, no. 47 (£724.10s. to Farrer).
- Dealer Farrer, London.
- Coll. Comte de Pourtalès Gorgier, sale Paris 27 March 1865, no. 181 (34,500 francs, bought in).
- Coll. Comte Edmond de Pourtalès, Paris.

- Dealer M. Knoedler & Co., New York.
- Coll. C. P. Taft, Cincinnati.

### 9. Summary

Though not particularly interesting as an individual portrayal of character, no. A 78 is in style and technique an unmistakable work by Rembrandt, and the signature and date of 1633 can be accepted as reliable. The motif of movement and the gesturing pose, unique in a single portrait, can be understood when taken in conjunction with the companion-piece showing a woman seated square-on (no. A 79).

### REFERENCES

- 1 J. Q. van Regteren Altena, in: Jan Veth, *Rembrandts leven en kunst*, 2nd edn, Amsterdam 1941, p. 73.

**A 79 Portrait of a woman in an armchair** (companion-piece to no. A 78)

[1633]

NEW YORK, N.Y., THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, ACC. NO. 43.125

GIFT OF HELEN SWIFT NELSON, 1943

HDG 881; BR. 341; BAUCH 469; GERSON 141

Fig. 1. Canvas 126.2 × 100.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



### 1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved (if somewhat over-cleaned) authentic work, dating from 1633.

### 2. Description of subject

A fairly young and stylishly-dressed woman is seen down to the knees and seated in an armchair of which one armrest is visible on the left; she faces the viewer almost square-on. In her right hand she holds a black, ostrich-feather fan in front of her, while the left hand rests on a table covered with a heavy cloth. Over her black costume – an open overgarment ('vlieger') and a wide skirt of figured stuff – she wears a double-layered collar, mostly of lace, and broad cuffs with scalloped lace edges. The overgarment is belted high under the bosom with a silver and purplish-pink band with a large rosette; similar rosettes are attached to the gatherings halfway up the wide, slashed sleeves. From her waist hangs a bunch of gold cords, on which is suspended a round watch with its key. She wears pearls and other jewels in her hair (which stands out wide to the sides), around her neck and at her wrists.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 18 April 1969 (J. B., B. H.) in good light and in the frame. Nine X-ray copyfilms, together covering the whole painting were received later, together with a photomosaic series of neutron-activation autoradiographs.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 126.2 × 100.5 cm (measured along the present stretcher). Single piece.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Slight, irregular distortion is seen at the top edge of the canvas. To the right there is slight cusping, with the pitch varying between 10.5 and 13.5 cm and extending inwards 12 cm. At the bottom the cusping pitch varies between 9.5 and 13 cm, with a depth of 12 cm. The left has similar, quite slight cusping over lengths of 11 to 13 cm, extending 16 cm into the canvas. Threadcount: 11.3 vertical threads/cm (10.7–11.5), 12.6 horizontal threads/cm (11.5–13.5). The weave shows coarse long and short thickenings, more numerous horizontally than vertically. Because of the slighter variation in density of the vertical threads and the many thickenings in the horizontal direction, one may assume the warp to be vertical. The similarities in thread density and weave structure suggest that the canvases for nos. A 79 and A 78 come from the same bolt of cloth. From the only slight and rather irregular distortion at the top edges of the two companion-pieces, it may be suspected that they were prepared as a single piece, with these two edges contiguous.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Not observed.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Microscope examination carried out by Mrs C. M. Groen showed the ground to consist of two layers in three out of five cross-sections and of three layers in the two others; moreover one of the samples shows the glue layer underneath the ground proper to contain some vermilion, black and yellow grains of pigment. The bottom layer contains red ochre and some quartz. The top layer was found to contain lumps of white lead, very fine black pigment, a little ochre with occasionally bright yellow and dark brown particles. Where an intermediate layer was found, an orange layer containing

some black particles was applied wet-in-wet over the bottom layer.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Fairly good though rather flattened during lining; locally wrinkled (especially in the hand on the left and, to a lesser degree, in the face), probably as a result of the heat used during the lining. Somewhat overcleaned in the head; in the collar the internal detail has suffered, and in the top row of pearls at the throat it is mainly the thickly-painted catchlights that have survived. The black fan, too, shows wearing. Craquelure: a normal, irregular pattern can be seen, spread fairly evenly over the whole surface.

DESCRIPTION: The grey background is lightest at the lower left, and becomes a darker grey further up where the tone becomes very dark and broad brushstrokes are readily visible.

In the head both the lit areas and the narrow zone of shadow are painted almost evenly, with merging flesh tints. Around the eyebrows, on the cheeks, nose and tip of the chin pink has been used, while elsewhere the flesh tint is a yellowish white. A thicker white paint has been used on the highest lights on the forehead and below the lefthand eye.

The eyes and light brown eyebrows have been treated almost alike on right and left. The lower edges of the upper eyelids are painted with strokes of grey; the edges of the lower lids are a light pink and have a somewhat darker tint at the corners, where the eye on the left has a catchlight; here there is also the reflexion of a rim of moisture on the bottom eyelid. The upper lids are bordered at the top by fine strokes of brown. The irises are unsharp against the light grey of the whites of the eyes; within their dark grey there is a little light brown used towards the pupil, lightest at the lower right; at the upper left small white catchlights have been added, merging towards the lower left. The pupils are black. The half-shadows at the root of the left eyebrow, the heavier shadow to the right of the nose and the lighter shadows on the upper lip and along the chin are executed in shades of a light grey. An edge of grey-brown shadow runs down the righthand side of the head. A little white has been used on the ridge and tip of the nose. The area of shadow around the dark, carmine-coloured nostrils is a ruddy brown. The lips, surrounding a fairly sharply-drawn line done in a dark carmine colour, are a bright pink which merges somewhat into the surroundings.

The brown hair has suffered a little from wearing. The ear-drops have highlights in an ochre yellow and white over a dark basic tone. The pearls of the necklace are heightened with white on grey (which has suffered from wear).

The lace collar is done in white paint, on which browns have been set to indicate the apertures in the upper layer of lace. The cuffs are done in grey and white, with the pattern in black.

The black clothing is depicted very convincingly, in a cool grey-black and greys used to indicate the vivid pattern of folds and the figured material. The rosettes and ribbons are done in a dry white paint, and given bands of a purplish pink, likewise in drybrush. Long, straight brushstrokes can be seen in relief, running from just below the rosette at the belt almost to the bottom edge of the painting, sometimes slightly obliquely to the right; these are evidently connected with an under-painting.

The lit part of the hand on the left is painted rather flatly, in a yellowish colour. The double bracelet of pearls and dark vermilion beads is not rendered very convincingly, and has a great number of rather arbitrarily-placed catchlights. The cast shadow alongside the bracelet is flat, and fails to suggest any plasticity. The fan is in a rather flat black (no doubt due to

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)





Fig. 4. Neutron activation autoradiograph ZM 4

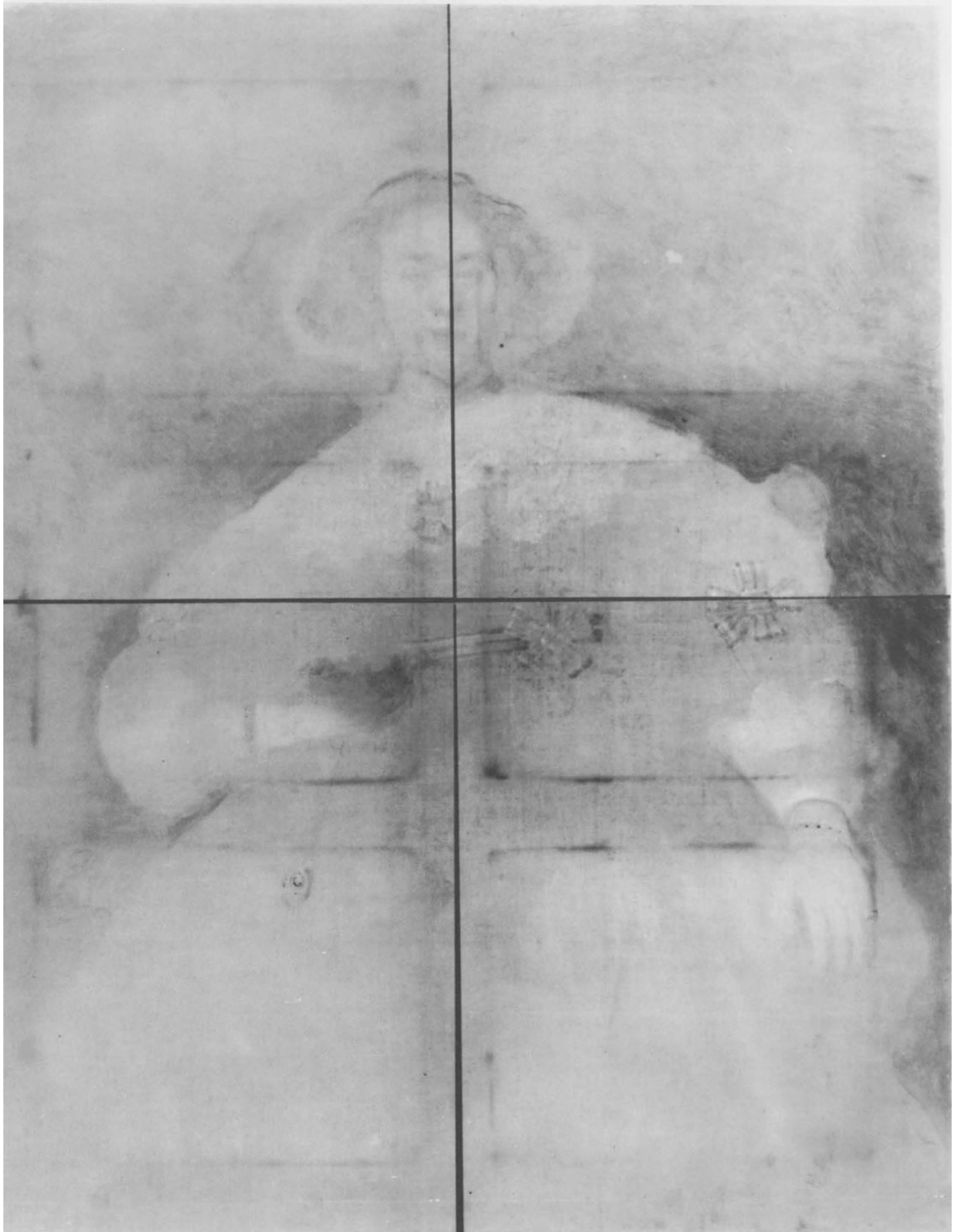


Fig. 5. Neutron activation autoradiograph ZM 8



wearing). The wrist of the hand on the right is in a yellow-white; here the shadow along the cuff and the bracelet are depicted more effectively. The hand, in a rather strong pink, is modelled carefully in fairly thick paint, with dark red-brown shadows between the fingers.

The tablecloth is painted thickly in brown-red, on top of which the pattern has been applied in an ochre yellow.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** Eight cross-sections were prepared by Mrs C. M. Groen. The first, from a sample taken from the reddish paint of the tablecloth (16.3 cm from the bottom at the righthand edge), showed two layers, the bottom one a black layer with some ochre and organic red (the underpainted background?), the top one a greyish brown-red layer containing some vermilion, organic red pigment, ochre and black particles (the tablecloth that was painted over the background, see below). The second, from a sample taken from the yellowish paint of the tablecloth (near the right edge) and not comprising the ground layers, showed four layers, the lowest one being black and containing some white pigment (the underpainting of the skirt), the second a pure black (the upper layer of skirt), the third layer reddish containing vermilion, organic red pigment and some black particles (the red of the tablecloth), and the fourth a yellow pigment (probably ochre), a little vermilion, organic red and black pigment (the yellow decoration of the tablecloth). The third cross-section, from a sample taken from the skirt (at 37.5 cm from the righthand and 33.4 cm from the lower edge), shows one black paint layer with a very fine red pigment (the upper layer of skirt). The fourth, from a sample taken in the tablecloth to the right of the hand, shows two layers on top of the ground, the bottom one being a black layer containing bone black (the skirt), the top one vermilion in a brown medium (the tablecloth that was here painted over the skirt, see below). The fifth cross-section, from a sample taken in the background to the right of the righthand sleeve (50.6 cm from the top, 9.2 cm from the righthand edge), showed two layers on top of the ground, the bottom one being greyish and containing white lead, black, yellow ochre and dark brown particles (possibly the underpainting of the background), the top one being dark and containing coarse black particles, an organic red, a light yellow pigment and a little ochre (the top layer of the background paint). The sixth cross-section, from a sample taken in the background (at 10 cm from the top, 16.4 from the righthand edge), showed one layer on top of the ground containing black and brown pigments. The seventh, taken from the collar (45.3 cm from the top, 42.4 from the righthand edge) showed one layer of pure white on top of the ground containing white lead and occasional black, brown and red particles. The eighth cross-section, from a sample taken in the lower lip (43.2 cm from the top, 50.2 cm from the righthand edge), showed two layers on top of the ground, the bottom one containing vermilion, possibly some organic red, white lead and an occasional black particle, and the top one, which may partly fuse with the other one, showing some red particles.

#### *X-Rays*

In general the radiographic image is what one would expect from the paint surface, though there are a few aberrant features. In the lightish background to the left of the figure there is a clear reserve for the sleeve and, lower down, another for the armrest of the chair in a lower position than it occupies today. The light area in the cuff on the left must for the most part belong to a light underpainting. The same applies to long strokes that can be seen at various places in the skirt, some of which have already been described as appearing in relief at the surface. At the extreme bottom right there are similar strokes

at the place now occupied by the tablecloth, which was evidently here painted over the costume already done at least as an underpainting.

Above the lower edge of the lace collar, in the centre, there is a roughly circular shape; this suggests that there may once have been another rosette at this point.

#### *Neutron activation autoradiographs*

Made during the Metropolitan Museum's project on Rembrandt canvases – mentioned in the Preface – these are an important adjunct to the X-ray photographs. An exposure made at an early stage of the radiation process (ZM 4; fig. 4) shows mainly the emission from manganese, as a component of umber; it renders visible the shape left in reserve, in the parts of the background containing umber, for the figure and the chair. The armrest of the latter on the left appears in the same low position as in the X-ray. In front of the figure, below the costume to the right, there is a sizeable bulging shape; the skirt obviously spread out below the armrest in the place where one now sees the table. A later exposure (ZM 8; fig. 5) shows, inter alia, the emission from mercury giving a dark image for vermilion and that from phosphorus as one component of bone black which has evidently been used in the underpainting as well as in a number of strokes apparent at the surface, e.g. in the lace; there may be areas where the phosphorus emission is masked by overlying white lead. The brushwork made visible in this way gives a coherent and vivid picture of the underpainting. On the left, in addition to an armrest seen earlier, there is also a second, evidently painted over the background higher up; this coincides with the one seen today. At the bottom right the bulging shape seen earlier has been extended further over the background, and there is the lighter image of an armrest on which the hand is placed. The rosette in the collar, already suspected from the X-ray, appears clearly in all these exposures.

#### *Signature*

At the left about 31 cm from the lower edge, in grey-brown paint <Rembrandt . f (followed by a v-shaped mark)./1633>. Both the spelling of the artist's name (without a *t*, as he seems never to have spelled it) and the somewhat unsure handwriting make the inscription's authenticity doubtful. The possibility that it was copied, rather timidly and in different paint, from the signature on the companion-piece (no. A 78) cannot be excluded.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### **4. Comments**

There can be no doubt about the attribution of the painting to Rembrandt. The plasticity achieved in the woman's clothing and left hand by the interplay of modelling and contour, and the effect of contrast in the head, match fully what one finds in portraits from his early Amsterdam years. This is in keeping with the signature and date of 1633, which in themselves inspire confidence. The original quality of the execution may still be seen in the greater part of the painting; in some passages overcleaning has however caused wear, particularly in the neck, the lace collar and the forward-tilting fan, of which one sees mainly the silhouette.

Rembrandt evidently made a number of not unsubstantial changes in composition during the work. The table is, as can be seen from the X-ray, placed over a part of the costume that was at least underpainted. The fresh insights provided by the autoradiographs lead one to the conclusion that this change was one of several. The armrest, placed lower on the left at an early stage, was level with the armrest that has now disappeared on the right and on which the hand rested. One can only guess at the reason for the higher placing of the armrest on the left; it can be surmised that Rembrandt felt the need to provide the figure with a clear support in order to achieve a balanced posture. The outcome of this decision was that, if he wanted to keep the hand on the right that had obviously already been completed, there was no longer room for an armrest at this side; this led to the introduction of the (by no means clearly shaped) corner of the table seen today, on which the hand was placed. It is probable that the tablecloth was set over an area that was already completed – there is evidence for this especially in the fact that there was a reserve for the hand in its original position, so that it can be assumed to have been finished. This would not have been so unless the black costume, against which it stood, had not also already been completed. Furthermore, the paint of the tablecloth gives the impression of having been placed around the fingers, giving these something of a ‘cut-out’ appearance.

Although there is no documentary evidence for this, no. A 79 can be looked on as the pendant to the *Portrait of a man rising from his chair* in the Taft Museum in Cincinnati (no. A 78), from which it had already been separated by 1793. See further comments under that entry.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

\*–Coll. Vincent Donjeux, sale Paris 29ff April 1793 (Lugt 5049), no. 147: ‘Rembrandt. Une femme de grandeur naturelle, et vue jusqu’aux genoux; elle est vêtue de noir, et dans l’ancien costume espagnol, tenant de la main droite une plume noire, et ayant la gauche appuyée en avant sur le coin d’une table, couverte d’un tapis; elle a le col et la poitrine couverts d’une large fraise de dentelle, ainsi que des manches

relevées, du même genre; ce tableau de la manière finie de ce maître, est d’une harmonie et d’une perfection rares dans ceux de cette grandeur. Haut. 46 pouc., larg. 36. [= 124.2 × 97.2 cm] T.’ (1600 livres to Le Brun).

– Coll. Lord Leconfield, Petworth House, Sussex (Collins Baker, cat. 1920, p. 101, no. 105).

– Donated to the museum by Helen Swift Neilson, 1943.

#### 9. Summary

Even in its locally somewhat overcleaned condition, no. A 79 is an authentic example of Rembrandt’s largescale portraits painted on canvas, dating from 1633. From a series of autoradiographs it can be deduced that Rembrandt made a number of interesting changes during the execution of the picture. It forms, with no. A 78, an unusually composed pair of pendants.

**A 80 Portrait of the minister Johannes Wtenbogaert**

1633

SOUTH QUEENSFERRY, WEST LOTHIAN, DALMENY HOUSE, COLL. EARL OF ROSEBERY

HDG 726; BR. 173; BAUCH 361; GERSON 137

Fig. 1. Canvas 123 × 105 cm





Fig. 2. X-ray





### 1. Summarized opinion

A not very well preserved, authentic work, with a signature and date of 1633 of doubtful authenticity.

### 2. Description of subject

The preacher, seen knee-length, stands with the body turned three-quarters to the right and the head facing almost straight to the front. His left hand is held on his chest, while the right holds a pair of gloves lower down in front of the body. He is clad in a fur-trimmed cloak over a black tunic, and wears a white ruff and a black skullcap. To the right, on a table covered with a tablecloth, are a hat and an open, propped-up book. The background is formed by a wall, with on the right a dark space set back and separated from the lighter part by a sharp edge. The light falls from the left.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 14 November 1974 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in excellent daylight, and in the frame. X-Rays (by the Courtauld Institute, 9 films 30 × 40 cm) covering the whole canvas except for the extreme bottom edge were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 123 × 105 cm. Single piece. There is (especially apparent in the X-rays) slight cusping along the top, marked cusping at the right, but none at all along the left and bottom.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: At the top of the canvas there are vague signs of what is probably secondary cusping, with a pitch that varies between 10 and 15 cm and extending some 8 cm into the canvas. On the right the pitch varies between 7.5 and 10 cm, with a depth of c. 14 cm. The bottom has no cusping, though there is distortion in the form of a single curve that gives the impression of the canvas having at some time been attached only by the corners. The lefthand side has cusping varying in pitch between 6.5 and 9.5 cm, and extending c. 16 cm inwards. Threadcount: 14.8 vertical threads/cm (14–15.5), 14.6 horizontal threads/cm (13.5–15.2). There is a noticeably large number of longer and shorter thickenings, lying close together, in the horizontal direction, and only occasional thickenings vertically. Because of the slight variation in the density of the vertical threads and the numerous horizontal thickenings, it may be assumed that the warp runs vertically. Thread density and weave structure show so much similarity to those of the canvas of the *Raising of the Cross* (no. A 69) that it is highly probable that both canvases came from the same bolt. In view of the strange deformation at the bottom it may be supposed that the canvas of no. A 80 was at one end of a long strip of canvas primed as a single piece.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Light yellow-brown, visible at the point where the sleeve, book and background meet, and showing through in a number of other places such as on the left by the collar and in the hair on the left above the ear.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: According to an oral communication from Mrs Joyce Plesters, the ground consists of two layers, a reddish brown bottom and a greyish top layer.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: So badly flattened during lining that the weave of

the canvas has been pressed through the paint over virtually the whole surface. The condition of the pressed paint layer – so far as it can be judged (see below under *Varnish*) – leaves much to be desired. Large areas of the black clothing have probably been overpainted, and the same may also be true of the shadowed part of the nose, areas of shadow in the left background, and in the tablecloth. Craquelure: a fine, irregular network can be seen in the background running, near the head, mainly diagonally to the upper right. In the tablecloth on the right fine hair-cracks, in a single diagonal direction, may be connected with overpainting.

DESCRIPTION: The lit parts of the face are painted opaquely with brushstrokes that, though not obtrusive, can be followed in most passages. They partly follow the form of the face, and partly – as in the nose – have strokes placed diagonally, running from bottom left to top right. At other points the strokes are to some extent merged. The transitions to the shaded parts of the face are gradual. The shadows are done in generally thinner and more translucent paint, but towards the right-hand half of the face, where there is a strong reflected light, a thicker, subdued yellow-brown paint is used. Around the eyes and in the forehead cool and warm flesh tints alternate, and around the eyes and tip of the nose there is a pink tending to red. A carmine-like red-brown is used in the nostril and recurs in the mouth. The eyes are defined clearly, with the pupils shown as sharply-outlined patches of black placed on the brownish iris. The catchlight in the eye on the left is stronger than that in the right, where it consists of merely a small stroke of grey. The rim of moisture is here indicated with light strokes in the pink of the eyelid, while in the other eye the line of moisture is suggested with crisply-placed dots. The mouth is done summarily, with a dark red-brown mouthline and a single touch of dark red placed over the thin carmine red-brown. The ear on the left is painted very fluently, using scant contrast in the flesh tints but giving a strong suggestion of shape.

The hair is executed very freely, with an effective suggestion of its texture, above the ear in opaque greys applied at some places with fine, curving strokes and elsewhere with lumpy strokes and leaving glimpses of the underlying ground. In the moustache the hairs have partly been painted on top of the flesh tint, and in the beard they are placed over the shadow on the collar.

The hands are dealt with fairly broadly. The hand on the chest offers little variation in colour, and scant suggestion of form. Any subtle colour differences there maybe have been hidden by the varnish; the strangely slovenly appearance of the lower hand may come from the same cause, while later overpaintings of the neighbouring black have moreover been placed insensitively alongside the flesh colour so that the hands look as if they have been cut out of the black. There is, in fact, more colour in the lower hand than in the upper, with light yellow and red-brown at the knuckles and here and there, in cooler tints, for the veins. The shadow cast by the cuff is done in a fairly strong red-brown. The hand as a whole however remains flat and unsatisfying as a rendering of flesh. The gloves, in a subdued yellow-brown with an occasional accent of light, are modelled broadly but deftly.

One may suppose that a large part of the black of the clothing has been overpainted. The fur on the cloak seems to be in rather better condition; a clear variation can be seen in both brushstroke and consistency of paint. The brushwork is easy and varied, with the ground occasionally showing through, while elsewhere the grey and brown paint covers fully. It is uncertain whether, and if so to what extent, later restorations contribute to this appearance. The contours of the

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)



fur lie over the background paint; painted earlier, this background can at some points be detected in relief as much as 2 cm inside the outline. The contour of the cloak, too, has been painted over the background. The white cuffs are painted fluently and effectively in white and grey, the upper one probably overpainted in the shadow area.

The ruff was completed at a late stage: the background on the left, the black cloak and parts of the beard at the chin, and the background to the right, all show through clearly, contributing to the rendering of the semi-transparent material. Firm brushstrokes in grey and white run through the collar area, unconnected with the form and the folds, and are evidence of a first, rough lay-in. The suggestion of form is achieved by the contorted white lines of the lit edges. Some of the shadows, such as that beneath the chin, appear to have been placed on top of this. The shadow cast by the head on the collar is placed partly over the white.

The skullcap is done in a very dark, flat grey with a deftly drawn outline in black; the sheen on the material is suggested with a zigzag line in light grey. The condition at this point seems to be good. The black hat on the table is done in comparable fashion, in a fairly even, almost black paint with a deep-black hatband and a little grey for a tassel.

The book behind the hat is depicted very simply, the lit

pages in greys that are so thin that an underlying layer (see *X-Rays*) shows through. The edges of the pages on the left are shown sketchily, with bold strokes in a cool grey. The cut edges of the pages on the right are similarly sketchy in treatment; a partially translucent brown is laid over the ground, and darker brown and grey strokes placed on top of it. These latter strokes lie at some points over the background, and must thus have been painted at a comparatively late stage. The lines, obviously intended to suggest script, are set down with relaxed strokes of brown. It is evident, at the point where background, cloak and book meet, how crudely the initial reserves were shaped – the yellow-brown ground is here totally exposed. The hanging tablecloth is painted vigorously, with a great deal of ground showing through particularly on the left; to the right there are probably overpaintings.

The background is painted in an opaque grey, lightest to right and left of the figure, with bold strokes running in various directions and only occasionally parallel with the outline. To the lower left the grey becomes darker, but continues to cover. There may here be a later overpainting. The tone becomes darker towards the top as well, though the paint covers less fully and the ground can be glimpsed at some points.

To the right a receding section of wall is shown by a darker zone. The paint is quite translucent at this point, applied with

Fig. 4. Detail (1:1.5)



broad strokes and with the ground showing through. The transition between the light wall and the area of shadow is not sharply defined.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

Along the majority of the contour, and most clearly along the head and shoulders, the background appears remarkably light in the radiographic image. It is evident that the reserve left for the lefthand side of the ruff in this light area was a good deal more generous than the final execution; the same is true of the hair on the left, where an autograph retouching likewise extended the background over part of the reserve initially left for it. Below the revers of the cloak there is a band visible along the back, showing up quite sharply, that is scarcely darker than the remainder of the background at this point. The lefthand margin of this band must be the first reserve that was provided in the background for the figure. The righthand border matches a closer delineation of the figure, and arose through a broadening of the background to the right. Comparison with the present state shows that the contour of the back was finally shifted back again a little to the left, and placed over the background.

The head shows a remarkably broad treatment with brushstrokes, appearing as a pronounced white, on the forehead and nose that are plainly applied more vigorously than in the more

careful working-up. The hands, especially the lower, show up only vaguely.

In the right background the present-day book appears dark for the most part, though its form is interrupted by a lighter form that was probably a book set higher up. The dark reserve for the hat is intersected by the vague shapes, appearing light in the X-ray, of a limp and folded-over book or books.

To the upper right there is a curved boundary between a darker part of the background (to the top) and a less dark area (to the bottom), giving the impression that there was intended to be a curtain, drawn up to the right, at this point.

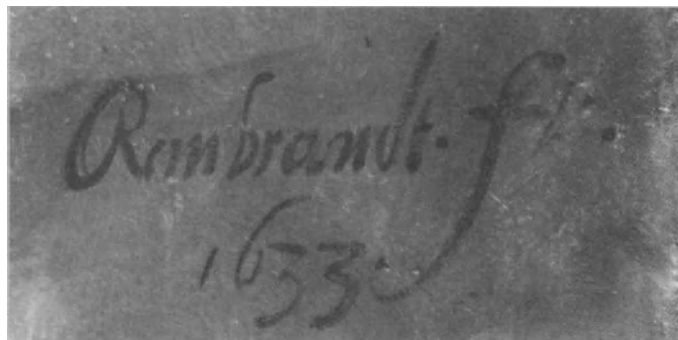
The image is interfered with to some extent by predominantly horizontal, long and slightly curved stripes, probably stemming from the adhesive used during the lining of the canvas.

A very small amount of localized paint loss is seen as dark patches, e.g. in the cuff by the upper hand, in the shadow of the right sleeve and by the brim of the hat.

#### *Signature*

At the right above the book in bold, black letters <Rembrandt. ft: / 1633.>. The letters present a uniform thickness that is uncharacteristic. The same is true of a number of details, such as the shape of the *m*, the way the *a* is linked to the *n* and the open loop at the top of the *f*. The paint used differs in colour from the grey one used for the <AET (followed by three dots

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (reduced)



arranged as a triangle) 76>. There is every reason to doubt the authenticity of the signature. It may have been copied from an original one. The date of 1633 is demonstrably correct (see 4. Comments).

#### Varnish

A badly yellowed varnish hampers assessment of the painting's condition and observation of the colours, and impairs the whole appearance of the work.

#### 4. Comments

The pressed condition of the painting, where the weave of the canvas can be clearly seen over the entire paint surface, the overpaintings the extent of which cannot always be made out, and the badly yellowed layer of varnish combine to make assessment of the work difficult. On closer inspection, however, the structure and manner of painting are found to correspond to a very great extent with those of other Rembrandt portraits from the early 1630s, in particular the 1634 *Portrait of Johannes Elison* in Boston (no. A 98). The sketchlike, freely-brushed way the background and book are rendered are very reminiscent of the background in that painting, while the broad definition of space is a more general characteristic of Rembrandt's portraits. Care has been used in applying the paint of the face, and is most clearly apparent in the area of the eyes; the distribution of light here is well-judged and yields a strongly three-dimensional effect, as it does in the collar. The placing of the figure in the picture area, and the way a reticent animation has been achieved by means of the gesturing hand and the turn of the head against the body, are wholly in keeping with Rembrandt's portraits from these years.

The unsatisfactory appearance of the hands undoubtedly has partly to do with the state of the painting, and with the insensitive way the black of the clothing has been butted up against the contours during a later restoration. Only removal of the layer of varnish and the overpaintings could reveal to what extent their appearance is due to the condition of the paint layer or, alternatively, to the quality of the execution. If the latter were true, one might

wonder whether this would be a case of intervention by a studio hand in the execution of an otherwise autograph work.

The radiographic image as a whole gives the definite impression – more strongly than does the surface in its present condition – that the structure, brushwork and chiaroscuro are in line with the authentic portraits from the 1630s. It is also evidence – with the changes in the contours and changes in the still-life of the books – that this is an individually-produced work and definitely not a copy. The shifts in the outline of the body, already apparent to the naked eye and confirmed by the X-ray, point to a working method in which the final form and position of certain parts were arrived at only after some searching, as is repeatedly the case with Rembrandt's kneelength works; one may think, for instance, of the portraits of Marten Looten (no. A 52) and Joris de Caullery (no. A 53). All things taken together, there can be no doubt as to the Rembrandt attribution.

The painting also has features that are seen again in his portraits of ministers of religion from the subsequent years – the clothing, and the presence of books that often lead to a more precise specification of the background as a summarily-indicated interior. In two cases – the Boston *Portrait of Johannes Elison* of 1634 (no. A 98) and the *Portrait of Eleazar Swalmius* known only from a print (cf. W. R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt*, Stuttgart-Leipzig 1909, Kl. d. K., p. 524) – the sitter is likewise holding one hand before his chest. The meaning of this gesture, and at the same time its particular applicability to a picture of a man of religion, is explained in John Bulwer's *Chirologia or the natural language of the hand*, London 1644, pp. 88–89 under the motto *Conscientier affirmo*, in these words: 'To lay the Hand open to our heart, using a kinde of bowing gesture, is a garb wherein we affirm a thing, swear or call God to witnesse a truth, as so we seem as if we would openly exhibit unto sense, the testimony of our conscience, or take a tacite oath, putting in security, that no mentall reservation doth basely divorce our words and meaning, but that all is truth that we protest unto'.

The identification of the sitter as the Remonstrant leader Johannes Wtenbogaert is beyond dispute, and has never been put in doubt since it was advanced by Hofstede de Groot<sup>1</sup>. The resemblance to other portraits of the frequently-portrayed cleric is evident<sup>2</sup>. We would mention here, for comparison, only the etching by Rembrandt himself which in its fifth state bears the date 1635 and an inscription from which the identity of the subject is plain (B. 279), and the painting by Jacob Adriaensz. Backer from 1638 (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv.

no. C 1474; K. Bauch, *Jacob Adriaensz. Backer*, Berlin 1926, no. 159), which is still owned by the Remonstrant community in Amsterdam and was reproduced in an engraving by Johannes de Visscher and provided with an inscription. Moreover, a note by Wtenbogaert himself (see 5. *Documents and sources*) confirms that in April 1633, during a stay in Amsterdam, he had his portrait painted by Rembrandt at the commission of a wealthy supporter of the Remonstrants, the merchant Abraham Anthonisz. Recht. The painting must thus be seen as an autograph work by Rembrandt not only by reason of its execution, but also because it is well documented. While the date of 1633 which, together with Rembrandt's name, appears on the picture is correct, the inscription itself is written in such an even calligraphic hand that it cannot be regarded as an authentic signature. One wonders whether it may have been copied from an original one that was somehow lost.

Johannes Wtenbogaert (Uytenbogaert), who was born on 11 December 1557 at Utrecht and died on 4 September 1644 in The Hague, was in his time a widely known and respected personality. He was a minister in Utrecht and, from 1591 on, in The Hague, where he was the confidant and adviser of the Grand Pensionary Johan van Oldebarnevelt. He became the court preacher of Prince Maurits, and tutor to the young Prince Frederik Hendrik. His open support of the cause of the Remonstrants – the less-strict branch of Dutch Calvinism – brought him into disfavour, and he fled to Antwerp, Paris and Rouen. In 1626, when the political tide had turned, he returned to The Hague.

### 5. Documents and sources

Journal of Johannes Wtenbogaert, now in the University Library at Leiden (ms. Sem. Rem. 66, fol. 43), entry under the date 13 April 1633: 'Wtgeschildert van Rembrant, voor Abr. Anthonissen'<sup>2</sup> (Strauss *Doc.*, 1633/2). Abraham Anthonisz. Recht (1588–1664) was a rich merchant in Amsterdam; as a convinced follower of the Remonstrants he was an admirer and friend of Wtenbogaert<sup>3</sup>.

### 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Engraving by Giuseppe Longhi (Monza 1766–Milan 1831). Shows the picture in a rather narrower frame. Inscribed: *Rembrandt pin 1633. – G. Longhi inc. 1811/Borgomastro Olandese*. The fact that the inscription is in Italian suggests that the original was in Italy in 1811 – the inscriptions on other works by Rembrandt engraved by Longhi that were in French collections are written in French or Latin.

### 7. Copies

Painted copies are mentioned a number of times in 18th-century sales catalogues, e.g. in the Hendrik Houtman sale, Alkmaar 19ff March 1776 (Lugt 2510), no. 292 [33.6 ×

31.2 cm] and in the Johannes Enschedé sale, Haarlem 30ff May 1786 (Lugt 4056), no. 82.

1. Canvas 71 × 60 cm, signed <Rembran . . f.>. Stockholm, National Museum, cat. no. 585. Bust showing one hand, with a pillar in the background. The X-ray shows the hand (which is placed differently from either hand in the original) to have been foreseen from the outset. Both the paint surface and the X-ray give the impression of a 17th-century painting. As no cusping can be seen, the possibility of the picture in its present state being only a fragment cannot be ruled out. It was previously, before no. A 80 became known, taken to be the original.

2. Panel 72 × 57 cm. Bust without hands and without the ruff, with a pillar in the background as in no. 1 above. Attributed to Govert Flinck, lately in coll. Dr C. J. K. van Aalst, Hoevelaken (Von Moltke *Flinck*, p. 115, no. 238).

### 8. Provenance

– Painted for Abraham Anthonisz. Recht, Amsterdam, and listed in the description of his estate on 20 October 1664 as being in the main hall of his country mansion in the Watergraafsmeer: 'Conterfeijtsel van Uijtenbogaert f 40.-'<sup>2</sup> (Strauss *Doc.*, 1664/5).

– Possibly in Italy early in the 19th century (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*).

– Coll. the 5th Earl of Rosebery, Mentmore, Buckinghamshire. We do not know whether the painting was bought by the Earl, or had already been purchased by Baron Mayer Amschel de Rothschild (d. 1874), whose daughter Hannah married the Earl of Rosebery in 1878 and who bought works not only in France and Germany but also in Italy, especially Venice.

### 9. Summary

The painting can in spite of its unsatisfactory state of preservation unhesitatingly be attributed to Rembrandt on the grounds of design, manner of painting and handling of light, all of which fit in perfectly with the style of the portraits Rembrandt was painting during the early 1630s. This conclusion gains strong support from the radiographic image, which bears all the hallmarks of an autograph work from the 1630s and, because of the changes it shows in the contours and in the still-life of books, practically rules out the possibility of the painting being a copy.

The identity of the sitter is adequately documented, and the painting is undoubtedly the same portrait that – according to Johannes Wtenbogaert's own statement – Rembrandt made of him in the year 1633.

### REFERENCES

- 1 W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt VIII*, Paris 1905, no. 562.
- 2 B. Tideman Jzn., 'Portretten van Johannes Wtenbogaert', *O.H.* 21 (1903), pp. 125–128.
- 3 S. A. C. Dudok van Heel, 'Mr. Johannes Wtenbogaert (1608–1680) een man uit Remonstrants milieu en Rembrandt van Rijn', *Jaarboek . . . Amstelodamum* 70 (1978), Liber Amicorum I.H. van Eeghen, pp. 146–169, esp. 151; idem, 'Abraham Anthonisz Recht (1588–1664), een Remonstrants opdrachtgever van Rembrandt', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad . . .* 65 (1978), pp. 81–88.

HDG 657; BR. 171; BAUCH 363; GERSON 138

**1. Summarized opinion**

A well preserved but possibly substantially reduced original, with (authentic ?) signature and date of 1633.

**2. Description of subject**

The subject, seen to just above the knees, stands in front of a stone wall with a profiled moulding which continues into the arch of a gateway on the right. His body is turned three-quarters to the right, and he looks towards the viewer. He wears a black cloak over a black doublet with burls, a flat pleated collar with a tasselled bandstring, and a wide-brimmed black hat; in his gloved left hand he holds the other glove. The light falls from the left.

**3. Observations and technical information***Working conditions*

Examined in October 1968 (J. B., B. H.) in good artificial light and out of the frame. Sixteen X-ray films of the museum, together covering the whole picture, were received later.

*Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 128.5 × 100.5 cm. Single piece. The original painted canvas is folded over the stretcher for a few centimetres at the bottom and both sides; the original border of the painting is visible only at the top.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: The pitch of the cusping varies on the left between 9 and 11 cm; the depth cannot be measured on the X-rays owing to the presence of a radioabsorbent layer on the back of the lining canvas. To the right the pitch varies between 13 and 15 cm. No cusping can be seen at the bottom. On the left the pitch varies between 7 and 10 cm. Threadcount: 14.7 horizontal threads/cm (14.5–16.5), 15.3 vertical threads/cm (14–15.5). Because of the lesser variation in density of the vertical threads, one may assume the warp to be vertical. Otherwise there is nothing to be deduced about the weave from the X-rays, because of the radioabsorbent layer already mentioned.

*Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light brown-yellow is visible here and there, especially on the left in the background, suggesting a light-coloured ground.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn<sup>1</sup> found two layers, the lower consisting of red ochre, chalk and a little white lead in an oil/resin-like medium with traces of protein, and the upper of white lead and a little bone black in an oil/resin-like medium.

*Paint layer*

CONDITION: So far as can be seen with the naked eye, very good. A rectangle of grey at the lower right, which must represent the floor outside the gateway, seems not to belong to the original paint layer. Craquelure: a varying pattern, depending on the thickness and consistency of the paint.

DESCRIPTION: There is no impasto at any point. The contrasts in the head are quite strong, and bold accents have been used especially in the area of the nose. In the lit areas one can see distinct, relatively long brushstrokes that mostly follow the forms. A pink flesh colour lies over strokes of yellowish paint. The eye on the left is drawn strongly in grey, pink and an ochre brown. The lower lid is pink, with brownish-red strokes to suggest the lashes; the area below this consists of a stroke of

orange-yellow brown, with below it a stroke of pale yellow. The white of the eye, which becomes greyer towards the right, ends abruptly in a dark area of shadow. The grey iris has a white catchlight at the upper left, with opposite it a lighter and thicker dab of grey. On the left, in the white of the eye and beneath it, small touches and strokes of white are used to render moisture. The eye on the right is done in a similar but somewhat less pronounced manner. The shadow areas are here fairly thin, in subtle greys that merge into the cast shadow of the hat on the forehead; the latter is a reddish brown at this point, becoming a darker and more opaque grey towards the left. The shadow side of the face has a strong plastic effect created by subtle shading and by a yellowish reflexion of light along the contour. By the wing of the nose, too, the marked three-dimensional effect is determined partly by a reflexion of light on the wing shown with accents of yellow. The shadow cast by the nose is applied fairly heavily in opaque dark grey and pink, with the nostrils in thick, almost black paint. There is an almost white highlight on the tip of the nose, and another in slightly broken white on the ridge of the nose. The moustache and tuft of beard below the lip are done with thin, firm strokes in brown-yellow and white-yellow. A zone of grey on the lit jawline shows the light growth of stubble. The ear is painted with scant precision, the form indicated only approximately in pink and ochre brown. The hair is also shown rather cursorily in ochre brown and grey. The collar is done in long strokes of white, various greys and yellow-greys; the ends of the pleats are represented by jumbled strokes of light and dark grey. The cuff is painted in a similar fashion.

The hand on the left is painted with quite long strokes, the veins done in grey-blue and yellowish highlights. The lines of shadow between the fingers are drawn in grey-brown and reddish brown, alongside an ochre brown in the half-shadows. The white flesh colour of the wrist is placed against the ruddy grey cast shadow of the cuff, and in fact runs somewhat over it.

The clothing is executed in black and grey-black, with an effectively placed grey sheen of light against which, on the nearer sleeve in particular, the small black burls decorating the material stand out clearly. To the lower right and left, the reserve left for the cloak in the paint of the background was wider, and the background has been filled in to bring it up to the present contour.

The architecture in the background is painted entirely in greys, the form shown with lines in grey and dark grey, though without giving a clear idea of its construction. The opening of the gateway is closed off at the bottom with a horizontal band painted flatly in a bluish grey, which may be meant to represent a floor. This area is painted carelessly over the grey background, and differs from its surroundings in application of paint and in having a peculiar bluish colour; it is probably a later addition.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn<sup>1</sup> took samples, one from the tasselled bandstring containing white lead, the second from the clothing and containing bone black, brown ochre (umber) and a little white lead.

*X-Rays*

The back of the canvas is covered with paint containing lead, and this results in a greyish tint that lowers the contrasts.

In the head the brushstrokes show up clearly in the light parts, and confirm the observations made with the naked eye. In the collar there are, besides the vertical strokes, other strokes that run crosswise and must be due to a light under-painting.



Fig. 1. Canvas 128.5 × 100.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



#### *Signature*

At the bottom left in dark grey <Rembrandt/f(followed by three dots arranged as a triangle)/1633.>. The handwriting is alternately hesitant (as in practically the whole of the name) and vigorous (most so in the *f*); the thin oblique strokes that link the legs of the *m* are uncharacteristic. As was first suggested to us by the handwriting experts Ir. H. Hardy and Mrs R. ter Kuile-Haller during the examination they undertook at the initiative of Professor Dr W. Froentjes, there is reason to doubt the authenticity of the inscription.

#### *Varnish*

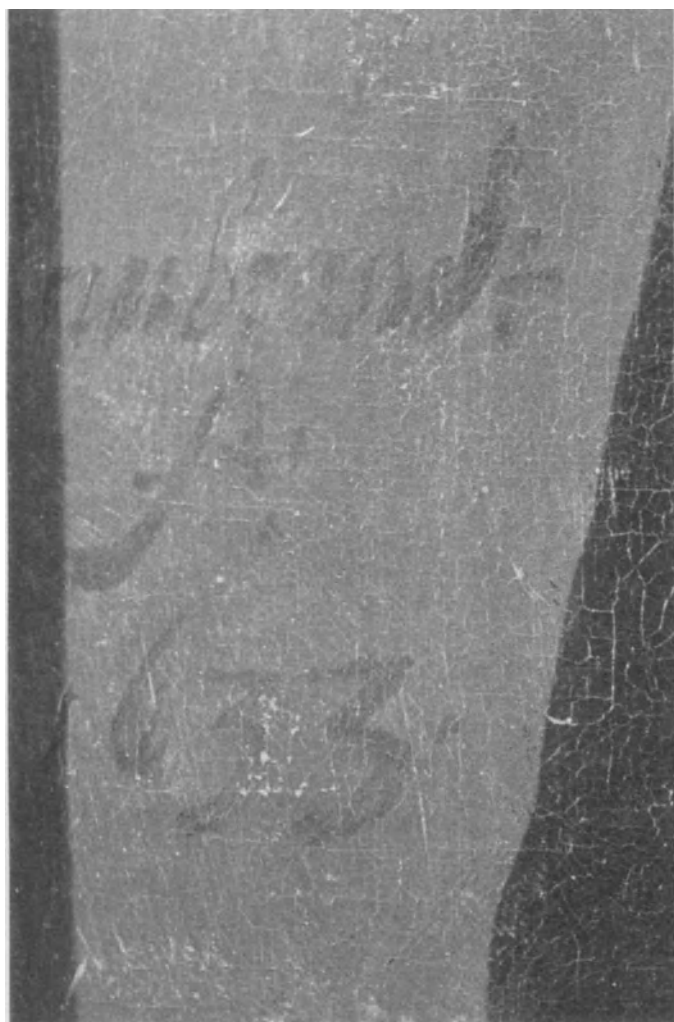
No special remarks.

#### **4. Comments**

In its treatment no. A 81 corresponds sufficiently to

Rembrandt's portraits from the years 1632–33 to eliminate all doubt as to its authenticity. The head and hands are marked by a direct manner of painting and an effective use of paint. There is no attempt at meticulous detail. The X-ray shows that the areas of light and shadow were balanced one against the other from the outset, and invariably serve to create an effect of plasticity. This is seen particularly strongly in the nose with its heavy cast shadow and in the treatment of the shadow side of the face where the areas of light and shade are supplemented by reflected light on the jaw. The treatment of the contours – which, as in for instance the portraits of Nicolaes Ruts (no. A 43), Joris de Caullery (no. A 53) and Johannes Wtenbogaert

Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1)



(no. A 80), were initially planned to be broader – and the reticent but effective execution of the clothing and background are wholly in accord with what we know from Rembrandt's portraits from the early 1630s, especially the knee-length works. Compared with these the composition does however appear a little strange. The focus of the lighting is placed on the lefthand side of the painting, without any counterweight being provided on the righthand side. The empty archway to the right with its strong downward perspective forms a surprising element, and the horizontal grey band at the bottom gives the impression of being a later addition that may have been intended to counter this effect; it is however badly matched to the remaining architecture. These considerations, added to the fact that the painted canvas is folded over at both sides and the bottom (indicating at all events that there is more painted surface on these sides) prompts the question of whether the original canvas may not have been larger. The absence of cusping at the bottom would certainly allow for the possibility of a substantial reduction in size along the bottom without, in itself, providing proof of it. If one assumes a reduction

Fig. 5. N. Elias. Pickenoy, *Portrait of Cornelis de Graeff*. Berlin GDR, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie

here, there are two possibilities – the figure could have been shown knee-length, or full-length. In the first case, one can think in terms of some 10 to 20 centimetres having been cut off; the lay-out could have resembled that of the *Portrait of a man rising from his chair* in Cincinnati also from 1633, no. A 78. It is however unclear how the archway might then have continued further downwards. In the second case, one could think of a composition like that of the *Portrait of Cornelis de Graeff* by Nicolaes Elias. Pickenoy (Berlin GDR, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Gemäldegalerie, cat. 1976 no. 753A, canvas 184 × 104 cm, fig. 5), dating from around 1630 and showing a comparable pose and placing of the figure. The unsatisfactory effect of the composition of no. A 81 would be explained if one could assume that the painting originally extended in similar



Fig. 6. S. Savery, *Portrait of Jan Harmensz. Krul*, 1634

*Lusit auē zēvxis. zēvxim parrhasivs. at tu  
Pictorem Et qui te sculpsit in aere virum.  
Exprimit iste stiplō. Depingit et is penicillo  
Efigiem, neuter cum genio ingenium.  
Laus r' triq3 tamen, qui quod tractabile tangunt,  
Quod non hoc linquunt Iudicio inuidiæ.*

BER Fontanus  
M.D.

fashion. Rembrandt painted a number of lifesize and full-length portraits in the 1630s – e.g. the *Portraits of Marten Soolmans and his wife Oopjen Coppit* of 1634 (nos. A 100 and 101, both on canvas, c. 210 × 134.8 cm and the *Portrait of a man standing* in Kassel, of 1639 (Br. 216, on canvas, c. 200 × 124 cm). No. A 81 would have been his first portrait of this type, with a composition rather more traditional than in the later examples and thus most akin to the portrait by Elias. The painting would then have measured around 195 × 110 cm, or slightly more. In any case the present signature may, because of its atypical execution and cramped position, have been copied from an original one, which could well have been lost when the canvas was reduced in size. In 1735 Valerius Röver was already describing no. A 81 as a knee-length piece (see 5. *Documents and sources*); any trimming-down in size would thus have taken place earlier than that date.

The identification of the sitter as Krul is remarkably enough not given by Röver, but only later in the Hauptinventar of the Kassel collection that was begun in 1749 (see 5. *Documents and sources*); the

source of this identification is not known. Comparison with a portrait of Krul in print form done by Salomon Savery in 1634 (Hollst. XXIV, no. 125; our fig. 6) scarcely bears out the identification. The poet Jan Harmensz. Krul (1602–1646) was a locksmith and later an estate-agent and bookseller in Amsterdam (N. Wijngaards, *Jan Harmensz. Krul*, Zwolle 1964, *Zworse reeks van taal-en letterkundige studies* no. 14). It must be commented that it would in itself be uncommon for a man like Krul to have his portrait painted lifesize and full-length; portraits of this kind were in the early decades of the 17th century reserved for courtiers and nobles, and for very well-to-do burghers. Even a knee-length portrait would for him have been reaching rather high.

## 5. Documents and sources

- In the ms. catalogue of his collection Valerius Röver of Delft lists: '1735. 114 een Mansportret, levensgrootē, zijnde een kniestuk, met 2 handen, Ao. 1633 van Rembrandt van Rhyn f. 200. 1738 verkogt aan de Hr. Rutgers à f. 165' ( . . . a man's portrait, lifesize, a knee-length work, with two hands, AD. 1633 by Rembrandt van Rhyn f. 200, 1738 sold to Mr Rutgers for f. 165) (E. W. Moes in: *O.H.* 31 (1913), pp. 4–24, esp. 24).
- On 29 April 1738 the collector and dealer Antonie Rutgers writes to the Landgrave Wilhelm VIII of Hesse: 'Aussi Monseigneur, étant ces jours passés avec Monsieur Röver de Delft, qui vouloit faire quelque Réforme dans son Cabinet de Tableaux, pour y trouver place à ses nouvelles Aquisitions; j'achetai de lui, pour Votre Altesse, un très excellent *Portrait d'homme* de Rembrandt, à f 160.- qui justement sera un parfait Compagnon pour le Van Uffelen de Van Dijk. Le prix est très bas, car Mr. Röver en avoit payé f 200.- à Mr. Van Dyck de la Haye . . . ' (C. Alhard von Drach in: *O.H.* 8 (1890), pp. 187–202, esp. 201–202). The portrait of Lucas van Uffelen by Van Dyck, for which the Rembrandt could serve as a companion piece, did not return to Kassel after the Kassel collection was moved to Paris in the Napoleonic era, and is now – in the Benjamin Altman bequest – in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. This canvas (126 × 102 cm) is practically the same size as no. A 81 in its present dimensions.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

None.

## 8. Provenance

According to the information given under 5. *Documents and sources*, in particular the letter from Antonie Rutgers to Wilhelm VIII of Hesse:

- Dealer Philips van Dyck, The Hague until 1735.
- Acquired from Van Dyck in 1735 by Valerius Röver, Delft.
- In 1738 sold by the above to dealer Anthonie Rutgers, Amsterdam.
- Sold in the same year to Landgrave Wilhelm VIII of Hesse-

Kassel; in the Kassel *Haupt-Catalogus* begun in 1749, as no. 298: 'Rembrant van Ryn. Der holländische Poët Croll, Kniestück auf Leinen, in verguldem Rahmen. Höhe 4 Schuh Breite 3 Schuh 3 Zoll (Rhineland feet)[ = 125.5 × 101.4 cm].'  
From 1807–1815 in Paris, thereafter back in Kassel.

### 9. Summary

In style and execution, a characteristic portrait from the early Amsterdam period. The arrangement and composition, together with the fact that the original canvas has been folded over at the bottom and sides give reason to suppose that the painting was originally larger and may even have been a full-length portrait. The identification as the poet Jan Harmensz. Krul, which first appears in the Kassel inventory begun in 1749, cannot be regarded as definite.

### REFERENCES

- 1 H. Kühn, 'Untersuchungen zu den Pigmenten und Malgründen Rembrandts durchgeführt an den Gemälden der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Kassel', *Maltechnik/Restauro* 82 (1976), pp. 25–33.



**A 82 Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq**

FRANKFURT AM MAIN, STÄDELSCHES KUNSTINSTITUT, INV. NO. 912

1633

HDG 630; BR. 339; BAUCH 466; GERSON 148

Fig. 1. Panel 67.5 × 54.9 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



### 1. Summarized opinion

A very well preserved, authentic work, with a probably authentic signature and date of 1633.

### 2. Description of subject

A woman is seen almost down to the waist and turned slightly to the left, against a middle-toned background. She wears a starched cap with lace edging, a wide ruff, and a black costume consisting of an open overgarment ('vlieger') with shoulder-caps and a bodice decorated with horizontal stripes and closed at the front with numerous small buttons. The light falls from the left.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 10 June 1968 (J. B., S. H. L.) in good daylight and in the frame; again on 15 November 1982 (J. B., E. v. d. W.). Five X-ray films, four covering the whole picture and the fifth the head, were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 67.5 × 54.9 cm. Thickness c. 1 cm. Three planks, widths from left to right 12.1, 31.6 and 11.2 cm. Bevelled all round at the back, from which it may be concluded that the oval shape is original.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch, Hamburg): all three planks were measured, and the righthand and middle planks could be dated. The middle plank, with the youngest annual rings, has 281 rings of heartwood (+ 1 on the heart side and 3 on the sapwood side) datable as 1323/4–1604/7. Earliest possible felling date 1627. Growing area: Northern Netherlands. The ring pattern does not match that of the supposed companion-piece (no. C 77).

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish brown shows through to a greater or lesser extent in the whole of the grey of the background, and can also be seen in thin parts of the paint layer in the shadow side of the face, the hair, the righthand part of the cap and on the right in the piped edge of the collar.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Very well preserved, apart from a few very small paint losses in the face. The joins of the planks making up the panel are scarcely detectable at the front. Craquelure: a regular pattern of fine cracks can be seen in the thickly painted areas.

DESCRIPTION: The background is for the most part executed in a thin grey with no apparent brushstroke; in general it is somewhat translucent, most so to the right above the ruff and least in a dark zone running along the lace edge of the cap.

The face is painted the thinnest in the shadow part, including the righthand eye-socket, the shadow along the nose and around the righthand wing of the nose, and the hair; in the latter, dark brown and small strokes of grey are placed over an ochre brown underpainting. In the lit side of the face the locally pink flesh colour is applied with brushstrokes that mainly run downwards to the right. The paint is thickest in the middle of the forehead, and on the white highlight on the ridge of the nose. The nostrils are marked in dark brown with a little carmine red, and carmine red is used for the rather tautly

Fig. 3. Back of panel



drawn mouth-line. The bottom lip, in pink with a sheen done in white, is painted more thickly than the top lip. The chin and lower chin have a broad stroke of brown shadow, and a reflexion of light shown in grey.

The righthand eye has a lower border in pink with a few dots of white to suggest the moisture; the upper lid, done with a little white on the pink flesh colour, is bordered at the top by a grey line that merges into the shadow of the eye-socket, and at the bottom by a line that starts in the eye-socket and becomes a brown suggesting the shadow on the eyeball. In the corner of the eye there is some pink with a spot of white for the catchlight; the iris is subtly done, mainly in a dark grey with at the lower right a lighter grey and at the upper left a fine white highlight, the whole set in the white of the eye that is white on the left and grey on the right. Around the black pupil there is a translucent zone in which the underlying ground can be sensed. The short strokes of grey for the eyebrow are partly covered by the pink flesh colour. The eye on the left is drawn in brown and pink, with white catchlights on the eyelid, the lower rim and in the corner. The iris is treated in the same way as that in the other eye. Grey and brown are used to mark the shadow of the eye-socket, which together with the upper eyelid provides a convincing suggestion of plastic modelling.

In the cap a thin grey and a thicker, light grey lie over the yellow-brown of the ground. The figuring of the lace is summarily indicated in dark grey on a greyish white, using tiny dots and lines. The edges of the cap, and the lit edges of the lace, are in a thicker white. The ruff is done mostly in long strokes of light grey and white, beneath which it is however possible to see brushstrokes running in a different direction and obviously forming part of a light underpainting. Immediately alongside the lower edge of the collar there are glimpses of white in the black of the costume, which probably has to do with the fact that (presumably at the underpainting stage) the collar extended somewhat further downwards.

Fig. 4. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 5. Detail with signature (1:1)



The costume is indicated rather broadly, in dark grey and black; the cursorily-treated buttons are placed on this in ochre yellow, thin and translucent on the righthand side, with catch-lights in a yellow-white that become fuzzy towards the lower edge of the painting.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

In the face, various areas appear light and correspond with highlights applied in white at a late stage, e.g. on the eyelids, the nose and the piped edges of the ruff. Other light patches – especially on the forehead, both cheeks and the upper lip – coincide with patches seen at the paint surface which, though relatively light and showing the same brushwork as in the X-ray, have (especially on the cheeks) been covered with pink, evidently at a late stage. Short strokes, also seen at the surface and apparently connected with an underpainting, are visible in the collar to the right below the chin, where they do not follow the direction of the folds but run diagonally downwards to the left. Other brushstrokes, e.g. in the highest light immediately to the left below the chin, do however evidently coincide with the fashioning of the ruff in a late stage; it would seem that at an advanced stage the collar was taken further to the left and lower left. The cast shadow of the head on the ruff shows up dark; no light paint was used during the underpainting and painting of this area.

As for the collar, a light underpainting was apparently used in the white cap; between the present lobes of lace, the X-ray shows fuzzy light traces indicating their initial lay-in that was changed in the final execution and covered over by paint used to extend the background.

The X-ray image is impaired to some extent by the inscription on the back of the panel in white paint, seen in reverse (see 5. *Documents and sources*).

#### *Signature*

On the left, level with the shoulder, in a grey somewhat darker than that of the background (<Rembrandt. ft.:/1633.>). Beneath the final 3 there is a short oblique stroke, such as can also be found in some signatures of 1632 (no. A 61), 1633 (nos. A 78 and A 84) and 1634 (no. A 103). Although the handwriting lacks some of the usual spontaneity, the inscription may well be authentic.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

Because of the great discipline exercised in using the

simple but subtle lighting and the tenseness of line to serve the suggestion of plastic form, and because of the way paint is (without ever becoming smooth) used effortlessly to render the different textures of skin, eyes and clothing, this portrait can be termed representative of Rembrandt's carefully-executed portraits from the early 1630s. Utterly characteristic features are the subtlety of modelling in the shadow half of the face and, in general, the way all facial elements are involved in an image of curves and hollows. The face is defined with marked plasticity against the grey of the background which, because of its translucency, has to some extent a lightening effect. It must be said that, while these features are typical enough of Rembrandt, the lace of the cap shows a surprisingly casual treatment that lacks the convincing suggestion of the structure of the material usually achieved by him (cf. Introduction, Chapter III, p. 75). This passage makes one wonder whether a studio assistant may have been given the task of adding it to an otherwise completed picture. Instances of studio intervention in passages of secondary importance are, after all, not uncommon in 17th-century portraiture, though with Rembrandt this practice seems to have been the exception rather than the rule.

The portrait depicts, as appears from two inscriptions on the back (see 5. *Documents and sources*) and in keeping with the painting's pedigree, Maertgen or Maria Hendriksdr. van Bilderbeecq (Leiden c. 1606–1653), who in 1625 married the Leiden grain merchant Willem Burchgraeff (Reningels, W. Flanders c. 1604–Leiden 1647). (We are indebted to Mr W. Downer, City Archivist of Leiden, for biographical and genealogical information.)

A man's portrait in Dresden, also dated 1633 (no. C 77), has long been thought to be the pendant of no. A 82 and to represent Willem Burchgraeff. This idea can be traced back to the 1870s and may be found in, for instance, the catalogue of the 1877 edition of C. Vosmaer's *Rembrandt* (p. 500, though not in the text on p. 121). For a variety of reasons, it seems however unfounded. The panels have not been constructed in the same way, as one might expect with companion-pieces – that in Dresden is a single plank, while the Frankfurt panel consists of three planks. The painting style of the man's portrait differs markedly from that of the woman's, so much so that Rembrandt's authorship can in our opinion no longer be upheld (which in itself would not rule out the identification of the sitter as Willem Burchgraeff). It is highly unlikely that the man's portrait would have been disposed of prior to 1722 (when it appears in Dresden) while the woman's was faithfully kept by their descendants until the early 19th century. And, finally, a portrait of



Fig. 6. D. Mytens, *Portrait of Willem Burchgraeff*, signed and dated 1635. Whereabouts unknown



Fig. 7. The painting in its original frame



Willem Burchgraeff is known, dated 1635 and signed by Daniel Mytens (panel, 68 × 52 cm, present whereabouts unknown; O. ter Kuile in: *N.K.J.* 20, 1969, pp. 14, 53, no. 18; our fig. 6; the sitter is identified by an inscription on the back, probably similar to that on no. A 82). This not only has about the same dimensions as no. A 82, but must apparently also be seen, because of the composition and of the lighting (which is unusual for Mytens), as a companion-piece deliberately executed by the artist so as to match the already existing woman's portrait. The sitter does not resemble the subject of the Dresden *Portrait of a man* (no. C 77).

The painting is one of the very few Rembrandts, if not indeed the only one, which can be assumed to be still in its original frame; this is made of oak veneered with ebony (fig. 7). The place where the iron eyelet must have been let into the frame is now at the bottom instead of the top.

##### 5. Documents and sources

A label stuck to the back of the panel bears in probably 18th-century script the words:

*Margareta (sic) Hendrikse van Bilderdijk (sic)*

*Huysvrouw van Willem Burggraaf.*

The same inscription (identical except for the later spelling 'Huisvrouw') is repeated in large, ornate script letters in white paint (cf. *X-Rays*).

##### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

##### 7. Copies

None.

##### 8. Provenance

– Passed by inheritance from the Burchgraeff family into that of the Rotterdam burgomaster Van Myrop<sup>1</sup>, no doubt Johan Gerbrand van Mierop (Rotterdam 1733–1807), many times a city councillor, and burgomaster in 1787, 1791 and 1792. According to genealogical information kindly provided by Mr W. Downer, city archivist of Leiden (letter of 27 January 1982), the successive owners will have been: Adriana Burchgraeff (Leiden 1630–1705), the sitter's eldest daughter, who married the merchant Paulus Tierens in 1648; their only child Willem Tierens (Leiden 1649–Rotterdam? 1726), who married Catharina Rijzendaal in 1670; their daughter Agnita Catharina Tierens (Rotterdam 1674–?), who married Johan van der Heyde; their daughter Regnera, who married Isaacq le Petit (magistrate) of Rotterdam; and their daughter Marijn Sara le Petit (Rotterdam 1732–Rotterdam 1771), who married Johan Gerbrand van Mierop in 1755.

– Coll. de la Bouexière, Paris until 1844.

##### 9. Summary

No. A 82 can be considered a characteristic specimen of Rembrandt's portraiture from the early years in Amsterdam. Simple pictorial means have



been used to achieve an effective chiaroscuro that creates a strong suggestion of plastic form.

In the literature, a *Portrait of a man* in Dresden (no. C 77) has long been regarded as the pendant to this work. The man shown in that painting however looks quite unlike Maertgen van Bilderbeecq's husband, Willem Burchgraeff, whose appearance is known from a portrait dated 1635 by Daniel Mytens. It was this painting that probably formed a pair with no. A 82.

## REFERENCES

- 1 HdG 630.

HDG 867; BR. 335; BAUCH 462; GERSON 123

**1. Summarized opinion**

A locally not too well preserved painting in which the application of paint shows – at the surface and in the X-ray – sufficient similarity with Rembrandt's way of working for it to be attributed to him. There is every reason to accept the date of 1633 as correct.

**2. Description of subject**

A woman is seen almost down to the waist, with the body turned slightly to the left, against a dark background. She wears a white cap, and a black costume with a white pleated collar. The light falls from the left.

**3. Observations and technical information***Working conditions*

Examined on 16 April 1969 (J. B., B. H.), in reasonably good daylight and artificial light, and in the frame. An X-ray of the head was available, and copyfilms covering the whole picture were received later. Examined again in November 1978 (E. v. d. W.) and October 1984 (B. H.) after restoration in reasonable daylight.

*Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 69.5 × 51.5 cm. Three planks, the left- and righthand ones *c.* 9.5 cm wide and the middle plank *c.* 32.5 cm. Back cradled. There is no evidence to show whether the panel was originally oval.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology examination was carried out by Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg, but none of the planks is yet datable.

*Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Light brown, visible in thin, open patches in the shadow of the cheek on the right.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*Paint layer*

CONDITION: The painting shows a considerable amount of paint loss in all the light areas of the head and over large parts of the collar and cap, due to blistering of the paint along the grain (apparent also in the X-ray). These patches have, perhaps reaching beyond the area of actual damage, been painted-in. Craquelure: none seen with the naked eye.

DESCRIPTION: The background is done in a dark, even grey which gives a rather lifeless appearance. Some diagonal brushstrokes at top left and right seem to be connected with the application of the ground.

Although the flesh-coloured paint in the lit part of the face is not entirely trustworthy, because of a substantial amount of paint loss and subsequent skilful restoration, it seems to have preserved much of its original character. Part of the brushwork, particularly in the highest lights on the forehead and the ridge of the nose, seems to be authentic and contributes to the modelling. The transition from the pinkish flesh colour to the shadow area is achieved by means of a zone of light and darker grey. The shadow area itself is partly in translucent browns with the reflected lights on the jaw indicated in opaque greyish paint. This grey continues upwards along the cap and into the temple, where it merges into a yellow-brown. The nose is carefully modelled, with the darkest shadows along the bridge and under the nostrils, an effectively-placed reflexion of light

above the carmine-like red nostril on the right and a firm highlight on the tip. A pronounced red is used on both cheeks. Considerable portions of the subtly-drawn eyes, with grey-brown irises and crisp catchlights, seem to be still in a sound condition, as does the strikingly-modelled mouth area with the thickly-painted mouth-line. The effective lefthand outline of the face is done with some red and, towards the chin, a dark brown.

The cap, in grey and grey-white, gives a convincing impression of three-dimensional form. The white collar shows a slightly thicker light edging, while the remainder is treated somewhat mechanically. The dress is executed in a flat, apparently worn grey-black, with a broad indication of internal detail.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*X-Rays*

The paint loss appears dark, in numerous short vertical and longer narrow bands along the grain, especially in the light areas of the face, cap and collar. The brushwork in the face shows up more clearly than it does at the paint surface. The brushstrokes vary in length, and at various points such as the cheekbone on the left contribute to the modelling of the face. The highest lights are plainly evident on the forehead, cheekbones and nose. The entire radiographic image mirrors the plastic rendering of form aimed at in the painting. A reserve was left for the shadow cast on the collar.

*Signature*

At the lower left background close to the shoulder, in dark paint <Rembrandt f (followed by three dots arranged in a triangular pattern) /. 1633.>. There is a diagonal line below the date. The inscription bears a strong resemblance to authentic Rembrandt signatures from 1633 down to such details as the diagonal line (cf. nos. A 78, A 82 and A 84, as well as no. A 61 from 1632 and no. A 103 from 1634) and the three dots after the *f*. The script is however so hesitant and irregular that it is hard to accept its authenticity. It may have been copied from an authentic signature of 1633 (see also under 4. *Comments*).

*Varnish*

No special remarks.

**4. Comments**

The painting's condition is partly characterized by a considerable amount of local paint loss due to blistering. This can perhaps be explained by the period the work spent in Lithuania and Poland (see 8. *Provenance*), with very dry winters which can cause marked shrinking of the panel and consequent blistering. Assessment of the head is consequently somewhat hazardous. The better-preserved parts reveal however a method of working wholly in keeping with that of Rembrandt in the early 1630s. The effective use of slightly translucent paint in the shadow area combined with opaque grey for the reflexions of light can, with the strong three-dimensional effect that results, be termed characteristic. The area by the wing of the nose and mouth exhibits a successful suggestion of plasticity that has been achieved in exactly the same manner in comparable

Fig. 1. Panel 69.5 × 51.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1)



paintings – especially in the Frankfurt *Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq* of 1633 (no. A 82). A marked effect of plasticity can also be found in the rest of the head and in the cap, and it can be assumed that during restoration the original tonal values were to a large extent preserved. This impression is confirmed by the X-ray image, which not only shows a distribution of light very like that in the X-ray of the *Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq* just mentioned but also reveals a similar, modelling brushwork. There is thus every reason to regard the painting as an authentic Rembrandt. The fairly even background, painted without a distinct brushstroke, may seem rather surprising. A background like this does however occur in a few other portraits we look on as authentic, such as the *Portrait of a young woman* of 1633 (no. A 84). Prior to a recent restoration, the dark costume presented an all but even surface without any appreciable internal detail or suggestion of plasticity. It may have been this inconsistency of quality that leads Gerson<sup>1</sup> to call the attribution to Rembrandt ‘not wholly convincing’.

There is reason to doubt the authenticity of the signature and date of 1633; the dating is however confirmed by the manner of painting in the head, as may be seen from a comparison with the 1633 *Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq*. The inscription moreover resembles authentic Rembrandt signatures so strongly that one is almost forced to assume that it was copied from an authentic prototype. The latter may have been on a companion piece now lost; it was not uncommon for only one of a pair of pendants to be signed (see Introduction, Chapter V). (The idea, advanced by Valentiner<sup>2</sup>, that the New York *Portrait of a 40-year-old-man*, no. A 59, might be the companion-piece to no. A 83, is unwarranted.) Another possibility is that the original inscription was on a part of the panel that was removed when its format was altered. There is no clear evidence that it was originally rectangular, though the way the outlines of the shoulders and arms are intersected by the edge of the present oval is not entirely satisfactory and certainly does not disprove it. The cradling makes it

impossible to examine the back for evidence of a reduction in size.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

- Coll. Prince Radziwill, Nieswiz Castle, Lithuania.
- Coll. Lachnicki (Warsaw), sale Paris 15 June 1867, no. 24.
- Dealer F. Kleinberger, Paris.
- Coll. B. Altman, New York; bequeathed by him to the Metropolitan Museum in 1913.

#### 9. Summary

Despite the not very good condition of no. A 83, the head shows a clear resemblance in the manner of painting and treatment of plastic form to comparable works by Rembrandt that we regard as authentic. Important evidence is also provided by the radiographic image, which gives a distinct picture of the brushwork and of a distribution of light and shadow that was clearly conceived from the outset: the X-ray of the 1633 *Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq* (no. A 82) offers such a strong resemblance that it can provide a clinching argument for the attribution and date.

It is uncertain whether the panel was originally oval or rectangular.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 Gerson 123; Br.-Gerson 335.
- 2 Cf. Br. 335.



HDG 873; BR. 340; BAUCH 475; GERSON 146

**1. Summarized opinion**

A fairly well preserved, authentic work that is reliably signed and dated 1633. It was probably originally rectangular.

**2. Description of subject**

A young woman wearing a double-layered lace collar is shown to the waist and facing slightly to the left. On the back of the head she wears a lace cap over hair that stands out to both sides; she has eardrops with jewels set in gold, and four rows of pearls at the throat. The balloon sleeves of her black dress are slashed, and a light-grey material can be seen through the slits. She wears a band with a bow around her waist, both made from a grey, red and green striped material. The figure is placed in front of an even, dark background, and the light falls from the left.

**3. Observations and technical information***Working conditions*

Examined on 21 October 1971 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good daylight and in the frame.

*Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 65.3 × 48.6 cm. The construction of the panel is not entirely clear; it probably comprises three planks with the joins about 8.5 cm from the lefthand side and 13 cm from the righthand side. The back is cradled. When the cradle was being made, part of the panel was left exposed at the upper edge to allow the affixing of a seal, which has been placed on a bevelling; it is impossible to tell from this whether the panel was originally oval or rectangular (see 4. *Comments*).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish brown shows through in numerous places in the background, the hair and the shadow parts of the face.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*Paint layer*

CONDITION: The paint in the face area seems in fairly good condition, and only here and there can a small blister be seen. There are quite a few retouches in the collar. The background has possibly been overpainted at some points. Craquelure: none seen.

DESCRIPTION: The paint layer has a clearly-apparent structure. At many places one can see a translucent brown underpainting laid directly over the yellowish ground. The treatment of paint varies widely, matching the material being depicted.

In the light areas the face is done in a variety of flesh colours ranging from pink via yellow to a brown-grey and cool grey. The brushstroke can be readily traced; in many cases it follows the plastic forms, and on the lefthand part of the upper lip the strokes to some extent run with the light. In the shadowed area of the temple, cheek and neck the paint is generally opaque, though in the deepest shadows the translucent brown of the underpainting has been left exposed.

Each eye is dealt with in an almost identical way. They have round, dark brown to black pupils; the irises are in a translucent brown, but have a lighter and more opaque brown placed opposite greyish catchlights. The shadow of the eyelid on the

iris is indicated in the same dark brown as is used for the pupils, and the same is true for the outlines of the irises. The borders of the upper eyelids are somewhat vague; the lower edges – where use is made of the brown underpainting – are darker. The white of the eye, in an opaque white to the left of the irises and a greyish paint to the right, is done with brushstrokes that could almost be called hesitant, and without forming a sharp line of demarcation. In the eye on the right the yellowish-brown colour of the ground is apparent in the white of the eye. The inner corners are drawn cursorily in red with white catchlights. The borders of the lower lids against the eyeballs are executed in pink, with no clearly defined contour. The same pink is seen again, somewhat less intense in tint, in the shadow of the eye-pouch. The rims of moisture along the lower eyelids are indicated with tiny highlights.

In both eyebrows the translucent brown underpainting is left exposed, with occasional brownish strokes added in that on the left. The flesh areas adjoin these translucent zones with a fluid transition; to the right, the translucent area merges into the shadow of the bridge of the nose.

The ridge of the nose is done with predominantly vertical brushstrokes, with a stronger pink towards the tip; in these places the brushwork follows the roundness of the tip of the nose. The highlights on the ridge and tip have a measure of impasto, and are integrated into the layer of flesh-coloured paint. At the point where one expects the highest light on the tip of the nose, there is a dot of bright yellow, a colour that appears nowhere else in the face. The wing of the nose is done in thin, opaque paint, surrounded by a haze of brownish pink. The shadow suggesting the nostril is done in variations of a mainly translucent, but occasionally opaque brown.

A translucent brown is seen in the lefthand corner of the mouth. In the lips the brushstroke follows the form, with numerous tiny dabs on the lower lip; the wrinkles in the lower lip are indicated with a fairly bright red and a pink bordering on white. The mouth-line is shown in a brownish red, merging towards the right into strokes of black-brown that can hardly be distinguished one from the next. The line of division between the lips and the surrounding areas of skin is seldom clearcut. The shadow below the mouth is in a translucent brown, surrounded by somewhat merging strokes of grey and flesh colour that follow the form and continue around the righthand corner of the mouth as a grey. The plasticity of the point of the chin is suggested by an effective use of warm and cool flesh tints. The area where the light from the collar is reflected onto the underside of the chin is shown in a dark cool grey that gradually becomes warmer towards the right, merges into the line of the jaw and, becoming warmer still, ends by the eardrop in the shadow of the cheek and jaw where an almost translucent red-brown predominates. In the neck the brushstroke for the greater part follows the form. There is a division into three distinct areas here – to the left in the light there is an opaque flesh colour that merges towards the right where, coming out from beneath this, there is a dark, translucent brown with here and there a darker brown of the same kind; to the far right there is a cool, greenish-grey tone suggesting an area of shadow illuminated by the light reflected from the collar.

The transition from the flesh tint of the forehead to the hair is painted with animated brushstrokes that contribute to the suggestion of a wispy fringe. The hair itself is built up from the brown underpainting, and the lively brushstroke of this makes a substantial contribution to the rendering. Grey-brown to black is placed on top of this, in varying tints and covering it to a varying extent, and an ochrish brown is used in the light part. The whole gives the impression of a reddish brown. The

Fig. 1. Panel 65.3 × 48.6 cm



rather hard upper contour of the hair area is formed mainly by the paint of the almost black background. The lace edge of the cap seems to have been placed partly on top of the background. The small apertures in the lace are done with black placed on the grey of the cap. The edgings of lace to the left and right beneath the hair area had reserves left for them in the background, and have been done with perfunctorily-applied strokes of grey in the appropriate tone, sometimes not reaching right out to the edge of the reserve and sometimes extending out over it.

The jewels in the eardrops are done in black with a white catchlight, while the rest is in fairly lumpy strokes of a dark ochre yellow. The righthand eardrop is set in a reserve left in the background. On the left one has the impression that the ochre was set down while the black of the background was still wet.

The pearls are painted perfunctorily in two tints, grey and white; proper allowance is, however, made for the fall of light. To the lower right, by the contour of the neck and plainly visible in relief, there is a projecting loop which shows through red at a number of places and has obviously been painted out.

The collar has a relatively high degree of impasto, and has been painted with a thickness of paint that increases in almost direct proportion to the amount of light. The small apertures in the upper layer of the lace collar, placed for the most part against the white, are in a warm grey except for the extreme left where they are in black and grey. The white of the upper layer of collar is, besides, somewhat warmer than that of the lower layer. The shadows cast by the upper layer on the lower are indicated with the same warm grey as is used for the holes in the top layer. The openings in the lower layer are indicated in black. The cool effect of the lower layer of collar is helped by the fact that this has partly been placed very thinly over the black of the clothing, which shows through here and there. All the gaps in the lace are indicated by means of swiftly and by no means always accurately placed strokes and dots. Patches of wear along the lower edge of the collar and in the collar itself reveal an underlying white, from which it may be assumed that the collar had an underpainting in a light colour.

The bow is painted with strokes of bright pink and red, and light and dark green on a grey basic tone. Much use is made of impasto highlights. The whole seems to have been done wet-in-wet on the already more or less dry grey of the ribbon, which in turn has been placed over the black of the dress, which can be glimpsed at various points. To the right in the shadow the band encircling the woman's waist continues vaguely.

The decoration on the clothing, in grey and black, is given a fair amount of detail without becoming finicky, and is painted with firm and sometimes thick, long strokes in a dull, warm brown. The breast area is in a deep black, without visible internal detail.

The background is painted thinly, in a black that is even over the whole surface. A little brown shows through in the brushwork at a number of points spread over the whole background.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

None.

#### *Signature*

At the left above the shoulder in black, offering little contrast with the very dark background, <Rembrandt. f/1633.>. There is an oblique line below the date, such as also appears in other signatures from 1633 (cf. nos. A 78 and A 82) as well

as one from 1632 (cf. no. A 61) and one from 1634 (cf. no. A 103).

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

This very deftly and subtly painted portrait exhibits in every respect features that are characteristic of Rembrandt. With its structure, using a yellowish ground with a translucent brown underpainting that has skilfully been left exposed at many places, and a light underpainting for the collar, the painting presents a familiar image. The handling of paint, which never becomes finicky and has an effective variation in depth and direction of brushstroke, and the deliberate vagueness that has been kept in areas that (for instance in and around the eyes and mouth) invite a harder outline, may be termed quite typical.

The rendering of form, too, which has pronounced, lively but never obtrusive contours, together with the vivid yet never disjointed plasticity, has all the hallmarks of Rembrandt's style. Finally, the way the light plays around the figure and produces frequent areas of reflected light suggested superbly in the shadows, and the associated subtle interplay of warm and cool tints, are typical of his approach. There cannot, therefore, be any doubt as to the authenticity of the work.

The absence of any tonal variation in the dark background is unusual. It may have to do with the distribution of light and dark in the figure; the areas along all the outlines are more or less light, especially in the lower part where Rembrandt's backgrounds usually become somewhat lighter. It is noticeable that in a painting showing a figure in a similar costume, the New York *Portrait of a woman in an armchair* (no. A 79) from the same year, the background around the head and shoulders is similarly almost uniformly dark.

The strikingly high placing of the figure in the frame is perhaps the result of the demands made on composition by the prominent collar and the relatively brightly-lit bow and waistband. Since there is bevelling at the section of the upper edge left uncovered by the cradling, the panel can have been hardly, if at all, larger at the top. As it is impossible to tell whether there is bevelling elsewhere, one cannot however be sure that the panel was bevelled along an oval edge, as is normal with originally oval panels; allowance must thus be made for the possibility that the painting was originally rectangular, showing the figure less tightly framed, and was reduced to its present oval shape at some later date. This idea is supported by the observation that the

teardrops are not shown as hanging vertically in the picture in its present state and frame. If one corrects this anomaly by turning the oval through some 10°, the composition takes on a different and much more striking character; the shoulders match each other in height, the centre of the waistband gets a clearer meaning (cf. the dress shown in no. A 101), and the head slightly tilted to the left gains an unexpected, slightly impish (or at least less sullen) expression. The total result of this imaginary correction would seem to restore to the painting the effect that the artist must have intended, and surely provides convincing proof that the panel's present format is not original.

Mentions in sales in 1767 and 1772 of a painting that was not described as oval (and was thus presumably rectangular) can therefore quite well relate to no. A 84.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

\*— In view of the dimensions, probably identical with a painting in coll. Pieter van Copello, sale Amsterdam 6 May 1767 (Lugt 1614), no. 59: 'Rembrandt van Ryn. Een ander, zynde het Pourtret van een deftige Vrouw, borststuk, krachtig, gloeiend en uitvoerig geschildert, het geen in geen deelen van Dyk behoeft te wyken, op P.[aneel] h. 25, br. 18½ d. [= 64.25 × 47.5 cm] (Amsterdamsche voetmaat).' (Rembrandt van Ryn. Another, being the portrait of a dignified woman, bust, boldly, glowingly and thoroughly painted, a work that is in no way inferior to Van Dyck, on panel) (50 guilders to Fouquet).

\*— Probably identical with a painting in a sale in Amsterdam on 30 November 1772 (Lugt 2082), no. 52: 'Rembrand. Een Portret van een Jonge Dame, zynde een Borststuk, omtrent van vooren te zien; ze is verbeeld in een zwarte kleeding, hebbende om den Hals een Kraag met Kanten bezet. Zeer fraai, kragtig en natuurlyk; op Paneel, hoog 25½, br. 19 duim [= 65.5 × 48.8 cm] (gemeeten, binnen de Lysten, volgens de Amsterdamsche Voetmaat).' (Rembrand. A portrait of a young woman, a bust seen roughly from the front; she is shown in black clothing with a lace-trimmed collar round her neck. Very fine, bold and natural; on panel.)

— Coll. Wynn Ellis, sale London (Christie's) 27 May 1876, no. 84.

— Coll. Count Mianszinski, Warsaw.

— Dealer Knoedler & Co., New York (around 1915).

— Dealer A. Preyer, The Hague.

— Coll. K. W. Bachstitz, Berlin (around 1929).

— Coll. Leo van den Bergh, sale Amsterdam 5 November 1935, no. 21.

#### 9. Summary

No. A 84 shows an uncommonly subtle treatment of the face, which is modelled softly against a dark background; yet the execution and the handling of light and plasticity achieved are so characteristic of Rembrandt's style that there can be no doubt as to its authenticity. In all likelihood the panel was originally rectangular, and this would explain the now rather cramped framing of the figure.

**A 85 Half-length figure of Saskia van Uylenburgh in rich apparel**

[c. 1633/34 – 1642]

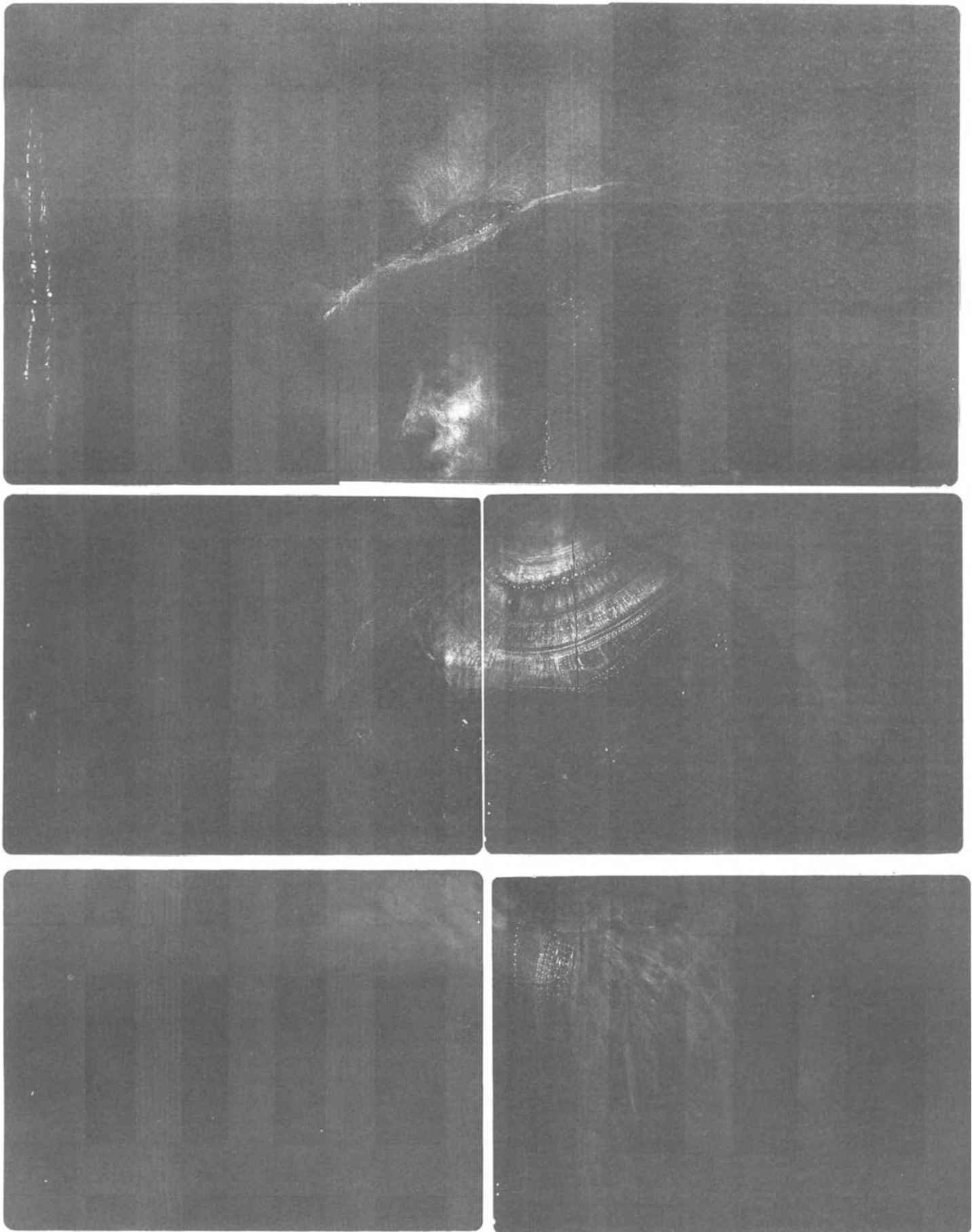
KASSEL, STAATLICHE KUNSTSAMMLUNGEN KASSEL, SCHLOSS WILHELMSHÖHE, INV. NO. GK 236

HDG 607; BR. 101; BAUCH 489; GERSON 175

Fig. 1. Panel 99.5 × 78.8 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray





### 1. Summarized opinion

A work that must be presumed authentic, though it has been overpainted subsequently by a different hand to an extent it is hard to gauge exactly. Perhaps at the same time the two planks that today form part of the panel at the two sides must have been attached to replace the originals. The painting must have borne the date 1642, though Rembrandt seems to have made a start on it considerably earlier, probably around 1633/34.

### 2. Description of subject

A young woman is seen hiplength, standing against a dark background. Her body is turned three-quarters to the left, with the head in full left profile. The light falls from the left, illuminating the face, the edge of a flat red cap with a white ostrich plume and part of the body; the hands, held in front of the body, are less fully lit, and the side of the body away from the viewer is lit hardly at all. The right hand rests on the left one, holding a twig; from this hand hangs, in the darkness, what must be a fan with a gold handle. She wears a red velvet bodice, cut low at the front and closed with a front panel with a straight upper edge; along the top edges of both there is braiding with gold thread. A wide band of fur lies over her right shoulder and forms the lining of a cloak that hangs from her arm in front of and alongside the body and may also be seen on the opposite shoulder where it is held by a cord decorated with jewels. This cord loops over the shoulder of the bodice, where a red velvet puffed sleeve is attached by strips, with its lower edge again trimmed with gold braiding. Below this the arm is covered by a very wide shirt-sleeve of fine, pleated material, possibly gold brocade. The shirt visible above the bodice, leaving only the throat uncovered, is embroidered in concentric bands with ornament in light green and light yellow, and between these small gold-coloured beads seem to have been attached; close to the top edge, parallel with the ornamented concentric bands, hangs a rope of large pearls with between them gold-coloured rosettes, in the middle of which there is a large, teardrop-shaped pearl pendant. A number of ropes of pearls hang over the wrists, and a teardrop pearl dangles from an elaborate earring.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in October 1968 (J. B., B. H.) in artificial light, in the frame and on the wall, with the aid of a number of X-ray films. Seven copy-films from these, together covering practically the whole painting, were received later from Dr M. Meier-Siem, Hamburg; an infrared photograph was received later from the museum. Examined again on 10–12 January 1983 (S. H. L., E. v. d. W.) in good artificial light, out of the frame, with the aid of a binocular microscope, IR reflectography, and a different set of X-rays some of which were more contrasty than the first.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 99.5 × 78.8 cm. The original panel has been planed down to a thickness of c. 0.3 cm and is now stuck to two oak panels the rearmost of which has been cradled. To judge from the medullary rays visible in the end-grain along the bottom edge of the panel, the panel

consists of a radial board about 66.4 cm wide, with on the left- and righthand sides a narrow plank, 6.4 and 6 cm wide respectively. At c. 26.5 – 27 cm from the lefthand side and c. 32 cm from the righthand side there are cracks running from top to bottom. One may imagine that these cracks, which are in no way surprising in a radial board, gave rise to the planing down of the panel and the affixing of the two supporting panels.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None. The extreme thinness of the original panel impedes dendrochronological examination, as we have been informed by Prof. Dr J. Bauch of Hamburg.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish brown shows through in the forehead, in the shadow of the cap, and on the left close to the ear.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn<sup>1</sup> found a white ground of chalk (calcite) and glue containing proteins. He does not mention the imprimatura normally found on top of this.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: The layer of varnish hampers assessment. Apart from retouches along the cracks, clearly apparent in the infrared photographs, the condition appears to be sound. The question of how far there are overpaints of subsequent date is discussed later (see 4. *Comments*). Craquelure: none seen over large areas of the painting. Mainly in the background there are, however, large areas where the paint, of varying thickness, shows an irregular pattern of shrinkage cracks; this cracking is worst at the left by the top edge, ending along the vertical limit of the c. 6.4 cm wide plank at the lefthand side, and along the upper edge of the cap and plume; it is less severe between the righthand lower outline of the plume and the upper edge of the cap, to the left of the head and running through into the shadow of the fur, in various patches in the left background (again terminating along the vertical border just mentioned) running through into the fur above the woman's right arm, and in patches in the right background ending along the vertical border of the c. 6 cm wide plank at the righthand side, especially towards the bottom and there penetrating into the hanging garment.

DESCRIPTION: In general the paint covers, and nowhere is the grain of the wood to be seen. The highest relief is found in the highlights of the various jewels and in the lit part of the cap.

The background is painted in an almost even dark grey (which, due to the varnish, has a warm tone), merging on the left into a somewhat lighter and warmer brown. To either side of the plume in the cap the fairly thick paint exhibits quite coarse shrinkage cracks; a reddish-seeming tint shows through these – probably the yellowish-brown ground (cf. also the IR photograph). To the right of the lit plume there is, between the thick, dark paint and the edge of the cap, a band of smooth dark paint through which a red may be sensed. Along the lefthand and righthand sides of the panel the dark grey paint is, over a width of about 6.4 and 6 cm respectively (i.e. matching the narrow planks to each side), smoother than in the adjacent areas, and also lies deeper; underlying layers show through fine shrinkage cracks, partly as a translucent brown and partly identifiable as a light ground (cf. the IR photograph). In the central panel, on the other hand, there are – apart from the shrinkage cracks to either side of the plume, already mentioned – shrinkage cracks over large areas to both sides of the figure and ending at the joins; these are visible in the X-rays, and are in fact covered over by the layer of dark grey paint. One may assume that the dark grey paint was applied to the lateral planks and to the central section at the same time, but in the latter case on top of a background that

Fig. 3. Infrared photograph



had already been painted (this is indeed confirmed by the X-rays). The uppermost layer offers no brushstroke of its own, though in the central area there are thicker parts connected with an underlying layer of paint that here and there (to either side of the head) seems to show through as a lightish tone. In the lower lefthand corner the brown paint that has already been mentioned continues over the join with the lefthand plank and inwards, and is brought up against the contour of the hanging part of the cloak.

The relationship between the paint of the background and that of the figure is a complicated one. At various places the background paint determines the contour of the figure (e.g. along large parts of the lefthand side) or even penetrates it. Such is the case at various points in the fur to the left of the figure, and to the right along the costume. Along the underside of the nose the paint of the background lies over the flesh colour; in the angle between the underside of the nose and the upper lip, red paint shows through the background, and a stroke of red can also be detected beneath the background paint where this borders the top lip. As may also be seen from a comparison with the X-rays (q.v.), an earlier form of the profile has here been slightly modified by the application of the top layer of background paint. A little way up from the tip of the nose, however, the paint of the latter lies over that of the background; here it has (seen under the microscope) a fine-grained compactness that appears unusual. To the left, at some distance from the contour of the forehead, the dark red-brown of the under-edge of the cap ceases, leaving exposed a narrow gap running upwards to a point; this has been filled in with a dark grey (like that of the background) with somewhat curling strokes of ochre-brown paint placed over it.

There are various signs that the face itself, together with part of the hair, has been thinly overpainted. This may be deduced from the observation that the present top layer masks a considerably more lively brushwork, now visible only in the X-ray though also apparent in relief. The light yellow curls of hair on the temple and cheekbone, for instance, visible in relief, are to a large extent covered over by a thin yellow-pink flesh colour; thin and carefully brushed-out streaks of a ruddy brown have been placed on top of this. An irregular network of tiny accents of a flesh colour that tends sometimes more to a yellow, and at others more to a pink, can be seen at various points. The overpainting keeps in general to the contour of the face, other than at the tip of the nose, so that the relationship to the surrounding paint can be judged only at the latter point. The treatment of the eye matches the character of the overpainting of the face and hair; this is true of a brownish-red stroke marking the upper edge of the eyelid, a similar line along the lower edge of the eye and to the left along the iris, the indication of eyelashes using small strokes of grey, and the quite sharply-outlined darker grey – with a fine, horizontal catchlight in lighter grey – used to show the remarkably wide iris (where the X-ray in fact shows a form that is less wide). To the left of the iris one can (under the microscope) see an underlying red that seems to be similar to the covered-over red to the left of the present contour of the upper lip; this suggests that at some time there was here an indication of the corner of the eye. There is moreover to the left of the iris a slightly curved, vertical dark stroke that is apparent in IR reflectography and evidently belongs to a preparatory stage. A small grey stroke, seemingly partly covered over by the overpaint, can be detected just below the present upper border of the eyelid (where the X-ray shows a reserve). Along the lower edge of the eye there is a vague stroke of pink. The nostril is shown with a dark stroke, placed in a quite strong red used for the underside of the nose; this latter area makes an authentic

impression, all the more so since the red – as already described – continues beneath the topmost layer of the background. The ear is modelled painstakingly in orangish browns of varying translucency, similar to the reddish brown string of hair that is placed over the original light yellow curls alongside the ear. The hair presents a brown, over which long curving strokes of dark brown indicate the swept-up strands. To the right similar strokes run out over the background.

In the area of shadow along the underedge of the cap a translucent brown lies over a light green-grey underpainting, giving the impression of being a discoloured red lake. In the adjacent zone, which forms the transition to the lit area, a quite bright red lake is placed over an orangish or ochre-yellow underpainting (and in comparison with the translucent brown just mentioned gives a 'fresh' impression), while in the most brightly lit area the same bright red lies over a white underpainting; along the upper border this red glaze spills over into the adjoining area along a rather ragged edge. To the right of the lit plume there is, as has already been mentioned, a band that is smoother and lies deeper than the surrounding paint, where red is covered over by the dark grey paint used for the top layer of the background. At the top of the cap strokes of brown, green and dark pink with yellow and white highlights suggest decoration with gold thread and colourful jewels. The plume itself is indicated in greys, with quite long strokes of white. Remarkably, the stem, indicated in white, runs just to the right of a zone in which the beard of the feather is set down thinly in white paint.

The embroidered shirt is modelled painstakingly, but very skilfully in the tonal gradations, in light green, light yellow and grey paint, with regular, thick catchlights on the pearls and interspersed ornaments, which are done in some detail. The other jewellery is similar in character – the pearl necklace with its pendant, the ear-drop, the rope of pearls around the left wrist and – in rather less detail – the jewel at the breast and the similar gold clasps and rings on the cord hanging over the breast. Among the dark red of the bodice the sheen of light on the velvet is shown on the sleeve with quite long strokes of a lighter colour. The gold braiding is indicated with very regular, fine strokes of ochre yellow and light yellow. The wide sleeve of the shirt is painted with strokes and touches of brown-yellow, greyish and greenish paint, with a few spots of yellow and a line or two of red; along the upper edge a brown shows through. The hands are flat and vague, done in greyish and brownish half-tints with reddish shadow lines between the fingers. The bracelets on the left are indicated cursorily, with flat, black strokes between them. The fur shows a mixture of yellowish and brown strokes; below the hands, to the left, the hanging part of the cloak is indicated in a dark brown-grey and ochre yellow. Above the hand on the left one sees, showing through the strokes of brown used to render the fur (and apparent under the microscope), a patch of red, a small patch of pink and two spots of green-blue, as if a nosegay of greenery with blossoms were here hidden beneath the top layer.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** According to the results of paint sample analysis published by Kühn<sup>1</sup>, the yellow in the jewel on the breast has the same composition (including the trace elements) as that in the gold links between the pearls of the necklace, i.e. lead-tin yellow I. A sample taken in a pearl from the necklace was found to contain white lead.

#### *X-Rays*

In the radiographic image there are on the one hand various light features of the present-day picture that show up clearly – parts of the cap and plume, the embroidered shirt and the jewellery around the neck and wrists, those in the ear and on

Fig. 4. Detail (1:2)



the shoulders and breast —, and on the other elements that in the X-ray differ to a greater or lesser extent from the present paint surface.

The background shows, to either side of the head and trunk and with a varying intensity, an image of lively brushwork applying a radioabsorbent paint. There is a reserve left for the figure in this, along a border that differs from the present contour in that it does not include the fur; on the right this is strikingly sharp, as if it were not a normal reserve but rather

an edge left by removal of background paint. On the right this light area is separated, by a straight vertical boundary at some 6 cm from the edge, from a band that appears dark and corresponds to the righthand plank of the panel and to the band of smoother dark grey paint noted at the surface. Half-way down the body contour the part of the background that appears light in the X-ray ends abruptly along a wandering border, without there being any clear sign of paint loss. A similar lacune, which may well be the result of paint loss,

Fig. 5. Detail (1:2)



appears in a number of broad strokes of radioabsorbent paint on the left next to the figure at the level of the hands; the significance of these strokes in an otherwise virtually dark background is not however clear. Traces of radioabsorbent paint just above this correspond approximately to an area showing shrinkage at the surface.

The head broadly matches what can be seen today at the surface. The pattern of brushwork is, it is true, much more distinct; it lends support to the modelling, and the highest light lies on the upper half of the cheek. Components like the eyebrow and mouth-line appear dark, as does the pupil (less wide than the present one) and the borders of the upper eyelid (the topmost of which coincides with a now vaguely visible, slightly curved grey stroke of paint). Above the nose the light image of the forehead bends further to the left than it does in its present state, and the radioabsorbency decreases faster upwards than one would expect from the surface seen today. To the left of the bridge of the nose one can see a rather light stroke that might suggest that there was here the indication of the upper lid of another eye. The line taken by the contour of the lower half of the nose shows minimal changes from that existing today. There is a rather more pronounced difference in the contour of the lips; in the X-ray they are both more curved in shape (which could match the red observed under the top layer of the present background). Close below the ear, and interfering with the clear image of the present eardrop, there is the less distinct shape of a teardrop shaped pendant, with its catchlight.

The embroidered shirt has a reserve left in it for the string of pearls and the pearl pendant hanging from it. This indicates that allowance was made for it when the present shirt was being painted. In the lefthand half, mostly inside but also just outside the present shirt and adjoining it to the lower left, there are sometimes quite vaguely apparent and sometimes sharp,

stippled light strokes and touches that might point to an underpainting for another garment (perhaps a white shirt?) which had borders somewhat different from that seen today; only on the right do the highlights in the present shirt appear light, without interference from other radioabsorbent paint.

Slightly further down one finds a succession of light accents running obliquely to the lower right, and further to the right light edges that might belong to a flower (and that are roughly at the same level as the presentday twig). Probably these shapes are partly connected with the patches of colour (red, pink and grey-blue) visible under the microscope that suggest the presence of flowers, and perhaps partly also with an earlier chain-like piece of jewellery. In the righthand half of the cord hanging down over the breast one can make out, to either side of the lowest ringlike jewel, the lightish traces of the underpainting for two other pieces of jewellery. Similar vague traces below the two hands might come from the underpainting for a belt-like item of jewellery at this point.

Nothing can be seen in the radiographic image of the present hands, though there is the indistinct image, evidently that of an underpainting, of a right hand (with the fingers pointing obliquely downwards to the right) that one must imagine as resting on the left wrist, and, to the left of this, a scarcely articulated image of the left hand. In the wide sleeve there is similarly an underpainting done with easy, coarse brushstrokes that do not coincide with the indication of folds seen today; a certain amount of paint loss in this area shows up dark. A similar area appears above the present limit of the left forearm.

The cradling and the three panels stuck to each other create a highly confusing pattern of woodgrain. A vertical series of light patches along the lefthand edge is probably connected with stopping that is not present at the front of the topmost panel.



Fig. 6. Detail (1 : 2)

*Signature*

None; for the presumed former presence of a signature and date of 1642, see 4. *Comments*.

*Varnish*

A yellowed varnish affects the appearance of the painting, and hampers assessment.

**4. Comments**

Though the painting belongs among Rembrandt's most famous works, this does not alter the fact that in its present state it does not, in many respects, fit readily into the mental picture one can form of his work; certainly not if – as has usually been done in the literature – it is dated around 1633/35. In the Kassel painting there is almost none of the plasticity and three-dimensionality marked by a strong chiaroscuro coupled with a simplification of form and subduing of colour, of the kind manifest in a series of female half-length figures from the years

1633–1635. The head in profile stands out like a relief, with a minimum of shadow effect despite the wide cap, against the dark background, and this effect is heightened by the extremely precise rendering of the embroidered shirt and jewels on the one hand and the rendering of the rest of the figure (somewhat dispersed in the semi-gloom) on the other. Over large areas the colour has a remarkably self-contained character; the lighter and darker tints of red in the cap and velvet bodice dominate to an extent unknown in Rembrandt's work from the mid-1630s. The rather dull mid-tints used in the embroidered shirt and the wide sleeve provide little counterweight, and the dark background even less, so that the overall colour-scheme has a degree of over-saturation.

The contradiction between this painting and Rembrandt's work from the 1630s, and that exists within the painting itself, did not escape past authors. Neumann<sup>2</sup>, for example, points to the dis-



crepancies in treatment in the painting – he speaks of ‘Holbein *plus* Rembrandt’ – and took particular exception to the background, saying that ‘Dieser Hintergrund, wie er ist, ist, zumal für Rembrandt, leblos. Saskia steht ganz vorn, nicht mehr im Bild’. While Neumann’s words do suggest some doubt in respect of the condition of the background – ‘wie er ist’ – he had no doubts as to its attribution, even though the work in its present state gives at least cause for wondering. If the attribution is here nonetheless accepted, after ample thought, this is for the following three reasons: the pedigree of the painting most probably goes back to its sale by the artist in 1652, the work must in all probability have been completed only in 1642, and even after that date alterations were probably still made, including a change in the make-up of the panel.

As to the painting’s pedigree, we can be brief. There is strong evidence that the painting, which came to Kassel from the Willem Six sale in 1734 via the Valerius Röver collection, is indeed (as has always been supposed) identical with Rembrandt’s portrait of his wife that the artist sold to Willem’s uncle Jan Six in 1652 (see 5. *Documents and sources*), and that subsequently came into the possession of the latter’s son Nicolaas (d. 1710). Even though watertight evidence cannot be offered – it is not known what happened to the possessions of Nicolaas Six on his death – no. A 85 may nevertheless be counted among the well-documented paintings by Rembrandt.

We can form a picture of how the painting came into being from Rembrandt’s hand through three kinds of evidence – that derived from the painting itself, including the X-rays and infrared photograph; three old copies (two of which were drawn and one painted); and the mention in Valerius Röver’s inventory where ‘Ao. 1642’ is given as the date. To begin with the last, this has been paid no attention since Hofstede de Groot<sup>3</sup> marked this date down as a misunderstanding. No notice was taken of the fact that in other instances the dates given by Röver in his catalogue invariably match those on the paintings. One may assume, on the basis of this, that this was equally true for the *Saskia*, and that in the 1730s the painting did bear a visible date of 1642. Keith Roberts<sup>4</sup>, who was unaware of the date given by Röver, came to a similar conclusion on the grounds of stylistic resemblances to the Dresden *Saskia with a flower* of 1641 (Br. 108) and the *Portrait of a woman with a fan* of 1643 in the coll. Duke of Westminster (Br. 363), and these similarities (to which we shall return later) are, where parts of the painting are concerned, very revealing.

Apart from observations at the paint surface and the X-rays, three old copies give us some idea of the

changes of thought that went into the work before it was finally completed, even if their documentary value is difficult to gauge and a fourth one must be mentioned although it hardly provided useful evidence. The oldest of these is a drawing in the Albertina (fig. 7), which was published by Meder<sup>5</sup> in 1902 as a preliminary study for the Kassel painting but has since then no longer been looked on as being by Rembrandt (see 7. *Copies*, 1). Yet even as a drawing from Rembrandt’s workshop, probably by Govaert Flinck, it has greater documentary value than has been recognized hitherto. On a number of points it coincides enough with what especially the X-rays show of the painting to make it reasonable to assume that it matches an earlier state of the latter. In the first place the head is not seen exactly in profile but, as one can also believe of the image in the X-rays, just a little can be seen of the second eye; as late as the 1650s Rembrandt was to give a similar pose to the head in the New York *Flora* (Br. 114). Secondly, the left hand – whose position in fact matches neither the underpainting seen in the X-rays nor its present position – is holding what may be read as flowers, and matches slightly what is visible both in the X-ray and at the surface as colours showing through. (Meder interpreted a flower projecting forward in the drawing as the handle of a fan, while others including Bauch<sup>6</sup> thought, on the grounds of the X-ray, that it was a sword or dagger.) Thirdly, the drawing does not show a fur-trimmed cloak, and the bodice has a slightly upstanding edge at the shoulder which on the left coincides with the small white accents seen in the X-ray (probably as an underpainting) by the contour of the shoulder. The pear-shaped eardrop seen in the drawing recurs in the X-ray as well. The very lively contour that is produced in the drawing on the right by the upstanding upper edge of the bodice and puffed and slashed sleeves does, it is true, differ from the rather tense contour of the reserve for the figure seen in the X-ray; if the painting ever showed it, this must have been before the background visible in the X-ray was applied, when the composition was executed only as a monochrome underpainting. If one assumes that the drawing is based on an initial state of this kind, this would also explain why it shows a fairly long necklace or cord with pendant whereas a reserve has from the outset been left when executing the present shirt for the presentday short string of pearls. The cap shows, in the drawing, an edge that takes a different course and is less well articulated, and has no plume. Taking all things together, the drawing offers enough indicators to provide an overall idea of how the Kassel *Saskia* may have looked initially, in an incomplete and perhaps only underpainted state.

Fig. 7. Attr. to G. Flinck, pen and wash drawing (cf. *Copies*, 1). Vienna, Graphische Sammlung Albertina



The head was probably seen not exactly in profile, she was not wearing a fur-trimmed cloak, her cap had no plume, and a shirt was perhaps only broadly indicated.

The second document to be regarded as a copy is a drawing that was earlier in the collection of C. Hofstede de Groot and is now in Basle (fig. 8), and that was still looked on by Benesch and Sumowski as a preliminary study of Rembrandt (see 7. *Copies*, 2). This must however, like the foregoing, be regarded as a work by a pupil, probably Ferdinand Bol, giving a general impression of the painting in a rather later state. On some points such as the covering over of the throat the drawing matches neither the present painting nor anything that can be recognized in the X-rays. On others it corresponds closely to the presentday picture, for instance in the contours of the draped parts of the clothing at the lower left, and in the shape of the cap, minus the plume but including the rather more bulging contour of the brim on the right, which matches to some extent a smooth band apparent at the paint surface where red paint is covered over by the paint of the present background. The placing of the hands is not all that clearly defined; it is however possible that a bold loop represents the right hand matching the pose seen in the X-ray (with the fingers pointing slightly downwards to the right). The drawing does not suggest one of the hands holding anything. One can with certain reserves take it that the drawing renders the painting in a

Fig. 8. Attr. to F. Bol, pen drawing (cf. *Copies*, 2). Basle, Kupferstichkabinett des Kunstmuseums Basel



further developed state, more in line on a number of points with what is seen in the X-rays – the head is seen exactly in profile, the position of the hands has been altered, and the contours of the body no longer show the projections apparent in the Vienna drawing; they are tauter and more like the reserve seen in the X-ray, including a projection out to the right level with the shoulder; there is no sign of the fur over the shoulders.

A third drawing, in the Courtauld Institute Galleries, London (fig. 9), which was fairly recently (but incorrectly) attributed to Rembrandt (see 7. *Copies*, 3) shows the figure (not too convincingly) full-length but otherwise resembles the painting's presentday state more clearly than the one just described. It shows the hands approximately in their present position and also suggests the presence of such details as the elaborate eardrop. Surprisingly, the hat is missing entirely, and this makes it all the more difficult to decide how faithfully the drawing reflects any given stage of the painting's genesis and, if so, which stage. Neither the absence of the hat nor the unsuccessful enlargement of the figure would seem to correspond with the painting at any stage. As the style of drawing and even the motif seem to be based on a Rembrandt drawing of about 1633/34 formerly in Bremen (Ben. 239), the drawing may well be a concoction done by a pupil

Fig. 9. After Rembrandt, pen and wash drawing (cf. *Copies*, 3). London, Courtauld Institute Galleries (Princes Gate Collection)



in the mid-'30s. Its main documentary value would then lie in the indication that some features of the painting, especially the profile view of the head, had then already been decided on. Judging by its style, one feels inclined to date the drawing earlier than the one attributed to Bol.

A fourth copy is a painting in Antwerp (fig. 10) that has long been recognized as such; Hofstede de Groot<sup>3</sup> took this to be 18th century, but it makes more the impression of having been done in Rembrandt's workshop around 1650 (see 7. *Copies*, 4). It cannot be an entirely faithful copy. The major divergence from the original is that an open-necked pleated shirt leaves part of the throat exposed, a motif that it must be supposed from the X-rays was never present in the painting in its completed state. For the rest the Kassel painting has been followed fairly faithfully, with a much broader technique and more overall approach to form; the pose of the hands, the fur edge to the cloak (which however reached up to the chin) and the plume in the cap (though not white, but a reddish brown) are plainly based on it, and did not appear in the previous copies. There is thus reason to assume that the Antwerp painting had the Kassel work as its

prototype in the state in which this was finally produced by Rembrandt in 1642. The main question is now how far the differences between the Kassel painting and the copy of it in Antwerp can be interpreted as evidence of overpaints that were added to the original by another hand after its completion (which can be put in 1642), rather than as liberties the copyist allowed himself in departing from his prototype.

The main difference between the two paintings lies in the background. Compared to the largely dark grey background of the original, the copy offers a lighter, broadly-brushed background with a rather clumsy indication of a wall (or a cloth with folds?) and a projecting section to the right. This difference makes it reasonable to wonder whether the Antwerp painting gives an impression of the background the Kassel painting had in 1642, and whether – in other words – the present dark grey background is the result of subsequent overpainting. This is not improbable. The fact that the X-rays show an image of a background that is lighter and more animated than the present one does not tell us a great deal; it is after all conceivable that Rembrandt himself was responsible for the overpainting. It is particularly the way the top layer of background paint relates to the contour of the figure that creates the strong impression that it is a later addition. It defines the contour of the fur over the far shoulder along a line that deviates clearly from that in the Antwerp copy, and the contour of the profile around the mouth along a line that differs not only from the Antwerp copy but also from the X-ray of the Kassel painting – both of these show the upper and lower lips as protruding slightly, and the notion that Rembrandt himself would have overpainted part of the lips with the dark grey paint of the uppermost layer of the background (under which, alongside the present top lip, there is still red to be seen), and would have done so after the Antwerp copy – datable at around 1650 – had been made, is improbable in the extreme. Much the same applies to the relationship between the dark grey background paint and the top edge of the cap to the right of the illuminated plume. At this point the X-ray gives only an image that coincides with what one sees today – the heavy white underpainting present beneath the bright red top layer of the most fully lit zone shows up boldly, taking the present shape. At the paint surface there is however, to the right of the plume, a relatively thin and smooth band of dark grey paint under which red is seen showing through. The upper limit of this band first continues the cap contour, running slightly upwards to the right, with a soft curve, then bends rather more sharply downwards and finally continues

Fig. 10. After Rembrandt, canvas 112 × 89.5 cm (cf. *Copies*, 4). Antwerp, Museum voor Schone Kunsten



towards the lower right to join up with the present contour just before the righthand end. The upper limit coincides exactly with the upper contour of the cap as this is shown in the Antwerp copy and also – though naturally, because of the sketchlike nature of the drawing, less precisely – with that in the Basle drawing attributable to Bol. From this one may conclude that the dark grey background paint, now determining the flattened shape of the cap to the right of the plume, was applied after the cap was reproduced (some years after the painting had been completed) in the Antwerp copy.

Before going on to compare other areas in the original with the corresponding passages in the Antwerp copy, one must first say that the conclusion

that the dark grey paint of the background is a later addition has two far-reaching consequences when one comes to assess the Kassel painting. The first has to do with the time at which the two lateral planks of the panel were painted on; we shall return to this below, when discussing the format of the painting. The second concerns the cap as it is seen today. If part of the original cap was in fact overpainted at a later stage, then the relatively thin red that here – in a deep-lying band – is now hidden beneath the dark grey forms a vestige of the original cap that in structure, thickness and colour differs wholly from the zone of thick paint (a clear red over a white underpainting) that forms the illuminated edge today. This makes it impossible to accept the

presentday execution of this lit edge as authentic – it must have been done at the same time as the contour was altered by means of the dark grey background paint. The Antwerp copy appears to give an entirely acceptable picture of the original cap, not only in its form but also in colour – a greyish brown in the shadow and a fairly bright, warm red in the light. In the Kassel painting only the shadowed lower edge – described above as a translucent brown, giving the impression of a discoloured red lake, over a green-grey underpainting – seems still to be in its original (albeit perhaps discoloured) state. The areas adjoining upwards, where a very clear red lake (with a ‘freshness’ about it) lies first over an orangish or ochre yellow and then over a white underpainting and spills slightly out over the top edge (as well as over the dark grey paint of the background), must be ascribed to later, radical treatment that may perhaps have been prompted by the discoloration of the red lake.

Is the Antwerp copy then able to yield any further information about the original state of its prototype? It is obviously, on a number of points, a free copy. The mainly broad treatment, seemingly derived from Rembrandt’s style in the 1640s, has for instance led to a greatly simplified treatment of the jewellery, and probably also to the suppression of the embroidered and richly ornamented shirt. An open-necked shirt was substituted for the latter. It was probably the same tendency to simplification that resulted in the multicoloured wide sleeve being replaced with one done in the same warm red as the rest of the costume. It is hard to tell whether the rust-brown plume can be interpreted as an indication that a similar one is hidden beneath the present white in the Kassel painting; the strokes of white paint do lie partly over the present background, and at the very least there must have been a certain amount of overpainting done at this point. It is especially in respect of the state in which the face was shown when the Antwerp copy was made that the latter is able to provide useful information. When describing the paint layer, we said that beneath the present top layer there is a more animated structure; the light yellow indication of the dangling curls forms part of this, and – though clearly visible in relief – these are now for the most part covered over with a flesh colour and with a lock of hair beside the ear, done in a reddish brown. One finds this state reproduced in the copy; an overpainting that led to this must therefore have been carried out (one may assume, by Rembrandt) before the work was completed. The same is true for the eye, or at least for its shape and presumably also for the paint seen today. The X-ray gives the impression of the eye, and especially the iris, having

had a different shape; if this is so, then the present shape with a very broad iris must – however readily one might ascribe this, too, to a later overpainting – have already existed (according to the Antwerp copy) when the work was completed by Rembrandt. This is not to say that the face, neck and hair have remained untouched since then; the fact alone that along part of the nose the flesh colour lies slightly over the subsequently-added dark grey paint of the background is evidence that there has also been later overpainting in the flesh area. Seeing the widely varying character of the colours now met in that area, this is perfectly easy to accept; but it is hard to tell just how much overpainting has been done. On one point it does seem possible to be more precise – one of the singular features of the Kassel painting in its present state is the very slight extent to which the broad-brimmed cap throws a shadow on the face. From the X-ray one can get the impression that the shadow (where it is left exposed by radioabsorbent paint) begins much lower down, and the Antwerp copy gives virtually the same picture. From this one may suspect that the present appearance of the head is at least in part determined by a later, quite discreetly done but nevertheless intrusive overpaint using material with little or no radioabsorbency. It is not improbable that the head owes to this the slick and somewhat cloying character it has in its present state. The copy suggests that with this overpainting some rather stronger nuances and accents than are present today (in the modelling of the chin and jawline, and a cast shadow from the eardrop on the neck) have been lost. The dark lines in the hair, which continue out over the dark grey background on the right, must also come from this later treatment.

If one is justified in thus eliminating a number of disturbing features as being due to later overpainting, this removes several major obstacles to accepting the authenticity of the painting. Even though the total extent of the overpainting is difficult to gauge, there is sufficient ground to say that the relation between the tonal values, and hence between the volume of the figure and of the space that surrounds it, has been fundamentally distorted by a later hand. The profile must have contrasted less strongly with the lighter background, and neither the colour nor the shape of the cap was as insistent as now appears. A more atmospheric approach, which is what is now so sadly missing, must have taken away the relief-like character that the figure has today. There then still remain quite sufficient elements that can be reconciled with Rembrandt’s work – whether from the years around 1642 or from somewhat earlier – only with some difficulty. This applies not so much to the handling

of the red velvet – which can be found much the same in the Dresden *Saskia* of 1641 (Br. 108) – as for the meticulous care devoted to the various jewels and to the embroidered shirt. One is reminded of the earliest known work by the Rembrandt pupil Jan Victors, the 1640 *Girl at the window* in the Louvre (inv. no. 1286), where the headdress shows a similar over-illusionistic treatment. One finds no analogy for this in Rembrandt's own work. Only on a smaller scale can one find something similar in the almost equally systematically and emphatically rendered pearls in the *Portrait of a woman with a fan* of 1643 in the coll. Duke of Westminster (Br. 363). In this same painting the arrangement of the fur and the somewhat flat manner of painting in the hands is reminiscent of that in the Kassel *Saskia*, and the effect is certainly no happier. The treatment of the wide sleeves is still a jarring note, with the indeterminate rendering of material and washed-out colour contrasting strangely with the remainder of the costume.

To summarize, the history of the painting's genesis can be imagined as follows. In a first state, probably executed only as an underpainting, the head was not shown exactly in profile, and – to judge by vestiges in the X-rays – the costume differed substantially from the present one. Some reminiscence of this state probably remains in the Vienna drawing that can be attributed to Flinck (fig. 7). In a following state, which in a number of respects dominates the radiographic image, a background was executed probably in grey, with lively brushwork, leaving a reserve for the figure without the fur-trimmed cloak and with the face in exact profile, very like the Stockholm *Young woman in profile* of 1632 (no. A 49); as in that work, there were curls on the temple done with curved strokes of a thick light yellow paint. It is probable that the drawing in Basle attributed to Bol (fig. 8) and, to a lesser extent, the one in the Courtauld Institute (fig. 9) have reminiscences of this state. The cap would then still not have had a plume; what the position of the hands was in this stage is not entirely clear – if they were executed at all; one might imagine that in this phase only the background, head and the cap were executed, with the remainder of the costume and the hands merely underpainted. The costume and hands would then come from a state datable in 1642 – whose similarities to works from 1641 and 1643 have already been referred to – together with several changes in the head. Perhaps the possibility should not be ruled out that in this stage there was also a hand other than Rembrandt's involved in the completion.

This still does not answer the question of how much time elapsed between the various phases. If

one takes it that 1642 was the date the work was completed, there is enough in the present paint surface to suggest that the entire painting was begun in or shortly before that year. In particular the character of the costume can be compared with works from the years 1641–1643. It is mainly what is revealed by the X-rays, and what can be observed with the naked eye at various points beneath the present surface, that argue against this. The animated, somewhat fibrous structure of the parts of the head and background that appear lighter in the X-ray differ entirely from what one sees in X-rays of works from the early 1640s, e.g. in the London *Self-portrait* of 1640 (Br. 34) or the Dresden *Saskia* of 1641. A structure like this is typical of work from the mid-1630s, and the treatment of the head (with the dangling golden curls done in thick paint) remind one so strongly of the Stockholm *Young woman in profile* of 1632 that it cannot have been done much later than in that year. The painting would thus have been started not long after Rembrandt's betrothal to Saskia in 1633 or his marriage in 1634, which would not conflict with Rembrandt's having completed it – mainly in respect of the costume – only in 1642, the year of Saskia's death. This would be in line with the X-rays showing in general (i.e. apart from the absence of a reserve for the fur-trimmed cloak) only vague traces of a costume differing from that seen today – evidently the traces of an underpainting that was never worked up.

A separate problem, one that is directly connected to the painting's genesis, is that of its format. The panel now comprises three sections about 100 cm in height; the radial board in the middle is about 66.4 cm wide, and the narrow planks to either side about 6 cm. It must be regarded as quite out of the question that the panel consisted of these same sections at the time Rembrandt started the painting; the two side panels have, beneath the present top layer of paint, a different and thinner substance than there is on the central section – and this is already apparent at the surface and confirmed by the crack formation seen in the X-rays. Nor can it be assumed, however, that Rembrandt had his panel enlarged with the present side panels at a later date, in the early 1640s; as has been argued above, the present top layer of the background (which extends evenly over the side planks and the central section) must be seen as a later addition, and beneath this top layer there is over the ground, on the lateral planks, only a thin translucent brown that cannot be supposed to belong to a background painted by Rembrandt. On the other hand it cannot either be assumed that Rembrandt's original painting would have consisted only of the middle part of the present panel; the two drawn copies give



the impression that the figure occupied a picture area roughly matching the present one, and the Antwerp copy suggests that it was even a little larger on all four sides than it is today. The conclusion has to be that Rembrandt's panel had about the same (or slightly larger) dimensions as the present one but that the lateral planks were, for some reason or other, replaced with new ones. That the panel was at some time subjected to radical treatment is evident from the fact that it has been planed down to a thickness of about 0.3 cm and glued to two support panels.

To make matters even more complicated, the first mention of dimensions, occurring in the manuscript catalogue by Valerius Röver and dating from the year 1730 (see 8. *Provenance*) gives a size considerably larger (at, converted, 122.7 × 101.9 cm) than the painting has today (99.5 × 78.8 cm). The simplest explanation of this discrepancy would be that Röver included the frame in his measurements, and this seems all the more likely since the differences in height and width are exactly the same – 23.1 to 23.2 cm. There must however be some doubt about whether this explanation is the right one – we know of no instance of Röver including the frame in the measurements he quotes. The Kassel *Haupt-Catalogus*, whose dimensions often coincide with those of Röver (and even seem to have been copied from him) gives approximately but not exactly the same dimensions, while those in the printed Kassel catalogue of 1783 (and its reprint in 1799) are substantially bigger (at 128.2 × 104.6 cm), and Filhol's *Musée Napoléon VI* of 1809 (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 2) are smaller (102.6 × 82.6 cm). Some light is probably cast on these enigmas by a handwritten inventory from the 1840s; this gives, as Dr F. Lahusen kindly informs us (letter dated 5 August 1981), the dimensions of the painting *with* the frame as 4 Fuss × 3 Fuss 4½ Zoll (= 125.4 × 105.8 cm) and *without* the frame as 3 Fuss 4 Zoll × 2 Fuss 8½ Zoll (= 104.5 × 84.8 cm). These measurements give an impression of accuracy and result, compared with the present dimensions, in an admittedly slightly but not wholly insignificantly larger panel, differing 5 cm in height and 6 cm in width. One wonders whether it is pure chance that the Antwerp copy – if this is faithful in this respect – should indicate a picture area some 7 cm taller and 5.5 cm wider. Probably it is; at all events Oortman's print in the *Musée Napoléon* (fig. 11) shows the painting in its present form, in respect of both the size of the picture area and the shape of the cap and the tonal value of the background. If the overpainting of the background took place at the same time as the change in format subsequent on a replacing of the original side panels with new ones,

Fig. 11. Etching by J. J. Oortman, 1809



then this operation must have been carried out before Napoleonic times. That the painting in any case did in Röver's time, and most probably after its purchase by Wilhelm VIII of Hesse-Kassel in 1750, undergo treatment is plain from the fact that Röver could still read the date of 1642 which is now – either through the overpainting of the background or through the replacement of the side planks (whether or not coupled with a reduction in size) – no longer to be seen. It may be well to remember that many of Wilhelm's acquisitions were given 'in die Cur' (for treatment) to his court painter and restorer Johann Georg von Freese (1701–1775) (see C. A. von Drach in: *Katalog . . . Cassel*, 1888, p. xlviii).

A final complication is provided by the fact that Röver described the painting in his possession as 'boven rond' (round at the top) (see 8. *Provenance*). Probably one may interpret this as meaning that the picture was in a rectangular frame with a masking frame that covered the top in an arch shape. Rembrandt's London *Self-portrait* of 1640 (Br. 34) was probably framed in a similar fashion, and in view of the resemblance that exists between the two paintings both in format and iconographic inter-

pretation – not as *tronies* but as portraits in ‘antick’ clothing – they must be looked on not so much as true pendants as having been painted in the same vein. One can perhaps deduce this, too, from the fact that Govaert Flinck, in a *Self-portrait* dated 1643 (Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 434, pl. 48) borrowed the composition from Rembrandt’s London *Self-portrait*, and in an associated female portrait (ibid. no. 435, pl. 49) – probably that of Ingeltje Thoveling (whom he married however only in 1645) – the costume of the Kassel *Saskia*; both panels have an arched top.

There can be no doubt that the painting shows Saskia van Uylenburgh. This is plain from the name given it when it was in the collections of Willem Six and Valerius Röver (see 8. *Provenance*), and from the fact that this designation most probably goes back to Rembrandt himself (see 5. *Documents and sources*). Confirmation is moreover provided by the similarity to the wellknown silver point drawing of 8 June 1633 in Berlin (Ben. 427), which Rembrandt did of Saskia three days after his engagement to her. Together with the Dresden *Saskia* (Br. 108), this is the only painting that can be said with certainty to represent her. In this connexion it is important that the work may be identified with what was in 1658 called ‘sijns huijsvrouw conterfeijtsel’ (his wife’s likeness) and was obviously intended as a portrait, albeit in ‘antick’ dress. Rembrandt was using here a costume that included a variety of old-fashioned elements – the embroidered shirt reminded Bode<sup>7</sup> of 16th-century portraits from the Donauland, and the hat and shirt reminded Clark<sup>8</sup> of Lucas Cranach – and that incorporated reminiscences of theatrical costume, as has been pointed out by Louttit<sup>9</sup> (see also the comments on the Leningrad *Flora*, no. A93). The lastnamed author also drew attention to the fact that Ferdinand Bol used this figure in profile and in almost the same costume in his etching *The hour of death*, the second state of which was used in J. H. Krul’s *Pampiere Wereld*, Amsterdam 1644 (Münz II, no. 334). It is not improbable that Rembrandt’s painting too, especially in the form in which he completed it in 1642 (the year of Saskia’s death) – with the rich apparel and ostrich feather –, contained a reference to the transitoriness of human life. The twiglet, currently identified as rosemary, that the subject holds in her right hand (and that took the place of another flower traces of which can be seen in the X-ray) could be connected with this: ‘the temptation to assume a kind of memorial portrait is, for an English person, almost irresistible (Ophelia’s ‘There is rosemary, that’s for remembrance’), but not necessarily correct’, as Keith Roberts has commented<sup>4</sup>. In general rosemary does however seem to

have had rather the meaning of marital fidelity, and whether rosemary is in fact depicted is, as Dr S. Segal has told us, extremely doubtful.

It is hard to say to what extent Rembrandt had older prototypes in mind for his composition. Clark’s reference to Leonardo’s drawn portrait of Isabella d’Este in Paris<sup>8</sup> can at the most indicate Rembrandt’s awareness of the type of portrait with the head in profile and the body seen three-quarters-on. Kronig<sup>10</sup> pointed to a drawing once attributed to Titian in Teylers Stichting, Haarlem, which does indeed show a very similar figure, but one seen entirely in profile. If this drawing was in the Netherlands at an early date, one might assume some relationship. It is clear, at all events, that in the early 1630s Rembrandt was preoccupied with the profile figure (cf. no. A49), perhaps as a result of the commission to paint Amalia of Solms in profile (no. A61). Related works seem to have been painted in his circle; busts of this kind can be found, for instance, in Warsaw (with a Rembrandt signature and date of 1633; J. Białostocki and M. Walicki, *Malarstwo Europejskie w zbiorach Polskich*, 1955, no. 239 as Jacob Adriaensz. Backer) and in Tours (K. Bauch, *Jacob Adriaensz., Backer*, Berlin 1926, no. 113, pl. 21).

## 5. Documents and sources

It is highly probable, though not provable with certainty, that the two following items of information relate to no. A85.

– By deed of 5 October 1652 Rembrandt stated that he had sold ‘sijns huijsvrouw conterfeijtsel’ (his wife’s likeness) to Jan Six. The deed itself has not survived, but it is quoted in a resolution by the Amsterdam Chamber for Bankrupt Estates on 13 September 1658 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1658/18; cf. J. Six in: *O.H.* 11, 1893, pp. 154–156).

– In the catalogue of the coll. Jan Six (d. 1700), sale Amsterdam 6 April 1702 (Lugt 183), this painting is described under no. 39: ‘De Vrouw van Rembrand, door Rembrand geschilderd, krachtig en heerlyk uitgevoerd’ (Rembrand’s wife, painted by Rembrand, powerfully and beautifully done). According to an annotated copy of the sale catalogue in the possession of the Six family, it was bought by Jan’s son Nicolaas (d. 1710) for 510 guilders.

It is not entirely sure whether the painting that appears in 1734 in the sale of the collection of Nicolaas’s nephew Willem Six (see 8. *Provenance*) is identical with the one referred to above. This similarly-worded description might indicate this, as would the fact that a number of paintings from the Jan Six sale reappeared in the Willem Six sale.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

1. A print (etching?) by H. Dethier (Dordrecht 1610 – ?) is mentioned by Vosmaer<sup>11</sup> and subsequently referred to in the literature on the authority of this, but was not found by us. It is said to carry the publisher’s name ‘Danckerts’ and an inscription (handwritten on the print, or included in the printing?) according to which the painting came ‘de la famille du peintre’. This print would, if it could be found, be a valuable

document for providing knowledge of the original state of the painting.

2. Etching (fig. 11) by Joachim Jan Oortman (Weesp 1777–Paris 1818) inscribed: *Dessiné par Plonski – Gravé par Oortman / L'Épouse de Rembrandt*. Published in Filhol, *Galérie du Musée Napoléon VI*, Paris 1809, no. 395: '... peint sur bois, la hauteur un mètre deux centimètres six millimètres ou trois pieds un pouce, largeur quatre-vingt-deux centimètres six millimètres ou deux pieds six pouces.' Reproduces the painting in the same direction as the original and, so far as can be made out, in the same state as the present.

### 7. Copies

1. Pen and wash drawing, 13.9 × 11.6 cm, Vienna, Graphische Sammlung Albertina, inv. no. 8901 (fig. 7). Published by Meder<sup>5</sup> as a preliminary study by Rembrandt, and also regarded as such by Hofstede de Groot<sup>3</sup>; since then it has been rejected as a Rembrandt, and convincingly attributed to Flinck by Sumowski<sup>12</sup>. The drawing can be regarded as a broad and fairly free copy after the Kassel painting as this was presumably executed by Rembrandt in 1633/34 (see 4. *Comments*).

2. Pen and bistre, 11.4 × 8.9 cm, Basle, Kunstmuseum Basel, Kupferstichkabinett, inv. no. 1978.562 (fig. 8). Previously coll. C. Hofstede de Groot, The Hague; Stuttgarter Kunstkabinett, 16. Kunst-Auktion 25–27 November 1952, no. 880. Still looked on by Benesch (Ben. 431) and Sumowski<sup>12</sup> as a preliminary study from Rembrandt's hand. The emphatic character of long, continuous lines, the significance of which is not always clear, prompts an attribution to Ferdinand Bol. At all events the drawing can be regarded as a workshop drawing from around 1640 that, probably with some degree of liberty, reproduces a state of the Kassel painting in which, for instance, the fur-trimmed cloak and plume in the cap had not yet been added (see 4. *Comments*).

3. Pen and brush in bistre, 22.8 × 15.2 cm, London, Courtauld Institute Galleries, Princes Gate Collection (fig. 9). Published for the first time as by Rembrandt in O. Benesch, *Rembrandt as a draughtsman*, London 1960 (cf. also Ben. II 217A; *Recent acquisitions at 56 Princes Gate London SW7*, London 1971, no. 405, where Dr Julia Wilde is credited with observing the resemblance between the drawing and the Kassel picture). The attribution to Rembrandt cannot be upheld, particularly if one compares it with the drawing formerly in Bremen (Ben. 217) that Benesch cites in this connexion. The latter seems rather to have been the prototype used for the present drawing, together with the Kassel painting, from which it differs most noticeably in that the hat is missing. It is hard to tell which phase in the painting's genesis was reproduced here, but the drawing may well have preceded the Basle drawing described under no. 2.

4. Canvas, 112 × 89.5 cm, Antwerp, Museum voor Schone Kunsten, cat. no. 293 (fig. 10). The painting is, in the hands and the area to the left of them, not in a good state of preservation. It is evidently a free copy, in a rather wider framing, after the Kassel painting, probably in the state in which Rembrandt completed this in 1642. Hofstede de Groot<sup>3</sup> dated it in the 18th century, but there seems no good reason for doing so. The ground seen in the throat is grey in colour, which is in keeping with a dating in the 17th century, and there seems besides to be nothing in the technique or craquelure that would contradict such a dating. The very broad brushwork, especially in the background, may indicate that it was produced in Rembrandt's workshop around 1650, and one might think in terms of a pupil like Reynier van Gherwen

(d. 1662) who, in his *Young man in a gorget* in Vienna (Kunsthistorisches Museum, inv. no. 405), imitated Rembrandt's style of the early 1640s – in particular that in the *Portrait of a man with a falcon* of 1641 (coll. Duke of Westminster, Br. 224) – in a similar rather coarse and at the same time weak manner. The painting was sold with the Robit collection in Paris, 11 May 1801 (Lugt 6259) as a pendant to Rembrandt's *Standard-bearer* (Br. 433): '118. Par le même [Rhyn (Rembrand Van)]. Le Pendant. Une belle femme, vue à mi-corps, et de forte nature, comme le précédent. Elle est représentée de profil, dans l'ancien costume du pays de Gueldres, ayant la tête couverte d'un large chapeau d'étoffe rouge, garni d'une plume, et les deux mains croisées sur son estomac. Très-beau Tableau pour la force du coloris et l'énergie de la touche' (1001 francs to Sir Simon Clarke). Subsequently sales Sir Simon H. Clarke, London 8 May 1840, 2nd day no. 94 (£142.16s to Nieuwenhuys) and King William II of the Netherlands, The Hague 12 August 1850, no. 88 (3700 guilders to Le Roy, Brussels, for the Antwerp Museum). An etching by Moritz Kellerhoven (Allenrath 1758 – Munich 1830), published by Dom. Artaria in Mannheim, reproduces the painting in reverse and in a much narrower frame.

5. Canvas, Madrid, coll. Chacón, partial copy by Enrique Valdivieso (*Pintura Holandesa del siglo XVII en España*, Valladolid 1973, p. 347, fig. 228), described as 'de torpe técnica' (inept in execution).

### 8. Provenance

– Probably sold by Rembrandt in or before 1652 to Jan Six; bought at the sale of the latter's collection by his son Nicolaas (d. 1710); see 5. *Documents and sources*.

– Coll. Willem Six, sale Amsterdam 12 May 1734 (Lugt 441), no. 36: 'De Vrouw van Rembrand, door hem geschildert, zo konstig als van hem gezien is' (Rembrandt's wife, painted by him, as artfully as ever seen by him) (270 guilders to De Reliven [= Reuver?]) (Hoet I, p. 412).

– Coll. Valerius Röver (1686–1739), Delft; described in his 'Catalogus van mijne schilderijen, boeken, tekeningen, prenten, beelden, rariteiten' among the works bought in 1734: '112. de Vrouw van Rembrand van Rhijn, door hem zelfs zeer uitvoerig en konstig Ao. 1642 geschildert, tot de knien toe, levensgrootte, met 2 handen, de tronie in profil, met een rode fluwele hoed en pluymen op 't hooft, hoog 3 voet 11 duim breed 3 voet 3 duim [= 122.7 × 101.9 cm] boven rond – f 270-' (112. Rembrand van Rhijn's wife, painted by himself very elaborately and artfully in the year 1642, kneelength, with 2 hands and the face in profile, wearing a red velvet cap with plumes on her head... round at the top...), Amsterdam, University Library no. UB II A 18 (E. W. Moes in: *O.H.* 31 (1913), pp. 23–24). Sold in 1750 by Röver's widow to the Landgrave Wilhelm VIII of Hesse-Kassel.

– Coll. Landgrave Wilhelm VIII of Hesse-Kassel. Described in the *Haupt-Catalogus* begun in 1749: '557. Rembrant. Eine Frau mit einem Hübsen profil. Höhe 3 Schuh 10 Zoll Breite 3 Schuh 2 Zoll (Rhineland feet) [= 120.8 × 100.2 cm]. Described in *Verzeichniss der Hochfürstlich-Hessischen Gemäldesammlung in Cassel*, Cassel 1783, as no. 28 in the 'Gallerie auf der Ober-Neustad': 'Rembrandt van Ryn. Ein Frauenzimmer-Portrait in Profil und altmodiger Tracht mit einem rothen Huth und weissen Federn. Wahrscheinlich Rembrandts Frau. Auf Holz, 4 Fusz 1 Zoll hoch, 3 Fusz 4 Zoll breit [= 128.2 × 104.6 cm]. In Paris from 1807 to 1815.

### 9. Summary

In its present state the painting exhibits features that cannot be reconciled with Rembrandt's style. However, both the pedigree (most probably going back to the artist himself) and the existence of earlier states that the painting must, on the evidence of the X-rays, have had and that are reflected in two drawn copies, indicate that it is authentic, even though overpainted in the background by a later hand. The overpaintings were probably done at the same time as work on the panel (which resulted in the present two lateral planks some 6 cm in width), and must have taken place in the second half of the 18th century. One has to assume that the date 1642 and a signature are, or were, either beneath the overpainted background or on a lost section of the original panel, and that Rembrandt completed it in its final state in that year (the year of Saskia's death); this final state forms the basis for a painted copy now in Antwerp.

This would explain the in some passages extremely meticulous treatment of parts of the costume, which shows some similarity to other works from the early 1640s but which is exceptional when taken to this extent. Rembrandt must however have started on the work much earlier, around 1633/34, and the head has a resemblance to that of the Stockholm *Young woman in profile* of 1632 (no. A 49). The overpaintings involve mostly the background and the cap, but the effect in the face is partly determined by them.

The motif of the ostrich plume (which may originally have been a rust-brown, not white) was added only in the final state and may, together with the very rich apparel, be an allusion to the transitoriness of human life.

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- 3 HdG 607.
- 4 K. Roberts, [Book-review], *Burl. Mag.* 121 (1979), pp. 124-126, esp. 125.
- 5 J. Meder, 'Eine Vorzeichnung Rembrandts zu dem Cassler Porträt Saskias', *Mitteilungen der Gesellschaft für vervielfältigende Kunst. Beilage der 'Graphischen Künste'*, 1902, pp. 49-50; C. Hofstede de Groot, *Die Handzeichnungen Rembrandts*, Haarlem 1906, no. 1431.
- 6 Bauch 489.
- 7 W. Bode, 'Die Bildnisse der Saskia van Uylenborch als Braut und Junge Gattin Rembrandts', *Jahrb. d. Pr. Kunsts.* 18 (1897), pp. 82-91, esp. 84-85.
- 8 K. Clark, *Rembrandt and the Italian Renaissance*, London 1966, p. 72.
- 9 M. Louttit, 'The romantic dress of Saskia van Ulenborch: its pastoral and theatrical associations', *Burl. Mag.* 115 (1973), pp. 317-326, esp. 322.
- 10 J. O. Kronig, 'Nog eene ontlening van Rembrandt', *O.H.* 32 (1914), p. 264.
- 11 C. Vosmaer, *Rembrandt Harmens van Rijn. Sa vie et ses oeuvres*, Den Haag 1868, pp. 51 en 432; ed. 1877, p. 499.
- 12 Sumowski *Drawings IV*, no. 947.

HDG 769; BR. 177; BAUCH 365; GERSON 149

Fig. 1. Panel 69.5 × 54.7 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray





### 1. Summarized opinion

A fairly well preserved, authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1633. Probably from late in that year, as the pendant is dated 1634; if the suspicion that the pendant was originally rectangular is correct, then this would of course apply to this painting as well.

### 2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen almost to the waist, with the body turned slightly to the right. He wears a broad-brimmed black hat, a white ruff and a black costume. The light falls from the left, and a shadow is cast at the lower right onto the rear wall, which provides the background.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 7 September 1972 (J. B., P. v. Th.) in moderately good daylight and out of the frame. Four X-ray films covering the whole, and two covering the central part were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 69.5 × 54.7 cm. Comprises 3 planks, with widths (from left to right) c. 13, 27.9 and 13.8 cm. Back planed down to a thickness of about 0.7 cm, and cradled.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light brown is exposed to the left of the tip of the nose by the nostril, and shows through in the shadow areas of the head, in the hat and here and there in the background.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: In general good, apart from some wearing in the shadow areas of the head and in the black of the hat. A very slight amount of paint loss at the tip of the nose has been restored. Craquelure: none seen with the naked eye.

DESCRIPTION: The head is painted in the light in flesh colours that vary in tint and consistency. The tints are lightest in a pinkish white on the cheekbone and ridge of the nose, in a creamy white below the eye on the left and by the crowsfeet, and in the white and pinkish white of the highlights on the nose. The paint is thickest in these highlights, and in the vertical zone between the corner of the eye and the wing of the nose. There is also a heavy stroke of light flesh colour below the wing of the nose, running to the left alongside the fold in the cheek. This fold and the shadow at the bottom of the wing of the nose are both indicated in a brownish flesh colour. Grey is used in the transition to the brown cast shadow of the hat. The area of shadow on the nose consists of a (somewhat worn) red-brown, with next to it a thicker brown-grey on the cheek.

The lines in the eye areas are drawn firmly in brown. The white of the eye on the left is an off-white, extending partly over the black edge of the iris. The latter is done in a thin (and slightly worn) brown, with the pupil painted in dark brown. A small catchlight to the upper left is placed opposite a small stroke of opaque light brown in the iris. In the corner of the eye there is some pinkish red and a stronger red, and a tiny dot of white. The lower border of the eye is made up from small

strokes in a pink flesh colour and light brown, with white for the rim of moisture. The whole gives a strong suggestion of form and depth. The eye on the right is executed mainly in browns; thin grey has been used on the upper eyelid, in the eye-sockets, in the white of the eye and along the eye-pouch.

The moustache is done with strokes of grey-brown and brown-grey, wet-in-wet with the flesh colour below the wing of the nose and towards the left. The mouth-line, in a dark brown, is covered a little in the centre by the pinkish red of the upper lip, and ends to right and left in somewhat thinner patches of brown. On the upper lip there is a colourful stroke of light brick-red, over which the grey-brown of the hairs of the moustache project a little. The lower lip is in a pinkish red, shadowed with brown-red towards the right and merging to the left into a light brick-red colour with highlights in a whitish pink.

The beard is painted with small strokes of grey and dark grey, dark brown towards the left, some light grey to the right and in the centre towards the bottom with thin strokes of a ruddy tint. The roots of the beard seen against the reflexion of light along the outline of the face on the right offer an effective suggestion of the roundness of the jaw.

The ear on the left is rendered carefully and shows a wide range of colours – a carmine and salmon pink in the thickly-painted lobe, and pink and broken white in the strokes above this and running into an area of shadow. A flat carmine-red colour is used in the shell of the ear. The other ear now consists of a worn patch of brownish paint.

The ruff is drawn vigorously, with a strong suggestion of form; cool and warm greys alternate, and the degree of translucency of the paint also varies. The edges are heightened with thick white paint. To the right the ground shows through somewhat, while on the left the grey is placed over the brim of the hat, then thinly over the grey background, and further down over the black of the costume. In the black of the costume there is only a small amount of internal detail, achieved by means of the brushwork. On the right the outline of the shoulder extends over the background paint, and is rimmed with curving lines of black. In the black of the hat a horizontal stroke of grey in the centre, representing reflected light from the forehead, and grey sheens of light on the brim give a certain effect of depth and plasticity. The hat-brim on the right extends over the paint of the background a little along the lower edge, and at the extreme right remains somewhat inside the reserve left for it; the same is true of the righthand side of the crown.

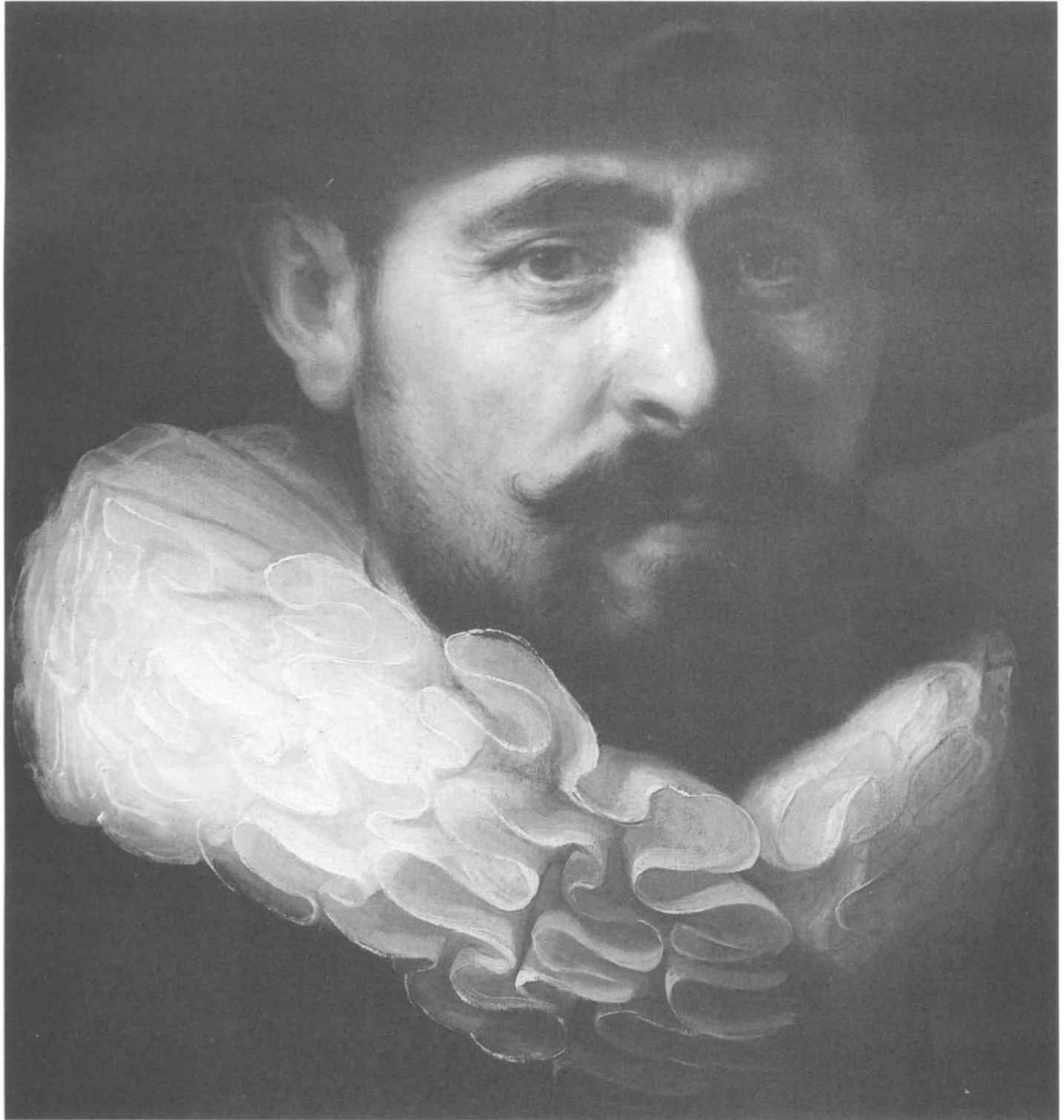
The background is a fairly opaque grey, quite dark to the left of and above the figure and with barely visible brushwork; to the right there is lighter and thicker paint with clear and fairly long strokes running parallel to the contour of the shoulder and along the figure. The cast shadow on the right is done in fairly opaque, dark brownish grey. There are auto-graph retouches visible, in a grey somewhat less opaque than the adjoining paint, along the shoulder outline to the left and, on the right, along the brim and crown of the hat, where the reserve left for the figure in the paint of the background was plainly broader than its final shape.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The radiographic image shows a clear distribution of dark and light, in which – as usual – the small brushstrokes are more clearly evident in the light area of the face than at the surface. The area of the face in shadow appear as dark reserves, and were conceived from the outset without hesitation or subsequent changes. There are no signs of a broadly-brushed light

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)



underpainting of the ruff. The autograph retouch, described above, along the lefthand shoulder line is clearly visible. No reserve was left in the paint of the background for the undulating silhouette of the cloak on the right, nor for the cast shadow.

The cradle affects the image only to a limited extent.

#### *Signature*

On the right, at half-height in the background and in grey, <Rembrandt. f. 1633>. Given the firm and characteristic handwriting, it makes a wholly authentic impression. On the left, in

brown on the dark grey of the background, there is <AET 41.>.

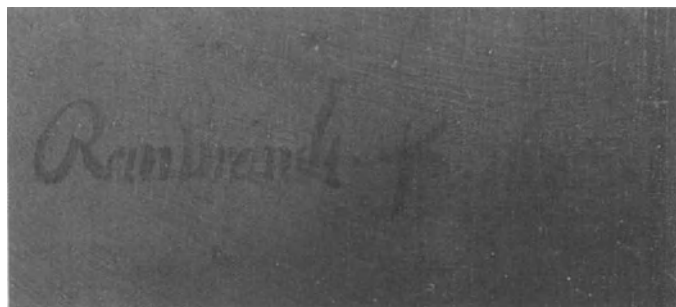
#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### **4. Comments**

Both no. A 86 and its companion-piece no. A 87 are typified by a direct, effective use of paint and, on the

Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1)



evidence of the X-ray, underwent no changes in design. The chiaroscuro was set down in its essentials in the initial lay-in. The paint covers in the lit flesh areas, while in the shadow parts it is more translucent. The placing of the head in the man's portrait in relation to the fall of light creates a pattern of light and shadow that provides the basis for the effect of plasticity, which is moreover greatly enhanced by the handling of chiaroscuro in the ruff. In the woman's portrait, where strong contrasts in the head are lacking, the effect of plasticity is achieved by an extremely subtle interplay of tonal differences, and emphasized by skilfully-placed reflexions of light. The way the detailed rendering of lit areas has been limited to the head and its immediate surroundings, while in the dark clothing, shown cursorily, the three-dimensional effect has been attained mainly by the suggestive use of contours, can be termed very typical. The outlines, with their animated pattern of billowing curves and sudden steps, are a familiar feature in Rembrandt's paintings; that their effect was stressed deliberately is shown by the fact that both portraits have, on the further shoulder, projecting details of costume placed over the background after the latter was painted. In the man's portrait the cast shadow on the rear wall adds to the spatial effect.

In both the interpretation of form and the technique the two portraits are so in line with the general features of Rembrandt's portraits from the early 1630s (as described in Introduction, Chapter I) that there can, bearing also in mind the confidence-inspiring signatures, be no doubt about the attribution. The dating (1633 for the man's portrait and 1634 for the woman's) shows that – as one may assume was the general rule – the man's portrait was painted first and the accompanying woman's portrait done subsequently. These companion-pieces, apparently produced around the turn of the year 1633–1634, form the earliest pair of bust portraits of a couple by Rembrandt to have survived in the original. The panel used for the woman's portrait offers clues suggesting that it was originally rectangular; if so, this would then naturally apply also to the man's portrait.

The now somewhat varying state of preservation of the two paintings must be due to the fact that they came into different ownership following the sale in March 1960, and were treated by different restorers.

There is so far no evidence to identify the man, born in 1591/92, or the woman, born in 1593/94. If there ever were inscriptions on the back of the panels, they were lost at the time these were cradled.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

Together with the companion-piece no. A 87:  
 – Coll. Earl of Beauchamp, Madresfield Court, Great Malvern (England).  
 – Dealer M. Knoedler & Co., New York.  
 – Coll. W. H. Moore, New York (on loan for a period to the Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Conn.). Sale London (Sotheby's) 23 March 1960, nos. 67 and 68.  
 Without the companion-piece:  
 – Coll. Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza, Lugano until 1977.

#### 9. Summary

The style and execution of nos. A 86 and A 87 match entirely those of Rembrandt's portraits from the early 1630s, and the paintings are undoubtedly authentic specimens from these years. Though the man's portrait is dated 1633 and the woman's 1634, they form a homogeneous pair, the earliest by Rembrandt still known to be extant. Because of the excellent state of preservation – especially in the case of the woman's portrait – they give a clear picture of Rembrandt's work of this period. Allowance must be made for the possibility of both panels having originally been rectangular.

HDG 874; BR. 344; BAUCH 480; GERSON 150

### 1. Summarized opinion

A very well preserved authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1634. Probably from early in that year, as the pendant is dated 1633. The panel may originally have been rectangular.

### 2. Description of subject

The woman is seen down to the waist with the body turned three-quarters to the left and the head rather more towards the front. She has a white, lace-edged cap, and wears a wide, flat, pleated collar over a black gown with decorated shoulder-caps and sleeves. The light falls from the left, and there is an almost flat, grey background.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 3 February 1970 (S. H. L., P. v. Th.) in good daylight, and out of the frame, with the aid of an ultraviolet lamp. Five X-ray films were available, four covering the whole painting and one of the head.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 69 × 55 cm; back cradled. The X-ray shows a join 9 cm from the righthand side. At right and left there are traces of bevelling, filled in with wood during the cradling; from this one may suspect that the panel was not bevelled all round, and thus may originally have been rectangular.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish brown shows through in the background and the shadow side of the face, and is visible at the border of the forehead and hair.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Very well preserved. Under UV light it can be seen that there are small retouches to strengthen the outline of the forehead on the left and along the cap and the contour of the chin on the right. Craquelure: none seen with the naked eye. DESCRIPTION: The background has been done with a broad brush in dark grey paint that has a greyish-green tinge, painted lightly and thinly over the underlying ground, which adds to the effect especially to the left and right of the cap.

The head is modelled firmly in fresh flesh colours in which a yellowish tinge alternates with tints of pink and red that are partly laid on top of the flesh colour. The lit areas are invariably opaque, and quite thickly painted in the forehead and on the ridge of the nose. The shadow areas are partly opaque and partly in translucent browns.

The lines around the eyes are set down in strong strokes of brown. The upper eyelids are pink, and the border of the eye is formed at the bottom by touches of pink with a little white to show the rim of moisture. The white of the eye is greyish. The irises, not entirely round, are grey and a little darker towards the edges. On the black pupils there are small, bright catchlights to the upper left, while the inner corners of the eyes have a touch of pink. The shadow areas are done translucently in brown, and especially in the righthand corner of the right eye this is very thin. The eyebrows are indicated with extremely fine, thinly painted strokes of grey and a little brown,

which at the upper edge extend a little over the flesh tint. The righthand eyebrow is rather more pronounced than the other, and done with parallel, oblique strokes.

The forehead is painted with short strokes that follow the convex shape, in a yellowish flesh tint over which a little pink has been placed. A few white highlights are placed on the nose. The dark brown nostril on the right lies in a translucent, light brown cast shadow. The shadow side of the nose, in opaque paint, is in brown through which a little grey and pink can be sensed. The light reflected from the collar onto the cheek on the right, painted in grey with a trace of pink, does much to create an effect of plasticity in the head; the reflexion not only gives a subtle indication of the curve of the chin and jawline, but also lends a three-dimensional quality to the wing of the nose.

The sensitively drawn mouth-line is in dark brown. The upper lip has pink and a greyish brown, while the lower lip, in a slightly more pronounced red, has vertical strokes of pink for the small clefts. On the curve of the chin the shadow is shown with three parallel strokes of pink.

The cap is executed in greys and white. A small ochre-coloured line runs over the pleated, starched edge and indicates the metal band glimpsed through it. The white outline of the edge is marked with thick white paint. In the righthand wing of the cap the ground contributes to the colour of the area of shadow. In the lit part of the collar there are small grey lines of shadow, while curved strokes of white with thick edges run along the upper border. The lower edge is shown, in the light, in thicker paint with rather broader, curving strokes. The sensitive way the white of the collar has been placed against the line of the jaw heightens the plastic effect of the cheek area. The shadow cast on the collar is a brownish grey, becoming a light grey towards the back; at the outside edge the paint has been placed a little way over the grey of the background.

The black clothing is given detail with thicker lines of black and, at the shoulder, with flecks and dots of grey; elsewhere it has a tendril-like pattern, done in cursory fashion.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The radiographic image is similar to that of the companion-piece no. A86, in having a clear distribution of light and dark, and a clearcut, short brushstroke in the lit part of the face. In the collar a free brushwork, running in all directions, apparently has to do with an underpainting.

The background along the lefthand shoulder outline appears rather light, without there being any reserve left for the shoulder-cap. There is a roughly-shaped reserve for the cast shadow on the collar.

#### *Signature*

On the right at half-height, in dark grey-brown paint <Rembrandt. f/1634.>. Given the firm and characteristic handwriting, it makes a wholly authentic impression. On the left, and now difficult to make out, are the vestiges of the inscription <AE . . . S 40>.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

### 4. Comments

See no. A86.

Fig. 1. Panel 69 × 55 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray

Fig. 2. X-ray

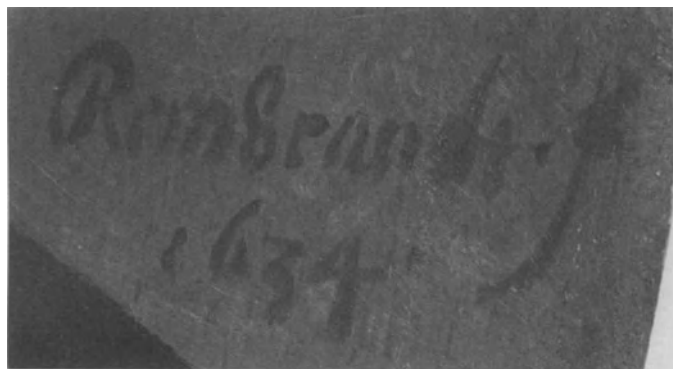




Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1 : 1)



#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

Up to 1960 together with the companion-piece no. A 86 (see that entry). Without the companion-piece:

- Dealer E. Speelman, London.
- Coll. J. William Middendorf II (on loan to the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam) until 1977.

#### 9. Summary

See no. A 86.

**A 88 The Holy Family**

MUNICH, BAYERISCHE STAATSGEMÄLDESAMMLUNGEN, ALTE PINAKOTHEK, INV. NO. 1318

[1634]

HdG 92; BR. 544; BAUCH 53; GERSON 63

Fig. 1. Canvas 183.5 × 123.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



### 1. Summarized opinion

An authentic painting that is reasonably well preserved, though it was altered in format a number of times and must originally have been somewhat wider.

### 2. Description of subject

The figures are seen in a room that, to judge from the carpenter's tools hanging on the wall, must be Joseph's workshop. Mary sits on the left, turned slightly towards the right, evidently on a low bench. Under the heavy folds of a dull purple-red dress she has her right leg stretched out almost straight, with the foot tilted sideways against the wooden floor; her left knee is raised. The upper part of the body is bent slightly forward and to the right, so that her bare breast, with a drop of milk on the nipple, rests against the Child's head as He lies sleeping on a fur pelt on her lap. She holds the Child and pelt to her with the left hand, while the right hand holds both His feet. She glances down with her head tilted slightly to the left and forward. A veil covers part of her forehead and hangs down over the right shoulder. Above the bodice, her body is partly covered up to the neck by a thin, pleated shirt open to the front. To the right of Mary and a little further back stands a large wickerwork cradle, over which Joseph leans forward and looks down at the Child. He rests his left arm on the hood of the cradle, while his right hand is placed on a piece of furniture – perhaps the edge of an open chest – standing in the shadow between him and the rear wall. A large, dark curtain hangs down to behind this piece of furniture. To the left of this can be seen a wall with a masonry arch, running just above Mary's head. At the top of the wall there is a strap, attached horizontally, in which tools are hanging: from left to right these can be identified as a chisel, a brace, a wooden mallet, a drawing knife with two handles, and a bag. A bundle of twine hangs from a nail above the drawing knife. On the extreme left the wall makes a right-angled corner. On the wall seen in foreshortening there is a dark patch that may be an open shutter (though two dark areas of shadow on the rear wall still remain unexplained, as does a dark mass to the extreme left – a cloth or cushion, perhaps?). Level with the upper part of Mary's body there is a wooden table against the rear wall, on which a hammer lies on the left. On the wood floor, the boards of which run parallel with the picture plane, there are various objects to the left, of which only a thick, sawn-off branch of a tree and an earthenware pot with a handle are recognizable. The figures are illuminated by light falling from the left that produces strong shadows, that of Joseph's head falling on his body.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in January 1969 (S. H. L., P. v. Th.) in good daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of seven X-ray films. A complete set of 21 X-ray films was received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, c. 183.5 × 123.5 cm measured along the stretcher, including narrow edges added to right, left and bottom, and pieces of canvas at top and bottom with which the painting has been restored to a rectangle after having (probably in the early 18th century) been altered in shape, apparently to fit a decorative surround. The original

canvas is now bounded at the top by a flattened arc about 15 cm high that comes down to a horizontal border 15 cm wide on the left and 13 cm wide on the right. At the bottom the border is formed by a flattened arc some 12 cm high, coming to the present horizontal lower edge a good 21 cm out from the side to the left and c. 23 cm from the side to the right. The original shape must have been rectangular. Some authors, including Bauch<sup>1</sup> and Gerson<sup>2</sup>, thought that the curved top was original, while rejecting the curved bottom; in fact both must be seen as the result of a change in format leading to a shape that was common in the early 18th century for paintings mounted on, for instance, a chimney breast. The present narrow proportions (almost 3:2) and the composition suggest that the canvas was once wider than today's rectangle, although X-rays nos. 2 and 7 show some curvature in the weave that can be interpreted as traces of cusping, vaguer on the left than on the right; from this it may be deduced that – especially on the right – not much can have been lost. The original canvas consists of a single piece; a horizontal line at about 95 cm from the lower edge (just above the Child's head), which looks like a join, is merely the trace of a join in the lining canvas that has been pressed through from the back.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: At the top the pitch of the cusping is about 12 cm, and it extends some 17 cm into the canvas. On the right the pitch varies between 8 and 11 cm, with a depth of c. 25 cm. A single cusp 8.5 cm long can be seen at the bottom, extending inwards about 22 cm. On the left the cusping is so little pronounced that it is hard to measure – the pitch varies between 8 and 10 cm. Threadcount: 18.7 vertical threads/cm (17.5–20.5), 13.7 horizontal threads/cm (13–14.5). The pattern of thickenings offers no clear difference in the vertical and horizontal directions. Neither the characteristics of the weave nor differences in the threadcounts provide any clue as to the warp direction. From the large format it may perhaps be assumed that it is parallel to the long sides of the painting, i.e. vertical. The fact that the vertical threads are denser than the horizontal lends support to this supposition. Because of the similarity in threadcount (showing a marked difference in the two directions) and the structure of the weave one may assume that this canvas came from the same bolt as the *Cupid blowing a bubble* (no. A 91), the *Vienna Apostle Paul* (Br. 603) and the *Berlin Samson threatening his father-in-law* (Br. 499). The same bolt also supplied the canvas to which the *London Lamentation* (Br. 565), painted on paper, is stuck, as well as the narrow strip used for the first enlargement of the *Berlin John the Baptist preaching* (Br. 555). The pieces of canvas attached at top and bottom have a threadcount of 11 vertical threads/cm (10.5–12) and 13.8 horizontal threads/cm (12.5–15.5).

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Not observed with certainty. A grey that is probably that of the ground shows through in the pink of Mary's right hand and the Child's right hand and toes. A yellowish colour, which may rather belong to an underpainting, shows through in the edge of the cradle, between the pillow and the sheet, and in Joseph's shadowed right hand.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn<sup>3</sup> analysed a sample (from which no cross-section was prepared) and identified the main ingredient as an ochre, plus a little white lead with an oily or resinlike medium. He describes the colour as grey-brown.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Generally good, though perhaps a little flattened. Overpaintings penetrate inwards slightly from the added sections of canvas. There are also overpaintings along the edges of the shutter (?) on the left, to the left of Mary's arm in and

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)





around the hammer seen there, in a paint-loss at the lower end of Mary's veil, in a damage intersecting the pillow in the cradle, in the crumpled sheet beneath this, as well as in damages above Joseph's head that can probably be ascribed to tears (two horizontal and one vertical), and along the bottom part of the righthand edge. There is some retouching in Mary's face. Craquelure: an unobtrusive, irregular but fairly evenly distributed pattern that is rather finer in the greys and coarser in the lighter and more thickly-painted passages.

**DESCRIPTION:** In general the paint is opaque, thicker in the light areas than elsewhere but never a pronounced impasto. The background is done almost entirely in greys; darker greys are used for the carpenter's tools hanging on the wall and lying on the table, in the curtain that hangs on the right, and in the joins in the masonry of the arch; a little dullish pink has occasionally been used in the bricks of the latter. The item of furniture (an open chest?) to the left behind Joseph is also painted in a flat, dark grey. The planks of the wood floor in the foreground are executed in a horizontally-brushed brown-yellow paint, with brown to indicate the joins between them.

Mary's face is done in flesh tints with a little pinkish red on the cheeks, the shadows in the eye-sockets mainly in brown and (here and there subsequently strengthened) grey tints, and the other shadows in thin greys over a darker flesh colour; hardly any brushstroke can be detected. Small strokes of black show the lower edge of the upper eyelids, and strokes of a thin black are used for the eyebrows (where brown contributes to the effect) and mouth-line (where there is also a little brown and some grey). The latter lies over the red-brown of the upper lip and the red of the lower lip; the corner of the eye on the left has a purplish grey. The lower border of the eye on the left is shown in a pale red; the other eye is executed with rather more detail, using grey for the white of the eye and a dot of red for the corner. The veil worn on the head is done in a creamy colour, with a pattern indicated with dabs of pink and small curved strokes of white and grey and with shadows done in an ochre-brown; scratchmarks emphasizing the pattern reveal an underpainting in black and brown. On the shoulder on the left the veil is painted with broad strokes of a yellowish white, on which are placed small strokes of broken white, a dull pink, ochre yellow and a purplish red and a few dots of grey, to represent the pattern. The shirt has discreet parallel strokes of white and brown in the folds by the edge of the dress. The bared breast is modelled along the contour and in the shadow with brown, and by the Child's head there is reflected light shown with a little ochre brown and grey. The dress is executed in dull, pinkish red tints that tend towards pink in the lit parts; broad brushstrokes provide modelling for the folds of the material. The deepest shadows are painted in greys and black. Mary's bare right forearm is done in a creamy flesh colour, the hand in a pinkish flesh tone with fine lines of brown at the outline. Her left hand, executed in similar fashion (with slightly strengthened lines of shadow between the fingers), shows in relief at the paint surface long brushstrokes that bear no relation to the shape of the hand. The slipper has a few strokes of a translucent grey-green; the contour is dark, and a stroke of brown placed alongside it indicates the edge of the sole.

The carefully painted head of the Child has brushwork that in general follows the roundness of the form; broad brushstrokes visible in relief belong to an underlying paint layer. The mouth is modelled in pink, while the nostrils are indicated with pink that is partly covered with a grey shadow: the ear is done quite meticulously, in pink. A small stroke of brown is used to represent the closed eye. There are white highlights on the eyelids. The back of the head is in thin, light browns that

tend towards a ruddy tint. A contrast with the white of the neck-scarf is provided by the ochre colour with small strokes of brown and yellow of the sleeve, by the greenish tint and black shadows of the clothing round His trunk, and by the ochre tints, browns and thin greys used to render the fur pelt; the latter has at some places a dabbing brushstroke and elsewhere a longer stroke. The outer surface of the pelt is done in greys.

In Joseph's relatively boldly executed head the forehead is painted in a flesh colour applied with strokes that follow the hairline, and a thin brown is used to indicate the wrinkles; the colour becomes pinker towards the eyebrows, which are shown with short strokes of grey running downwards. Between the eyelids, painted in a light, opaque brown paint, a long stroke of black indicates the opening of the eye. The crowsfeet alongside the eye are done in shades of ochre brown over a dark brown. A stroke of brown marks the shadow of the wing of the nose. The curling hair, moustache and beard are executed with strokes of browns and greys with occasional touches of black. The shadowed part of the neck is painted in a translucent brown (over a lighter layer) and a grey provides the transition to the boldly-painted flesh tints of the half-exposed shoulder. The cast shadow on the shirt is in grey. The left hand, held in front of the chest, is done in the light with a yellowish flesh colour, on top of which the veins are modelled in a translucent brown; the area in shadow is shown cursorily, as is the other hand where a brownish tone lies over a lighter underlayer. Joseph's cloak is executed in brownish grey over a lighter layer, and modelled broadly with dark greys.

The wicker work of the cradle is done in an ochre brown on top of which there are small and relatively drily-applied dabs and dots in a lighter ochre colour and greys. The bedclothes are painted with firm strokes of white and light greys.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** None.

#### *X-Rays*

Forms showing up light in the X-rays are found to be connected to a large extent with a light underpainting. This is clear in, for instance, the heads of all three figures, where one can see long, bold strokes that do not match the present paint surface. The underlying brushstrokes in Mary's left hand, already described as visible at the surface in relief, show up distinctly and seem to form part of a roughly indicated shape that might be read as a drapery leaving only the fingers exposed. Some change seems to have been made to the righthand outline of Mary's head; the present form here does not correspond with a patch appearing dark in the X-ray image which probably matches an earlier lay-in in which there was less to be seen of the hanging veil. There was a smaller reserve for Joseph's hair in a paint that appears quite light, the broad brushwork of which roughly coincides with the direction in which the curtain hangs today. Paint also shows up light along his forehead and nose, this time in strokes that run fairly horizontal and which leave a quite sharply defined reserve (partly bordered with interrupted brushstrokes, as if paint had been scraped away) that extends between the lower half of his head and Mary's head; the meaning of this shape is unclear. Nor is it clear what the significance is of a boldly painted form that appears to the left of Joseph's upper body, in which his beard was given a smaller reserve than it occupies today – the righthand border of this coincides roughly, though not exactly, with the contour of the present piece of furniture, which might be an open chest. One might assume that to the left of the body there was originally more to be seen of the curtain that shows up light above Joseph's head as well; in that case, the dark area by the lower edge of the light area could well be a reserve for a shadow cast by Mary's body on the curtain.

Fig. 4. Detail (1:1.5)



Some local paint loss can be seen, especially below Joseph's beard.

#### *Signature*

At the lower right in a worn and restored area, in dark paint and running up to the join with the added strip, <Rembrandt f 163 (followed by a fragment of the last digit)>; on the added strip the fragment has been completed as a 1. There is a retouch between the 6 and the 3, and these figures and several letters seem to have been touched up. The clumsy script and the upright stance of the letters do not inspire confidence. There is no clear evidence for the presence of a different, and

possibly authentic inscription underneath the present one. The possibility of the latter having been copied after an original signature, possibly when this was lost through the canvas being reduced, cannot be ruled out.

#### *Varnish*

A heavy layer of yellowed varnish hampers observation.

#### **4. Comments**

In style and execution the painting is convincingly authentic, even though the composition, seen

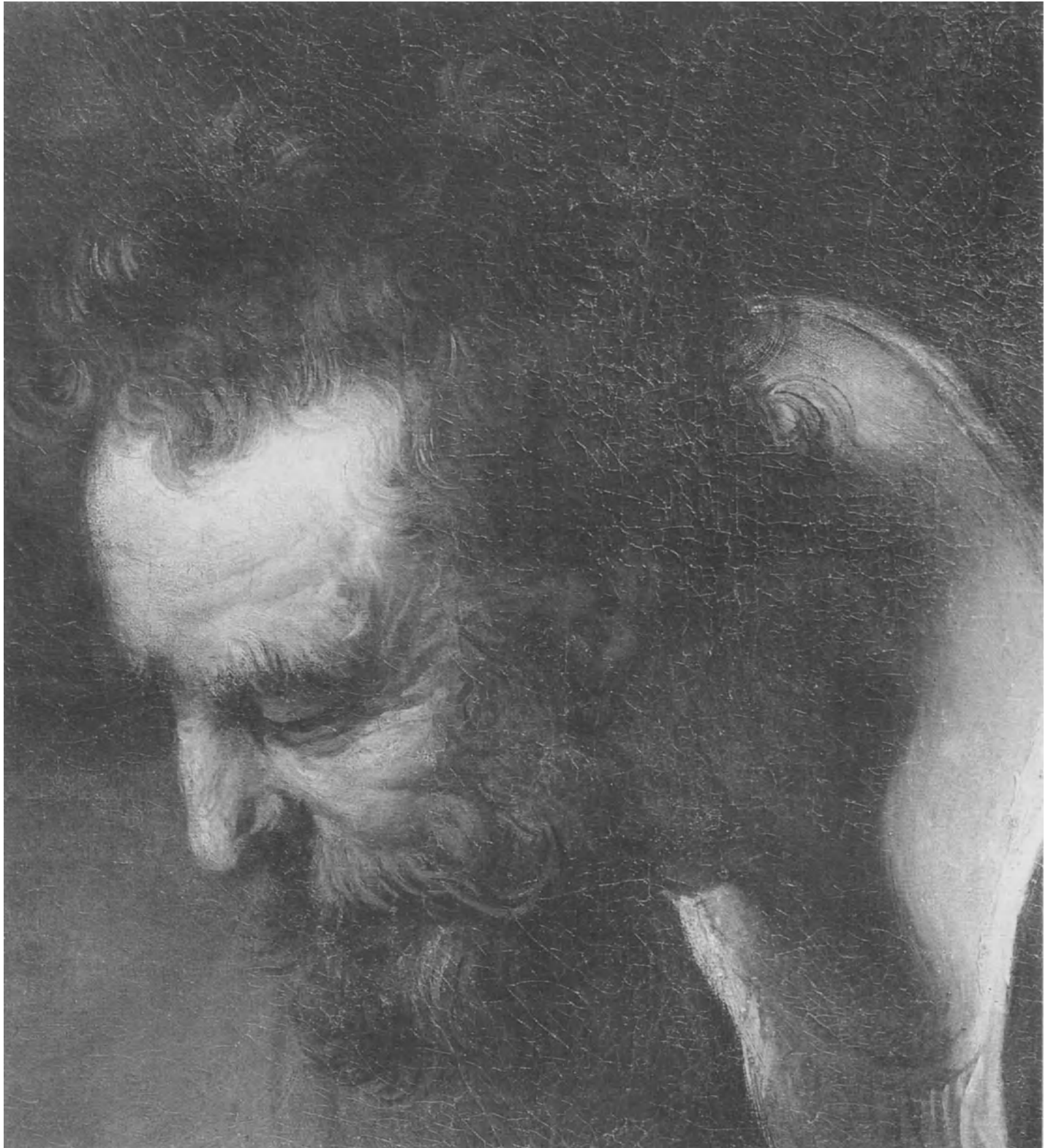
against Rembrandt's development, calls for some explanation. Where the execution is concerned, the work comes close to others from the early 1630s. The way chiaroscuro – often by means of contrasts and incisive cast shadows – contributes to the three-dimensional effect, the rendering of widely-varying materials, and finally the wide differences in the amount of detail shown (which at the edges and in some shadow areas is almost totally lacking) can all be termed typical of Rembrandt's way of working. One notices that the relatively broad depiction of form in Mary's face, which is never found in portraits but is seen in, for example, the Madrid *Sophonisba* of 1634 (no. A 94), is evidently connected not only with the intention to show a general type rather than individual features, but also with the distance from which the painting was meant to be viewed. The same is true of the treatment of the figure of Joseph which, though highly characteristic in its alternation of thicker light and thinner dark paint, is marked by a bold brushwork that suggests the forms without defining them precisely. It is seen from the X-rays that the lighter areas were to a great extent prepared by means of a firmly-brushed light underpainting from which the final version exhibits a number of differences, especially – so far as is shown by the few X-rays available – between the figures of Mary and Joseph. Where the use of colour is concerned, one may say that this is dominated by the dull purplish red of Mary's clothing, with which the cool colours of the Infant's clothes form a contrast and which is set into the greys and browns of her surroundings. This dominance of a broken tint in drapery that is handled very emphatically as a plastic feature is something this painting has in common with the Leningrad *Flora* of 1634 (no. A 93); one can see in this the first pointer to the most likely dating.

The apocryphal date of 1631 now seen on the painting was accepted in the literature up to the late 1960s, although Bauch<sup>1</sup> already in 1933 found it hard to reconcile this date with the fact that such a widely differing work as the *Simeon in the Temple* in The Hague (no. A 34) came from the same year. It was only in 1966 that Bauch<sup>4</sup>, followed by Gerson<sup>2</sup> and Haak<sup>5</sup>, pointed out that most of the final figure of the date is on an added strip of canvas, and that in 1631 Rembrandt never signed paintings with his forename written out in full; this form became a firm habit only in 1633. Gerson suggested 1635 as a date for no. A 88, and Haak 1633. A certain preference for a tentative dating in between these two rests, as has already been noted, on the use of colour. Moreover, the rendering of form is marked to a greater extent by a rather broad treatment than it is in, for instance, the New York *Bellona* of 1633 (no. A 70),

though less so than in, for example, *Belshazzar's feast* (Br. 497) which can with a great measure of certainty be placed in 1635. That 1634 is the most likely year of production is also suggested by the approach to plastic forms, in particular in the figure of Mary, treated in terms of large convex areas; this is encountered again in the Leningrad *Flora* dated 1634 and is abandoned in, for example, the London *Flora* of 1635 (Br. 103) in favour of a stronger accent on a depth-creating element such as a foreshortened hand and the shadow it casts on the figure. In any case it can be assumed that the Munich *Holy Family* did not, as Benesch<sup>6</sup> and Münz<sup>7</sup> supposed, precede the etching with a similar composition and of the same subject (B. 62) which can be dated as 1632; rather, the painting is a later version of the subject, further developing the composition towards a baroque idiom.

It is precisely as a composition that the painting presents a very special and somewhat unusual character that undoubtedly has to do with the large format of the work – it is probably larger than any other history painting done hitherto by Rembrandt – and the (almost) lifesize scale of the figures. Placed large in the picture area (which will originally have been a little wider than it is today) the two principal figures describe curves that are placed diagonally in space. In this very consistently-developed three-dimensional construction, which anticipates the Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* of 1635 (Br. 498), the turn of Mary's head represents a countermovement that lends a certain emphasis to the Child as an object of shared interest; the flat rear wall provides stability to the whole. Compared with this sophisticated treatment of space, the etching shows a far less subtle solution – Mary does not have her head turned, and she describes a single diagonal, while Joseph (taken freely from Annibale Caracci's etching of the same subject) can be seen in the background in pure profile. One gets the impression that Rembrandt owed the firm grip on spatial construction, as seen in the painting, to a prototype with which he came into contact between about 1632 and 1634. Various authors have thought in terms of an influence by Rubens<sup>8</sup>, but the essence of the spatial composition – the figures bending over an open space in the centre – does not seem to point in this direction. One must rather imagine a North Italian – perhaps Bolognese – painting of around 1620. Another pointer to this might be the fact that the gesture with which Mary holds the Child's feet, which as Bruyn has pointed out<sup>9</sup> is taken from an old iconographic motif and was frequently used in the 16th century in Venice and other Northern Italian centres. A direct link with Titian, as was supposed by Van Rijckevorsel<sup>8</sup> and Sumowski<sup>10</sup>, is however less likely.

Fig. 5. Detail (1:1.5)



While the arrangement, and to a certain extent the type, of the figures exhibit an Italian influence, the rendering of the interior is very similar to other representations of this in Rembrandt's work. One is reminded most strongly here of the *Portrait of the shipbuilder Jan Rijcksen and his wife* of 1633 (no. A77), and it is quite possible that when the

canvas was reduced in size – which seems to have been done mainly on the left – a similar kind of window as is seen in that painting may have been lost.

The theme arouses associations with a Roman Catholic milieu, either religious or secular, but wrongly so. The Soolmans-Coppit couple who were

Fig. 6. Detail with signature (reduced)



portrayed by Rembrandt in 1634 (nos. A 100 and A 101) and who belonged to the Dutch Reformed Church, owned a painting of the same subject by him, and probably bought it from the artist. It is not improbable that it was in fact this very painting (see 8. *Provenance*). If so, then it would provide a further example of a painting by Rembrandt that came into the possession of owners who had themselves painted by Rembrandt in the same year (for other examples, see nos. A 48 and A 95).

### 5. Documents and sources

The inventory of the estate of the art dealer Johannes de Renialme, drawn up on 27 June 1657, includes two paintings described as 'Een Maria en Joseph van Rembrant van Ryn', one valued at 120 guilders and the other at 36 guilders (A. Bredius, *Kunstler-Inventare* I, The Hague 1915, p. 233; Strauss *Doc.*, 1657/2). Even the higher valuation seems on the modest side for such a large work as no. A 88, and it is more likely that well before 1657 it was owned by Oopjen Coppit and her first husband Marten Soolmans (see 8. *Provenance*).

### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

### 7. Copies

None.

### 8. Provenance

\*— Probably identical with 'een schilderij van Joseph en Maria, gedaen door Rembrandt' described in the settlement of probate dated 24 June 1660 on the estate of Maerten Daey (d. 1659), the second husband of Oopjen Coppit, and allocated to her son Jan Soolmans from her first marriage with Marten Soolmans; it would thus seem to have belonged to the Soolmans-Coppit couple, whose portraits by Rembrandt from 1634 have survived (nos. A 100 and A 101). The painting hung in the main room of the house of Maerten Daey and Oopjen Coppit on the Singel in: Amsterdam, according to an inventory of the estate drawn up on 3 November 1659 (cf. I. H. van Eeghen in: *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 43, 1956, pp. 86–89; Strauss *Doc.*, 1660/8).

\*— Probably coll. Isaak van Thye, Lord of Opmeer, sale Amsterdam 22 April 1711, no. 1: 'Joseph en Maria, met 't Kind Jesus aen haer Boesem, konstig van Rembrandt' (Joseph and Mary with the infant Jesus at her breast, artfully done by

Rembrandt) (900 guilders) (Hoet I, p. 140). The fact that the painting was sold as no. 1 and fetched a high price is evidence both of the esteem in which it was held and of the large size; to this extent identification with no. A 88 is quite plausible. The widow of Isaak van Thye (1641–1695), Elisabeth Lestevenon, died in Amsterdam in 1710.

— Probably anonymous sale Amsterdam 17 August 1735 (Lugt 451), no. 5: 'Een ongemeen heerlijk Stuk, van Rembrand, Joseph en Maria met het Kindeken Jesus' (An uncommonly fine piece by Rembrand, Joseph and Mary with the infant Jesus) (100 guilders) (Hoet I, p. 442, no. 4). The much lower price this painting fetched compared with the one sold in 1711 does not support the assumption that they are one and the same work; it is however conceivable that the mutilation of the canvas (see under *Support*) had been carried out in the meantime, and affected the price realised.

\*— Bought in 1760 by the Amsterdam dealer Hendrik de Winter for the Elector Palatine Carl Theodor through his court painter Lambert Krahe<sup>11</sup>.

— In 1799 transferred to Munich with the Elector's gallery at Mannheim.

### 9. Summary

In style and execution no. A 88 shows unmistakably the characteristics of Rembrandt's work at the time when, in 1633 and the years following, he was involved with compositions and figures done on a large scale. The range of colour makes 1634 the most likely dating. The composition shows a well-thought-out spatial construction, suggesting influence from a Northern Italian (perhaps Bolognese) prototype that cannot be more closely identified. The canvas was altered in size and shape in the early 18th century, but was later restored to a rectangle; the width was however originally probably greater than it is today.

### REFERENCES

- 1 Bauch 1933, p. 212; idem, 'Rembrandts "Christus am Kreuz"', *Pantheon* 20 (1962), pp. 137–144, esp. 138–140.
- 2 Gerson 63; Br.-Gerson 544.
- 3 Kühn, p. 201.
- 4 Bauch 1966, p. 53.
- 5 Haak 1969, p. 88.
- 6 O. Benesch, *Rembrandt. Werk und Forschung*, Vienna 1935, pp. 6, 8.
- 7 Münz II, p. 93.
- 8 J. L. A. A. M. van Rijckevorsel, *Rembrandt en de traditie*, Rotterdam 1932, pp. 87–91. J. Rosenberg, *Rembrandt* I, Cambridge 1948, p. 121.
- 9 J. Bruyn, 'Rembrandt and the Italian Baroque', *Simiolus* 4 (1970), pp. 28–48, esp. 35–38.
- 10 W. Sumowski, 'Einige frühe Entlehnungen Rembrandts', *O.H.* 71 (1956), pp. 109–113, esp. 110–111.
- 11 W. Wegner, *Kurfürst Carl Theodor von der Pfalz als Kunstsammler*, Mannheim 1960, p. 37; *Alte Pinakothek München, Katalog III. Holländische Malerei des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Munich 1967, pp. 56–57.



**1. Summarized opinion**

A well preserved, autograph oil sketch in grisaille, the design for etching B. 77, reliably signed and dated 1634.

**2. Description of subject**

The scene depicted is the episode from the Passion where the governor Pilate shows Christ to the people who, urged on by the high priests, call for Him to be condemned (John 19: 13–16).

The main characters are on a dais in front of the court building; a few steps are visible at the lower left. The figures in the main group are, broadly, in two groups at different levels. The upper group comprises Christ, and the soldiers to either side of Him; the weapons of the group to the left stand out against the darkness of an arched doorway. Christ is manacled, His upper body is bare and He wears a crown of thorns and the cloak described in the Bible as 'purple'. The lower group consists of Pilate and the high priests, and receives the strongest light falling from the right. Pilate is engaged in violent argument with four of the priests; one of these, to the rear, indicates with the thumb of one hand the figure of Christ standing behind and above him, and with the other hand clutches Pilate's cloak. The high priest to the front kneels on the steps of the dais and offers the judge's rod to Pilate, an action that here represents the urging on him of the death penalty that Pilate – rising from his chair and lifting his hands to ward the rod off – is reluctant to pronounce. A fifth high priest, placed further to the right and a little lower than the others, turns with outstretched hand towards the crowd thronging the court in front of the court building. To the left is Pilate's richly-decorated judge's chair, with a high canopy that stretches out over the dais. Immediately behind Pilate, and behind his chair, a man can be seen sitting with his head resting on his hand.

To the right there is a pillar high above the crowd, topped by the laurel-wreathed head of a Roman emperor. In the far background is a gatehouse, with a clock in the high superstructure. The clockface, with Roman numerals, has the VI at the top and the I at the bottom.

**3. Observations and technical information***Working conditions*

Examined in May 1968 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good light and out of the frame. Four X-ray prints, together covering the whole painting, were received later.

*Support*

DESCRIPTION: Paper, stuck on canvas, 54.5 × 44.5 cm. On the upper and lower right there are small, repaired tears in the paper; at various places, though mainly at mid-height by the side edges, there are black dots that according to MacLaren<sup>1</sup> are foxmarks.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*Ground*

DESCRIPTION: In thinly and sketchily painted parts, such as the canopy and building on the left and the crowd in the background on the right, a yellowish brown shows through; on the basis of scientific examination (see below) it must however be doubted whether this really can be described as a ground.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Cross-sections taken by Mrs Joyce Plesters of

the National Gallery (1975 report) seem to point to an absence of ground; the possibility that the paper was in fact primed with glue (which might then bring about the yellow-brown colour just mentioned) still has to be investigated. See however also under *X-Rays*.

*Paint layer*

CONDITION: This seems to be good, though observation is hampered by old varnish. Craquelure: apparent in a number of impasto areas.

DESCRIPTION: Apart from the structure of the paper, that of the canvas can also be seen in a number of places at the surface. Very thin, dark lines visible especially in the gateway in the background (e.g. in the arch) and in the shadow side of the pillar bearing the emperor's bust might be evidence that there is beneath the paint layer a design drawn with a pen.

In keeping with the varying degree of detailed treatment, the manner of painting shows considerable variation in both treatment and the thickness of the paint. Some passages, as seen especially at the upper left in the shapes of the canopy and curtains around Pilate's chair and of the lower parts of the building directly behind this, are done only roughly and with clearly evident brushwork. The steps of the dais on the lower left and the crowd in the right background are likewise done only sketchily. A slightly fuller treatment is found in the group of soldiers to the right of Christ and – done with touches of thick paint – in the row of heads of onlookers at the bottom right. There is a greater amount of detail in the gateway and the pillar with the emperor's bust, in the soldiers to the left of Christ and, even more, in the main figures where there is considerable impasto and the paint is applied with often gossamer-thin and carefully controlled strokes. The figure of Christ is however painted rather flatly and quite thinly; the structure of the paper is partly visible at this point. The dark brown lines in the main group, separating and accentuating forms, are set down quite thickly. Fine lines can also be seen here that give the impression of being scratchmarks made in the paint with a fine-pointed tool (unlike those in the gateway where they seem to belong to an underlying design showing through the paint layer).

The colours, which must under the varnish be lighter and perhaps somewhat cooler than they appear today, offer a subdued contrast between light and dark areas in a rich variety of brown, ochrelike and yellow-white tints, with a few touches of carmine red in Pilate's chair. The building on the right and the fairly opaque sky above it show greyish tints.

A thin black line is painted along each of the edges of the paper except the right.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: A cross-section taken by Mrs Joyce Plesters of the National Gallery from the upper right at the edge of the paper shows that the paint layer here consists of a layer of white lead with some black pigments, placed directly on the paper; on top of this there is a translucent layer that tends towards black. The medium used appears to be oil (1975 report).

*X-Rays*

The areas done with light paint of greater or lesser thickness show up distinctly, and in general correspond with what one expects from the paint surface. It is noticeable that some passages that are light in the painting, and are evidently painted very thinly, show up dark in the X-ray. This is the case, for instance, in Christ's body and head and in some of the heads in the bottom righthand corner; in both instances the reserves do match the present shape. In general the radiographic image gives no reason to suppose that there were



Fig. 1. Paper stuck on canvas 54.5 × 44.5 cm



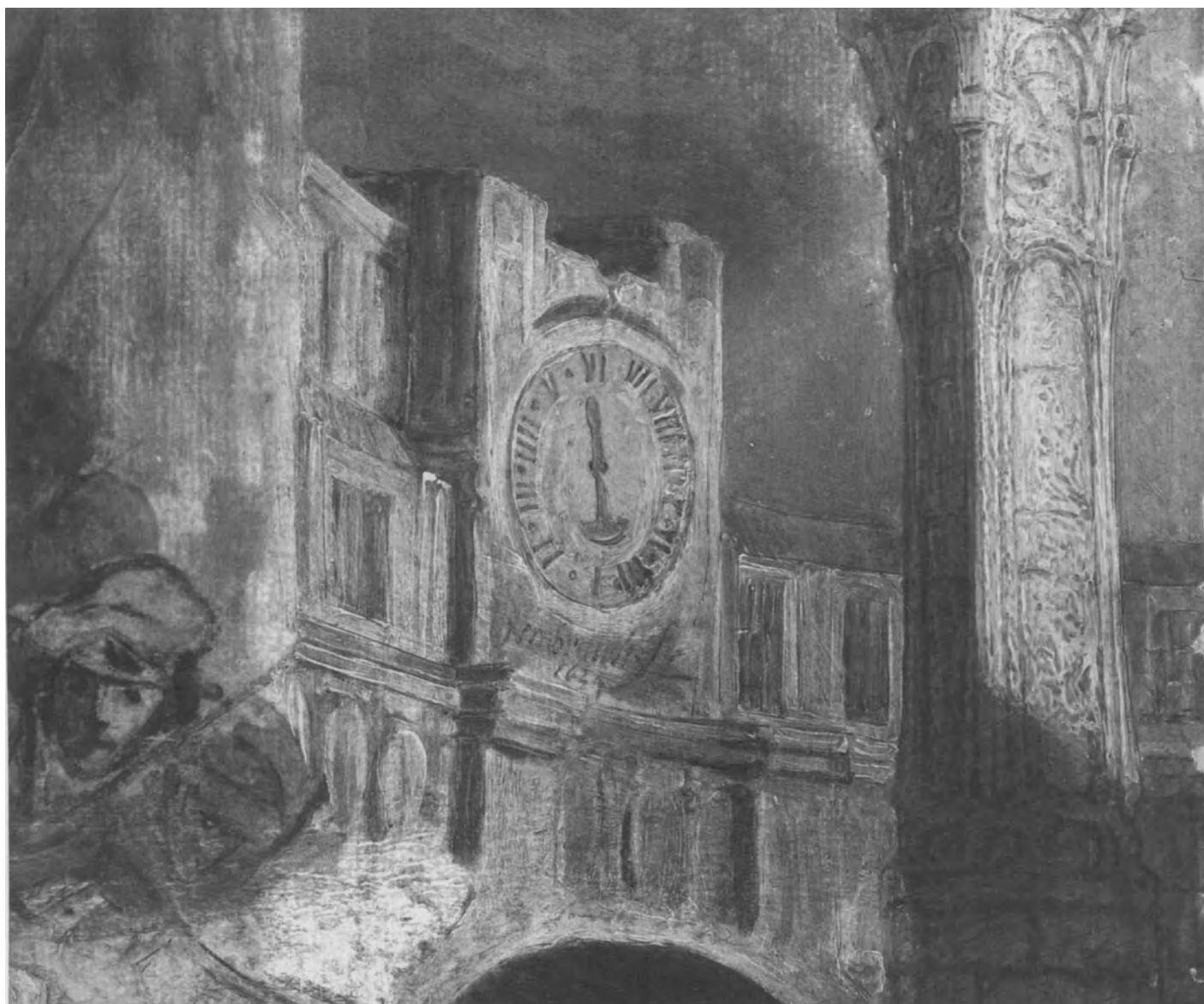
Fig. 2. X-ray



Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 4. Detail with signature, infrared photograph (1:1)



substantial changes in areas already painted. The only thing that is not entirely clear is whether a dark reserve left in the paint of the gatehouse – roughly torus-shaped, and giving the impression of forming part of the base of a classical column – has always been intended for a sketchy indication of the upper body of a man leaning forward.

The structure of the paper can be seen over the entire surface, evidently as the result of a radioabsorbent material having been brushed onto it. That this material is on the front surface (and may thus be looked on as a ground) can be deduced from the fact that numerous long, thin scratchmarks showing up dark in the X-ray coincide with the thin, dark lines that can also be seen at the paint surface (especially in the gatehouse in the background, and in the pillar with the emperor's bust). Similar scratchmarks are however seen elsewhere, for instance on the right close to the lower edge (curving gently from the centre towards the lower right, and possibly the edge of the dais in an earlier design), and by the upper edge (curving vaguely in a mainly vertical direction, conceivably the earlier edge of an architectural feature or curtain in a previous design). One gets the impression that the artist scratched on the ground while this was still soft with a sharp object, perhaps a pen (and probably using ink), in order

to set down a rough lay-in of the composition, or of only the architectural framework. On a number of points he departed from this lay-in (at the bottom and top edges), while elsewhere he kept to it, particularly in the gatehouse and the pillar on the right where black lines can still be glimpsed in the surface. This latter phenomenon must perhaps be explained by the depth at which the lines lie, possibly combined with the paint-repellant properties of the ink used.

#### *Signature*

On the right, below the face of the clock <Rembrandt. f./1634>. The fine and confidently-placed letters make a reliable impression.

#### *Varnish*

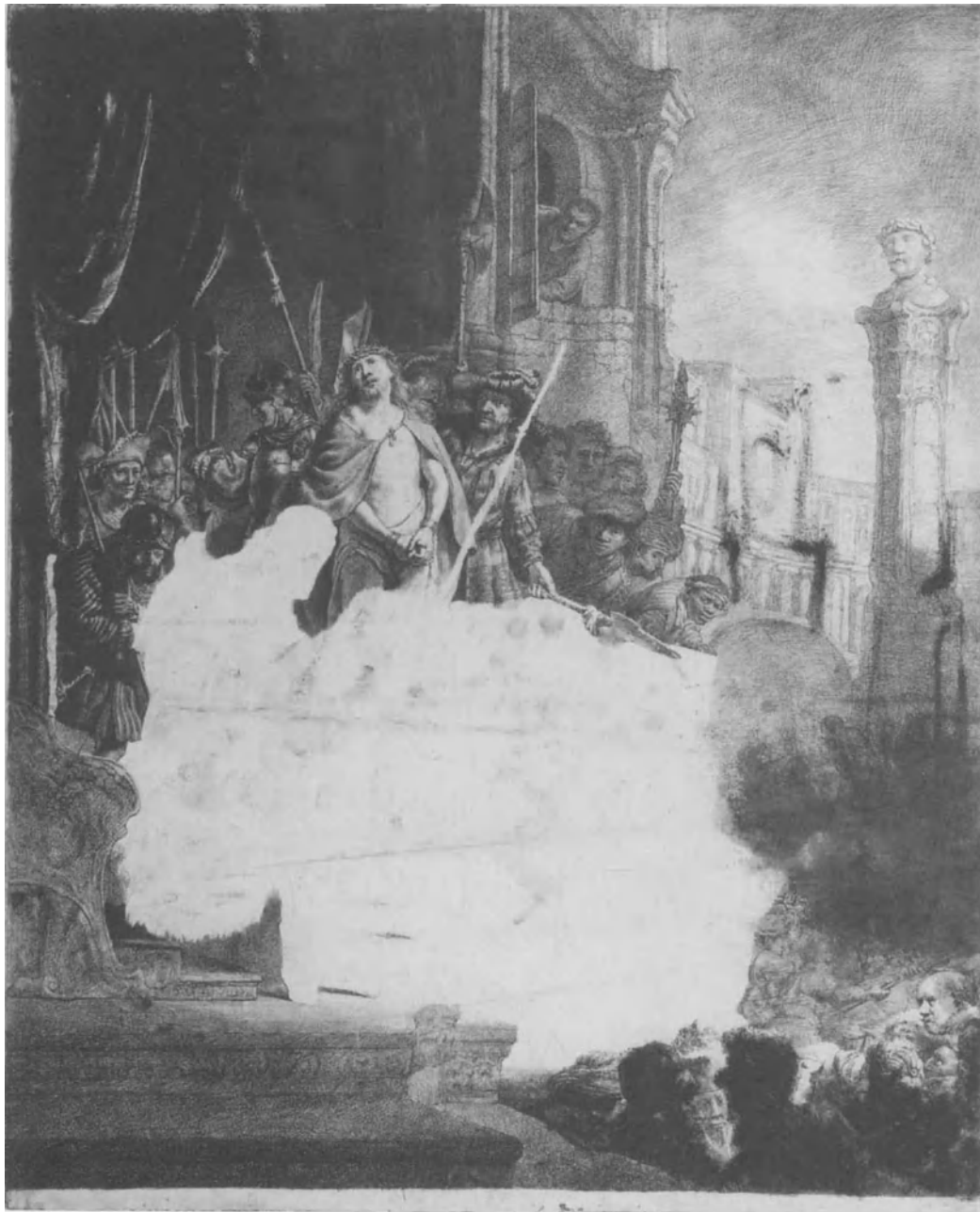
A thick layer of old varnish hampers observation.

#### **4. Comments**

The grisaille, dated 1634, is wholly convincing as to its authenticity, not only because of the direct link with etching B. 77 (the first state dated 1635 and the



Fig. 5. Rembrandt, *Ecce homo*, 1635, etching (B. 77 I, reproduced in reverse). London, The British Museum



second 1636) for which it must have served as a draft, but also because of its own pictorial qualities. This applies both to the rapid but succinct indication of shapes that are merely sketched, such as the soldiers to the right of Christ where the line-work and tonal value are reminiscent of Rembrandt pen-and-wash drawings, and to the effectively detailed treatment of most of the main characters. The process used in providing detail in Pilate and the high priests to the front, with dark accents and lines embedded in and somewhat overlaid by impasto touches of light paint, is typical of Rembrandt's manner of painting. Equally typical is the juxtaposition of a finely and densely worked area, placed slightly off-centre, and rapidly and broadly painted areas. This is quite apparent from, for example, the

dissimilar treatment of the figure of Christ and that of the soldiers immediately to His right and left. While the figure of the soldier on the left is done in considerable detail, the rendering of Christ is more general and in the expression of the head is kept rather vague; the soldier on the right is still in the stage of a provisional, rough indication. Naturally in a sketch like this such contrasts are more abrupt than is usual in Rembrandt's fully-worked paintings. More than in many paintings from this period Rembrandt has achieved here a homogeneous composition and a consistent, curving interplay of curving contours.

The *Ecce homo* presents a virtually unique case in Rembrandt's oeuvre in that we know of both the etching and the sketch in oils done in preparation

Fig. 6. Rembrandt, *Ecce homo*, 1636, etching (B. 77 II, reproduced in reverse). Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet



for it. The etching has practically the same dimensions as the oil sketch, and presents the composition on the same scale in reverse. The figures in the main group are repeated without appreciable changes, while the areas that are not closely detailed in the grisaille are worked up further in the etching. Only the man with his head resting on his hand behind Pilate's back, and the detail of the clockface on the gatehouse, have been left out. In a print of the first state that can be seen as a proof (in the British Museum, fig. 5), where the area comprising the group of Pilate and the high priests is left blank, the canopy and architecture above the main group (which may have been etched wholly or partially in accordance with the design of the grisaille) have been given a different form with the brush; this was

subsequently incorporated in the second and later states of the etching (fig. 6).

It is noticeable that in the oil sketch Rembrandt has the light falling from the right so that the etching has the scene lit from the left – the direction that is usual in his paintings but less so in the etchings, where it normally comes from the right; this state of affairs makes it likely that the fall of light in the grisaille was chosen with the reverse effect in the etching in mind. One cannot so far be certain as to the procedure followed in transferring the composition onto the etching plate; there are no traces on the front surface of the sketch of lines having been pressed through, as there are on some drawings that have been used for transfer to the plate (Ben. 21, 758 and 768).



Fig. 7. After J. Stradanus, *Ecce homo* (engraving by J. Callot, 1613)

The thin, dark lines, most likely done with pen and ink, that have become visible through the paint layer in the architecture to the right and in the pillar with the emperor's bust present an unusual feature. So far as we know Rembrandt always set down his paintings with a brush, even in, for example, the case of the grisaille of *Joseph telling his dreams*, also on paper, in Amsterdam (no. A 66). There are however insufficient grounds for assuming that the entire composition was first drawn in pen and ink – there are no pen-lines to be seen in the thin and partly translucent areas such as the canopy.

Though Haverkamp-Begemann<sup>2</sup> seems to favour a somewhat different view, one may take it that the oil sketch served to fix the total conception for the

etching. It is probably no coincidence that one is dealing here with one of the two most ambitious etchings done by Rembrandt. The other (done in two versions), which is of like size and executed equally thoroughly in a painterly manner, the *Descent from the Cross* of 1633 (B. 81), reproduced a fully-fledged painting (no. A 65). It seems possible that commercial success with this first large and detailed print of a religious subject prompted Rembrandt to publish a second, even more full of animated and exotic figures, and that he produced the grisaille with a view to employing an assistant, who seems to have been involved in the production of the etching (see Münz II, p. 170).

In the dynamic of its composition the *Ecce homo*

offers points of similarity with other works by Rembrandt from the same period, such as the etching of *Joseph's coat brought to Jacob* of c. 1633 (B. 38). The much more modest design, with only four figures, does not detract from the resemblance between the two in the varied placing of the figures with the aid of the steps of a staircase, and a chair in the foreground. One also finds actions repeated in a matching position, such as the emotional raising of the arms of Jacob and the pointing into the distance by one of his sons, and the gestures of Pilate and of the high priest standing lowest on the steps. Earlier work exhibits other points of resemblance with the composition of the *Ecce homo*; a feature that recurs in the décor, consisting of the combination of an architectural element that fills the picture up to the top edge with a drooping line that leads into the distance (the skyline of the gatehouse in the *Ecce homo* and, in a looser form, the treeline in the etching just mentioned) can already be seen in the 1631 *Simeon in the Temple* in The Hague (no. A 34), where the sloping line of the spring of the vault suggests space in the same way. In both the 1631 painting and the *Ecce homo* an arch shape is incorporated in a tall structural element, and in turn half covered over by a canopy.

Apart from the resemblances within Rembrandt's oeuvre, there is, with a standard subject such as the *Ecce homo*, good reason to look for links with iconographic tradition. So far, attention has been focussed on one detail. Van Rijckevorsel<sup>3</sup> and Clark<sup>4</sup> have (we believe wrongly) seen in the figure of Christ a borrowing from Guido Reni; so far as is known, however, this admittedly frequently imitated type was introduced only later with the *Christ crucified* (now in Modena at the Galleria Estense), which according to Malvasia was not commissioned until 1639 (C. Garboli and E. Baccheschi, *L'Opera completa di Guido Reni*, Milan 1971, no. 193). Traditional elements in Rembrandt's picture are the gatehouse in the background (cf., for example, *Ecce homo* scenes in the Passion series by Schongauer and in Dürer's 'Small Passion') and the caricature-like appearance of the high priests and some of the onlookers, which he was to abandon in his much later *Ecce homo* etching (B. 76). The prominent emperor's bust atop the pillar is a symbol of worldly power that, though sometimes in a different form, also occurs in earlier representations of the subject. In particular, however, it is the composition that is dictated by a traditional type. The idea of depicting Christ, seen as the Man of Sorrows, more or less in close-up with Pilate on an asymmetrically-placed podium, and of showing the throng by using figures cut off by the bottom edge of the composition, arose in the last quarter of the 15th century; it can be found first in

the Ghent-Bruges school of book illustration (see S. Ringbom, *Icon to narrative. The rise of the dramatic close-up in fifteenth-century devotional painting*, Abo 1965, esp. pp. 193 ff, cf. figs. 180 and 193). The compositional type occurs in the beginning of the 16th century in both Northern Netherlandish (cf. a drawing by the Haarlem Master of Absalom in Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, no. 5415) and Southern Netherlandish painting (cf. a painting by Quinten Massys in the Prado, Madrid, cat. no. 2801), and then in a great many variations during the 16th century. A late representative of this, such as Rembrandt may have used as his starting point, might be an engraving by Jacques Callot after Stradanus (fig. 7).

Whatever similarities Rembrandt's design may show with this type, one is struck by the fact that he has not only greatly enlivened the formal rhythm, but has also added a wholly new element of dramatic significance. In his composition the animated group of high priests forms a link between the crowd lower down and the figures on the dais, and at the same time introduces a new action that is essential for the significance of the instant portrayed – the thrusting-forward of the judge's rod (which still in the 17th century was held in the right hand by a sheriff pronouncing the death sentence) towards Pilate, whose warding-off gesture – reminiscent of that of the seated priest of the *Judas repentant* of 1629 (no. A 15) is also quite unusual in the iconographic tradition. It is evident, from this gesture in particular, that the rod of justice has not been torn from Pilate's hand – as has been thought (C. and A. Tümpel, *Rembrandt legt die Bibel aus*, Berlin 1970, no. 96) – but is being forced upon him by the high priests, who urge him to sentence Christ to death.

A detail that tends to be overlooked in the densely occupied centre of the composition is the Hebrew lettering that decorates the edge of the headdress of the high priest to the front. The centre part of the inscription offers in the oil sketch (though not in the etching, where the letters appear in reverse) the name of God 'יהוה' = (read left to right) JHWH, or 'Lord', followed upwards by 'אלהים' = (similarly l. to r.) AL or EL, possibly the start of the word Elohim, or 'God' (information kindly supplied by F. J. Hoogewoud, of the Bibliotheca Rosenthaliana of the University Library, Amsterdam). In the etching letters are also placed on the cloth band round the hat of the high priest furthest to the left, though attempts to decipher these have so far failed. A curious feature is the way the hours are indicated on the face of the clock over the archway, where the VI is placed at the top. One explanation for this might be that Rembrandt was trying to combine the fact given in John 19: 14 – 'And it was the prep-

aration of the passover, and about the sixth hour;' – with the western way of indicating the time, where that hour corresponds to 12 noon. In the etching the clockface was given no detail.

### 5. Documents and sources

– 'Een excehomo in 't graeuw, van Rembrant', described in the inventory of Rembrandt's possessions drawn up on 25 and 26 July 1656 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12, no. 121), may safely be identified with no. A 89.

### 6. Graphic reproductions

None, apart from Rembrandt's own etching B. 77.

### 7. Copies

None.

### 8. Provenance

– Still in Rembrandt's possession in July 1656 (see 5. *Documents and sources*).

\*– Coll. Jan van de Cappelle (1624/5 – 1679), described in the inventory of his estate, Amsterdam 4 January – 13 August 1680, no. 13: 'Een Ecce homo, grau, van Rembrant van Rijn' (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 10, 1892, p. 32).

\*– Coll. Valerius Röver (1686–1739) of Delft, mentioned in: *Korte Specificatie van het Cabineth Tekeningen van wijlen de Heer Valerius Röver, alle op Cartons gezet en gelegd in 42. Portefeuilles . . .*; Portefeuille no. 8 in folio, among the Rembrandt drawings: 'de Capitaalste die van Rembrand is bekend, zijnde de groote *Ecce Homo* met olieverf op papier in 't graauw' (the most capital known from Rembrand, the large *Ecce homo* in oils on paper, in grisaille) (Amsterdam University Library, ms. IIA 17-3).

– Coll. J. Goll van Franckenstein, Amsterdam; sold in 1827 to A. Brondgeest, dealer, of Amsterdam.

– Dealer Th. Emerson, London.

– Coll. Jeremiah Harman by 1836, sale London (Christie's) 17–18 May 1844 (second day), no. 92 (112 guineas to J. Smith, sold to G. Blamire).

– Coll. George Blamire, sale London (Christie's) 7–9 November 1863 (first day), no. 57 (16 guineas to Mulvaney).

– Coll. Sir Charles L. Eastlake. Bought from the executors of Lady Eastlake for a nominal sum (in accordance with the terms of Sir Charles' will) in 1894.

### 9. Summary

This grisaille, dated 1634, is wholly convincing as to its authenticity, in its treatment both of the more detailed passages and of the sketchily painted areas. It is the only example known where we have a large etching as well as a like-sized oil sketch on paper done in preparation for it. The etching (B. 77) is dated, in its first and second states, 1635 and 1636 respectively. Apart from clear similarities in the composition with other works by Rembrandt from the early 1630s, the design has links with a composition type that had been used for *Ecce homo* scenes since about 1500. Rembrandt's own contribution to this traditional type is mainly in the dramatic centre

of the composition, where Pilate rejects the judge's rod being thrust at him by the high priest, thus showing his reluctance to pronounce the death sentence on Jesus.

### REFERENCES

- 1 N. MacLaren, *The Dutch School* (National Gallery Catalogues), London 1960, pp. 326–328.
- 2 E. Haverkamp-Begemann, 'Purpose and style in oil sketches of Rubens, Jan Brueghel, Rembrandt', in: *Stil und Überlieferung in der Kunst des Abendlandes III*, Berlin 1967, pp. 104–113.
- 3 J. L. A. A. M. van Rijckevorsel, *Rembrandt en de traditie*, Rotterdam 1932, pp. 106–107.
- 4 K. Clark, *Rembrandt and the Italian Renaissance*, London 1966, p. 28.

HDG 148; BR. 552; BAUCH 60; GERSON 67

### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved, authentic and characteristic work, reliably signed and dated 1634.

### 2. Description of subject

The scene is based on John 20:26–29, where the second appearance of Christ to the disciples – this time in Thomas's presence – is described. The moment depicted is that where Christ shows Thomas the wound in His side and says: 'Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing'.

In extremely vaguely suggested, dark surroundings Christ stands at the top of the two steps. With His left hand He lifts up His white, draped robe, and with the other points to the wound in His side. He faces slightly to the right, where Thomas is standing with one foot on the first step and both hands raised, shrinking back from what he sees. An aura of light radiates from the Risen Christ; light also falls from the top left only dimly illuminating the figures to either side of the main group. In the right foreground, below the steps, a young man clad in a red cloak and with bare feet, evidently John, kneels with the upper part of his body lying on a piece of furniture, asleep. Behind him there are two disciples, one peering round Thomas at Christ and the other, with hands clasped together, looking down. To the left beside Christ there are four figures whose heads, seen one above the other, are thrust forward: a bald-headed old man (Peter), and a woman wearing a large, grey hood which she holds aside with one hand (Mary), a disciple with a short beard and straight hair, and a young, richly-clad woman (presumably Mary Magdalene). In front of these figures a man, seen from behind, kneels on the ground before the steps with his hand outstretched. To the far left is a group of figures around a barely visible table on which a book lies open: a figure in the foreground rises from his folding chair and leans slightly towards the central group while another, behind the table, bends over the book and turns his head. The two other men are seen in right profile.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 4 September 1969 (J. B., S. H. L.) under strong artificial light and out of the frame, with the aid of one partial X-ray print covering the central part of the painting with the figure of Christ, over almost the full width.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 53.1 × 50.5 cm. Planed down to a thickness of c. 0.5 cm, and cradled. Single plank.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish brown is exposed at various places – in the aura above Christ's head, in the upper left background, in areas of shadow on the right and left, and in unpainted patches along the upper edge and an unpainted strip of varying width along the bottom edge.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Very good. The retouches in the background

mentioned in the literature<sup>1</sup> can be no more than insignificant. Craquelure: fine, long and mainly horizontal cracks are seen in the more thickly painted areas, especially the figures of Christ, Thomas and John.

DESCRIPTION: In general the paint layer is thin and without much colour, with the forms shown in mostly dark browns and greys. The central group and, to a lesser extent, the figures close to it including that of John sleeping on the right, are painted more thickly and with more colour.

In the dark background on the right there is a vague hint of architecture or curtains in dark greys, and to the left similar indications in thin translucent greys. The aura of light around Christ's head is painted in a rather lighter grey and grey-brown that does not entirely cover.

The figure of Christ has, in the light flesh areas, a yellowish flesh tint applied quite thinly, and rather thicker on the forehead and neck; the shadow areas are a mostly thin grey, and a translucent brown along the underside of the arm on the left. The face is modelled and drawn subtly, with a measure of colour. The draped robe is in an off-white with white for the highlights, and painted with scant detail. Beneath the grey of the shadowed arm and armpit to the right can be glimpsed some white that is unconnected with the present-day form (see *X-Rays*).

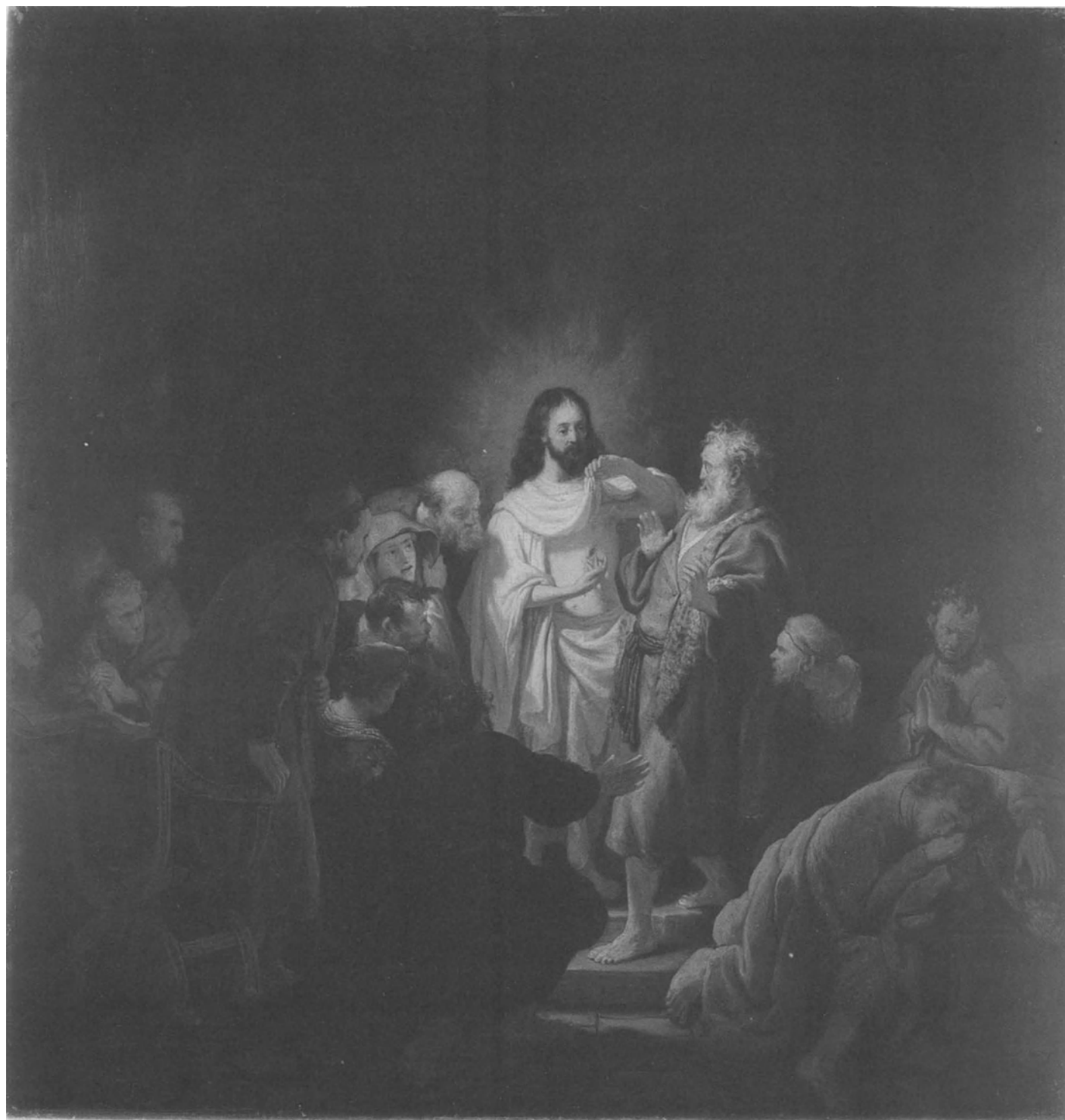
Thomas is in general painted with thicker and more animated brushstrokes, using more colour. The head has a darker flesh tint, and is given detail in accents of brown and light paint. His tunic and tabard are modelled strongly in the same colour, with a grey mixed with varying amounts of white. The green-blue sash, with a few strokes of pink, is modelled in grey.

The disciple looking round Thomas is painted in a thinner and more draughtsmanlike manner, with lines of brown and with a thin reddish brown plus a few highlights in the face. Similar, and almost in monochrome, the disciple with folded hands is depicted in translucent browns with a little grey, and with some dull red in the clothing. The figure of John is treated in like fashion in the half-shadows, though in the light the ochre-yellow of his tunic and the opaque and smooth, strong red of his cloak have more body. The carmine red in the deepest fold of his cloak, which together with broad strokes of black recurs on the extreme right of the cloak, is likewise thick and opaque.

The bald head (that of Peter) alongside Christ's shoulder is painted less thickly and less light than that of Thomas, but with a similar warm facial colour; on the dome of the head a little yellow shows a glint of light, while along the righthand contour a light flesh colour indicates the reflexion of light from Christ's shoulder. The disciple lower down, bending forward, is dealt with in similar fashion, with a thick green-blue in his clothing. Between these two the face of Mary, overshadowed by the grey hood, is painted thinly in a dark flesh colour with a little pink, with detail drawn in dark brown, and some white in the eyes. Some colour – mainly dark shades of red – marks the sheen of light on the cap and clothing of the woman (Mary Magdalene) seen in lost profile further down, as well as on the sleeve of the disciple rising from his chair. The remaining figures, and the chair (strengthened with lines of black), are predominantly in grey and dark grey with a little brown; the man kneeling in the foreground is dark, with black showing the folds in his clothing, while the three figures to the far left are painted thinly and sketchily. Of the latter, the beardless disciple looking up from his book has a curving stroke of brown, running through both eyes and across the nose, that can be seen as part of the underpainting that remained visible when it was worked up.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

Fig. 1. Panel 53.1 × 50.5 cm

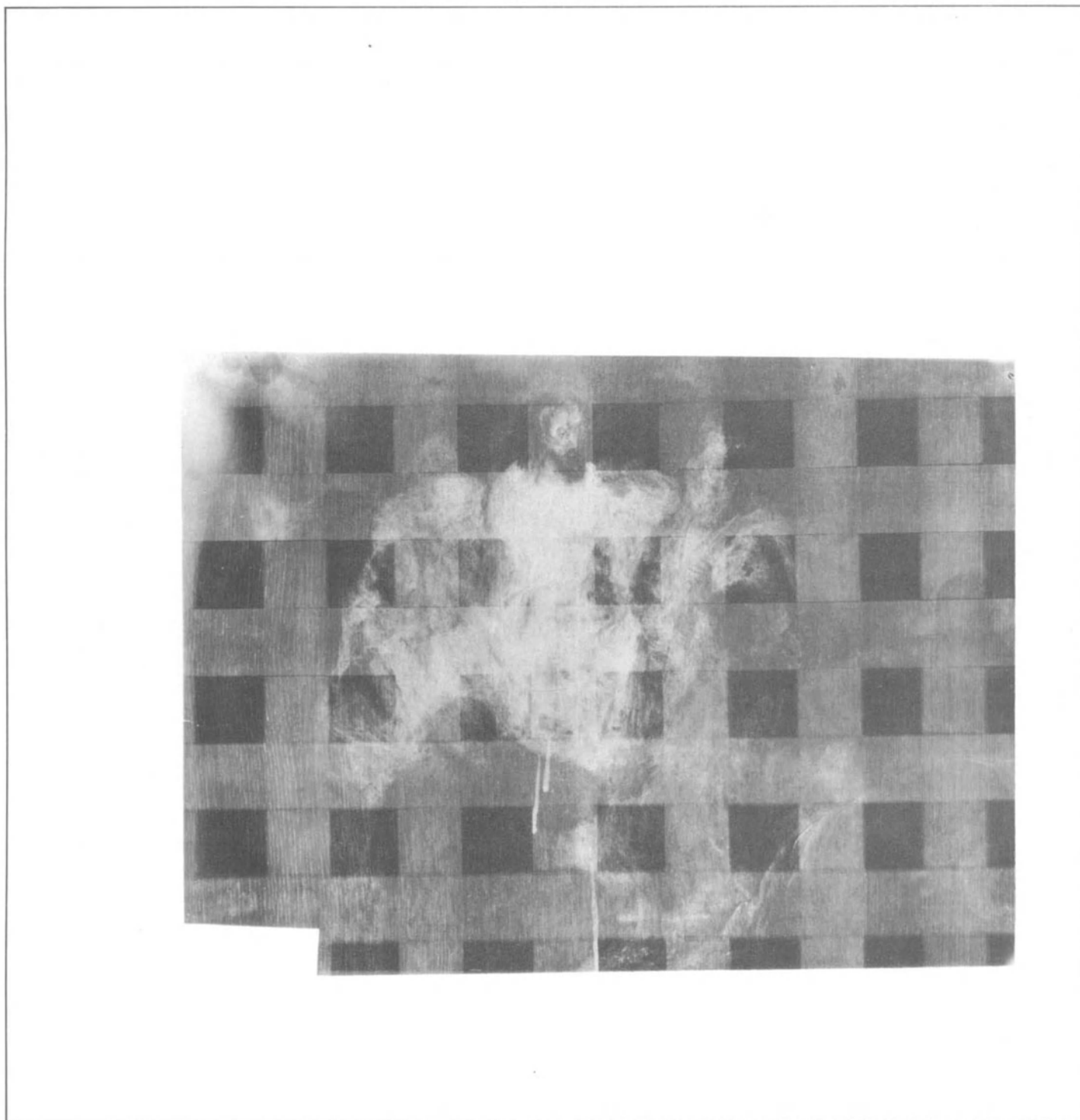


### *X-Rays*

In the X-ray print available most of the lighter areas are readily visible, though there are found to be not insignificant departures from the picture seen today. The head of Mary does not seem to have undergone any change. Below it there is a light area of what appears to be the lively brushwork of an underpainting that continues downwards to the right and in which no reserve was left for the heads of the mainly darker figures now occupying that area (the disciple with the straight hair and the woman with the red cap). The shadow cast by Peter's head on Christ's garment seems to have had a reserve

throughout. The figure of Christ itself has been drastically altered in a way that is not entirely clear. The contour of the shoulder on the left ran a good deal higher at an earlier stage; in view of the vague traces of the arm on the left, the shadow of which does not match a reserve, this arm was probably not always in front of Christ's body. Where the arm is seen largely in shadow on the right, and below this, there is in the X-ray an irregularly-shaped area of white that coincides with the underlying layer of white observed at the surface. The alterations that were made here are certainly connected with those made to the figure of Thomas. An earlier version of his head

Fig. 2. X-ray



is clearly visible, somewhat lower down and more to the left (it can to some extent be seen in relief in the paint surface). While Thomas's left hand shows up distinctly, partly light and partly as a dark reserve, this is not so for his right hand – on the contrary, an almost horizontal dark reserve penetrating into Christ's chest would suggest that Thomas's right arm was originally designed as stretching towards His wound. This is probably connected with the alterations made to Christ's left shoulder and arm. Finally, light shapes can be seen in the area, now dark, to the left of the sleeping John.

#### *Signature*

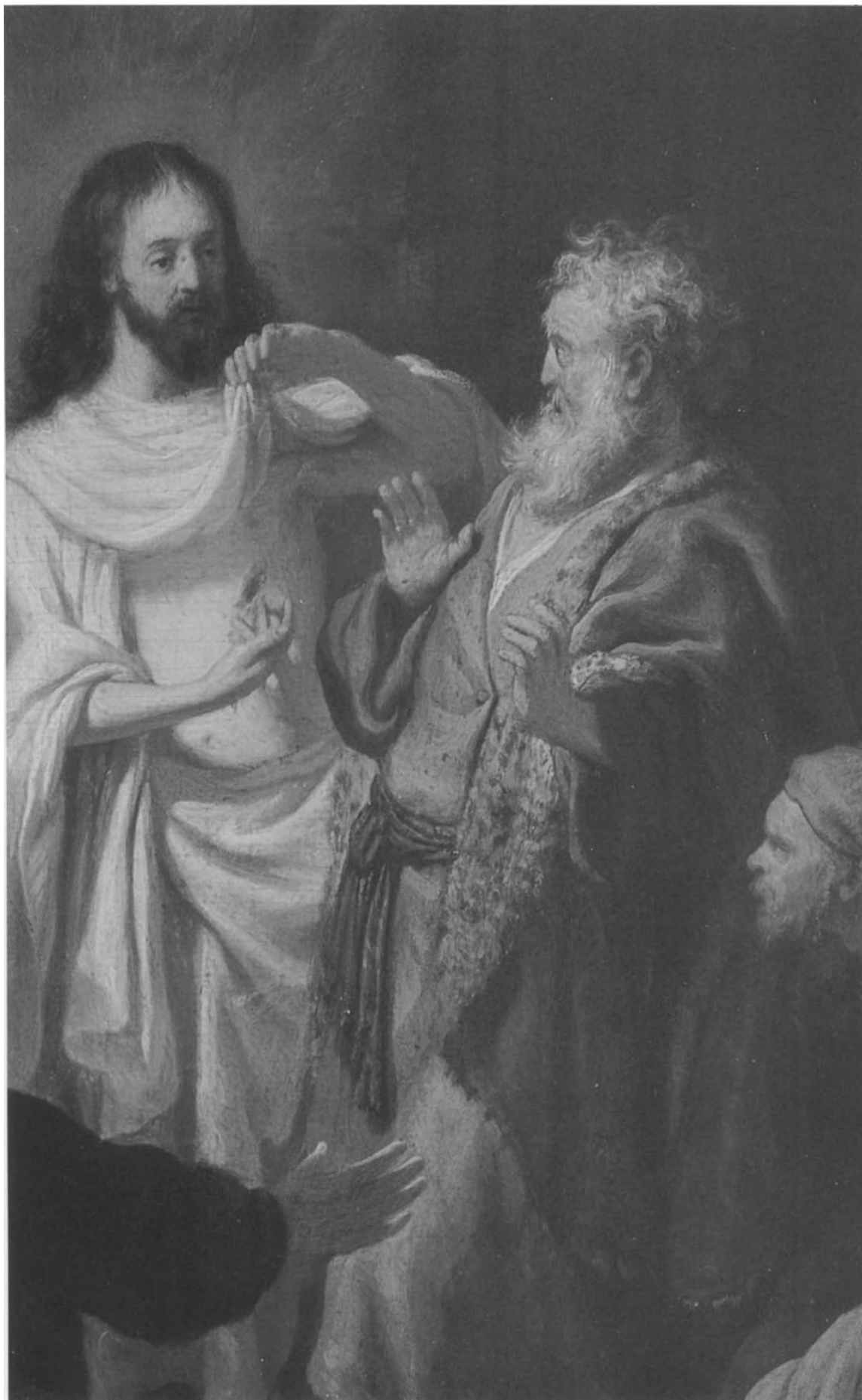
At the lower left in black, broadly brushed and in letters that get slightly larger towards the right (*Rembrandt. f. 1634*). Makes a wholly authentic impression, in view not only of the handwriting but of the similarity in line and material to some black accents found in the area to the lower right. In an infrared photograph published elsewhere<sup>1</sup> the inscription is very clearly visible.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.



Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



#### 4. Comments

The homogeneous design and very varied treatment, combined with a signature and date that can be regarded as authentic, make no. A 90 not only beyond doubt a work by Rembrandt, but also important evidence of his approach to history painting in 1634.

Similarities with his work from the early 1630s, and even earlier, are many. In particular the handling of light, with its focus on the main figure placed at the centre and the intensity of light and detail falling off towards the sides, is strongly reminiscent of the Munich *Descent from the Cross* and *Raising of the Cross* (nos. A 65 and A 69). There is also a similarity with these works in the use of colour, limited to cool colours in the centre with some contrasting warm colour only towards the periphery. Yet it is precisely this comparison that shows up distinctly the differences in brushwork: the areas outside the lit centre show a treatment in which the colour has only a supporting function and where an almost draughtsmanlike treatment is wholly responsible for defining shape; the underpainting makes a contribution at some places, most clearly in the disciple on the left looking up from his book. In some other passages in the full light however – in particular in Thomas's head – the use of paint can also be described as graphic, thanks to the liveliness and directness of the brushstrokes. As a composition, the group around the table on the left brings to mind the corresponding area in the *Judas repentant* completed in 1629 (no. A 15), particularly as that painting was originally conceived – i.e. with a standing, dark repoussoir figure; yet it is characteristic that here this area is kept entirely in the half-shadow. Nor is it coincidental that Mary, in her light grey hood, is here seen behind a dark repoussoir figure in just the same way as in the (original state of the) Hamburg *Simeon in the Temple* (no. A 12) and in the earlier state of the Munich *Descent from the Cross*. And finally, the commonplace types used for the disciples are very reminiscent of those in the *Christ in the storm* of 1633 in the Gardner Museum (no. A 68), though the contrast between these figures and the serene figure of Christ is here achieved more convincingly. In this respect, and in the handling of light, there is a great similarity with the elaborate drawing of 1634 in Teyler's Museum, Haarlem (Ben. 89) which according to the plausible supposition of Weisbach<sup>2</sup> depicts the first appearance of Christ to the disciples, related in John 20:19–24. Both the variety of the types and the differences in reaction to the main event apparent in the postures and facial expressions are characteristic of the painting, and provide an impression of what Rembrandt meant

by the phrase 'the greatest and most natural emotion and animation' he used in a letter to Constantijn Huygens on 12 January 1639 (H. Gerson, *Seven letters by Rembrandt*, The Hague 1961, p. 34; Strauss *Doc.*, 1639/2).

Benesch<sup>3</sup> placed great stress on the caravaggesque character of no. A 90 and of the drawing in Haarlem. Although a link with the work of Caravaggio and his followers is in general quite convincing, it must be added that Rembrandt's interpretation of form and composition does, even in these works conceived as nocturnal scenes, differ considerably from that of comparable caravaggesque works. The independence of the brushwork, often used as a graphic medium, takes away from forms modelled in the light the static character that is an essential feature of form in Caravaggio. This pictorial enlivening is of course helped by the scale of the figures, which is still roughly that used in many of the Leiden works and in the Munich Passion series and which by itself provides a quite different point of departure from the almost lifesize scale used by the Caravaggio school, one which Rembrandt did in fact also employ in history paintings from the same years. What may have provided the closest analogy to the Moscow painting seems to have been a probably lost work that is reflected in at least two paintings (one formerly with art dealer P. de Boer, Br. 542, the other in the Staatliches Museum Schwerin) and a drawing attributable to Ferdinand Bol in Paris (Cabinet des Dessins, inv. no. 23.011; see Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 124), which we reproduce here (fig. 6). For all three versions the names of Rembrandt, Lievens and Salomon Koninck were variously mentioned and a date of c. 1630 suggested. Yet there can be little doubt that the original closely resembled the *Incredulity of Thomas* in style and execution, and that it was done by Rembrandt in about the same year 1634.

Iconographically no. A 90 presents a number of features that are in part difficult to explain. Of the three different types of representation one may distinguish (see E. Kirschbaum et al., *Lexikon der christlichen Ikonographie* IV, Rome–Freiburg–Basle–Vienna 1972, col. 301–303 under 'Thomaszweifel'), the earlier two show Christ raising one arm and pointing to His wounds, while a later type has Christ placing Thomas's hand in the wound in His side. It is obvious that Rembrandt's painting in its completed state matches one of the older types. Because of the X-ray image it must be doubted that this was the original intention. To all appearances Thomas's hand was originally placed in the wound in Christ's side, and it is quite possible – and on iconographical logic almost necessary – that Christ

Fig. 4. Detail (1:1)

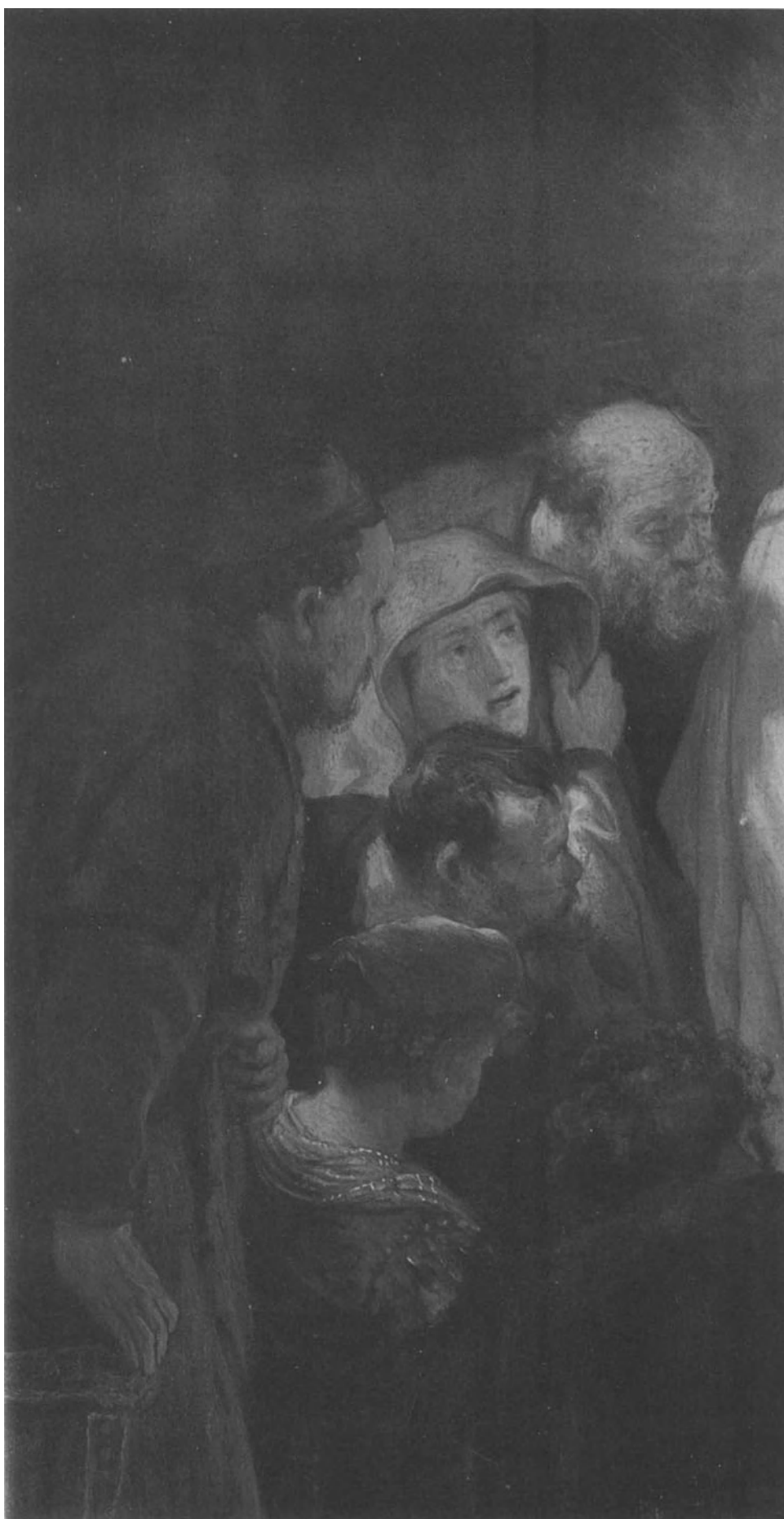


Fig. 5. Detail (1:1)

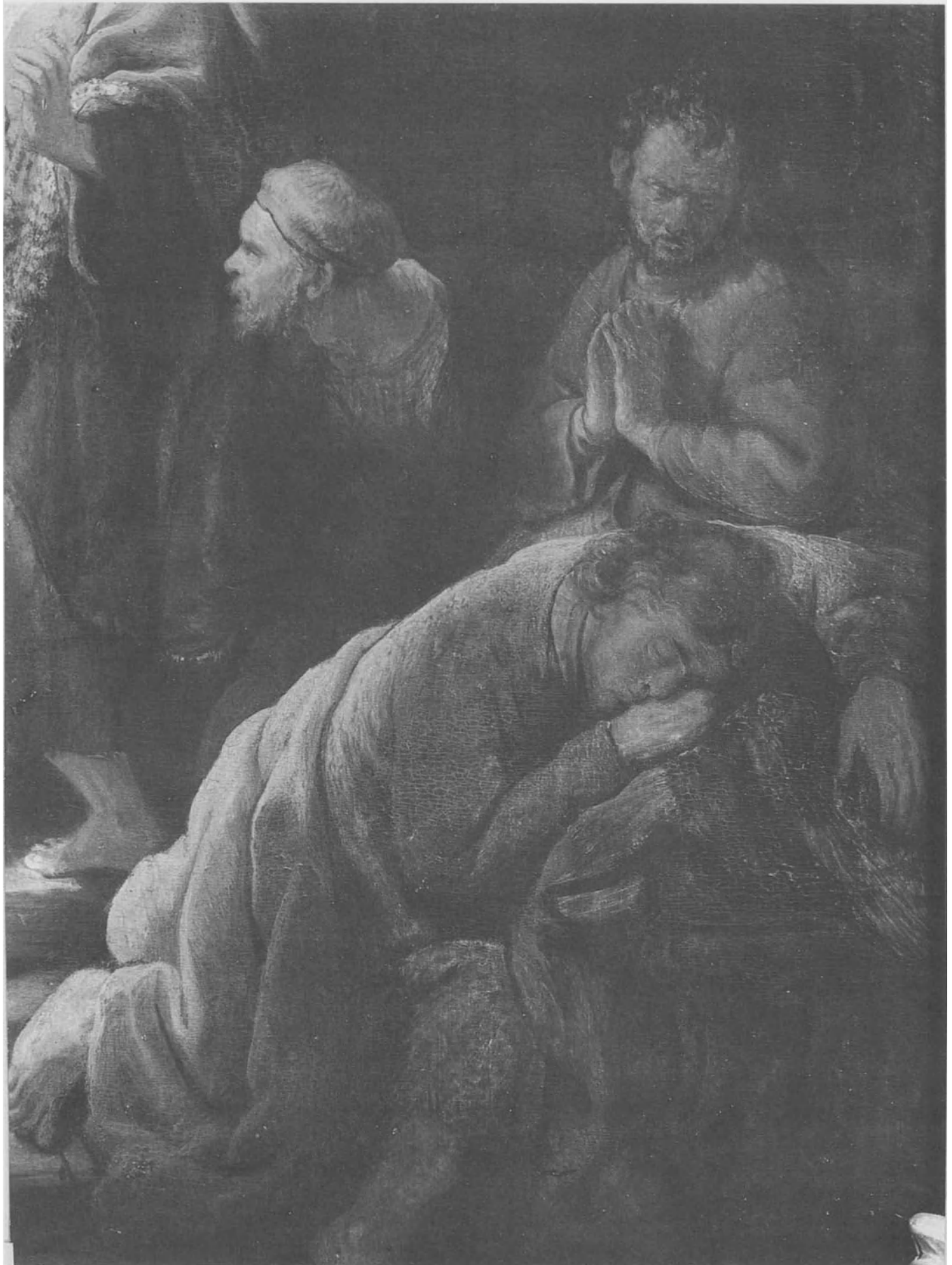


Fig. 6. Attr. to F. Bol, *Zachariah in the Temple*, black and red chalk washed in grey and heightened with white, 34.8 × 37 cm. Paris, Cabinet des Dessins



was holding Thomas's arm with His left hand. Rembrandt would thus initially have adopted the latest type, which had received a fresh impetus from Caravaggio's Potsdam painting now lost, and from imitations of this (cf. inter alia W. Friedlander, *Caravaggio studies*, Princeton 1955, no. 17; N. Ivanoff in: *Emporium* 134, 1961, pp. 147–151) produced among others by Terbrugghen (B. Nicolson, *Hendrick Terbrugghen*, The Hague 1958, no. A 2). It is unclear what prompted Rembrandt to abandon this approach, and what led him to the idea of the somewhat studied gesture with which Christ lifts His robe. Both Christ's arms were given their present position and function only on second thoughts – so much is certain. It must be commented that the wounds in Christ's hands and feet are not shown, as they are in older iconographic prototypes that moreover show the wound in Christ's left side and not, as here, the right (cf. V. Gurevich in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 20, 1957, pp. 358–362, and *ibid.* 26, 1963, p. 358).

Thomas's drawing back in alarm, further accentuated by Rembrandt's shifting of his head to the right, differs from the solemn reaction usually seen in other representations of this theme. It sets the key for the startled wonderment shown by most of the disciples. This excitement, which was not appreciated by authors like Weisbach<sup>2</sup>, is as we have hinted above to be regarded as characteristic of Rembrandt's ambitions as a history painter in his early days. A further unusual feature is the presence of two women, one of whom can certainly be recognized as Mary while the other is perhaps – because of her finery – Mary Magdalene. The latter's dress

is based vaguely on 16th-century models, as is that of some of the disciples, while others are wrapped in timeless draped garments. There can be no doubt that the men depicted, numbering eleven, do indeed correspond to the disciples of Christ in the biblical account.

A final problem is presented by the sleeping figure on the right in the foreground. That he is not in general 'a symbol of ignorance and mental blindness'<sup>1</sup>, but S. John the Evangelist, is already apparent from the comment just made, and from his youthful appearance and his clothing (a red cloak, and bare feet). Although it is quite possible that the fact of a disciple sleeping has a less favourable significance, it must probably be explained primarily as having an iconographic function. In the Last Supper John is portrayed leaning on Christ's chest and almost invariably asleep, and likewise when Christ is praying in the Garden of Gethsemane. Rembrandt's figure even shows a striking likeness to a drawing by Villard de Honnecourt based on a Byzantine Gethsemane scene (H. R. Hahnloser, *Villard de Honnecourt*, Graz 1972 2nd edn, pp. 79–81, pl. 33). Probably the sleeping figure of John comes from a similar context, and the motif has to be seen primarily as a means of visually identifying the disciple; it recurs (in a different pose) in the Haarlem drawing (Ben. 89), but is otherwise, so far as we know, quite uncommon in representations of this subject.

Rembrandt's later works that are regarded as depicting the *Incredulity of Thomas* – a number of drawings and etching B. 89 – perhaps more probably show the first rather than the second appearance of Christ, since they do not beyond any doubt show Thomas. These pictures do share with no. A 90 the motif of a group of disciples seated round a table, and the aura of light radiating from Christ and indicating the Risen Christ recognized as such (cf. H. -M. Rotermond in: *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 15, 1952, pp. 101–121, esp. 102–104).

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Mezzotint by Robert Laurie (1754/55 – 1836, from 1794 active only as a publisher in London): *Rembrandt pinx't – R. Laurie fec./London. Printed for R. Sayer & J. Bennett, Map & Printsellers N.º 53 Fleet Street, as the Act directs 20 Novem.º 1774* (Charrington no. 98). Reproduces the picture in a horizontal format, leaving out the upper part of the background and with minor additions at the two sides. On the right a niche in the wall is clearly shown, with a wooden wainscoting beside it. The figures are very faithfully reproduced, with slightly altered expressions. Nothing is known of Laurie having stayed in



Fig. 7. Copy 1



Berlin or S. Petersburg, where the picture was from 1764 onwards.

### 7. Copies

1. Panel 54.2 × 51.2 cm, formerly Chicago, coll. Florian B. Bajonski (fig. 7). A rather free copy with less detail in the central group; Christ's right arm and that of Thomas throw shadows on their bodies, Peter wears a headcloth and Mary (no longer recognizable as such) does not, while the head of an apostle below her is omitted; Mary Magdalene is bareheaded. Curtains can be distinctly seen in the right and left background. As is evident from a publication devoted specially to this painting<sup>1</sup> there can be no doubt that the copy is almost contemporaneous with the original. Dendrochronology examination has resulted in a felling date of around 1631 for the centre of the three planks making up the panel. Microscope examination of the pigments used has shown that these match 17th-century usage, the presence of smalt making a dating after 1700 unlikely.

2. Drawing, red chalk, Hamburger Kunsthalle, inv. no. 22.125. Shows the figures in a horizontal format; inscription at lower right in brown ink: *Livens*. Perhaps done for the print mentioned above under 6. *Graphic reproductions*.

### 8. Provenance

\*— Coll. Maria Rutgers, widow of the Mennonite merchant Ameldonck Leeuw; on the distribution of her estate on 7 February 1653, decided by lot, it passed to her son David Leeuw (1631/32 – 1703): 'een stuck van Rembrant sijnde Thomas bij Cristus' (P. van Eegen in: *O.H.* 68, 1953, pp. 170–174). It is not impossible that Ameldonck Leeuw bought the work direct from the artist, though there is no documentary evidence. Since in 1759 the painting was owned by a grand-daughter of David Leeuw (see following owner), it must be assumed that it stayed in the family and is not, as Hofstede de Groot (HdG 148) thought, identical with a work in the coll. Philips van Dyk sale, The Hague 13 June 1753 (Lugt 813), no. 73: 'Daar Christus aan Thomas zijn wonde vertoont in presentie van de Apostelen, zeer uytvoerig en

kragtig geschildert, door den zelve[n] [Rembrandt] hoog 1 voet 8 duym, breed 1 voet 7 duym [= 52.3 × 49.7 cm]' (Where Christ shows His wound to Thomas in the presence of the apostles, very elaborately and vigorously painted, by the same [Rembrandt] . . . ) (100 guilders to Visscher) (Hoet-Terw. p. 68 no. 49); the relatively low price this piece brought would seem to indicate that it was a copy, possibly that mentioned under 7. *Copies*, 1.

— Coll. widow P. Roeters, née Anna van Lennep, sale Amsterdam 30ff January 1759 (Lugt 1029), no. 1: 'Een Excellent schoon konstig Stuk van Rembrandt, verbeeldende Christus onder de Apostelen, daar Thomas met verwondering is aangedaan, het beste van Rembrandt ooyt bekend, hoog 1 voet en 10 duym, breed 1 voet 9 duym [= 54 × 51.4 cm]' (An excellent fine and skillful piece by Rembrandt, showing Christ among the apostles, with Thomas struck with amazement, the best ever known by Rembrandt) (1100 guilders to the De Neufville brothers). Dr I. H. van Eeghen has been kind enough to point out, in a letter dated 19 September 1977, that Anna van Lennep was a daughter of Susanna Leeuw, daughter of David Leeuw and, from 1682, wife of Dirk van Lennep (Van Lennep Documents Collection, pp. 137–138; cf. S. A. C. Dudok van Heel in *Doopsgezinde bijdragen*, new series 6, 1980, p. 121).

\*— Probably coll. Pieter Leendert de Neufville of Amsterdam, whence at some unknown time before 1764 it passed into the collection of Johann Ernst Gotzkowski of Berlin (on him, see no. A 27 under 8. *Provenance*); at about the same time no. A 27 must have come into the Gotzkowski collection from the De Neufville collection.

— In 1764 acquired, with 224 other paintings belonging to Gotzkowski, by Empress Catherine II (1729–1796; Czarina from 1762) as her first purchase. *Catalogue raisonné des Tableaux qui se trouvent dans les Galeries, Sallons et Cabinets du Palais Impérial de S. Petersbourg, commencé en 1773 et continué jusqu'en 1783 incl.* (MS in the Hermitage Museum, Leningrad) no. 602: 'Paul Rembrant. L'incrédulité de St. Thomas. Les Connoisseurs trouvent ce tableau trop foible pour être de Rembrant. Sur bois. Ht. 12.V[erchokk] L. 11.V. [= 53.3 × 48.8 cm]. Pendant du N.<sup>o</sup> 581 [= Paul Rembrant. Joseph vendu par ses Frères. Si ce Tableau est de Rembrant, comme l'assure le catalogue de Gotskofsky, c'en est un des plus foibles. Sur bois. Ht. 12.V. L. 11.V.]'.

— Transferred from the Hermitage Museum to the Pushkin Museum in 1964.

### 9. Summary

Partly because of its excellent condition, and especially because of the direct and vivid execution, no. A 90 is an important work for our knowledge of Rembrandt's small-scale history paintings done in 1634. The strong resemblances in style and execution with other work from this period, and the very convincing signature, leave no doubt about its authenticity. The manner of painting is marked by an animated and to some extent graphic brushwork, and by the concentration of the most telling colours in the lit central area. The picture differs in various respects from the traditional representation of the subject and as the X-ray shows was, where the pose of Christ and Thomas is concerned, planned rather differently.



The pedigree of this painting is unbroken back to 1653, when it belonged to the widow of Ameldonck Leeuw, perhaps the first owner. It is remarkable how little the work was esteemed when, in the late 18th century, it was catalogued in the collection of the Empress of Russia.

## REFERENCES

- 1 K. Yegorova in: *Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn. Paintings from Soviet Museums*, Leningrad [c. 1971], no. 8.
- 2 W. Weisbach, *Rembrandt*, Berlin-Leipzig 1926, pp. 140-142.
- 3 O. Benesch, "Caravaggism" in the drawings of Rembrandt', *Actes du XVIIe Congrès international d'Histoire de l'Art, Amsterdam, 23-31 juillet 1952*, The Hague 1955, pp. 385-404, esp. 394; reprinted in: O. Benesch, *Collected Writings I, Rembrandt*, London 1970, pp. 175-189, esp. 181.
- 4 J. Bolten ed., *Rembrandt and the Incredulity of Thomas. Papers on a rediscovered painting from the seventeenth century*, Leiden 1981.

HDG —; BR. 470; BAUCH 157; GERSON —

### 1. Summarized opinion

An authentic and mainly well preserved work, though slightly reduced in size on the left; it carries a probably reliable signature and date of 1634.

### 2. Description of subject

Against a dark background in which can be made out, on the right, a curtain hanging in folds, Cupid lies on a red cloth in light falling from the left. His legs are half-drawn up to the left. His body is half-raised, as he supports himself with his left elbow on a thick, purplish-grey cushion. Over the latter is draped a green-blue cloth (or cloak) into which gold thread is woven. He looks towards the viewer, holding a pipe in his right hand and a shallow dish or shell in his left; on the latter there is a large soap-bubble in which a rectangular light-source – a window – is reflected. He wears a white loincloth, over which is loosely wound a greyish sash, shot with gold thread, that supports a quiver full of arrows leaning against his hip. A thin gold chain loops over his thick, curly hair. The wing seen on the left behind his shoulder partly catches the light, while that on the right is in darkness. In the right foreground his bow, with the string hanging loose, rests against the cushion.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 19 December 1971 (S. H. L., E. v. d. W.) in good artificial light and out of the frame, with the aid of a UV lamp. Seen again on 13 November 1982 (J. B., E. v. d. W.) in good artificial light, in the frame and behind glass, with the aid of six X-ray films together covering the whole painting.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 74.7 ( $\pm 0.2$ )  $\times$  92.5 cm. Single piece. One may, from a contemporaneous etching done after the painting, deduce that the canvas has been cut down on the left (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 1).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: At the top the pitch of the cusping varies between 8 and 10 cm, and it extends some 14 cm into the canvas. On the right the pitch varies between 8 and 11 cm, with a depth of c. 15 cm. No cusping can be seen at the bottom and left. Threadcount: 18.7 vertical threads/cm (17.5–19.5), 14.4 horizontal threads/cm (13.5–16). The weave shows no distinct differences between the horizontal and vertical thickenings. Since it can, on the grounds of the striking similarity in threadcount and weave characteristics, be assumed that this canvas came from the same bolt as that of the Munich *Holy family* (no. A88), the Berlin *Samson threatening his father-in-law* (Br. 499) and the Vienna *Apostle Paul* (Br. 603), where the vertical threads are the denser and are presumably the warp, it is also likely here that the warp runs vertically. In any case one may take it that the strip from which the canvas was taken was considerably wider. It could be that the canvas was cut to measure in Rembrandt's studio, and parts of the pieces cut away then used for sticking down the London *Lamentation*, painted on paper (Br. 565), and for the first enlargement of the Berlin *John the Baptist preaching* (Br. 555). At all events, the pieces of prepared canvas used for these latter works did come from the same bolt, and they show cusping with a virtually identical pitch.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light greyish colour is exposed in the eye on the

left (to the right of the iris), and shows through in patches of wear in the dark shadow to the right of the figure's left thigh. SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Though slightly flattened and somewhat worn here and there, the paint layer is in general well preserved. Numerous retouches, connected with local paint losses, can be seen especially along the edges, and also in other places where local damages have been restored (in particular in the calf of the uppermost leg) (see also *X-Rays*). Craquelure: a normal canvas-type pattern. In one or two restored patches the pattern of cracks has been imitated in paint.

DESCRIPTION: The background is painted with quite thin, brown-grey paint over a light underlayer in which a certain amount of brushwork is to be seen; around the wing on the left the colour is rather browner. The curtain is for the most part done in dark grey with, on the upper right, broad, curved strokes of lighter grey marking the folds. The cloth on which Cupid is lying is executed in shades of a warm red, with a scarcely visible brushstroke. The rather purplish grey used for the cushion lies over a broadly-brushed light underlayer; lighter and darker greys indicate the sheens of light and the shadows. The cloth separated from this by a dark area of shadow is done with lively strokes that follow the folds, in green-blue under which can be glimpsed a layer of light paint; short strokes of ochre yellow with a little black show the decoration. A broad zone of dark paint marks the shadow cast by the figure.

The lit areas of the body are executed in a light flesh colour in brushwork that is occasionally apparent, following the forms; a little pink is seen on the knees and the right hand. A thin grey provides a subtle modelling of the shoulder area and forms the transition to the shadow parts of the body, done in a quite light brown that tends towards a yellow; in this, along the outline, great care is used in showing the light that in a variety of colours is reflected by nearby materials. The shadowed left arm is done in a relatively flatly applied yellowish brown; the same is true of the feet, whose form is indicated cursorily but effectively with strokes drawn in dark paint.

In the head the shadow part is painted in a more greyish light brown, with somewhat stronger reflexions of light along the contour of the cheek and chin and with a subtle play of light and shade around the wing of the nose on the right. Apart from the light flesh colour the lit areas have more pronounced colours than the body. Small strokes of black provide the nostrils and the mouth-line, the latter set over the pink and red of the lips. A pinkish red is used for drawing the upper eyelids, and a light pink on both cheeks. The somewhat off-round irises offer a curved stroke of greenish grey on the right below and along the black pupils, a dark grey edge and quite flat, clear white catchlights. The hair is done with partly curved strokes in brown, yellow-brown and light yellow tints; the chain consists of ochre-yellow and yellow accents with a little black, with no clear indication of plastic structure.

The loincloth is in greys, broken white and white, painted with long strokes that follow the softly curved folds. The knotted sash is set down in a warm grey with brown and grey in the shadow of the folds, with on top of this yellowish strokes and dabs and a little black, suggesting gold thread. The shadowed wing on the right is done in a slightly ruddy brown with scant contrast, while the lit wing on the left has boldly brushed greys with some blue. A silvery colour is suggested in the quiver, with green-blue reflexions of light and white highlights. The arrows are painted mainly in brown with shades of red and blue.

Fig. 1. Canvas 74.7 × 92.5 cm



SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The radiographic image is determined partly by what can be recognized at the surface as areas of radioabsorbent paint. The painting seems to have been executed in general without hesitation and with a definite idea of the effect being aimed at. Shadow areas mostly have reserves left for them from the outset. Here and there there is however the light image of an earlier lay-in, probably connected with a light underpainting. This is true of a flap of cloth (perhaps previously belonging to the loincloth rather than to the sash) that to the left of his waist hangs down to over Cupid's right foot, of the left wing that shows up light (and is shown darker in the final execution), and especially of an open book that can be seen in the background to the right of this. A reserve left in the light shape of this is given a sheen of light; its form – though hard to interpret – most resembles part of a brass wind instrument. The area below this must always have had roughly its present form, as may be seen from the reserve for the bow and its cast shadow (though not that of the dangling bowstring) in a mass that

appears fairly light. Perhaps the latter is an indication that the cushion was originally intended to be lighter, and it can at all events be detected from the surface that there is a light layer – probably the underpainting visible in the X-ray – beneath the present purplish grey.

Local paint losses show up dark at various places; at the lower left light patches suggest radioabsorbent material in areas that have been filled with priming. There are narrow, dark traces of paint loss round the edges.

#### *Signature*

At the lower right, near the tip of the bow, in ochre yellow <Rembrandt./f (followed by three dots in a triangular pattern)1634>. An underlining, running to the right and becoming thicker, can be vaguely made out below the date. Although the *R* has been gone over a number of times, and is thus unusual, the inscription makes a spontaneous and authentic impression.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

Fig. 2. X-ray



#### 4. Comments

Though the execution of the painting is in some areas – especially the various fabrics – somewhat broad, and elsewhere – especially in the for the most part carefully modelled body – extremely subtle, the whole reveals extremely confident mastery and great homogeneity in the rendering of spatial relationships. An essential means of creating this effect is provided by the dynamics of light and shade, and by the closely-allied interaction between the colours used, which exhibit a remarkable variety. The light falls on large areas of the figure, creating on the shadow side of the various parts of the body a lively interplay of half-shadows and reflexions of light (in his right knee these appear to come from both the red cloth and the lit left leg), and of cast shadows that along the sash and loin-

cloth are almost linear but quite successful in suggesting depth, while to the right of the figure they take on writhing shapes. These create, together with the rhythm of the figure and the folds – appearing most distinctly in the green-blue cloth, less sharply in the purplish-grey cushion, and least pronounced in the red cloth and grey curtain – a pattern that determines the unity of the picture as such even more than it serves to create an illusion of three-dimensionality. Hair, wings and draperies function more as elements of exciting colour and surprisingly suggestive brushwork than as an illusion closely matched to a rendering of form or material. All these features, and especially the approach to chiaroscuro, form and colour that can be sensed behind them, are so like what we know from Rembrandt's work from 1634/35 that there is no doubt as to this authorship as indicated by the

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 4. Detail (1:1)



signature and date of 1634. Even though the *R* – perhaps because of the ‘shortness’ of the yellow paint (uncommon for signatures) – is written in an unusual way, the inscription certainly makes an authentic impression.

The Rembrandt works to which there is the closest similarity belong to the series of mythological or classical female figures that began with the New York *Bellona* of 1633 (no. A 70) and includes the Leningrad *Flora* (no. A 93) and Madrid *Sophonisba* (no. A 94), both from 1634, and the 1635 *Minerva* and *Flora* (Br. 469 and 103); the Dresden *Ganymede* of 1635 (Br. 471) also prompts comparison. What all these works, as well as the *Cupid*, have in common can best be described as the great extent to which the sculptural quality of the figure is achieved by on the one hand subtle modelling and on the other strong shadows (that act as deep hollows in the depicted space), while at the same time an over-illusionistic effect is avoided by a certain abstraction of form in the accessories that contributes greatly to

the creation of seething patterns. In the use of exciting colour contrast the *Cupid* goes further than the other works just mentioned, mainly in the use of a varied red in the cloth that from the viewpoint of depth lends the composition a certain feeling of instability. Apart from this, the colours employed – which include a green-blue with yellowish accents, a silvery blue in the quiver, and a pale golden tone in the sash – can also be found in varying combinations in the other works mentioned.

The painting was first published as a work by Rembrandt by Valentiner<sup>1</sup> in 1923, when it was owned by a Russian private collector in Berlin. It subsequently attracted relatively little attention. Sumowski<sup>2</sup> regarded it as a pupil's work, with Bol in mind. Bauch<sup>3</sup> thought it possible that a pupil had a share in the execution, and suggested Flinck. Gerson<sup>4</sup>, finally, unreservedly attributed the painting to Flinck. Since none of these authors gave grounds for his doubts or rejection, it is hard to know what their opinions were based on. It may be



Fig. 5. Detail (1:1.5)



that the somewhat unusual use of colour was the reason, or perhaps the subject-matter (of which more below) which is a little uncommon in Rembrandt's work. It is possible, too, that Gerson's equally unjustified rejection of the New York *Bellona* was a symptom of a mental image of Rembrandt's oeuvre into which the *Cupid* similarly did not fit. At all events, the painting shows no trace of being by more than one hand (as Bauch believed), and it fits perfectly into a well-defined group of Rembrandt's paintings.

While the attribution of the painting naturally rests on the latter's inherent qualities, it is reinforced by the existence of a contemporary reproduction in the form of an etching. Previously attributed to

Rembrandt (B. 132), this renders the composition in reverse (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 1; fig. 7). It also makes it plain that the painting was originally somewhat larger on the lefthand side (where the canvas has no cusping), and showed a curtain. Münz (II, no. 324, p. 17) thought the etching an early work by Bol. It shows scratches at the lower right that can be read as a signature; in the Amsterdam impression the final letters may be interpreted as '... LLE' and Boon and White (Hollst. xviii, p. 177) claim that a signature 'I. de Jouderville' is clearly visible. In any case it may be assumed that the print was made soon after the painting, dated 1634, and in Rembrandt's immediate circle. If the author could be identified as Isack Jouderville, then

Fig. 6. Detail with signature (1:1)



this would mean that this pupil stayed with Rembrandt in Amsterdam longer than we have so far been aware of, which could be important for attributing both the assistants' share in Rembrandt's large etchings from those years and the paintings from his workshop.

Furthermore, there are variants of the picture – perhaps likewise works by pupils – in which the head of this *Cupid* is repeated exactly but in a different context. Some versions show the composition as a bust of a boy dressed in a Polish costume fastened with braiding (cf. Br. 189, Bauch p. 47), and one (sale of Mak van Waay, Amsterdam 21 May 1968 no. 1210, with illus.) shows the boy half-length beside a table bearing three fruits – Youth as Vanitas.

Rembrandt's original has the Vanitas element in the form of blowing bubbles ('homo bulla'), linked with a putto clearly recognizable as Cupid. This combination was, it would seem, first made in an emblem by Daniel Heinsius (in: *Het ambacht van Cupido* by 'Theodorus à Ganda', Leiden 1615, no. 21) where, under the motto 'Bulla favor' (favour is a soap bubble) the impermanence and uncertainty of love is compared to that of a soap bubble (fig. 8). Rembrandt's composition does not, however, have anything to do with the print of this emblem. His Cupid, leaning on one elbow with his legs drawn up, seems rather to be based on the winged putto leaning on a skull that was introduced in Venice as a symbol of Death around the middle of the 15th century, and spread into the North as well in a number of variants (see H. W. Janson, 'The putto with the death's head', *Art Bull.* 19, 1937, pp. 423–449; reprinted in: *idem*, *16 Studies*, New York 1973, pp. 3–8). One of these variants, the wellknown print of 1594 by Goltzius with the motto *Quis evadet*, can be looked on as a forerunner of Heinsius's emblem and Rembrandt's painting to

Fig. 7. Etching attr. to I. Jouderville (B. 132; reproduced in reverse)



the extent that it shows the putto – here not winged, and not Cupid but a personification of human life that is as impermanent as a soap bubble and as smoke – not only leaning on a skull but also blowing bubbles. In Rembrandt, just as in Heinsius, the idea of transience implicit in the soap bubble is related wholly to Love. The painting stresses this message through Cupid's gaze being fixed on the viewer, something exceptional in Rembrandt's work.

It is noteworthy that the iconographic programme also, according to the X-rays, included an open book and an object that must perhaps be interpreted as a brass wind instrument. The applicability of these motifs is not entirely clear – one wonders if they were discarded for that very reason.

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching 9 × 11.7 cm (B. 132; Münz 324 as perhaps by Bol), signed at bottom right . . . LLE, and plausibly read by C. White and K. G. Boon (Hollst. XVIII, p. 177; B. 132) as 'I. de Jouderville' (fig. 7). Reproduces the original in reverse in a frame slightly larger to the left, where a curtain can be seen. Probably done in 1634 in Rembrandt's workshop. No other etchings by de Jouderville are known of with certainty; on him cf. Introduction, Chapter III.

## 7. Copies

None, apart from the variants mentioned under 4. *Comments*.

## 8. Provenance

- Russian private collection in Berlin in 1923<sup>1</sup>.
- Coll. Dr Heinrich Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza, Lugano.

## 9. Summary

Although it has in recent years been on a number of

Fig. 8. '*Bulla favor*', woodcut from: D. Heinsius, *Het ambacht van Cupido*, Leiden 1616



occasions doubted as a work by Rembrandt, and attributed instead to Bol or Flinck, this painting fits so neatly into the series of works with large figures of mostly mythological characters that Rembrandt painted over the years 1633–1635 that there can be no doubt as to his authorship or the date of 1634 given by the inscription. The way the plasticity of the figure is, at one and the same time, suggested by the careful modelling and moderated by the shadow effect is as typical of his style in this kind of work as are the use made of colour and the character of the brushwork.

The motif of a soap bubble as a symbol of the impermanence of love can be traced back to an emblem by Daniel Heinsius (1615).

#### REFERENCES

- 1 W. R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt. Wiedergefundene Gemälde*, 2nd edn, Berlin-Leipzig 1923 (Kl. d. K.), p. 35.
- 2 Sumowski 1957/58, p. 231.
- 3 Bauch 157.
- 4 Br.-Gerson 470.

HdG 200; BR. 472; BAUCH 103; GERSON 61

### 1. Summarized opinion

A generally moderately well preserved work that though of an unusual type for Rembrandt must, on the grounds of the characteristic execution of the well preserved passages, be regarded as autograph and probably dating from 1634.

### 2. Description of subject

The scene is taken from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book II, 401 ff (the story of Callisto) and Book III, 138 ff (the story of Actaeon).

In front of the fringe of a wood with towering trees, to the left of which can be seen a mountainous vista, a large number of naked women are gathered on the bank of a pool that stretches into the foreground. One group occupies roughly the centre of the scene; they are standing in the shallow water, and most are moving hastily towards the right as Actaeon appears on the bank to the left, with his hounds fighting around him. Further to the right, in the shadow of the trees, three dogs (?) are seen dashing towards the left. Diana herself, recognizable by the crescent moon worn on her forehead, stands at the left of the group up to her knees in the water; her hands, reaching down into the water, suggest that she is throwing it up over Actaeon, and the antlers that are appearing on his head show that he is already beginning to turn into a stag. To the left one of the nymphs has thrown herself down into the splashing water, while another wades through it in the foreground with her arms slightly raised. On the bank to the extreme right a nymph, seen from the back with her head turned to the left, sits shielding her eyes from the light with her hand and watching the scene. Immediately to the left of her, between colourful clothing spread out on the ground and alongside a number of hunting weapons and dead game, is a group of struggling nymphs: they are tugging Callisto's robe away from her body as she lies on her back, held down from behind by one of the nymphs. Behind and to the right another nymph stands with the knees slightly bent, laughing uncontrollably. To the right of her a horse, wearing a saddlecloth and a quiver, is scarcely visible. In a dark cave – mentioned by Ovid (III, 157) – just right of the centre, two figures can be seen indistinctly, the larger with a long beard. To the extreme right a frog sits in front of a clump of reeds.

The light falls from the left, and is brightest on the foreground, creating strong shadows here and there; in the centre foreground a nymph standing in the water, and wearing a heavy headdress, has her profile turned to the right and stands out against the light, naked figures behind her.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### Working conditions

Examined on 30 September 1968 (B. H., S. H. L., P. v. Th.) in good light and out of the frame. Examined again, after restoration in 1977/78, on 25 July 1980 (J. B., B. H., S. H. L.) in good artificial light and in the frame, with the aid of two 30 × 40 cm X-ray prints (Doerner Institut, Munich) together covering the area from just left of Diana to close beside the righthand edge.

#### Support

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined with herringbone-pattern twill 73.5 × 93.5 cm. Single piece.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Because of the incomplete X-ray documen-

tation, it was impossible to look for cusping on all sides of the canvas. This was feasible on the right, though no cusping was found there. At the bottom there is cusping varying in pitch from 11 to 12 cm, and extending some 22 cm into the canvas. Threadcount: 16.7 vertical threads/cm (15–17), 15.5 horizontal threads/cm (14–17). The weave shows more thickenings horizontally than vertically. Because of these features one may assume the warp to be vertical. The slight variation in the number of vertical threads per centimetre would also suggest this. In thread density and weave characteristics the canvas is so similar to that of the *Man in oriental dress* in Washington (no. B8), that both canvases may be seen as coming from the same bolt.

#### Ground

DESCRIPTION: Not observed.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### Paint layer

CONDITION: Generally worn to a varying extent, and restored at many places especially along the edges but also in many shadowed and some of the lit flesh areas, and over large parts of the tree foliage. Craquelure: in general there is an evenly distributed pattern of coarser and finer cracks. Sometimes a crack follows the outline of a painted form – one does so very precisely along the headdress of the nymph who has thrown herself down into the water below Actaeon; and another runs between the foot of the nymph furthest to the left in the Callisto group and the blue cloak on the ground.

DESCRIPTION: The paint is in general applied evenly and opaquely. The sky is done at the top left in a fairly flat grey that merges downwards into blue applied with firm, horizontal brushstrokes and using a flat white to indicate clouds. The distant vista is painted with lively brushwork in a bluish green, with details done with lighter, thick strokes. The trees are mostly in a partly worn ochre-coloured brown and grey-green, with an indication of leaves in a red-brown to the left (above Actaeon) and an ochre yellow to the right. Dimly-lit branches and trunks are sketched in a brown-grey.

The sloping bank in the light is given plastic form using fairly thick paint; the grass beside Actaeon is painted with small, thick strokes of grey-green and yellow, and a patch of thistles in the middle is given a relatively large amount of detail with fine edges of light. In the water, which from a dark grey on the far left merges into a light blue and then into a cool grey with greyish-white highlights and reflexions of the bodies in flesh colours, the ripples are shown with long strokes of a fairly thick white.

The figure of Actaeon is executed with small, fine brushstrokes, in whitish greys that model the folds of his grey-blue coat, yellow colours that indicate braiding and edges, and grey-blue with a light bluish-white in the trousers. In the (partly worn) grey-browns, browns and grey of the dogs, dabs of red are used to show their open mouths and tongues. Above the thistles three running dogs (?) are shown in dark (worn) browns and dark grey, and to the right of these (and better preserved) a dead boar, deer and hare are depicted in partly thicker paint.

The naked figures are painted quite smoothly, mainly in a pale flesh colour, though in some figures this varies towards a pinkish or brownish tint; towards the opaque shadow areas this becomes somewhat more yellow, and in the hands and buttocks it is rather pink. The headdress of the nymph in the centre foreground is done in great detail in some matt blue and matt pink with yellowish highlights, and other headdresses too have tiny accents in bright red and other colours.

Fig. 1. Canvas 73.5 × 93.5 cm



The clothing spread out on the ground to either side of the Callisto group are given modelling and detail with thick paint, with on the left a blue and light blue, to the right (where the larger forms suggest a heavier material) an ochre-yellow with yellow highlights, and further still to the right a (somewhat overcleaned) dark red with light red highlights; these colours recur, thinner and flatter, in the reflexions in the water. Small dots of paint are used, equally painstakingly, to show the ornamentation of the quiver and saddlecloth of the horse on the right.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

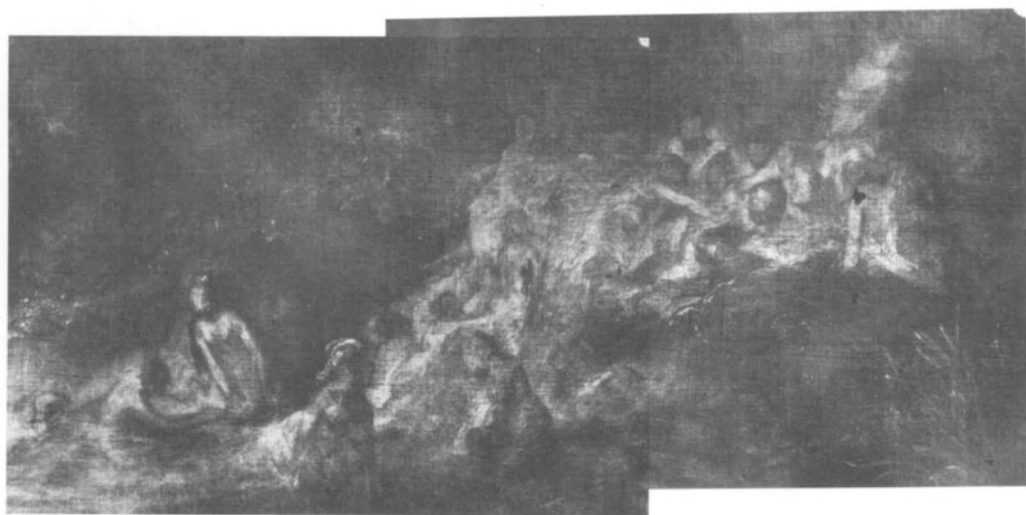
What can be seen in the available X-rays matches only to a small extent what one might expect from the paint surface. Clearly related to the latter is the white showing such details as the lights in the headdress of the nymph standing in the centre foreground, in the crescent on Diana's head and the blue cloak to the left of the Callisto group, and the highlights on the grass to the left of Diana, on the yellow robe beneath the Callisto group, on the horse's saddlecloth, the thistle and the reed stems, and perhaps also parts of the modelling of the

naked figures. The image of the nude figures is however partly also determined by a light underpainting and by dark reserves. Obviously executed in a light underpainting is a figure – not now visible and probably never worked up – standing to the left of the present Callisto group where there is now the still-life of spoils of the chase. A change from the underpainting can probably be detected in the turn of the head – now seen to the front – of the nymph standing to the right of centre in the foreground, which seems in the X-ray to be in left profile. Finally, there is a part-light, part-dark form to be seen on the left alongside the nymph bending forward to the left of Diana, which cannot be seen in this place in the painting – presumably the head of the nymph throwing herself down into the water whom Rembrandt painted again, probably at a late stage, 6 cm further to the left on top of the water that had then already been painted. This could well explain the crack in the paint, already described, that follows the outline of the headdress.

#### *Signature*

In dark paint with very distinct and carefully-formed letters on the light paint of the bank below the Callisto group

Fig. 2. X-ray



〈Rembrandt.[ft.1634]〉. Before the cleaning that took place in 1977/78 the final figure was overpainted with a 5. Beside the figure 4 that was then exposed, one can also see beneath it the vestiges of a figure that can be read as a hesitantly written 5. Gerson<sup>1</sup> noted already before the cleaning that the last figure of the earlier date had originally been different (he thought it was a 2 or 3). The affected style and yet somewhat unsure script of the letters and figures raise serious doubts as to authenticity of the inscription. It remains strange that three figures for the last digit have been set down one on top of the other – the topmost in paint so soft that it disappeared during cleaning. The year 1635 was already mentioned in a sale catalogue in 1774 (see 8. *Provenance*).

#### Varnish

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

Although the amount of wear suffered by the paint surface precludes a proper assessment of the

painting in its entirety, the design and the execution of the better preserved passages provide sufficient evidence for no. A 92 to be regarded as an autograph work by Rembrandt. The way the lighting divides up the space and (where they are well preserved) gives effective modelling to the figures, most markedly in the foreground; the great variety in the manner of painting, suiting the material being rendered yet everywhere keeping a certain freeness in the brushwork – particularly in the draperies, Actaeon's clothing and the vegetation; and the generally limited, though in a few passages very varied, use of colour – all leave no doubt about the picture's authenticity. Where the date is concerned, that given by the present inscription 1634(5?) cannot, because of the uncertainty as to its genuineness, be seen as more than plausible. Nor can one point to any other work from around 1634 that is marked to the same extent as no. A 92 by



Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)



liveliness in small-scale figures of humans and animals shown in great detail, and by relatively colourful areas and accents. In the manner of painting and the approach to a dramatic event, however, no. A 92 comes close to such – otherwise very different – works as the London *Ecce homo* (no. A 89) and the Moscow *Incredulity of Thomas* (no. A 90), both from 1634. As a composition the painting reminds one most of the *Rape of Europa* of 1632 (no. A 47). It is quite understandable, therefore, that Gerson<sup>1</sup> assumed that the final digit of the date would have been a 2 or a 3. The similarity to the *Rape of Europa* is not however as great as might at first appear. For example, the colouring of the distant vista, in the *Europa* is almost monochrome in grey-brown, and is totally different from the predominantly green-blue colour used here, more or less like the vista seen in, for example, the Leningrad *Abraham's sacrifice* of 1635 (Br. 498). The presence of the palmtree on the extreme left is reminiscent of the landscape in the etching of the 1634 *The angel appearing to the shepherds* (B. 44) and that in the Munich *Ascension* of 1635/36 (Br. 557). The greatest difference from the *Rape of Europa*, however, lies in the placing and execution of the figures. In the 1632 painting they are set rather in isolation one from the other, and their poses and rather awkward gestures

give a somewhat fragmented composition. In no. A 92 they have not only been arranged with a remarkable degree of virtuosity (especially in the very complicated Callisto group), but a great deal of attention has also been devoted to the relationship between the various groups, using movements and direction of gaze as a means of linking them; in the case of the nymph sitting at the far right and looking past the Callisto group to what is happening over to the far left, this linking function, used as a deliberate device, is very obvious. In judging the composition, account must besides be taken of the possibility, always present when one is dealing with a canvas, of the format having been reduced; though the available 18th-century data on the dimensions of no. A 92 (see under 8. *Provenance*) give no significant information on this point, the engraved and painted reproductions of the work (see 6. *Graphic reproductions* and 7. *Copies*) coincide in showing a picture area slightly larger at the bottom. A certain reduction in size at the lower edge is thus not improbable; this cannot however have been substantial, since it is precisely along the bottom that the X-rays reveal pronounced cusping of the canvas.

The radiographic image offers two kinds of evidence as to the production of the painting. In the first place, one finds that in preparing the figure

Fig. 4. Detail (1:1.5)



composition the artist made use not only of a brownish underpainting (which one may assume, though it is not of course evident in the X-rays), but also of a light underpainting (which is in fact visible in the X-rays) in which the position and pose of the figures was set out in an almost geometrical stylized form. In the second place he is seen to have made not insignificant changes in the final composition, compared to the first draft. In particular there is in the underpainting, on the left above the Callisto group, a figure leaning towards the right that would have formed the culminating point of the group of figures running and reaching from the centre towards the right, and would have formed a link with the Callisto group; subsequently Rembrandt evidently preferred to make a caesura in the form of the still-life of game and hunting weapons. He furthermore, at a late stage, moved the head of the nymph throwing herself down into the water some 6 cm to the left, towards the spot below where Actaeon stands.

It is remarkable that the leading motifs in the picture, the great variety of naked female figures, provide virtually no point of contact with Rembrandt's other work from these years. Comparable motifs are found only in the etching of *Diana at the bath* (B. 201) datable c. 1631 and the preparatory

drawing in London (Ben. 21), and the etching, dated 1634, of *Joseph and Potiphar's wife* (B. 39) that offers, in the figure of Potiphar's wife, a certain similarity with that of Callisto. Of the numerous drawn studies that one might expect to serve as preparation there is only one known that bears a certain resemblance to some of the figures in the painting. This is in Stockholm, and shows a female nude lying prone, with a hint of vegetation (Ben. Addenda 6). It may perhaps be deduced that there were more studies of this kind, from a mention in Rembrandt's inventory of 1656 of 'Een boeck, vol teeckeninge van Rembrandt gedaen, bestaende in mans en vrouwe; naeckt sijnde' (a book full of drawings by Rembrandt of men and women; they being nude) (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12, no. 239). It is noticeable that there are no instances of classical or renaissance poses. This is most true in the treatment of the Callisto episode – it contains only the most general echo of Titian's composition, known from the print by Cornelis Cort and imitated by Goltzius, and shows a fierce scuffle to which the laughing figure of a most uncomely woman adds a quite unusual 'affect'. The most remarkable feature in the structure of the group is the motif, so far unexplained by any prototype, of the figure of Callisto being held down on her back; this motif recurs,

Fig. 5. Detail (1:1)



*mutatis mutandis*, in the *Blinding of Samson* of 1636 in Frankfurt (Br. 501). Where the animals depicted are concerned, it is possible to reconstruct rather more clearly the use Rembrandt made of drawings. This applies particularly to the two dogs fighting on the left, one standing over the other which is lying on its back. The same little group is repeated by Rembrandt in the Berlin *John the Baptist preaching* (Br. 555) and also appears again in reverse in a drawing, ascribed to Titus van Rijn, in the Duits collection in London (cf. A. Welcker in: *O.H.* 55, 1938, pp. 268–273, fig. 4). It may safely be assumed that the depiction of this thrice-recurring subject was based on a model drawing by Rembrandt of the kind that must have been included in the book of drawings of animals done from life, described in 1656 ('Een dito, vol teekeninge van Rembrant, bestaende in beesten nae 't leven'; Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12 no. 249; cf. also no. A 66 and Vol. III, Introduction, Chapter I). One item of – less strong – evidence for this is given by the dog to the right alongside the group just mentioned, which appears to be bracing itself for a fight; this dog recurs in a similar though not identical form in the '*Nightwatch*' of 1642 (Br. 410) and the 1651 etching of *Blind Tobit* (B. 42).

A remarkable aspect is the combination in one picture of two episodes from different passages in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. This combination, for which there is no precedent in the tradition of Ovid illustrations, is all the more remarkable in that Rembrandt otherwise radically rejected the joint depiction of several scenes in one, even where this had been done in 16th-century prototypes. Panofsky<sup>2</sup> suggested that Rembrandt came to combine the two scenes under the influence of two companion-pieces that Titian did for Philip II of Spain; yet this hardly seems a likely explanation – in that

case Rembrandt would have produced a pair of companion-pieces – and moreover one cannot see how Rembrandt would have known of both of Titian's paintings, as only one – the *Callisto* – was reproduced in a print by Cornelis Cort. Primarily, Rembrandt's representation seems to be based on the usual illustrations of the Actaeon episode; in agreement with this – and with numerous renderings based on the same tradition – Diana turns towards the hunter and sprinkles him in order to turn him into a stag. This tradition is also followed by Antonio Tempesta's etchings with small figures (B. XVII, nos. 822 and 815) which Haak<sup>3</sup> and Vliegenthart<sup>4</sup> mention as possible prototypes for Rembrandt. The discovery of the pregnancy of Callisto, seduced by Jupiter, does not however belong to the episodes from the *Metamorphoses* usually illustrated in the 16th century; Panofsky speaks, when dealing with Titian's painting of the subject, of 'a creation almost *ex nihilo*'<sup>2</sup>, but this composition was known in the northern countries through Cornelis Cort's print, as may be seen from an engraving in a series of 52 scenes from the *Metamorphoses* designed by Goltzius and published by R. de Baudous (Hollst. I, nos. 16–67), and from an engraving based on this in a series of 103 prints by Crispijn de Passe the Elder (Hollst. XV, no. 852). This type of illustration however invariably shows Callisto, albeit under duress, being presented with some ceremony to a usually seated Diana, who repulses the nymph with a gesture (*Metamorphoses* II, 464–465). This was how Rembrandt, too, handled the Callisto scene in a drawing from the early 1640s (formerly coll. W. R. Valentiner, Ben. 521). Such a rendering could not however be used in this painting, where Diana focusses her attention on Actaeon; perhaps for this reason he placed the emphasis on the overpowering and dis-

Fig. 6. Detail (1:1)



robing of the unfortunate nymph, which can be taken as an episode immediately preceding that usually depicted (*Metamorphoses* II, 460–461: ‘... dubitanti vestis adempta est, / qua posita nudo patuit cum corpore crimen’ – while she hesitates [to disrobe and bathe with Diana and the other nymphs] her clothes are taken away and, her body being uncovered, her nudity shows her lapse). In the 17th century Rembrandt’s inclusion of Callisto in the Actaeon scene seems to have been felt to be a jarring element in the narrative; one may deduce this from the fact that not only in a print used as an Ovid illustration (see under 6. *Graphic reproductions* below) but also in a number of painted copies (see under 7. *Copies*) – apparently independently of each other – Callisto was left out, and the remaining Actaeon scene was bounded on the right by the nymph peering towards the left.

It remains unclear who the two figures seen indistinctly in a cave are meant to be.

It was precisely the Callisto scene that probably formed the main reason why a Paris sale catalogue of 1774 describes the painting as ‘piquant d’effet’. What was still ‘piquant’ for the 18th century became for the taste of the 19th, governed as this was by a neoclassical aesthetic and by a prudish morality, ugly or offensive or both. Michel<sup>5</sup>, who found in the Dresden *Ganymede* cause to voice his great objection to Rembrandt’s mythological pictures, calls the *Diana* only a reason for not regretting that Rembrandt had not dealt more often with such subjects: ‘Le goût, on le voit, n’est pas le fort de Rembrandt’. Panofsky<sup>2</sup>, still, refers to it as a ‘rather vulgar picture’. Seen against the free manner in which matters amorous were treated in 17th-century Holland, the painting seems rather to be Rembrandt’s (as always) drastic dramatizing of his theme, with all the ‘affetti’ that he could muster in

connexion with it – fear, heated emotions and malicious pleasure – and as such it makes a very original contribution to the iconography of the subject.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

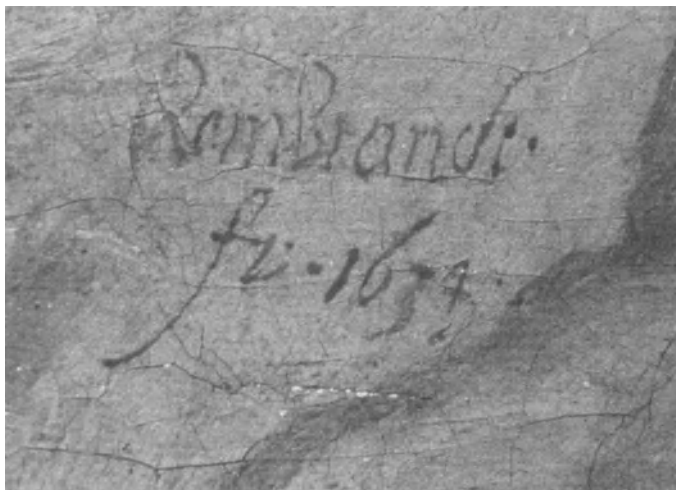
1. Engraving (fig. 8), probably from the workshop of Crispijn de Passe the Elder (c. 1565–1637) and probably intended, together with 45 other prints, for an illustrated edition of the *Metamorphoses* he was to publish. This engraving is among those that were not printed until, supplemented with later illustrations, they were used in an edition published in Brussels in 1677 by François Foppens as *Les Métamorphoses d’Ovide . . . De la Traduction de Mr. Pierre du-Ryer Parisien* (cf. H. Reitlinger in: *G. d. B. -A.* 6th series 27 (1945), pp. 15–26; Hollst. XVI, no. 236 ad). The illustration is placed at the beginning of the Actaeon story (p. 83), and the Callisto scene is omitted. Though mainly at the right, but also at the left and top, the picture in this reproduction has been severely reduced in size, it has a somewhat more generous framing at the bottom. Compared to the painting in its present state, the background has somewhat clearer detail, and the figures in the cave are more distinct.

#### 7. Copies

1. Canvas 75 × 115 cm, coll. Emil Goldschmidt (Frankfurt am Main), sale Berlin 27 April 1909, no. 55. The Callisto scene is omitted and the picture framed more narrowly (though not as tightly at the left and top as the print mentioned under 6. *Graphic reproductions*); at the bottom the picture area is larger than it now is in the original. The vista shows a light, glowing landscape without a high hill and without the palmtree. The painted copy and the print both differ from the original in their separate ways, and the print was not done after this copy nor the copy after the print.

2. Canvas 74 × 102 cm, Wolverhampton Art Gallery, Wolverhampton England. Here, too, the Callisto scene has been left out, the framing is tighter (though less so than in the copy

Fig. 7. Detail with signature (enlarged)



described under 1. above), and the image area larger at the bottom than it is in the original today. On the left the high land is shown, but not the palm tree. This copy, again, shows no direct link with the print mentioned under 6. *Graphic reproductions.*

### 8. Provenance

– Sale [coll. J. B. P. Lebrun] Paris 22 ff September 1774 (Lugt 2325), no. 48: 'Rembrandt van Rhyn. Un tableau piquant d'effet, d'un coloris admirable & du meilleur faire de Rembrandt. Un groupe de huit femmes qui découvrent la grossesse de Calisto, sont sur un terrain élevé; proche d'elles un cheval, du gibier, des flèches & des draperies: quinze autres femmes se baignent dans une rivière. Sur un plan éloigné Actéon commence à être métamorphosé, ses chiens se battent. Ce précieux morceau peint sur toile, porte 27 pouces de haut, sur 34 pouces de large [= 72.9 × 99.9 cm]. Il est peint en 1635'. Vliegenthart<sup>4</sup> wrongly thought that the name of the collector written in pen on the copy in the RKD – 'de Cabinet du Sr. le Brun' – could not refer to J. B. P. Lebrun; the latter had his paintings auctioned by others eight times (Lugt nos. 1974, 2097, 2153, 2184, 2217, 2256, 2325 and 2772) before he organized his own sales from 1778 onwards.

– Coll. Prince Ludwig Carl Otto zu Salm-Salm (1721–1778, reigned from 1770), Senones, Vosges; in his inventory drawn up in 1778 by Jean-Baptiste Chargoit (MS in the Fürstlich Salm-Salm'sches Archiv, Anholt) there is mention of: '18. Rembrant. Diane et Actéon. Diane est dans le bain avec ces Nymphes, elle jette de l'eau à Actéon qui s'est avancé près du ruisseau. A la droite du tableau sur une petite éminence est un groupe de femmes qui en tiennent [sic !] une renversée par terre et découverte jusqu'à la ceinture; c'est la malheureuse Calisto. Il paroît que le peintre a voulu, par l'histoire de cette nymphe, justifier la dureté de Diane envers Actéon. Le fond du tableau représente une forêt. Hauteur 26 ponce, largeur 34 [= 70.2 × 99.9 cm]<sup>4</sup>.

– Brought to Anholt under Prince Constantin zu Salm-Salm before the part of the collection remaining in Senones was confiscated in 1793.

### 9. Summary

Though many of the finer points of the execution can no longer be assessed because of the wearing of important areas of the paint surface, the execution

Fig. 8. Engraving attr. to the workshop of C. de Passe the Elder



of the better-preserved parts and the imaginative and skillful composition are sufficient reasons for accepting no. A 92 as an authentic work by Rembrandt. The signature and date – now 1634 – are not convincing, though the latter does give a plausible suggestion of the moment of production. Compared with other works from 1634/35, most of which are admittedly done on a larger scale, the meticulous manner of painting is surprising; but alongside this feature (which is reminiscent of earlier work) the painting does offer clear similarities with them.

The combination of two separate episodes from the *Metamorphoses* was unusual, and in a number of apparently unrelated derivatives it was abandoned in that only the Actaeon scene was reproduced.

### REFERENCES

- 1 Gerson 61; Br.-Gerson 472.
- 2 E. Panofsky, *Problems in Titian, mostly iconographic*, London–New York 1969, pp. 159–160.
- 3 Haak 1969, pp. 122–123.
- 4 A. W. Vliegenthart, 'Einige Bemerkungen zu Rembrandts Aktäon und Kallisto', *N.K.J.* 23 (1972), pp. 85–94.
- 5 E. Michel, *Rembrandt*, Paris 1893, pp. 221–223.

### 1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved, authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1634.

### 2. Description of subject

A young woman stands, adorned with flowers, in dimly-lit surroundings in which can be seen plants, some with flowers; she catches the full light, which falls from the left. Seen down to the knees, her body is turned almost in left profile and her head is tilted slightly forwards and turned a little towards the viewer. She wears a silver-grey garment that hugs the upper part of her body and hangs wide further down, with braiding at the breast and across a slit in the short sleeve. This garment is largely hidden from view by a very wide sleeve in a rich grey-white material, with blue-green stripes interrupted by a band of silver brocade, that projects from under the short sleeve of the upper garment, and by a light green satin train attached along the shoulder and down the back with tapes. The young woman has drawn this train forward under her arm and holds it with her left hand in front of her body, where it hangs down in broad folds. In her right hand, which emerges from behind this drapery, she holds a staff decorated with leaves and flowers among which may be recognized red marigolds, a red rose, a white lily, a branch of silver fir and a white rose. Over the shoulders she wears a finely-pleated shawl of the same material as the sleeve, knotted on the chest and passing under the arms; a large, pear-shaped pearl is attached to this at the middle of the breast, and a similar pearl hangs from the one visible ear. Over brown hair that hangs long and curling over her shoulders and back, she wears a large wreath of leaves and flowers, among which can be identified from left to right: red marigolds, a columbine, red-and-white anemones, a white rose, a branch of silver fir, red-and-yellow fritillary, forget-me-nots, a red-and-white tulip (botanical information kindly provided by Dr S. Segal, Amsterdam).

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 19 September 1969 (J. B., S. H. L.) in good daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of a set of X-ray films together covering almost the whole painting (apart from the extreme edges).

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 124.7 × 100.4 cm (measured along the stretcher). Single piece.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Along the extreme top edge of the canvas there is slight and probably secondary cusping. On the right the pitch of the cusping varies between 11.8 and 18.7 cm, while at the bottom it ranges from 15.2 to 18.2 cm. On the left it varies from 14.6 to 19 cm. Cusping at the right, bottom and left extends c. 25 cm into the canvas. Threadcount: 11.5 vertical threads/cm (11–12), 9.5 horizontal threads/cm (9–10). The weave shows more, and shorter thickenings in the horizontal than in the vertical direction. In view of these features the warp probably runs vertically. The strong similarity in weave characteristics and vertical threadcount with the canvas of the *Leningrad Descent from the Cross* (no. C 49) suggests that the two canvases came from the same bolt of cloth, though there is some difference in their width.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light brown shows through in the background to the left of the woman's chest, in small, thin patches in the paint surface in the foliage on the lower right, and in patches of wearing in the hair on the shoulder to the right and below this along the back. It is not impossible, of course, that this colour is due more to an underpainting applied to the ground than to the ground itself.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Apart from small paint losses, for instance in shadow areas and in the face and neck, and quite substantial paint losses at the lower left, the paint surface is reasonably well preserved in the vital areas, though somewhat impaired by slight cupping of the paint. The edges show a considerable amount of inpainting, especially along the top and bottom. There are also, according to the X-rays, numerous filled and inpainted patches of paint loss in secondary areas, mainly at the lower left. There is some localized wearing in thin passages, such as the hair on the right on the shoulder, and in thin areas of shadow on the face. Craquelure: an irregular but evenly distributed pattern is visible throughout.

DESCRIPTION: The background is done in predominantly dark greys in which vegetation is indicated with animated, curved brushstrokes that on the left use mainly lighter greys with a little ochre colour here and there, and on the right mainly ochre tones. At the bottom right some more fully illuminated leaves are sketched with modelling brushwork in pale green with thick rims of light, together with flowers done in blue with ochre-yellow for the centres.

In the figure, the lit parts of the head and neck are painted in a fairly flat, yellowish flesh colour, with a little pinkish red on the cheeks and some highlights in white on the ridge of the nose. The lefthand contour of the face is somewhat blurred as a result of the flesh colour having been applied with long strokes partly over the dark brown of her hair. Small strokes of a very thin grey mark the eyebrows, and a flat grey-brown shows the shadow of the eye-socket on the right. On the righthand cheek the flesh colour merges smoothly into a grey area of shadow, running further to the right into a curved zone of reflected light, along the jaw, done in a slightly thicker light brown. The neck in shadow alongside this is in a flat, thinner light brown; the ear is done cursorily in brownish paint, with a small stroke of ochre-brown to indicate the ear-drop from which hangs a pearl modelled in off-white. The latter can be seen again, a little further to the right, showing through as an evident pentimento.

The eyelids are bordered along their upper edge with a thin brown, while the lower edge on the left (in the eye more in the light) has a rather darker brown and that on the right has a thin line of black. There are white catchlights in the pink used for the corners of the eyes and – thicker on the right than on the left – in the perfectly round irises; the latter are painted with thin strokes of various browns, lightest at the lower right (opposite the catchlight). The lower edges of the eyes are modelled in a flesh colour with a little pink and brown, and the eyepouches have brown-grey and brown in the shadow.

To the left below the nose, at the nostril, there is a small touch of light brown, while the righthand nostril is indicated in a dark brown limited at the top by a red-brown reflexion of light in a shadow area done in brown with some grey (as a transition to the flesh colour). A darker brown and a little grey are used for the cast shadow beneath the nose and along the wing of the nose. The same applies to the cast shadow below the bottom lip, where the grey provides the transition to the



Fig. 2. Detail (1:1.5)



flesh colour. The mouth-line has several strokes of black set over the red of the lips; in the upper lip this is a bright red, while the lower lip also has touches of pink and, in the centre, whitish highlights.

The hair has a fairly dark brown basic tone, with the curls indicated with curving strokes of lighter brown and grey and, mostly on the forehead, a quite dark grey.

The hand in front of the body is painted mainly in flesh colour, with the roundness of the upper and lower edges modelled in grey that stands out against the firmly brushed cast shadow on the clothing; the fingers are separated with short lines of brown, and a little pink has been placed on the knuckles. Beneath the dark grey of the background, as an extension of the fingers, can be seen a form stretching some 5 cm to the left and showing that there was an earlier version of this hand, either fully completed or (perhaps more likely) in a light underpainting, as suggested by the X-rays.

The other hand is executed in the same flesh colour with highlights in a thicker and lighter flesh colour, one on the tip of the little finger, with the nails indicated in a little pink and brown and with browns in the shadows.

The short-sleeved, silver-grey garment is, at the shoulder and to the bottom in front of the body, set down in a slightly greenish-seeming grey, with the hint of a pattern in squiggling, flatly-brushed strokes of a darker grey and with white highlights used mainly in the braiding on the chest and sleeve. The wide sleeve projecting from the short sleeve has, at the top, a broadly-brushed cast shadow in brown, and is otherwise done with greys in which bold strokes of a slightly darker grey model the folds, with stripes of green-blue and ochre-yellow and yellowish and white highlights suggesting the structure of the material; the broad band of brocade at the elbow is in light grey with dark grey shadows, and has detail in dark brown with numerous white highlights. The shawl, made of the same material as the sleeve but finely-pleated, has long strokes of dark brown to show the shadows, and longer and shorter strokes of green-blue, yellow and greys. The train gathered in front of the body is painted in green, with brown to very dark brown in the shadow (behind the body along the back, and below the wide sleeve) and a light green mixed with white in the broadly-brushed areas of sheen. Zigzag strokes in an ochre-yellow run along the hem; the tapes used to attach the train to the shoulder are drawn with yellow and whitish-yellow and are bordered with bold cast shadows in brown. A few strokes of green-blue, with some ochre-yellow at the bottom, are seen at the extreme bottom in the centre beneath the train, and may be intended to indicate the tasselled end of the shawl wound round the bosom and waist.

The leaves and the flowers on the head and along the staff are, where they are seen in the light, done with touches of greens, reds and blues that indicate the shapes, and with a brown-black to give the shadows.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### X-Rays

The radiographic image matches to a very great extent what one expects from the paint surface. The few changes that were made during the painting of the picture, and that have already been observed at the surface – the shifting of the ear-drop and the different placing of the woman's left hand – are also apparent in the X-rays, though the shape of the earlier hand cannot be read accurately.

The published reproduction of the X-ray of the head<sup>1</sup> prompts the suspicion that the shawl was extended upwards a little, on top of the paint of the neck area after this had already been applied. The background shows up rather light, and to

the left of the head there is a reserve considerably larger than the area occupied by the hair in its present state. From this one may deduce that the background was, at least partly, laid in lighter and then covered over at a later stage with another, darker layer of paint.

#### Signature

In the left background below the hand holding the staff, in light grey on the darker grey of the background (<Rembrandt/f . . 34>). Old photographic reproductions show the signature much lighter and more distinct than it appears today, probably because of the yellowed varnish. What is clearly visible of the letters makes, with the firm drawing and the convincing resemblance to what we know of Rembrandt's signatures, an extremely reliable impression.

#### Varnish

A discoloured layer of varnish of varying thickness affects the appearance of the colour, so that published colour reproductions give a misleading impression of the painting.

#### 4. Comments

In every respect – theme, approach, handling of paint and colour-scheme – no. A 93 fits so perfectly into Rembrandt's work from in and around 1634 that there can be not the slightest doubt about the attribution and dating. A mezzotint of 1787 and various mentions of dimensions in 18th-century sales catalogues prompt the suspicion that the canvas has been reduced by a few centimetres, mainly at the bottom (see: 6. *Graphic reproductions* and 8. *Provenance*).

The painting belongs to the series of large-scale knee-length pictures of women from mythology and history that began with the New York *Bellona* of 1633 (no. A 70), and has most in common in manner of painting and interpretation with the Madrid *Sophonisba* of 1634 (no. A 94). This resemblance applies most to the partly broad and often quite flat, sometimes almost draughtsmanlike manner of painting. Where the former is concerned this serves to suggest bulk, while the latter enlivens the surface texture (e.g. in the weave of the brocade) and models the sketchily drawn accessories. (In another work from 1634, the Moscow *Incredulity of Thomas*, no. A 90, the graphic use of paint predominates to an extent that is not met prior to that year.) The mainly cool colour-scheme (which is not now properly appreciated because of the layer of varnish) is brightened by the presence of the variegated flowers, and the light green of the satin train – a colour that is undoubtedly dictated by the subject (see below). The treatment of the background as a dimly-lit setting with an almost monochrome indication of plants brings to mind that seen in the 1633 *Bellona*, the London *Flora* (Br. 103) and the *Minerva* of 1635 (Br. 469). Finally, the female type used, with the round face and heavy eyes, shows some

Fig. 3. Detail (1:2)



similarity with that of the *Bellona*, the London *Flora* and the *Sophonisba*. There is not much ground for recognizing Saskia in this type as Weisbach<sup>2</sup> and subsequent authors have done: the resemblance to her portraits in the Berlin drawing of 1633 (Ben. 427) and etching B. 19 of 1636 must be described as inconclusive.

Where the composition is concerned a prototype has been seen in Titian's *Flora* in Florence<sup>3</sup>, which was in fact in the collection of Alfonso López in Amsterdam for some time before 1641; yet in the case of the Leningrad painting – though not perhaps in that of the London *Flora* in its final state – this is improbable. For one thing, the stance and the clothing of Rembrandt's figure differ from those in the Titian, and for another the iconographic approach is different. Titian's painting may be seen as the result of an attempt to make use of classical traditions however corrupt: the diaphanous gown with one breast exposed is borrowed from sculptures that were in the 16th century thought to represent Flora, and a text – misunderstood by the humanists of the time – that describes the picture of a Flora as

'dextra flores fabarum ac ciceris praeferens' (proffering in her right hand the flowers of beans and chick-peas) must have prompted the gesture (for the relevant information, see Held<sup>4</sup>, pp. 206, 205 and 215). There is none of this in the Rembrandt. His formal starting-point must have been a different one

All differences in style and detail apart, Rembrandt's figure shows a remarkable resemblance to a late-gothic type, such as we find represented in, for instance, the wife of Giovanni Arnolfini in Jan van Eyck's painting of 1434 now in London (fig. 4). The inclined head and the abdomen pushed forward on which the left hand gathers up the train of the garment form in both cases an almost identical pattern. Though Rembrandt has invested this pattern with a baroque sense of bulk, it is still present in the relief-like character of his figure. In contrast to the London *Flora*, which shows an interesting development towards an emphatically spatial arrangement, the body is here seen almost in profile. The right arm is invisible, making the introduction of the right hand somewhat abrupt, and the staff in this hand is held parallel to the figure.

Fig. 4. J. van Eyck, *The marriage of Giovanni Arnolfini*, 1434 (detail). London, The National Gallery



Although Rembrandt did not often use a late-gothic prototype for the pose of a figure, this example does not stand totally alone in his work (cf. F. Schmidt-Degener in: *G. d. B. -A.* 3rd series 36, 1906, pp. 89–108).

Opinions differ as to the subject-matter. The 19th-century title of *The Jewish bride*, which tended to be given to any figure of a woman with long hair, is not now taken seriously. But does the picture represent Flora the goddess of flowers and Spring, or just a young woman dressed as a shepherdess? The first time the painting was described, in 1770, she was called a lady 'in the guise of a shepherdess' (see 8. *Provenance*). This idea, with the added notion that it was a portrait of Saskia, was again accepted by Kieser<sup>5</sup> and by MacLaren<sup>6</sup>, who gave the thematically-related painting of 1635 in London (Br. 103) the title '*Saskia van Ulenborch in arcadian costume*'. The most comprehensive defence of this view comes from Louttit<sup>7</sup>, who argues that the garments shown in the Leningrad and London pictures, 'although not garments of high fashion, are nevertheless perfectly in line with fashionable wear of the mid 1630s'. She explains this by pointing to the similarity between this clothing (in particular the high girdle, the pouched sleeves and, in the case of the London picture, the square-cut neckline) and costumes in pictures connected with the theatre. One may

assume that Rembrandt did indeed drape existing costumes, taken from or connected with the theatre, on lay figures in order to depict them in their structure and detail. Less convincing is Louttit's attempt to couple a specific pastoral significance with the theatrical element. This kind of costume (in which, as she fails to mention, 16th-century motifs are incorporated) is – as may be seen from her own illustrations – in no way limited to pictures that can be linked to the pastoral fashion that in the 1630s pervaded upper-class circles, in parallel with a literary genre that was introduced into the Netherlands with Pieter Cornelisz. Hooft's pastoral play *Granida* of 1605. Rembrandt's own work, and that of his school and contemporaries, provide ample evidence of this fact; Rembrandt could, in the London painting of 1635 (Br. 103), change a Judith into a Flora without her undergoing a change of dress. On the other hand shepherdesses, as painted by Utrecht artists (Honthorst, Moreelse and Bloemaert) in the 1620s and 1630s – either as portraits or as a type –, were always depicted in less extravagant dress and without such a superabundance of flowers, mostly with a broad-brimmed straw hat and virtually always with a shepherd's crook. The portraits done by Gerrit van Honthorst of royal and noble ladies of the court in The Hague who in the 1630s garbed themselves in the pastoral fashion referred to by Louttit (see in particular the catalogue of the Craven sale, London (Sotheby's) 27 November 1968, no. 61, our fig. 5, and no. 62) come very close to the Utrecht type and show costumes entirely different to those in Rembrandt's paintings in Leningrad and London. The conclusion that the garments depicted here show a link with theatrical costumes and that they 'can in no way be considered to be a purely fantastic product of the artist's imagination alone' (Louttit, op. cit.<sup>7</sup>, p. 326) seems to be warranted (cf. also the interesting theory on Rembrandt's interest in theatrical performances by H. van de Waal in: *Miscellanea I. Q. van Regteren Altena*, Amsterdam 1969, pp. 145–149). It seems wrong however to identify this theatrical component of his imagery with a pastoral fashion. This is not to say that the subject of Rembrandt's paintings in Leningrad and London might not have prompted pastoral associations, as was also assumed by A. McNeil Kettering<sup>8</sup>. The overlapping of the theatrical and pastoral usages makes this quite possible: and that this association arose not just in the 18th century but existed in Rembrandt's own times is evident from the fact that Flinck's paintings at Amsterdam and Braunschweig (the latter dated 1636; cf. Von Moltke *Flinck*, nos. 130 and 140, pls. 26 and 27), which unmistakably show (individual persons as?) a shepherd and a shepherdess, together

contain a number of elements that are taken from the Leningrad Rembrandt. Stronger evidence still is that Rembrandt himself has, in choosing light green satin for the gowns in this painting and the London *Flora*, evidently been guided by an association that perhaps on the stage but certainly in literature had to do with pastoral dress. Louttit (op. cit.<sup>7</sup>, p. 322) cites as an example the description of the shepherdess Rosemond in Johan van Heemskerck's *Batavische Arcadia*, Amsterdam 1647, 2nd edn (the first edition, under a different title, is from 1637), pp. 46–47: 'Zijnde een bleek-groen Satyne hongherlijn, de verw van 't wilghe-bladt seer na komende: ghebeelt met ghestrickt loof-werck, en gheboort met een kleyn net kantje van goud en silver' (Being a pale-green satin bodice, very close to the colour of willow-leaves: decorated with a pattern of embroidered leaf-work, and edged with a little border in gold and silver). The pastoral connotation that one must assume from this still does not invalidate the conclusion that the interpretation of no. A 93 as the portrait of a woman – possibly Saskia – as a shepherdess rests on insufficient grounds. It seems neither to have an essentially pastoral character, nor to be a 'portrait historié'.

The idea that the paintings in Leningrad and London have a mythological subject and represent Flora is far more plausible. Bode and Hofstede de Groot<sup>9</sup> introduced this notion, their only but cogent argument for it being the fact that a note in Rembrandt's handwriting on the back of a drawing in Berlin (Ben. 448) showed that he traded in work by his pupils, in three cases a 'flora(e)' being mentioned. Rembrandt himself thus applied the title 'Flora' to pictures from his workshop (presumably copied after work from his own hand). Though paintings of this subject did not occur all that frequently in Netherlandish painting, they were not uncommon in both the sixteenth century (works by Jan Massys, for example) and the seventeenth. The inventory of the estate of the Amsterdam painter Barent Theunisz. of 1629 mentions 'een groote schildery van Flora' (A. Bredius, *Kunstler-Inventare I*, The Hague 1915, p. 291) and the Amsterdam Bartolotti family owned, according to an inventory of 1649, in their house on the Herengracht 'een ditto van Flora in vergulde lijst' (a ditto [= painting] of Flora in a gilt frame) (G. Leonhardt, *Het huis Bartolotti en zijn bewoners*, Amsterdam 1979, pp. 79 and 91–92, plus information kindly supplied by the author). Taken together these facts, especially Rembrandt's own note, form strong evidence that the paintings in Leningrad and London must be looked on as genuine history paintings with a wholly mythological subject. It must be doubted whether Rembrandt was here following any traditional

Fig. 5. G. van Honthorst, *Portrait of Catharina Elizabeth, Countess of Isenburg (?)*. Craven sale, London 1968



Flora type in its formal aspects; he appears rather to have adopted a late-gothic prototype (see above). The figure covered with flowers does however, as Held (op. cit.<sup>4</sup>, pp. 207, 218) has pointed out, fit in well with the traditional meaning that pictures of the goddess of flowers and Spring had. One can furthermore take it that this picture (in which two tulips appear in a prominent position) had a certain topicality in the Holland of the 1630s in connexion with the flourishing tulip trade.

A derivative can be seen – apart from the two paintings already mentioned by Flinck – in a painting (which to judge from the reproduction is very rembrandtesque) that is now oval but was originally rectangular, and shows the bust of a young woman wearing a wreath of flowers on her head and carrying a small bouquet of flowers in her left hand (Bode and Hofstede de Groot, op. cit.<sup>9</sup>, no. 190; at that time coll. Adolphe Schloss, Paris). One might well recognize in this a work mentioned by Rembrandt on the back of the Berlin drawing (Ben. 448) as having been sold by him and done by 'fardynandus' (Ferdinand Bol) 'van syn voorneemen' (to his own design).

##### 5. Documents and sources

None.



Fig. 6. Copy after Rembrandt. The Hague, private collection



## 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Mezzotint by Heinrich Sintzenich (Mannheim 1752 – Munich 1812) inscribed: *Rembrand Gemald – Von Sintzenich geschaben in Mannheim|januar 1787|Erste Platte|Ophelia* (not in Charrington). A fairly broad reproduction in the same direction as the original, framed more tightly at the right and top and more generously at the left and – especially – bottom. This may indicate that the canvas has been somewhat reduced, mostly at the bottom, since 1787. There is however no documentary evidence of the painting being in Mannheim in that year.

## 7. Copies

1. Canvas, oval 70 × 55 cm, The Hague, private collection (fig. 6). Shows the figure to the waist, with the left hand complete but without the right hand; the plants vaguely visible in the background have been included. An old and faithful copy, possibly a fragment.

## 8. Provenance

– Coll. Herman Aarentz, ex-secretary to the Friesland Court-Martial, Gentleman Bailiff and Councillor at Deventer, sale Amsterdam 11 April 1770 (Lugt 1831), no. 1: 'Rembrandt van Rhyn. Ao. 1634. Een staande Dame in een Landschap. Hoog 48, breed 39 duim (Rhylandse voetmaat) [= 125.5 × 102 cm]. De Dame is levensgrootte verbeeld in de gedaante van een Herderin, een weinig op zyde te zien; haare kleeding is prachtig, zynde een schoone Brunet, met loshangend hair. Het hoofd, zo wel als de Herdersstaf, dewelke zij in haare rechterhand heeft, is rykelyk versierd met Bloemen en groente; met

haare linkerhand houd zy haar kleet een weinig opwaards. Alles uitmuntend, kleurlyk, kragtig en uitvoerig op Doek geschilderd, en wel in zyn besten tyd.' (Rembrandt van Rhyn. Ao. 1634. A standing lady in a landscape. Height 48, width 39 inches (Rhineland feet). The lady is shown lifesize in the guise of a shepherdess, seen a little to the side; her dress is splendid, her being a beautiful brunette with hair hanging long. Her head, as well as the shepherd's crook that she holds in her right hand, is richly adorned with flowers and leaves; with her left hand she holds her gown a little upwards. All excellent, colourful, skilfully and elaborately painted on canvas, and from his best period.) (2600 guilders to Van Diemen; bought in).

\*– Possibly sale coll. [Gabriel Huquier père], Paris 1–23 July 1771 (Lugt 1944), no. 2: 'Un Portrait de femme de grandeur naturelle, peinte par le même jusqu'au genoux; sa tête est couronnée de fleurs: hauteur 4 pieds 1 pouce, largeur 3 pieds 2 pouces & demi [= 132.6 × 102.8 cm].' (60 livres).

\*– Possibly sale coll. [Jombert père], Paris 15ff April 1776 (Lugt 2528), no. 6: 'La Mariée Juive, vue à mi-corps: elle est vêtue richement, couronnée de fleurs, & tient un bâton qui en est orné. Ce tableau porte le nom de Rembrandt, & l'année 1638. H. 4 pi. 2 pou. l.3 p. 2 pou. [= 135 × 102.6 cm] Toile.' – Coll. Empress Catherine II of Russia. *Catalogue raisonné des Tableaux qui se trouvent dans les Galeries, Sallons et Cabinets du Palais Impérial de S. Petersbourg, commencé en 1773 et continué jusqu'en 1783 incl.* (MS in the Hermitage Museum, Leningrad), no. 1772: 'Rembrandt. Portrait d'une jeune femme. Elle est coiffée de fleurs, tenant de la main droite une houlette, ou un bâton entorsillé de verdure, etc. enlevant de la gauche l'habillement qui la couvre, les cheveux lui tombent sur les épaules et le dos. Ce tableau est bien colorié et le vêtement artistement touché mais le reste n'annonce guères le Rembrandt et, non obstant qu'il porte sa signature, les connaisseurs ont de la peine de se persuader qu'il est de lui. Demi fig. Sur toile. Haut 1 ar.[chine] 11½V.[erchokk] Large 1 ar. 6½V. [= 122.1 × 100 cm].'

## 9. Summary

In artistic approach and execution the painting fits perfectly into the group of mythological and historical female figures that Rembrandt painted during the years 1633–1635. Features characteristic of his manner in 1634 are the modelling and almost draughtsmanlike brushwork used in particular for the flowers and leaves which together with the flatter, broader treatment of the large convex surfaces in the flesh areas and clothing, determines the appearance of the work. The structure of the figure is here somewhat fragmented – it calls to mind drapery studies of clothes hung on a lay figure to which have been added a head and hands that do not seem to have been entirely integrated. In the Madrid *Sophonisba* (no. A 94) of the same year and the London *Flora* (Br. 103) of 1635 Rembrandt was to handle a similar theme with greater coherence and a greater effect of depth.

The costume of the goddess Flora, probably of theatrical origin, has a certain affinity with the pastoral fashion of the second quarter of the 17th century, but one cannot from this deduce that the



painting is meant as a portrait in pastoral costume, as was thought in the 18th century.

## REFERENCES

- 1 *Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn. Paintings from Soviet Museums*, Leningrad [c. 1971], no. 7.
- 2 W. Weisbach, *Rembrandt*, Berlin-Leipzig 1926, p. 284.
- 3 H. Voss, 'Rembrandt und Tizian', *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft* 28 (1905), pp. 156–162, esp. 158.
- 4 J. S. Held, 'Flora, Goddess and Courtesan', *De artibus opuscula XL. Essays in honour of Erwin Panofsky*, New York 1961, pp. 201–208.
- 5 E. Kieser, 'Ueber Rembrandts Verhältnis zur Antike', *Zeitschr. f. Kunstgesch.* 10 (1941/42), pp. 129–162, esp. 155 note 8; cf. R. Vishnevsky, *Studien zum 'portrait historié' in den Niederlanden*, diss. Munich 1967, p. 107.
- 6 N. MacLaren *The Dutch School* (National Gallery Catalogues), London 1960, pp. 332–336.
- 7 M. Louttit, 'The romantic dress of Saskia van Ulenborch: its pastoral and theatrical associations', *Burl. Mag.* 115 (1973), pp. 317–326.
- 8 A. McNeil Kettering, 'Rembrandt's *Flute player*: a unique treatment of pastoral', *Simiolus* 9 (1977), pp. 19–44, esp. 24.
- 9 W. Bode with collaboration of C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt III*, Paris 1899, pp. 18–19, nos. 186–189.

HdG 223; BR. 468; BAUCH 101; GERSON 69

Fig. 1. Canvas 142 × 153 cm



### 1. Summarized opinion

An authentic painting, with a not wholly convincing signature and date of 1634, in which the main figure and other light areas are in sound condition.

### 2. Description of subject

A young woman sits beside a table standing on the right, in a chair of which only the velvet-covered ends of the armrests are visible. The body is turned a little to the left, and the face slightly to the right, while the eyes look back towards the left. One hand rests on the table, while the other is held against her body below the breast. She wears a richly-embroidered undergarment with long, wide sleeves, over which is a braided, sleeveless garment of a shiny white material; a wide ermine collar rests on her shoulders. She wears pearl ear-drops, strings

of pearls in her hair, around her neck and wrists, and a heavy gold chain with red and blue stones looping over the shoulders and up to a brooch at the breast. On the table, which is covered with a richly-patterned cloth, a folio volume lies open.

To the left in front of her is a servant girl, seen half-length and partly from behind, with the face in lost profile; she is offering the woman a drinking vessel in the form of a nautilus shell in a gold mount. In the very dark background, where draperies are vaguely visible, can be seen a figure with a cloth wound round the head. The light falls from the left.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 13 March 1972 (B. H., P. v. Th.) in very unsatisfactory light, on the wall and in the frame.

*Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, 142 × 153 cm, with two horizontal marks at about 33.5 and 73 cm from the bottom edge, perhaps indicating one or two joins.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Not seen.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*Paint layer*

CONDITION: In the vital areas, the main figure and the table, the condition is sound. That of the background, including the barely-visible figure there, is difficult to assess; retouches and an uneven surface in the left background indicate an old damage. The condition of the servant in the foreground may leave something to be desired. Craquelure: a pattern of canvas-type craquelure is plainly visible throughout.

DESCRIPTION: The paint is applied opaquely over the entire surface, the lighter passages being in general painted more thickly and with more relief than the dark. The brushstroke can for the most part be readily followed.

The face of the main figure is painted with brushstrokes that are just visible, in a quite light flesh tone with a little pink on the cheeks and tip of the nose. The forms are modelled boldly, the distribution of light and shadow lending great plasticity.

The eye on the left is bordered at the top by a series of small strokes, and the heavy eyelid is defined in the same way with brown and reddish lines. The brown iris is bounded vaguely in black. A white catchlight is placed to the top right of the black, off-round pupil, the part of the iris opposite this being somewhat lighter. The inside corner of the eye is done with a little red. The other eye shows the same structure and is distinctly outlined. Though the contrasts are stronger, the manner of painting of the iris and pupil is the same.

The cast shadow of the nose merges, in a boldly painted arc, into the very dark eyebrow and the shadow below it. In this cast shadow, which falls just across the corner of the eye, there is reflexion of light against the righthand side of the nose, done in a lighter, ochrish tint. The wing of the nose is indicated in a dull red; this runs through under the tip of the nose – which has a yellowish-white highlight – into the lefthand nostril. The transition from the chin area into the throat is modelled effectively in brownish and greyish shadow tones and reflexions of light, and the fleshy chin and lower chin give a strong three-dimensional impression.

The mouth is set down with rapid strokes of a quite bright red, with the mouth-line made up of a variety of almost black strokes. The hair, lightest on the forehead over which it falls in loose, indistinctly-separated curls, is painted quite precisely in brownish and light ochre tints and a very small amount of red; the curls in the light are indicated with separate strokes, and are somewhat unimaginatively done.

The pearls round the throat have been painted rather uniformly, with the knots between the pearls in light yellow dots and the catchlights on the pearls with spots of white and the shadows in brown. The woman's hands are done more smoothly, and shown even more plump, than the face, with fingers and nails drawn quite precisely. The shadow effect is subtly suggested.

The ermine collar is painted fairly smoothly with light, greyish and brown tints, with the structure suggested here and there with fine brushstrokes. The chain is done in very thick paint, the stones indicated in blue and red with a similar impasto. Heavy accents in the brooch are placed in red.

The sleeves are done in a mixture of colours ranging from

light and ochre yellow to a greenish blue, with the suggestion of the material and ornament lying, in fine strokes, dots and streaks, over the generally thinly-brushed modelling layer. The undergarment, too, is executed using a similar technique, with cloudy patterns in light yellow painted with relaxed strokes over a greyish blue.

The white of the overgarment is painted quite thickly, and the folds and sheen on them are shown with firm brushstrokes. The braiding is painted in brown-grey, with the shadows cast by the buttons in an almost black paint that creates an effect of plasticity. The cast shadow of the hands on the table and clothing are similarly done in near-black, and contribute greatly to the effect of depth. The armrests of the chair are executed in grey with strong highlights for the sheen that gives the impression of velvet. The tablecloth has been painted with great vivacity, using brushwork that follows the pattern. A large amount of red, in a madder-lake hue, has been used together with yellow, ochre-yellow and brown. The book is painted with fairly long strokes; the curling uppermost sheet and the shadow it casts on the barely-visible second page produce an illusionistic effect.

The figure on the left offers little detail or modelling in the lost profile of the face. The eye now gives a hardly convincing impression, possibly as a result of the state of preservation. The ear is rather lacking in structure, and the shadow effect on the lit part of the girl's back does nothing to render form. Her clothing is done with a certain cursoriness, giving scant suggestion of plasticity. The drinking-vessel appears to be set in a reserve in the white paint of Sophonisba's dress. The shell has a blueish bloom, with a strong blue on the inner surface where shadow and light merge. The liquid in the bowl has a somewhat reddish colour.

The background figure on the left is done summarily with streaky brushwork in dark greys and browns, and with a rather poor rendering of form. The eyes, nose and mouth have been done in cursory fashion.

The whole of the background now appears almost black and impenetrable. A number of strands of the hair of the main figure have been painted on top of it.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*X-Rays*

None available.

*Signature*

In thick yellow paint on the front edge of the armrest on the right <Rembrant / f (followed by three dots in a triangular pattern) 1634>. The spelling 'Rembrant' without the *d* occurs in 1632 and 1633 in a number of etchings (B. 38, B. 81 (I) and B. 101), and in a number of painted signatures from 1633 (cf. nos. A 40, A 64, A 67 and A 68); it is also seen in the earliest known autograph written documents (cf. Vol. I, p. 53). As the script is however somewhat halting and lacks the usual firmness, the inscription's authenticity is not entirely convincing. The use of yellow paint must be termed most unusual.

*Varnish*

A fairly heavy, yellowed layer of varnish hampers observation.

**4. Comments**

Examination of the painting was greatly hindered by the unfavourable circumstances, and by the

Fig. 2. Detail (1:1.5)



Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)



yellowed varnish; this made a proper assessment of the darker areas impossible. This is especially regrettable since, as Gerson says, 'its authenticity has been much questioned'<sup>1</sup>; he himself refrained from offering a definite opinion.

A characteristic feature of the work is the strong contrast effect seen in the whole composition and in the details. The three-dimensional effect is particularly well achieved almost everywhere. The figure of Sophonisba catches the full light, and makes a strong contrast with the dark background. The figure of the servant girl stands out light against the background where her lost profile catches light reflected from the main figure, and elsewhere dark against Sophonisba's light clothing. The latter is also true of the cup, itself painted with strong contrasts and, in view of the reserve in which it is placed, in this position from the outset. In the head of Sophonisba there is again a strong chiaroscuro effect, most pronounced in the shadow of the nose and by the eyebrow and chin but also evident around the mouth. The effective modelling of the convex shapes of the face stresses its plump features and the heavy eyes which the present-day viewer – used to other norms of female beauty – may perhaps find unattractive. The relative lack of subtlety in the treatment of the eyes, especially that on the right,

differs from what we are used to seeing in Rembrandt's portraits in the 1630s, and seems to be a deliberate sacrifice made in order to achieve a powerful plasticity. The black shadows cast by the fingers on the tablecloth likewise point to a firm attempt to suggest depth, as does the way the uppermost page of the book curls back, just exposing the pages beneath. The means used for producing this three-dimensional effect bear, besides, the stamp of Rembrandt's manner of painting – in the use of reflected light, and the way warmer and cooler tints alternate in the shadow areas. The fact that it is not a commissioned portrait, and that it may perhaps be intended to produce its effect when seen from some distance, has resulted in a certain lack of subtlety in the execution of the face, as can also be found in similar large-scale paintings of the same years (cf. the Munich *Holy family*, no. A 88, the Prague *Scholar*, no. A 95, and the *Minerva*, Br. 469). The working-up of the clothing and other components gives constant evidence of striking refinement in the considered use of greys, blue-greys, yellows, ochres and browns, also seen in other figures done by Rembrandt during these years, for example the Munich *Holy family* and the *Minerva*, already mentioned, and London *Flora* of 1635 (Br. 103). The manner of painting in the tablecloth is very like that



Fig. 4. Detail (1:1.5)



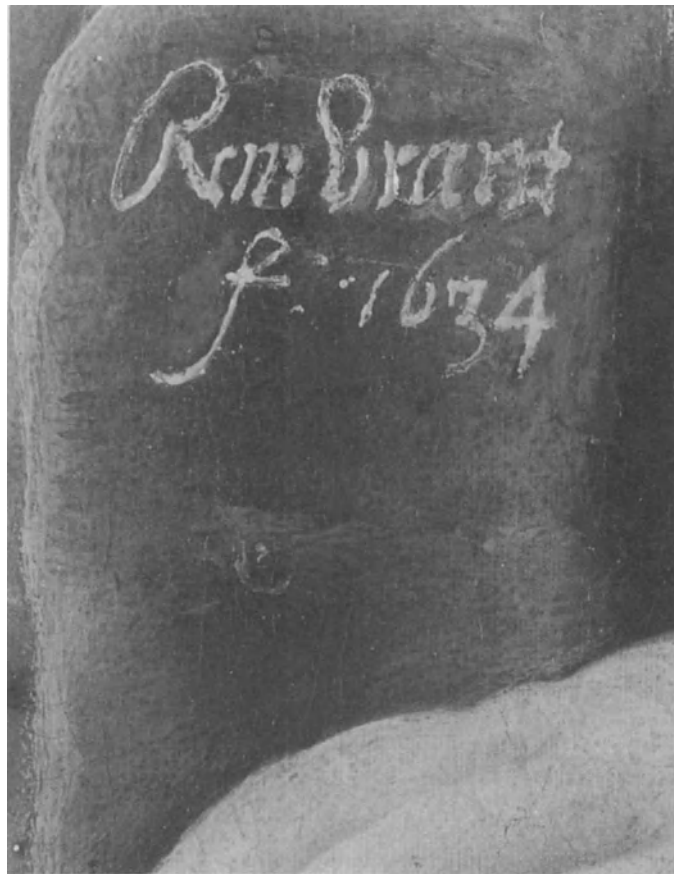
in the Prague *Scholar* and the *Minerva*. The figure of Sophonisba and the table with the book therefore cannot be regarded as other than from Rembrandt's own hand, and the signature and date of 1634, though not entirely convincing in their present place and form, certainly provide correct information.

The manner of painting of the servant girl holding out the cup differs from that in the main figure,

but the broad and sometimes even nonchalant treatment found here should perhaps be seen as creating a deliberate pictorial contrast with the main figure. It is impossible to tell to what extent the condition of this part of the painting contributes to this effect. As a compositional element, and in the style of lighting, this figure is comparable to the matching foreground figure in the *Belshazzar's feast* of c. 1635 in London (Br. 497).



Fig. 5. Detail with signature (1:1)



There is an even more marked difference in the treatment of the figure in the background. The slovenly and streaky manner of painting, and the rather clumsy rendering of form, are difficult to fit into Rembrandt's work from the middle 1630s, and it is again impossible to tell whether this is a later addition, made inside or outside Rembrandt's workshop, or a restored passage. The very dark background, where a few vague draperies can still be made out, gives the impression of having suffered wearing.

The painting's almost square format, 142. × 153 cm, is unusual. The high placing of the main figure in the picture area gives some reason to wonder whether the canvas may once have had a different shape. It is besides quite striking that the format of comparable compositions from the years 1634/35 – the Prague *Scholar* and the *Minerva*, mentioned earlier, likewise prompt the question of an altered format. It is conceivable that the present signature and date were applied when part of the canvas, bearing an original inscription, was removed.

The type of the main figure, a woman with plump facial features and heavy eyes, strongly resembles the one Rembrandt used for the New York *Bellona* of 1633 (no. A 70), the Munich *Holy Family* and the

*Minerva* of 1635, and perhaps also for the London *Flora* of 1635. In general such figures are looked on as being Saskia van Uylenburgh; the silver-point drawing of 1633 with Rembrandt's annotation (Ben. 427) gives little reason to think this.

A suggestion by J. R. Buendía<sup>2</sup> that no. A 94 (which he sees as representing Artemisia) is a companion-piece to the Prague *Scholar* (no. A 95) must be rejected. Even if one were to assume that both works earlier had the same format, and that they are iconographically compatible, they could not be regarded as pendants because their compositions cannot be matched, and because the manner of painting in the two works differs substantially.

The subject of no. A 94 is looked on either as Artemisia<sup>3</sup>, who after the death of her husband King Mausolus drank a cup of wine mixed with the ashes of her dead spouse and then died (Aulus Gellius, *Noctes Atticae* X, 18, 3), or Sophoni(s)ba<sup>4</sup> wife of King Massinissa who, after she had been captured by Scipio and approached by him with dishonourable intent, was sent a poisoned chalice by her husband and chose death rather than infidelity (Livy XXX, 12 and 15). Both stories speak of the true love of a woman of royal blood who chooses death by taking poison. Both were known and depicted in the Netherlands in the 17th century; we know from a 1632 inventory that a painting by Rubens showing *Artemisia* hung in the rooms of Amalia of Solms on the Noordeinde in The Hague (now in Sanssouci, Potsdam; J. G. van Gelder in: *N.K.J.* 3, 1951, pp. 113–114 and fig. 4), and it is likely that in the Huis ten Bosch there was a chimney-breast piece painted by Honthorst, probably identical with an *Artemisia* by Honthorst now in the Princeton University Art Museum (Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer in: *O.H.* 84, 1969, pp. 57–58, figs. 23 and 24). There was certainly already confusion between the two subjects in the 17th century, because at a later date the Rubens was thought to show Sophonisba. The latter theme enjoyed a certain popularity in the 17th century – Jacob Cats dealt with it in his *Trouw-ring* (J. Cats, *'s Werelts begin, midden, eynde besloten in den Trouw-ring, met den Proef-steen van den selven*, part III, Dordrecht 1st edn 1637, p. 605: 'Kort verhaal van een droevigh trou-geval tusschen twee Vorstelicke personen; te weten den koningh Masounissa, en de koninginne Sophonisba' (Brief tale of a sad instance of marital fidelity between two royal personages, to wit King Masounissa and Queen Sophonisba). There are various renderings of the theme in paintings, including a work by Gerbrand van den Eeckhout (now in the Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum in Braunschweig, cat. no. 260, signed and dated 1664; fig. 6). This painting can undoubtedly be described

Fig. 6. G. van den Eeckhout, *Sophonisba receiving the poisoned cup*, 1664. Braunschweig, Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum



as Sophonisba, because there are soldiers visible in the background, a detail that fits only into the Sophonisba story.

There are probably two criteria that can be significant in deciding whether a picture represents the story of Artemisia – the widowhood of Artemisia, and her anguish at the loss of her husband. These two features are present in both Rubens' and Honthorst's paintings in the form of a widow's veil and a distraught facial expression. In no. A 94 neither the clothing nor the woman's expression indicate widowhood, and the surroundings and dress show similarities with the painting entitled *Sophonisba* done (albeit later) by Rembrandt's pupil Van den Eeckhout. It is thus very probable that Rembrandt's work, too, must be looked on as a Sophonisba.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

\*– Coll. Marquis de la Enseñada; acquired in 1769 by Charles III of Spain, together with 28 other paintings from this collection, through the intermediary of Raphael Mengs. Recorded in the Palacio Real, Madrid, in 1772<sup>3</sup>.

#### 9. Summary

The painting offers a strong suggestion of depth and plasticity, achieved by means of a vigorous chiaroscuro never seen to this extent in Rembrandt's work prior to 1634; in the face this has led to a lessening in the detail. The technical execution by which this effect is achieved is however characteristic of Rembrandt's manner of painting. In the clothing and some of the accessories the striving for illusionistic effects has resulted in a pronounced rendering of details and materials. A far broader technique has been used for the foreground figure. Inadequate facilities during examination of the painting made it impossible to assess the condition of the darker areas; one should however possibly allow for there being a less satisfactory state of preservation in these passages. The date of 1634 can be deduced from the present inscription, whether or not this is authentic; it agrees entirely with the style of the painting.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 Gerson 69; Br.-Gerson 468.
- 2 J. R. Buendía, 'Consideraciones en torno a la exposición conmemorativa de Rembrandt', *Goya. Revista de arte* 95 (March–April 1970), pp. 276–283, esp. 279.
- 3 *Museo del Prado – Catálogo de los cuadros*, Madrid 1952, p. 511, no. 2132.
- 4 HdG 223.

HDG 236; BR. 432; BAUCH 162; GERSON 93

Fig. 1. Canvas 145 × 134.9 cm



### 1. Summarized opinion

A moderately well preserved, authentic work from 1634, which may originally have been larger.

### 2. Description of subject

A man with fluffy grey sideburns is shown almost lifesize and to below the knees, seated at a table and turned slightly to the right; with the head towards the viewer. He wears a black velvet cloak trimmed with fur, draped over his chair. A double

row of gold chain hangs over his shoulders. A reddish-violet hat has, wrapped round its lower edge, a cloth band that falls down to the back over his shoulders; a chain of gold beads is worn over this headband. His left hand is held in front of his chest, the forefinger touching his chin, while his right hand rests on the table which is covered with a richly decorated greyish cloth. Various folio volumes lie and stand on the table, and one of these is open in front of him; to the right of these can be seen the inkwell of a partly-visible pewter inkstand. Behind the books can be seen a globe, and further behind this, scarcely visible, a second. To the left the background is formed by a stone wall in which a masonry half-pillar is vaguely

Fig. 2. Detail (1:1.5)



Fig. 3. X-ray





visible. To the right hangs a partly-lifted curtain. At the top right the edge of a fringe can just be seen.

The light falls from the left, so that the cast shadow of the figure falls across the open book.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 22 May 1970 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in moderate daylight, artificial light and ultraviolet fluorescence, and out of the frame. One X-ray film of the head was available, and a print of this was received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 145 × 134.9 cm. Single piece; what appears at the surface to be a horizontal seam, running at 37.2 cm (on the left) to 39.5 cm (on the right) from the top edge through the eyes, may well be due to a seam in the lining canvas.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish grey, showing through at many places.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: The painting has suffered from local damages, paint loss and wearing. Considerable damage can be seen in two more or less vertical strips that are presumably due to tears in the original canvas – on the right in the background, running from the upper edge downwards to about the centre, and on the left running through the background, hat and shoulder and somewhat curved. Distributed over the whole surface, including the area of the signature, there are numerous major and minor overpaintings, and there are retouches at the horizontal mark in the canvas, by the man's left eye and elsewhere. Craquelure: almost the entire surface has an unobtrusive, irregular netlike pattern of cracks.

DESCRIPTION: On the left the background consists of a cool yellow-grey in which a half-column is shown in lighter paint applied with long vertical and horizontal strokes. The masonry joints are indicated in brown. The area to the left of the column is painted with bold strokes running in various directions, using translucent grey and brown; the lower part, which receives less of the light, is greyer and darker, with the ground showing through. On the right, where it is darkest, the curtain is executed in a dark brown that has a slightly translucent appearance; on the left, where the folds catch the light, a more opaque grey is used.

The books are done quite cursorily. The binding of the upright books is in translucent paint, while on the cut edges of the pages the paint covers more fully. The highest lights are applied with rapid, relaxed strokes. The closed book seen lying flat, the binding of which curls up slightly, has strong highlights shown with greyish and whitish, vertical strokes. The binding is shown with reddish brushstrokes, with the shadows in black. The book lying open is painted in the lit parts – mostly to the right – with a fair degree of impasto. The lettering is shown in grey and black lines (which have in part been gone over). The cut edges of the pages, in brown, have long, dark lines to indicate the shadows. The inkwell is painted flatly in a dark grey, with vivid white catchlights. To the extreme right a form is just visible that is cut through by the edge of the painting. The tablecloth is partly translucent in greys and grey-browns with, on top of this, fluid and animated strokes in a light yellow for the pattern and lights. The two

globes are indicated vaguely (the paint in this area is in poor condition).

The scholar's head is painted quite thickly in the light, with a fairly wide variety of flesh tints, the folds and wrinkles in the skin suggested partly by means of small lines and patches of greyish and reddish paint merging into the flesh tints. The area round the lefthand eye shows some red, both in the corner of the eye and in the drawing of the lids. In the upper lid this red merges into a line of black (possibly a later addition). The pupil is a deep black, and the iris brown. The small grey catchlight is opposite the lightest part of the iris. The whole is defined with a certain deftness, with more attention given to the three-dimensional effect than to precise definition. The eye on the right is no longer in its original condition, evidently because of the horizontal mark in the canvas – both the black pupil, now set excentrically in the iris, and the borders of the eye are clearly the work of a later hand and mar the three-dimensional effect. The zone of shadow in the eye-socket on the left is in a translucent red-brown. This area of shadow runs uninterrupted via the bridge of the nose into the shadow half of the face. At the cheek and chin a more opaque and more ruddy-toned paint is used. The light on the ridge of the nose is a yellowish white, with a pinkish white on the tip. The nostril and shadow beneath the nose are set down effectively in thin, reddish paint, with a very dark grey used for the deepest shadows; below this the forms are indicated with short, light yellow and orange-yellow strokes. The red of the upper lip is subdued, and the contours have no clear edge. The thin mouth-line is a very dark red, the lower lip being shown with touches of light red. The hair and eyebrows are painted with predominantly greyish and white, fairly thick and curving strokes. The fluffy sideburns on the right, in thin, fine strokes of yellowish paint, stand out distinctly against the dark paint of the curtain. The ear is done cursorily in reddish brown and red. The cast shadow from the hat on the forehead is in dark brown, painted thinner than the part of the forehead that catches the light. The hand on the table is done in a very similar way to the face, while the hand at the chin has been worked up less fully. The structure is shown with fairly long strokes over an underlying layer – to judge from the X-ray, a light underpainting – that is still visible in relief and had brushstrokes running differently.

The hat is painted in a violet-tinged red, translucent in the shadows and more opaque in the lighter upper part. The headband has numerous small strokes of green, ochre-yellow and yellow set as a pattern over a brownish basic tone. Especially towards the bottom and in the fringe, the edges of light are suggested with thin strokes of a dry-brushed white. At the temple there is a little red placed over the paint applied earlier. This same red recurs in the fur collar, otherwise painted in brown and yellowish strokes running in various directions. The chain on top of the headband consists of round, gold-coloured blobs, invariably with a light yellow catchlight and a black edge of shadow.

The folds of the cloak are painted partly with long strokes of black into which merge strokes of grey running across the folds. The chains over the shoulders are done with slightly squiggly strokes of ochre yellow, light yellow and white, with some impasto. The visible part of the chair is painted thinly in a purplish grey, with firm strokes in the shadows.

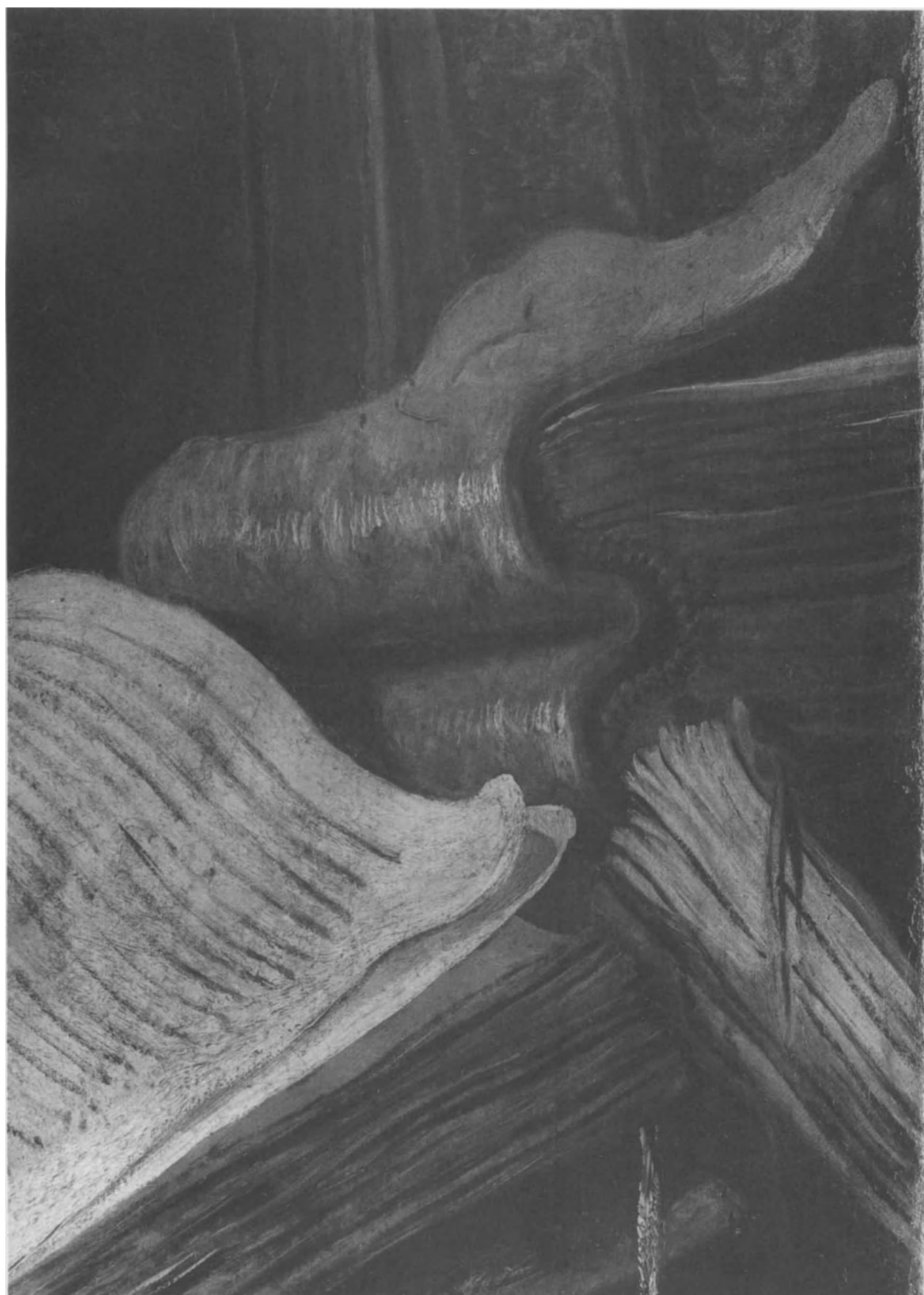
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

In the available X-ray the area to the right of the head shows up lighter than one would expect from the dark curtain. There is a rough reserve in this for the head, rather more generous



Fig. 4. Detail (1:1.5)



than the space it occupies today; the righthand contour of the head has been shifted slightly to the left during the working-up. The hand under the chin appears as a coarsely-brushed passage (probably in a rough and rather light underpainting); during completion the index finger was made to point further up towards the chin.

Local paint losses to either side of the face appear dark. At other places – e.g. in and to the right of the mouth – there are less sharply outlined, quite light patches in which the weave of the canvas is seen distinctly and dark; these do not seem to coincide with damages at the paint surface, and are perhaps connected with the presence of radioabsorbent material on the back of the canvas.

#### Signature

At the bottom left, in an area where the condition is far from good, in light grey partly gone over again with dark brown <Rembrandt.ft./1634.>. Even the first, grey version is not wholly convincing – the letters are shaky, and the initial *R* is much narrower than usual. The date makes a rather more convincing impression. Possibly the first grey version is to be seen as authentic, with the *R* ending up slimmer than the original when it was gone over in brown.

#### Varnish

An old layer of slightly yellowed varnish hampers observation to some extent.

#### 4. Comments

The style and execution of the work are unequivocal evidence of Rembrandt's authorship. In the head of the figure itself this is seen in the use of a lively distribution of light and shadow as a prime means of achieving plasticity, in the way linear elements are blended into their surroundings, and in the rhythm of the modelling brushstrokes. The treatment of the contours, articulated forcefully with billows and indentations, may also be termed entirely typical. Though in its present state the signature gives little to go on, the dating of 1634 seems to provide a correct indication of the period in which the painting was made. This is borne out by a comparison with large-format portraits such as the *Portrait of Johannes Wtenbogaert* of 1633 (no. A 80), and the *Portrait of Johannes Elison* and its pendant the *Portrait of Maria Bockenolle*, both dated 1634 (nos. A 98 and A 99). As can be expected from commissioned portraits, these works show a manner of painting that is, on the whole, less free than in the Prague *Scholar*. Even so, the use of pictorial means is basically the same, especially in the bold brushstrokes used in the backgrounds of all four works, three of which include a similarly-executed still-life of books.

In this imaginary figure Rembrandt has, more markedly than in his portraits, again experimented with the effect of light. In this respect it is interesting to see that a number of effects he used in the Amsterdam *Old woman reading* of 1631 (no. A 37) appear again here; both the effect of light in the

cloak and headgear, and the shadow effect on the books, recur (with some variation). Fresh elements include the way the light falls on the face, with a strikingly illusionistic effect from the small hairs in the sideburns catching the light and standing out against the dark curtain (a contrast perhaps made this strong only at a late stage), and the partly lit hands.

The format of the painting, only just higher than it is wide, seems a little strange. The fringe of curtain still just visible at the upper right prompts the suspicion that the canvas has been trimmed at the top. The fact that on the righthand side part of the inkstand is cut off by the edge indicates that here, too, the canvas was once larger. This possible reduction in size may have been due to an accident, as is suggested by the presence of some tears in the canvas. In the absence of visible cusping along the edges – which cannot be checked against X-rays covering the whole painting that might show it – a reduction in size remains a fair possibility.

It is as yet impossible to be more precise about the original format. A drawing in Berlin which W. Sumowski (Sumowski *Drawings* I, no. 237; our fig. 7) attributes to Ferdinand Bol does not seem conclusive on this point; it shows a still-life that is, in reverse, very similar to that in the Prague painting, but the pose of the scholar sitting beside it, seen full-length, is so different from the one in the painting that this cannot provide a firm basis for reconstruction, all the more so as the drawing has been cut on the right and shows only part of a composition.

The painting offers little help in identifying the subject. Van de Waal<sup>1</sup> called it a *Scholar in eastern dress* and remarked that 'the representation approaches portrait allure'. Bauch<sup>2</sup> called it a *Scribe* and thought in terms of an Old Testament character. Apart from the books, which very generally point to a scholar, only the dress – which is vaguely eastern and reminded Gudlaugsson<sup>3</sup> of theatrical costume – and the two globes – the second of which can scarcely be seen – give any more precise indication, but even they do not bring one much nearer to an answer; one might surmise that he is a geographer or astronomer from classical antiquity or from the eastern world. Another possible clue is offered by a mention in the estate of the daughter of the Pessers, the couple painted by Rembrandt in Rotterdam in 1634 (cf. nos. A 102 and A 103; in the sale, held in Rotterdam on 15 May 1676, of the paintings of Reynier van der Wolff and his children, as heirs to Maria Pesser (Hoet II, p. 344), there was under no. 14 of the Dutch masters 'Een Paracelsus, een half Figuur, door Rembrant – 200.- [guilders]'. From the relatively high price one may deduce that

Fig. 5. Detail (1:1)

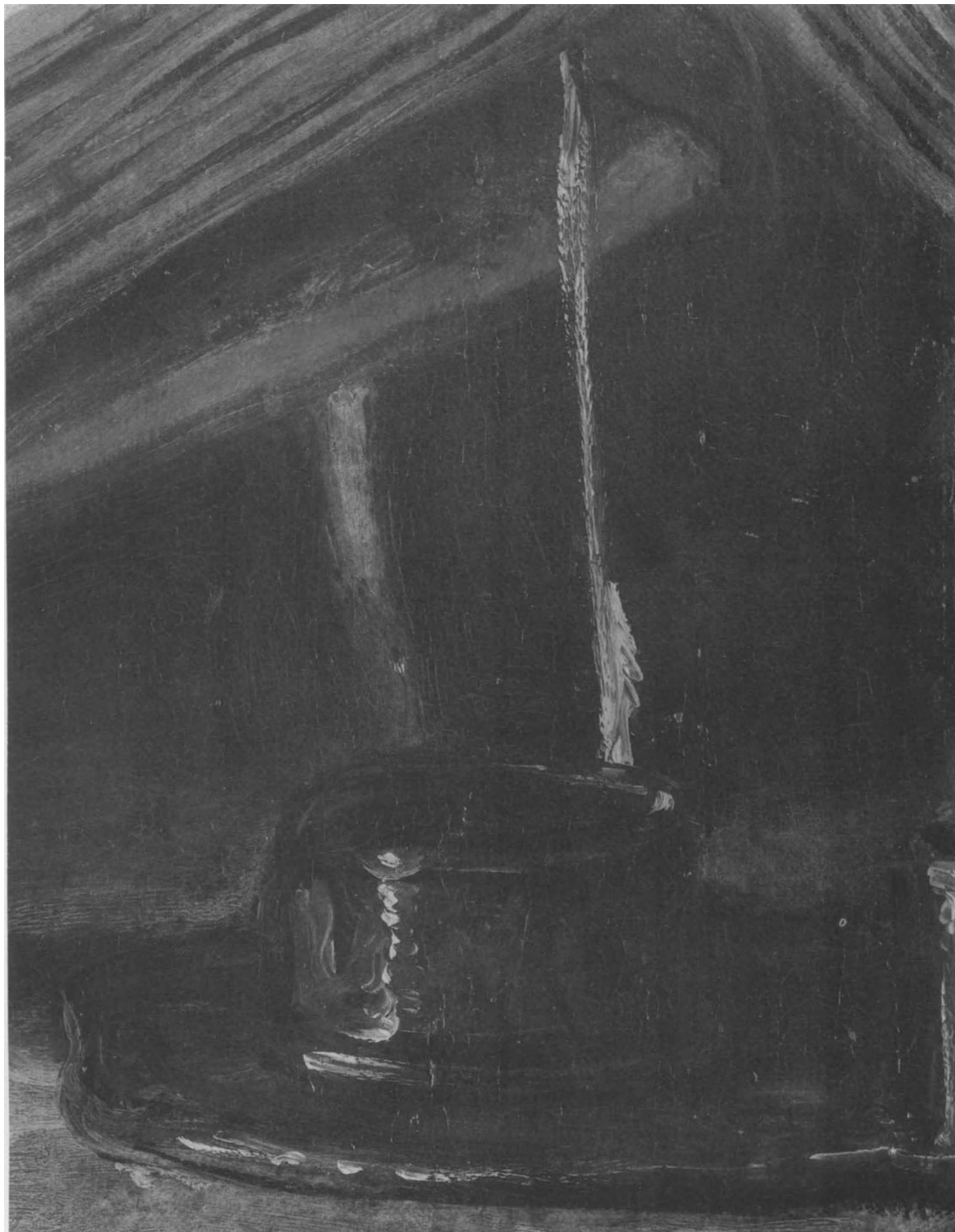
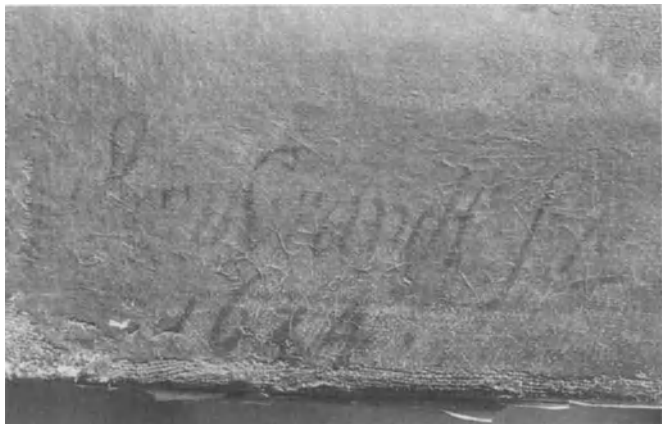


Fig. 6. Detail with signature (reduced)



this was a fairly large painting, and among the paintings by Rembrandt that have survived no. A 95 is the only one that can be considered in any way for such an identification; the fact that this painting is dated 1634 might indicate that the Pessers acquired it in the same year they had their own portraits painted. If one can assume that Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus Paracelsus van Hohenheim (Einsiedeln 1493 – Salzburg 1541) was looked on in the 17th century mainly as an astrologer (in which case the globes, interpreted as a terrestrial and a celestial globe, would be relevant), and if the costume can be understood as exotic and old rather than as specifically eastern, then one can perhaps take it that the figure depicted is indeed meant to be Paracelsus. In two English sales – London 13–16 October 1691 (Lugt 109), no. 79, and London 6–7 November 1691 (Lugt 115), no. 35 – there was mention of ‘Doctor Paracelsus, after Ranbrant’. The suggestion by J. R. Buendía<sup>4</sup> that no. A 95 might have been the same size as the stylistically very similar Madrid *Sophonisba*, also dated 1634 (no. A 94), is understandable, but to conclude from this that the Prague painting must represent Plato is unconvincing, if only because the globes would not fit in well with this philosopher as he is traditionally portrayed.

##### 5. Documents and sources

None.

##### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

##### 7. Copies

None.

##### 8. Provenance

\*– Perhaps identical with a painting in the sale of coll. Reynier van der Wolff and his children, as heirs of his deceased wife Maria Pesser, Rotterdam 15 May 1676 (Lugt 5), no. 14:

Fig. 7. Attr. to F. Bol, *A scholar seated*, pen drawing 15.5 × 12.2 cm. Berlin (West), Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett



‘Een Paracelsus, een half Figuur, door Rembrandt. 200 – o’ (Hoet II, p. 344).

\*– Perhaps identical with one of the following paintings in the Count of Hogendorp sale, The Hague 27 July 1751 (Lugt 764), nos. 155 and 156: ‘Een Philosoph, leevens groote, door Rembrandt, schoon geschildert, zynde een Kniestuk. fl. 22–10. Een dito, door denzelve. fl. 20 – o’ (Hoet II, p. 307). (A philosopher, life-size, by Rembrandt, finely painted, being a knee-length work . . . A ditto . . .).

– From 1819 mentioned as being in coll. Count Nostitz, Prague, cat. 1905, no. 170.

##### 9. Summary

No. A 95 fits in, in its manner of painting, treatment of light and composition, among Rembrandt’s work from the mid-1630s. In particular, comparisons with the *Portrait of Johannes Elison* of 1634 (no. A 98) are decisive in this respect. The painting has suffered some damage; the canvas appears to have been reduced in size. The signature has evidently been reinforced, possibly over an original; the date of 1634 must at all events be regarded as correct.

##### REFERENCES

- 1 H. van de Waal, ‘Rembrandt’s Faust etching, a Socinian document, and the iconography of the inspired scholar’, *O.H.* 74 (1964), pp. 7–48, esp. 37; reprinted in: idem, *Steps towards Rembrandt*, Amsterdam–London 1974, pp. 133–181, esp. 143.
- 2 Bauch 1966, 162.
- 3 S. J. Gudlaugsson, ‘Bredero’s Lucelle door eenige zeventiende eeuwse meesters uitgebeeld’, *N.K.J.* 1 (1947), pp. 177–195, esp. 182 and fig. 10.
- 4 J. R. Buendía, ‘Consideraciones en torno a la exposición conmemorativa de Rembrandt’, *Goya. Revista de arte* 95 (1970), pp. 276–283, esp. 279–280.

HDG 526; BR. 21; BAUCH 308; GERSON 158

**1. Summarized opinion**

A reasonably well preserved, authentic work (slightly reduced at the bottom), with a poorly preserved signature and date of 1634.

**2. Description of subject**

Bust of a young man with Rembrandt's features, in front of an illuminated wall. His upper body is turned three-quarters right, the head straight towards the viewer and tilted a little to the right. He wears a black velvet cap that casts a shadow over the eyes, and a black cloak with a fur edge under which, it seems, the right arm is held in front of his chest. At the throat can be seen a garment with an upstanding black collar, over which is draped a green shawl. The light falls from the left, so that much of the face is shaded by the cap and the figure casts a shadow on the rear wall towards the lower right.

**3. Observations and technical information***Working conditions*

Examined in November 1968 (S. H. L., E. v. d. W.) in good daylight and out of the frame. Four X-ray films, covering the whole painting, were received later.

*Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 58.3 × 47.4 cm. Thickness varying from 1 to 1.2 cm. Single plank. Back bevelled along three sides, at the top to the right over three-quarters of the width of the panel to a maximum width of 2 cm, and on the righthand side up the full height of the panel. The lefthand edge, which is not entirely straight but bows slightly outwards, is for the most part bevelled very irregularly – broadest at the bottom, to a width of c. 4 cm; upwards the bevelling runs almost to the edge. There is no bevelling along the bottom, where the panel appears to have been crudely sawn at a later date, leaving a rough edge with projecting splinters.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg): measurement along the lower edge showed 224 annual rings heartwood, not datable.

*Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish tint shows through in large parts of the background and in thin areas in the face and clothing, and locally at the outline of the hair.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*Paint layer*

CONDITION: There has been some paint loss possibly due to blistering, especially in the background at the lower right, in the shadow part of the face level with the nose, and below the righthand corner of the mouth; more can be seen in the clothing, mostly in the lefthand bottom corner of the painting. The retouching of the damages has been unnecessarily extensive, and is particularly obtrusive on the left between the corner of the eye and the ridge of the nose. The pupils of the eyes may have been strengthened. Otherwise, the condition is reasonably sound. Craquelure: a large, irregular pattern of what are probably shrinkage cracks can be seen on the lefthand shoulder. There is more fine craquelure in the green shawl and at individual points such as the righthand eye and the nostrils. A heavy varnish craquelure gives a false impression of there being severe craquelure over the whole painting.

DESCRIPTION: The manner of painting is very fluent, with the paint applied thinly and creates a lively interplay of billowing contours and an animated pattern of light and dark elements. In almost all areas apart from the lit side of the head the yellowish ground contributes to the overall luminosity.

In the greater part of the illuminated background, especially at the top and righthand edges, the paint is applied thinly and freely, so that the tone is to a great extent governed by the ground. The ground showing through also plays a role in the area of cast shadow, as well as on the left along the fur. Along the right- and lefthand contours of the cap and along the hair and right shoulderline the grey of the background is more opaque, and seems to lie partly over the paint of the cap and hair. Elsewhere, such as in the lower part of the hair on the right and at the adjoining shoulder contour, the paint has plainly been placed on top of that of the background.

The lit flesh area is in opaque paint applied with quite small and free brushstrokes. The rest of the face is kept in thin and partly translucent browns and greys. Here and there reflections of light are placed in thicker paint or else by merely leaving the ground exposed; in the eye-sockets, in particular, these have an important function in the subtle play of direct and indirect light on the face. The eyes are done cursorily, with the ground here and there helping to determine the tone and colour. The linear aspect tends to predominate: in the eye on the left the grey iris is given a dark outline, and the lower border of the bottom eyelid appears to have been set down with a single brushstroke. The other eye is done more vaguely. The mouth-line (which suggests that the lips are apart) is set down as a single, fairly broad, black stroke. In the upper lip a red is applied with mainly horizontal brushstrokes; the lower lip is done with small, dabbing strokes.

The hair consists for the most part of strokes of dark grey, indicating the curls. The cap is in black paint placed over an underlying brown layer. Lights and reflected light are shown with strokes of grey. The shawl is painted with small strokes in varying shades of an opaque green, through which the ground can occasionally be glimpsed. The upstanding collar, over which the shawl is placed, is executed in black. The fur is set down, over a brown underpainting, with short strokes in greys and browns that run in various directions; here and there a touch of ochre yellow is used. The cloak, too, has a brown underpainting, over which large and broadly sweeping brushstrokes of black have been placed, with greys for the lights on the folds. Bold strokes of black have been placed between the fur and the cloak, indicating a cast shadow.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

*X-Rays*

The radiographic image broadly matches what one expects from the paint surface. Differences are seen only in the line taken by the contours; these indicate that the background was in general worked up before work was started on completing the figure. Thus the outline of the cap, the fur collar on the left, a major part of the contour of the hair and that of the shoulder on the right all run rather differently and for the most part inside the present line, showing that the paint of the figure mostly overlaps that of the background. It will however be evident from the description that at the paint surface the background overlaps the figure at a number of places at the righthand contour of the cap and by the hair on the right. This shows that in the course of the painting process the background along this contour was gone over again in order to correct the line.

In the upper lefthand corner, where the painting has a dark even tone, the X-ray shows a light area that may indicate the



Fig. 1. Panel 58.3 × 47.4 cm





Fig. 2. X-ray



Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1)



use of a radioabsorbent material; the background was perhaps lighter here in an earlier version.

In the left background, level with the throat, a large wax seal on the back of the panel shows up light, and there is another seal in the bottom righthand corner.

#### Signature

In dark paint in the area of cast shadow at the lower right <R . . . brandt.f/ 1634>. The partly worn condition makes it hard to assess its authenticity; so far as one can tell, it does not appear unreliable.

#### Varnish

A thick layer of varnish, with heavy craquelure.

#### 4. Comments

Given the absence of any bevelling along the bottom edge of the panel, and the rough traces of sawing at this edge, one may assume that the painting was once larger at the bottom. The etching of 1753 by G. F. Schmidt (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 1; fig. 5), which is faithful in general even if not wholly reliable where, precisely, the proportions of the picture area are concerned, does support this assumption in that the costume extends further downwards, and provides evidence that this change in format took place after 1753. Some 2 cm may have been lost in the process.

This painting has always, and rightly, been accepted as a Rembrandt in the literature. In the manner of painting and the artistic approach it has all the hallmarks that one would expect to find in an autograph Rembrandt. They include the lively, thin brushwork, making a sophisticated use of the contribution from the underlying ground, and the way (to judge by the X-ray) the figure has, starting from a rather rough lay-in – done after the background had been worked up – been given its final form with characteristic alterations to the contours. The thin painting of the shadow areas in the head, giving a subtle suggestion of reflexions of light, and the succinct treatment of large areas of the painting that focuses the viewer's attention on the only lit area worked up in detail, are here taken even

Fig. 5. Etching by G. F. Schmidt (reproduced in reverse)



further than one is used to seeing in Rembrandt's work. Where its formal characteristics are concerned the painting is remarkable for the great autonomy of the sinuous contours, offering a vivid counterpoint to the frontal pose of the head, which is itself exceptional. It is not only the contours that serve to loosen up this square-on pose – the play of light and shade over the head, and its slight tilt against the body seen almost in profile, create a most arresting picture. The arabesque-like feeling of the contour is emphasized by the way the silhouette of head and body stands out against a background that is lightest alongside it. This is specially apparent from the fact that, according to the radiographic image, the background originally formed a more uniform backdrop and the chiaroscuro effect was heightened at a later stage. In this respect no. A 96 continues a stylistic tendency that started in 1631 with, in particular, the Chicago *Old man in a gorget and black cap* (no. A 42), which became already very apparent in the Paris *Self-portrait* of 1633 (no. A 71), but was not taken as far. In general, parallels for this approach to the organization of the picture and handling of light have to be sought not so much in Rembrandt's formal portraits as in his usually larger compositions of single figures in fanciful costumes.

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by G. F. Schmidt (Schönerlinde near Berlin 1712 – Berlin 1775) inscribed in the right background *Rembrandt pinx. | G f Schmidt fec aquaforti | 1753* (fig. 5). Reproduces the painting fairly accurately in reverse. The costume continues further down, making it more evident that the right arm is held across the chest under the cloak and pointing to the painting having subsequently been reduced in size. The cast shadow runs obliquely upwards.
2. Etching by Johann Andreas Nothnagel (Buch 1729 – Frankfurt a.M. 1804), with a star in the left background. Reproduces the painting broadly, in reverse. Two plumes have been added to the cap. The shawl is shown differently, knotted around the neck.
3. Etching by J. G. Hertel (late 18th century) inscribed in the upper left background: *J. G. Hertel sculp* and in the bottom margin *No. 1 Hertel excud.*; reproduces the painting in the same direction, in a closer framing.
4. Etching by Friedrich Christian Gottlieb Geyser (Leipzig 1772 – 1846); reproduces the painting broadly, framed more tightly and in the same direction.

In view of the line taken by the cast shadow in nos. 2–4 above, which in all three prints matches that in the Schmidt etching, one may assume that nos. 2–4 were done from the etching and not from the painting itself. The mention by Hofstede de Groot of a print by A. L. Krüger is based on a misunderstanding; this is in fact a print after the Berlin *Bust of Rembrandt* (no. C 56).

## 7. Copies

1. Hofstede de Groot<sup>1</sup> mentions an old copy at Schwerin already recorded as being in the Grossherzogliches Museum in 1821.
2. A copy of 1736 by King Friedrich Wilhelm I of Prussia is in Schloss Charlottenburg in Berlin.
3. A copy on canvas, that on stylistic grounds must be seen as 18th century, is in private ownership in Maastricht.

## 8. Provenance

- At all events already in the Prussian royal collection in 1736 (see 7. *Copies*, 2 above); perhaps described as in the picture gallery at Sanssouci (in: C. F. Nicolai, *Beschreibung der königlichen Residenz-Städte Berlin und Potsdam* III, 1786, p. 1210 no. 87); this listing could however also relate to the *Bust of Rembrandt*, no. C 56.
- Transferred in 1830 from the royal palaces to the Königliche Museen, Berlin.

## 9. Summary

In manner of painting this is a characteristic work by Rembrandt. In form and handling of light there is a tendency towards what could be termed a baroque design. The panel appears to have been reduced by some two centimetres at the bottom.

## REFERENCES

- 1 HdG 526.

HdG 534; BR. 22; BAUCH 307; GERSON 157

### 1. Summarized opinion

A moderately well preserved painting in which, in its present state, only the head, helmet, neckerchief and gorget can be considered authentic; the remainder of the picture has been overpainted at some later date. The signature and date are consequently likewise unauthentic, though 1634 is acceptable as an indication of the year of production.

### 2. Description of subject

A man in fanciful military garb, with Rembrandt's facial features, leans forward over a parapet of which only the top edge can be seen. The head is raised, with the gaze fixed on the viewer. He wears a helmet encrusted with ornamentation and, to the left, a plume-holder in which there are one light and one dark feather. His half-length hair leaves the ears partly exposed; the lefthand ear has an earring. He has a blond moustache, and a tuft of beard on the chin below his half-open mouth. A dark neckerchief is knotted over a gorget. The clothing further consists of a leather jerkin, a dark sash running towards the upper right, and a red-brown cloak draped over the shoulders in wide folds; a tassel hangs down from the shoulder on the right. The figure stands out against a dark, neutral background, and the light falls from the left.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in October 1968 (J. B., B. H.) off the wall and in the frame, with the aid of X-ray films covering the whole of the painting except for a few gaps. An infrared photograph was received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Mahogany panel in the form of an octagon with sides of slightly uneven length, grain vertical, 80.5 × 66 cm. Thickness 1.2 cm. Single plank. At the corners there are shallow traces of rounded bevelling. According to a report from 1953 held by the museum<sup>1</sup> the panel has brown paint not only on the back, as we observed, but on the edges as well; at some points the paint applied to the front surface runs slightly over the edges.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Examination by Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Dr D. Eckstein (Hamburg) showed the panel to be mahogany; it could not be dated<sup>2</sup>.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Not seen anywhere with any certainty.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Investigations by Kühn<sup>3</sup> showed a yellowish, very thin layer in which chalk, ochre and a small amount of white lead were found, together with glue and a little oil. In view of the substances found, this is probably not just one layer but rather a layer of chalk with glue as a medium, with on top of this a very thin layer containing white lead and ochre in an oil medium (see Vol. I, Introduction, Chapter II, p. 18 ff).

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: The paint layer has a number of restored lacunae due to blistering, many of which are apparent to the naked eye beneath the yellowed varnish. It is hard to tell to what extent overpainting extends beyond these gaps. Clearly apparent retouches of considerable size can be seen in the background

above the shoulder on the left, level with the hair, and above this in a series running to the left of and above the helmet; in the figure there are two somewhat darkened retouches in the shadow part of the nose, others in the plumes on the helmet and possibly, with a suspect, chocolate-brown colour, in the hair. Retouches are also seen in the cloak, on the left by the start of the sheen on the fold furthest to the right, low down on the fold lying across the parapet, and above and below the tassel hanging against the cloak on the right. The X-ray shows further paint losses above, in and below the eye on the left, in the highlight on the gorget, in the sash, on the righthand shoulder and, particularly, at the lower left of the jerkin. Craquelure: this can be seen only in thick and old retouches, with an irregular pattern.

DESCRIPTION: The helmet, face and gorget, with the neckerchief worn over it, show a careful treatment that is absent in other areas (which are, as we shall see, overpainted).

In dark areas the helmet is rendered with fairly thin, dark grey paint, with the raised ornamentation and catchlights in thicker white and greys, and the plumes are done in strokes of whitish and green-blue paint. The underedge of the helmet shows a reflexion of light in a ruddy brown. This is followed by an almost black line of shadow, and by a ruddy cast shadow on the forehead. The brushwork in the face is clearly visible, with the modelling in the lit areas suggested with short strokes of fairly thick paint in a warm flesh tint. Reddish brown and grey are used in the partly translucent shadows, as they are in the rim of the eyelids. The corners of the eyes are done in red, that on the right merging vaguely into the shadow from which reddish and grey strokes extend out below the eye. The eye on the left has been partly overpainted, and now has an iris in a dead dark grey and a dark blue (!) pupil; on the right the eye still has its original tints, a warm grey for the iris and black for the pupil, where a dot of light has been placed as the catchlight. The shadow along the nose (in which, as we have noted, there are two retouches) is set down as a series of strokes running one into the next, leading to the left round the tip of the nose and to the right feathering out into the cheek. The lefthand nostril is shown with a touch of dark red paint; the shadow below it is a pinkish red. The moustache is painted with lively, partly very thin strokes of a brown to brown-yellow paint. The lips offer a quite strong red, separated by heavy strokes of black that can be seen in relief in the paint surface. In the hair wide strokes of a warm brown (that does not impress one as entirely reliable) indicate curls; beneath them there is a more neutral, darker brown. The ear on the left has a broad modelling. The numerous small folds in the dark, green and brown neckerchief suggest a thin but nevertheless heavy fabric; on the folds there is here and there a fine gloss of green and yellow. The dark grey of the helmet is seen again in the gorget.

Around the central area described so far, which is executed in careful detail, there are a number of large passages painted with scant sensitivity; these include the dark and almost uniform background, the yellow-brown jerkin and the dark blue sash. Some, such as the cloak, are even quite coarse. In the infrared photograph there is on the left at the bottom of the jerkin a light band extending diagonally downwards to the right; at the paint surface this band is covered over by the paint used for the jerkin and sash. The cloak has long, quite coarse strokes of a brownish red in the light and a brownish grey colour in the shadow; vertical strokes, which do not correspond to the present fall of the folds, can be seen in the relief. Finally, the surface of the painting has the remarkable feature of the centre presenting an oval inside which the paint is applied thicker and less smoothly than in areas outside it.

Fig. 1. Panel 80.5 × 66 cm





Fig. 2. X-ray

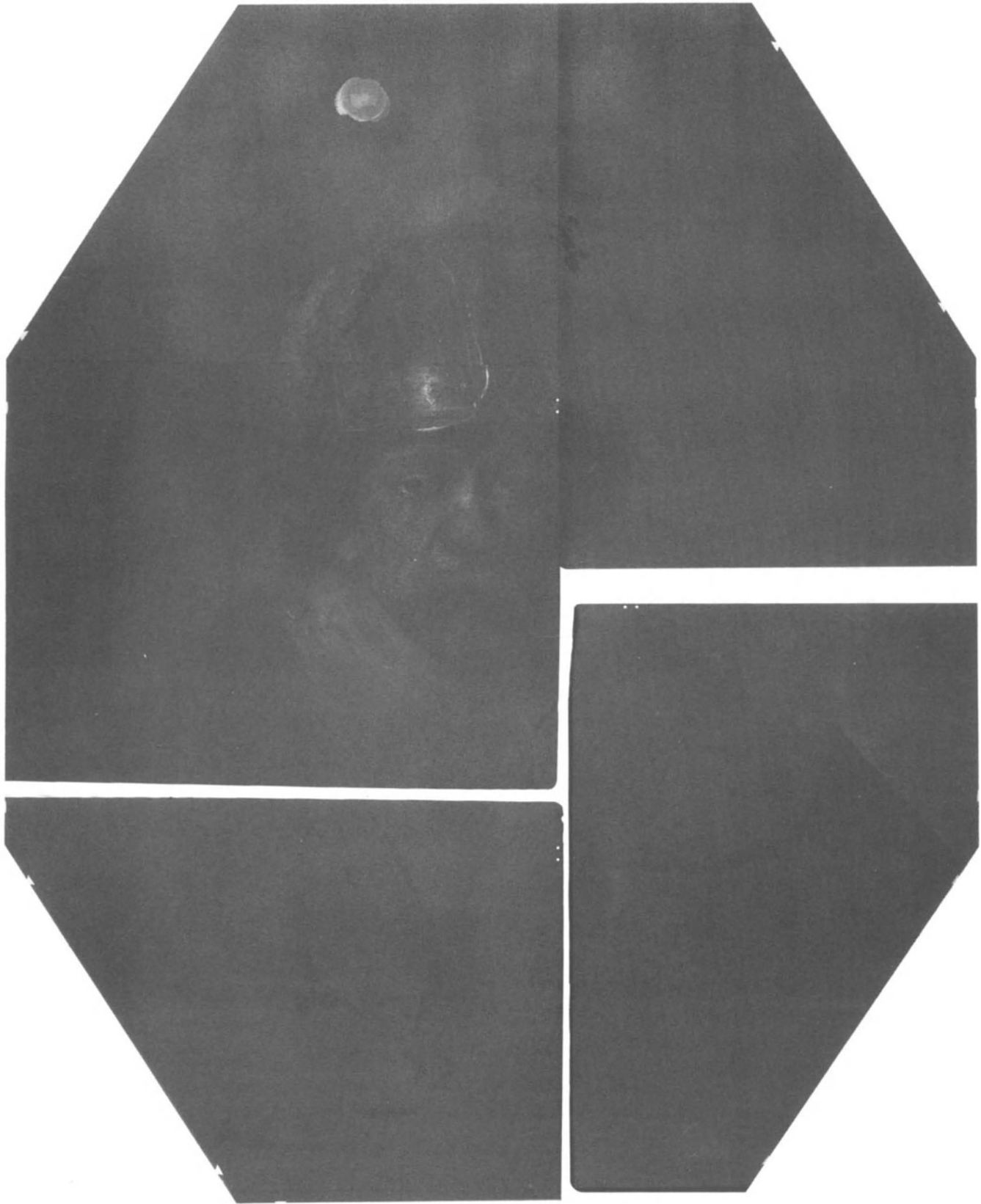
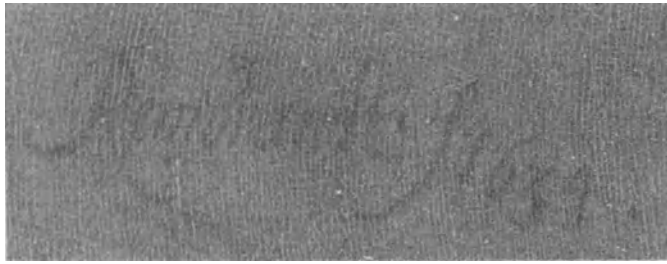


Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (slightly reduced)



This oval can also be seen in the X-ray image (particularly in the area of background), and offers important evidence as to the picture's authentic appearance (see *X-Rays* and *4. Comments* below).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn<sup>3</sup> took four samples, one from the white of the helmet containing white lead, one from the yellow of the helmet consisting of yellow ochre and some white lead, one from the blue of the helmet containing azurite, white lead and some yellow ochre and one from the red of the cloak containing white lead, red lake and some red ochre. As no cross-section was made, it is not clear whether the last-named sample comprised more than one layer.

#### *X-Rays*

In the head the X-ray image is on the whole what one would expect from the paint surface. In lit parts of the face small strokes running one into the other can be seen. Above, in and below the lefthand eye, dark patches with ragged edges indicate local paint losses. Two more such patches are seen in the shadow of the nose; there are in fact retouches at the surface at these points. The radiographic image of the helmet matches what is seen at the paint surface. Here, too, a dark band with ragged edges running obliquely over the front plume indicates paint loss.

A somewhat striated, light area is seen in the region of the neckerchief and gorget; it may be called to mind that greenish areas – like the neckerchief in this instance – usually show up light in Rembrandt's paintings obviously as a result of the density of the pigment used. The fact that there is no difference in the X-ray image between the neckerchief and the gorget need not, therefore, indicate any change having been made in the costume.

The most surprising feature in this X-ray image is that an oval shape, partly bordered by a dark zone, can be detected in the centre of the painting, due to the paint of the background inside this oval showing up lighter than the paint outside it. At the upper edge the distance between the top of the oval and the edge of the panel amounts to 10 cm, while that from the bottom of the oval and the lower edge of the panel is about 15 cm (though the image is very indistinct at that point); to the left the distance is *c.* 7.5 cm, to the right 10.5 cm. Inside the oval the background shows a far more animated structure than can now be seen at the paint surface; there is also, by the shoulder on the right, a concentration of radioabsorbent pigment indicating the fact that the shoulder was originally less broad, and ran lower down. The contour of the oval shape can be followed distinctly down to the original shoulderlines. It may be assumed that it continued beneath the point of intersection with the shoulders, especially since the same oval is also apparent in its entirety at the paint surface, due to the paint inside it being thicker. On the right the present shoulderline outside the oval can again be readily followed because the strokes in the background, showing up light, have been butted up against it.

The conclusion that can be reached from these observations,

and that we shall expand on later under *4. Comments*, is that the picture initially showed the figure in an oval field with a painted octagonal framing around it. Two vague light lines parallel to the oblique edges of the octagon at the upper left and bottom right may be interpreted as representing lit edges of the painted frame. The X-ray image also presents a slight indication of a hand stretching out beyond the oval having been painted or underpainted; at the bottom slightly to the right of centre and for the most part inside the oval, there is a roughly triangular area that shows up somewhat light; the position is roughly where one might expect a hand to be, but there is too little articulation to the shape for it to be seen as such with any certainty.

Finally there are in the X-ray a number of fuzzy spots and lines that appear over the whole surface and may therefore be disregarded when analyzing the picture. They include, firstly, light patches with a somewhat curving structure; since these continue in places – such as on the left in the chest – where paint has blistered off, one might assume them to be connected with the painting of the back of the panel, though one should not ignore the possibility of their being due to material used to fill in irregularities in the front surface of the panel. There are also, all over the panel, broad strokes appearing light in the X-ray and running mainly vertically and horizontally. The vertical strokes are interrupted at points where the paint has flaked off, and can thus be interpreted as traces of the ground having been applied. The predominantly horizontal strokes continue through the damages, and must therefore probably be reckoned as forming part of the treatment of the back of the panel.

#### *Signature*

On the right above the shoulder, done quite thinly in grey (<Rembrandt : f 1634>). Both the placing and the excessive slowness of the lettering – noticeable especially in the initial letter – are unusual. Bearing in mind too that the signature is on the paint of the unauthentic background, it can with certainty be seen as non-authentic.

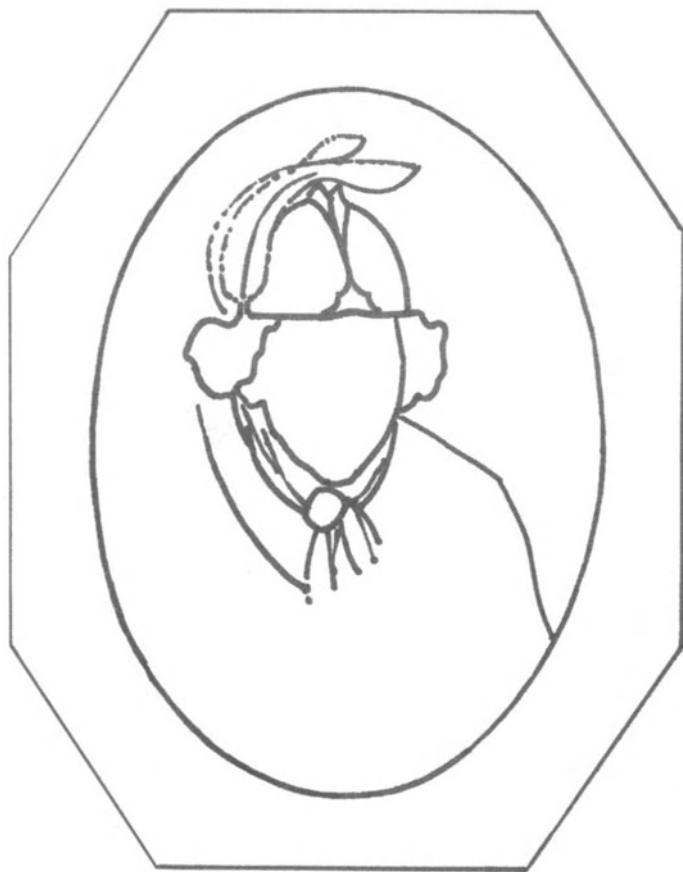
#### *Varnish*

There is a layer of somewhat yellowed varnish.

### **4. Comments**

In its present state the painting is marked by a substantial difference in quality between the centre and the remaining areas. The centre, with the helmet, face and adjoining neckerchief and gorget, is sensitively painted. The plumes, the metal of the helmet and gorget, and the fine material of the neckerchief are all effectively evoked; the face shows the variation in treatment between the lit and shadowed parts that is typical of Rembrandt – in the light a tight pattern of fat brushstrokes of varying length, and in the shadows a more fluent stroke with partly translucent paint applied more thinly. The painting as a whole has suffered quite badly, and even in the passages just described there is a range of damages that have been repaired to varying extents, especially in the darker plume and in and around the eye on the left. Nevertheless, the heart of the painting bears out the reputation of the

Fig. 5. Hypothetical reconstruction of the painting's original aspect



work as being an autograph work. It also fits in well with works from the period indicated by the dating of 1634, though as mentioned before the inscription is certainly not authentic.

The other parts of the painting are insensitively done, compared to the subtlety of the centre. The figure stands out against an almost uniform dark grey background that provides hardly any effect of space or atmosphere. The rendering of the brownish-red cloak is coarse and clumsy, with a slack contour to the shoulders, lifeless folds in which the action and anatomy of the figure are lost, and the amorphous rendering of the tassel hanging down from the cloak on the right. All these passages differ so much in execution from the head and immediately adjoining parts of the costume that they cannot possibly be attributed to Rembrandt.

This contradictory result is explained by the X-ray image, combined with what can be seen at the paint surface by raking light. The painting has evidently undergone a change at some time, the original design consisting of an oval field within a painted surround (see fig. 5). The upper part of this oval shows up distinctly in the radiograph, especially in the area of background, due to the fact that the paint used there contains white lead; at the paint surface the complete oval is apparent because the paint inside it is thicker and less smooth than

that outside. When the painted surround was eliminated the whole of the background was overpainted, and the figure and parapet were brought to their present width. Probably this area too has been overpainted, from the lower edge of the gorget downwards; the vertical strokes still visible in relief in the costume, and a band appearing light in the infrared photograph on the left, at the bottom of the jerkin, would then belong to the original appearance of the figure. The signature, which already because of its shape is hardly reliable, must also be seen as unauthentic because of the change made in the background. In the present composition the placing halfway up the shoulder is, as Gerson<sup>4</sup> has pointed out, unusual; the present inscription may nevertheless be based on an authentic signature.

The radiograph shows that the background within the oval originally presented a far more animated handling of the paint. The image of the body is fairly indistinct here, apart from the shoulderline on the right against which, in the background, radio-absorbent paint can be seen. It is plain that this shoulder was not only much less broad, but also ran lower down, remaining wholly within the oval. The X-ray also suggests that there was a painted octagonal frame around the oval picture, such as was in fact common practice with oval panels. This would, as a motif, be a unique example in Rembrandt's work, and moreover most unusual in the 17th century. The X-rays show the cursory indication of a rim of light along straight mouldings of the frame at the upper left and lower right. They contain no unequivocal evidence for a strong trompe-l'oeil effect having been intended – such as the illusionistic scrollwork that can be found in the 1632 *Portrait of Amalia of Solms* in the Musée Jacquemart-André, Paris (no. A 61). At best, vague traces suggest the presence of a hand projecting from the painted frame.

The fact that the lit edges visible in the X-rays run parallel to the oblique sides of the octagonal panel go to prove that this still has its original shape. The rounded bevelling, the panel presents at the back on the corners need not contradict this, in that it does not in itself give enough reason for the assumption that the panel was once oval in shape (which would lead to an excessively wide painted surround). At all events, it had its present shape at the time of the overpainting, since the paint used for this spills out over the edges at some points. It is impossible to say whether the overpainting took place before or after it passed from the Röver collection into that of Wilhelm VIII of Hesse-Kassel in 1750. One of Röver's manuscript catalogues describes it simply as a panel in an octagonal frame (see 8. *Provenance*), which might be taken to mean

that it already had its present appearance at the time.

If our reconstruction of the picture's original appearance is correct, it presents a most exceptional case. Painted oval surrounds in rectangular portraits or more fanciful busts are fairly common, and occur in paintings by Rembrandt and from his circle (cf. for instance nos. A 32, A 33, Br. 207). The occurrence of an added painted frame, and an octagonal one at that, may be termed unique, and one wonders what function a painting of this kind may have fulfilled. Was it intended to be let into the panelling of a wall? If so, the subject of a helmeted warrior may be connected with the frequent use of medallions with warriors' heads as a decorative motif in architecture and furniture during the 16th and early 17th centuries. The obviously fanciful nature of the helmet depicted (Mr J. B. Kist of the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, has kindly informed us that the thin, bifurcated crest cannot be considered functional and is as unusual as the placing of the plume-holder to one side instead of at the back) would be in line with such a decorative purpose. One may feel, however, that the illusionistic rendering of an octagonal frame contradicts this idea; it would rather seem to suggest that the picture was meant to hang from the wall, in the same way that a similarly framed oval painting would normally do.

## 5. Documents and sources

See 8. *Provenance*.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

Sumowski<sup>5</sup> drew attention to a pastiche in a Norwegian private collection in which the Kassel *Self-portrait* was initially followed; in a later stage the helmet visible in the X-ray was replaced by a hat that seems to have been borrowed from the Glasgow *Portrait of the artist*, no. A 58; in the remainder of the costume it also differs from the Kassel portrait.

## 8. Provenance

– Gerard Goeree, Delft (according to a note by Valerius Röver, see following owner).  
– Coll. Valerius Röver (1686–1739) Delft; described in his 'Catalogus van mijne schilderijen, boeken, tekeningen, prenten, beelden, rariteiten', drawn up in 1730, as among the works purchased in 1728: '83. het portret van Rembrandt zelfs met een stormhoed, Ao. 1634. geschildert, toen hij 28 jaaren oud was – f 90:– gekogt van Gerard Goeree te Delft' (the portrait of Rembrandt himself in a helmet, painted in 1634 when he was 28 years of age – 90 guilders, bought from Gerard Goeree of Delft) (Amsterdam, University Library, ms. UB II A 18; published by E. W. Moes in: *O.H.* 31, 1913, p. 21). In another, also autograph inventory described as '6.

het portret van Rembrandt zelfs door hem zelfs geschildert met een stormhoed op het hooft. op paneel met agt kante lijst h: 2v. 7½ d – b: 2v: 2 d [= 80.3 × 68 cm]' (6. a portrait of Rembrandt himself painted by himself, with a helmet on his head. on panel with octagonal frame . . . ) (Amsterdam, University Library, ms. UB II A 17–1). Sold by Röver's widow in 1750 to the Landgrave Wilhelm VIII of Hesse-Kassel.

– Coll. Landgrave Wilhelm VIII of Hesse-Kassel. Described in the *Haupt-Catalogus* begun in 1749: '558. Rembrant, Ein 8 eckigt Brustbild mit einem Casquet. Höhe 2 Schuh 7 Zoll Breite 2 Schuh 1 Zoll (Rhineland feet) [= 80.6 × 65.4 cm]'.

## 9. Summary

The *Self-portrait with helmet* is an authentic work by Rembrandt, only moderately well preserved, that originally consisted of an oval field inside a painted octagonal surround. In its present state all that can be seen of Rembrandt's work is the head, helmet and gorget with a neckerchief; the remainder consists of overpainting of inferior quality, done at an unknown date. The signature and date are, in the form they now have, unauthentic, though they may well replace an autograph inscription; a date in 1634 is acceptable on the basis of the authentic parts still visible.

What must be assumed to be the original appearance of the painting presents a most exceptional case, and is difficult to explain with any certainty.

## REFERENCES

- 1 Report 'Ueber die Malgründe . . .', 1953, typescript in the museum at Kassel.
- 2 Cf. J. Bauch and D. Eckstein, 'Woodbiological investigations on panels of Rembrandt paintings', *Wood science and technology* 15 (1981), pp. 251–263, esp. 255.
- 3 H. Kühn, 'Untersuchungen zu den Malgründen Rembrandts', *Jahrbuch der Staatliche Kunstsammlungen in Baden-Württemberg* 2 (1965), pp. 189 ff, esp. 193; idem, 'Untersuchungen zu den Pigmenten und Malgründen Rembrandts, durchgeführt an den Gemälden der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Kassel', *Maltechnik/Restauro* 82 (1976), pp. 25–33, esp. 29.
- 4 Br.-Gerson 22.
- 5 W. Sumowski, 'Kritische Bemerkungen zur neuesten Gemäldekritik' in: *Neue Beiträge zur Rembrandt-Forschung*, Berlin 1973, pp. 104–5, fig. 59.

HDG 645; BR. 200; BAUCH 372; GERSON 162

Fig. 1. Canvas 173 × 123 cm





### 1. Summarized opinion

A very well preserved, authentic work datable as 1634, which is, besides, well documented.

### 2. Description of subject

The figure is shown full-length, seated in an armchair with the body turned slightly towards the right, and looking at the viewer. His right hand lies on the armrest, while the left is held to his chest. He wears a long black tabard and a white ruff, and a skullcap. To the right of him is a table with a tablecloth, on which there are books and papers. The rear wall is occupied for the most part by a bookcase, the curtain of which hangs down in folds and lies over the books on the table. To the right of this is a window; the floor is planked. Quite strong light falls from the left, and none at all comes from the window which is evidently shuttered on the outside.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 9 October 1970 (B. H., P. v. Th.), in moderately good daylight and artificial light, and in the frame. Five X-ray films of the head, hands, books and the left and right lower sides were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 173 × 123 cm, consisting of two, almost equally wide vertical strips.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Because of the limited amount of radiographic material only parts of the righthand side and bottom were examined for cusping. At the right three cusps were measured, varying in pitch between 8 and 14 cm and extending inwards up to about 15 cm. Slight cusping could be seen at the bottom. Threadcount for the lefthand section: 14.9 vertical threads/cm (14.7–15), 13 horizontal threads/cm (12–14). Threadcount for the righthand section: 15 vertical threads/cm (14.5–16), 13.5 horizontal threads/cm (12.5–14). In view of the format of the two sections one may assume the warp to run vertically. The weave has the same, quite open structure in both sections. The yarn quality appears identical in both directions, and there are frequent thickenings both vertically and horizontally. This canvas is very close in thread density and weave structure to that of the companion-piece no. A 99.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A greyish brown is visible in those parts of the background where the paint has been applied quite thinly with a hard brush. In the floor an underlying layer, appearing to be dark grey, is visible in the brushstrokes.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Excellent. Craquelure: a clear canvas-type craquelure is evident everywhere.

DESCRIPTION: The head is painted with vigorous brushstrokes of varying width, in fairly thick paint. In the forehead and on the cheekbone catching the light yellowish tints predominate, while the rest has a ruddy tint. The highest lights on the forehead, cheekbone and on and by the nose are painted the thickest; on the nose these highlights are almost white.

The area of the eyes is thoroughly worked and has a strong three-dimensional effect achieved through skilfully placed shadows and lights. The eyelids are bordered with a variety of

strokes in a ruddy paint with a few accents in red. The lower border of the eyes is blurred with a glancing stroke of white that suggests the rim of moisture. The dark grey irises are not entirely round, and have a tiny white catchlight on the upper left. The black pupil does not stand out clearly against the iris. Touches of light red are placed at the corners of the eye on the left. Above this eye the folds in the skin are painted with numerous strokes of red and ochre yellow; the eyebrow is hatched in grey. The eye on the right, in the shadow, is less pronounced and less colourful. Small strokes of white give the suggestion of eyelashes. The strong shadow of the fold running down from the nose on the left is done with a carmine-like red, and the same colour has been used for the nostril. The shadows in the righthand part of the face show a less marked use of red; in the half-shadow a grey has been used. The moustache is set down, without hesitation, in a variety of greys. The top lip is modelled in a red that tends towards orange; the mouth-line, almost black, is built up from a number of thin brushstrokes. The bottom lip shows a number of greyish, vertical strokes. The beard has been painted in animated fashion, using curling brushstrokes in various tints of grey, a little ochre-yellow and, at the lower right, some red. The ear is modelled with firm strokes, light yellow in the lights and pink and red in the shadows.

The skullcap offers several deftly placed highlights. In the collar, too, an easy and direct manner of painting has been used, with bold strokes of a fairly thick white for the lights and brown-grey, vertical touches to indicate where the dark clothing shows through the lower edge, on which have been placed the white, curved edges of the material of the collar.

The hands have been done with some thoroughness, with a great many small touches varying from a bluish grey for the veins to warm flesh tints. The strokes have been set crosswise on the fingers of the upper hand. A few strokes of white by the wrists skilfully suggest the cuffs.

The black clothing is executed broadly, and modelled very effectively with sheens of light in grey and dark shadows. The chair is executed cursorily in browns, greys and some red in the fringes and the top part of the backrest.

The whole of the background is brushed thinly with clearly visible strokes that give a rough indication of the objects. The light parts of the floor are painted more thickly with yellow-brown, brown and a somewhat ruddy brown for the joins and grain. The brushwork can be readily followed, as has been mentioned (see *Ground*), and traces can be seen of an underlying layer that appears as a dark grey. Around the chairleg the paint covers more fully. The books on the table are painted with fluent, long strokes in a dark brown for the cut edges of the pages on the shadow side of the horizontal book and an orange-brown for those on the lit side. A light purple is used to show ribbons. Between the upright books and the arm on the right there is a slate-grey, opaque area painted without any definite form, probably part of the draped curtain.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

In the head and hands the pronounced brushstrokes seen at the paint surface are readily apparent. Elsewhere, too, the manner of painting is clearly reflected in the available X-rays. There is no trace of a light underpainting such as one might expect in, for instance, the collar.

#### *Signature*

At the lower right in brown <Rembrandt.f (followed by an abbreviation resembling an exclamation mark).1634.> (fig. 7). The inscription closely resembles that on the companion-piece

Fig. 2. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 3. X-ray

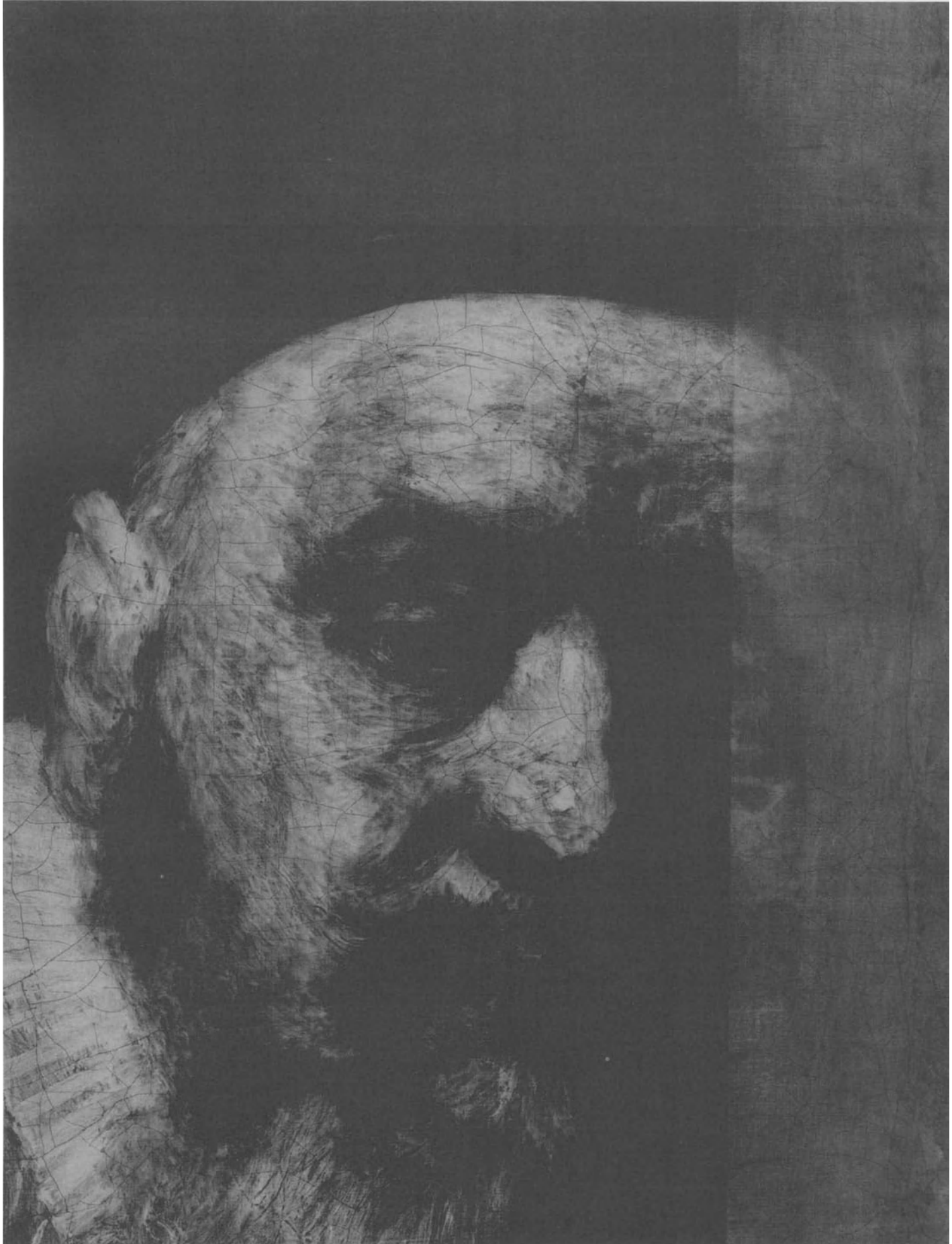


Fig. 4. Detail (1:1)



(no. A 99, fig. 6); Mr H. Hardy and Mrs R. ter Kuile-Haller of the Forensic Science Laboratory of the Ministry of Justice, Rijswijk, drew our attention to the possibility that it is by another hand. Given the general resemblance between the two inscriptions on the one hand, and the subtle differences in the shaping of the letters and numerals and the speed with which they seem to have been written on the other, there is a fair chance that different hands must be held responsible for each of them. As the result is far more homogeneous and stable in the inscription on the wife's portrait and that on no. A 98 shows flourishes (as in the *m*) and hesitations (as in the *b*) that must be termed unusual in Rembrandt signatures, it seems likely that the latter was copied from the former.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

Both portraits, nos. A 98 and A 99, are in the main painted in entirely the same manner which, moreover, is in line with the general picture of Rembrandt's work from the mid-1630s. The faces and hands are the most thoroughly worked up, and are plainly the focus of attention. Further out towards the periphery the rendering of form becomes

broader and the intensity of the chiaroscuro contrast lessens. In both heads there is a very direct and animated manner of painting which is all the more striking if one compares this to the smoother treatment of the faces of the younger sitters in portraits of 1633 (the pair in Cincinnati and New York, nos. A 78 and A 79) and 1634 (the Soolmans couple in a private collection, nos. A 100 and A 101). Shadows and lit areas are balanced one against the other to produce a convincing suggestion of plasticity. Remarkable in the woman's portrait is the emphasis on reflexions of light used for this purpose – light is thrown up by the large, flat ruff onto the face, the upper part of which is overshadowed by the brim of her hat. What differences there are in the treatment of both heads, such as the reticent use of colour in that of the woman compared to the much stronger flesh colour, with yellow and red, in the man's, stem from the differences in skin colouring – whether based on reality or convention – and lighting. They recur in the hands, which in other respects too show a treatment comparable to that of the heads. The clothing, especially the man's tabard

Fig. 5. Detail (1 : 1)



and the woman's dress, is painted broadly and freely, a tendency that becomes even more apparent in the background, the emptiness of which in the woman's portrait is however striking seen against the far more interesting treatment in the man's; this difference extends to the way the floor is dealt with. The contours in the two paintings, of both the figures and the accessories, are in line with the general characteristics of Rembrandt's work in his years in Amsterdam – nowhere is a dead straight line used, and the curving, interesting edges always serve the end of creating a sense of depth and plasticity. The three-dimensional effect is emphasized by strong cast shadows, especially in the man's portrait. Summing up, the approach to form and depth and the liveliness of execution leave not the slightest doubt as to Rembrandt's authorship. The firmly painted and reliable signature on the wife's portrait endorses this assessment; the one on no. A 98 may have been copied from this by a later hand (see under *Signature*).

The male sitter was formerly tentatively identified as the mennonite minister Hans Alenson of

Haarlem, on the basis of a resemblance to the latter's portrait (by Crispijn de Passe II; cf. Hollst. XVI, p. 97 no. 22)<sup>1</sup>. The correct identification was firmly established by Hofstede de Groot<sup>2</sup>; it rests on the following evidence:

1. Walpole, in 1763, describes two full-length portraits by Rembrandt, at Yarmouth (see 5. *Documents and sources*).

2. When nos. A 98 and A 99 first came on the London market in 1860 the subjects were, according to the deceased owner Rev. Samuel Colby of Yarmouth, the English minister in Amsterdam Hans Ellison and his wife. The portraits had come by inheritance from the sitter's son-in-law Daniel Dover of Ludham, Norfolk. One Daniell Dauvaert the Elder is mentioned as an elder of the Dutch Church in Norwich in 1644, 1646 and 1656, as is a Daniel Dover Jr. in 1656. Evidence that a daughter of Johannes Elison, Anne, was married to the younger Daniel Dover, was published by Wijnman in 1959<sup>3</sup>.

3. One Johannes Elison, who enrolled at the age of 17 as 'Joannes Elisonius, Anglus' at Leiden



Fig. 6. Detail (1:2.5)

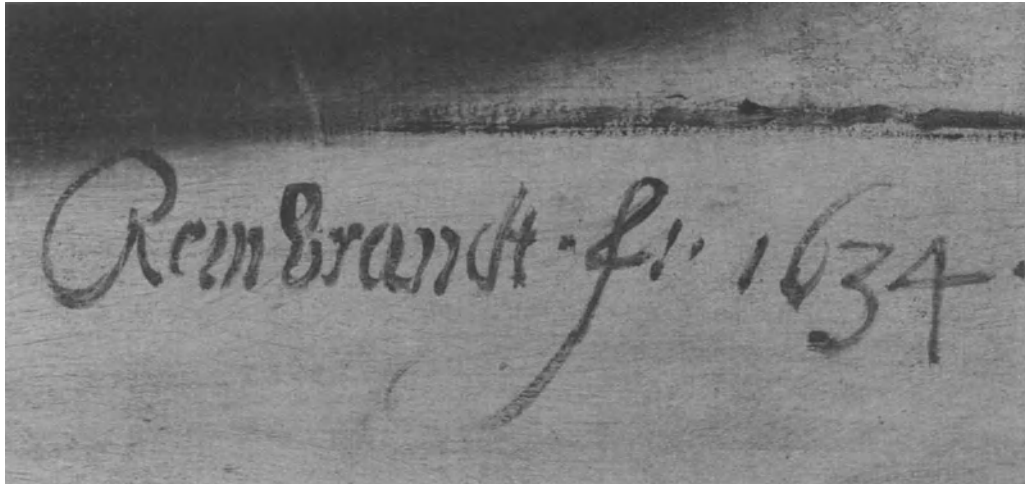


University on 14 October 1598, is mentioned as minister of the Dutch Reformed Church in Norwich in documents from March 1604 until April 1639. His name appears regularly, except between 17 August 1633 and 26 January 1635, in the Register of Attestations preserved in the Dutch Reformed Church in London. A volume by Jan Cruso, an elder of the Dutch Church and captain of the strangers' militia in Norwich, entitled *Uytbreijdinge over den Achsten Psalm Davids*, Amsterdam 1642, contains a 'Treur-Dicht, Op het ontijdigh overlijden van den Hooghgeleerden ende Godvruchtigen D. Ioannes Elisonius, Getrou Bedienaer der Neder-Duytsche Gemeynte Christi in Norwits' (Elegy on

the premature decease of the most learned and God-fearing Dominus Ioannes Elisonius, faithful minister of the Dutch Congregation of Christ in Norwich), and a plaque to Elison, with inscriptions in Latin, Dutch and English, is still to be found in the Blackfriars Hall at Norwich, which the Dutch used as their church (see W. Woods, 'Poetry of Dutch Refugees in Norwich', *Dutch Crossing. A journal for students of Dutch in Britain* 8, 1979, pp. 71-73). Johannes Elison was married to Maria Bockenolle; as far as is known, the couple had four sons, among whom were Theophilus (who succeeded his father as minister) and Johannes (see below under 4), and two daughters.



Fig. 7. Detail with signature (reduced)



4. A son of Johannes Elison, 'Johannes Elison de jonge, van Norwith' (d. 1677), married Josina Backer in Amsterdam in 1628, at the age of 22. He was a well-to-do merchant. In his will, made on 17 March 1635, he instructed that after his and his wife's death 'the two likenesses of the testator's father and mother' should go to his brothers and sisters in Norwich. This provision was repeated in the wills of 1646, 1652 and 1653<sup>4</sup>.

5. The couple's costume points, in the case of the man, very strongly to his being a minister, and where the wife's hat is concerned, certainly to an English style of dress.

Hofstede de Groot<sup>2</sup> interpreted the information available to him – he did not know of the existence of Johannes Jr. or of his will – as meaning that Elison and his wife stayed in Amsterdam around 1634, and then had their portraits painted by Rembrandt. Wijnman<sup>4</sup>, after the discovery of Johannes Jr.'s will, found in this the proof for Hofstede de Groot's theory – the Elisons lodged with their son in Amsterdam around 1634 and had themselves painted by Rembrandt, the portraits stayed in Amsterdam until the death of Johannes Jr. and his wife, and then passed to England.

Although the pedigree of the portraits still shows a few gaps – the will of Johannes Jr. does not mention the name of the painter, and there is no proof of a marriage between a Daniel Dover and a daughter of Elison's – the conclusion drawn is so self-evident that there can be no doubt as to the identity of the two sitters.

It is remarkable to say the least that a minister and his wife should be portrayed in large paintings lifesize and full-length, this usually being restricted to the wealthy. This can probably be put down to the social pretensions of their son Johannes Elison Jr. who, one may assume, was the person commissioning the works. In the man's portrait the sitter

is marked as a minister of religion not only by his dress and the books alongside him, but also by the characteristic gesture of the left hand held to the chest, also to be found in other portraits of ministers by Rembrandt and seen as bearing witness to a solemn commitment to God (see no. A 80, 4. *Comments*).

#### 5. Documents and sources

Nos. A 98 and A 99 are most probably identical with the portraits mentioned in the will of Joannes Elison and Josina Backer, engrossed on 17 March 1635 by the Amsterdam notary Laurens Lamberti, as 'de twee contrafeijtsels van sijne testateurs vader ende moeder' (the two likenesses of the testator's father and mother). In the wills of 7 March 1646, 18 October 1652 and 3 January 1653, drawn up by the same notary, the same portraits are mentioned again<sup>4</sup>.

In 1763 Horace Walpole wrote that '... There are two fine whole-lengths [portraits by Rembrandt] at Yarmouth'<sup>5</sup>.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

Together with the companion-piece (no. A 99):

– Most probably from the outset in the possession of Johannes Elison Jr. (d. 1677) of Amsterdam, and bequeathed by him in various wills to his brothers and sisters in Norwich (see 4. *Comments*, para. 4).

– Probably then into the possession of Daniel Dover of Ludham near Norwich, brother-in-law of the foregoing (see 4. *Comments*, para. 2).

– By inheritance into the possession of Rev. Samuel Colby of Yarmouth; sale London (Christie's) 30 June 1860 (Lugt 25681), no. 22: 'Rembrandt. Portrait of Mr. Ellison, Minister of the English Church at Amsterdam [sic]: he is represented in a black dress and cap, with white ruff, over which his beard falls; he is seated in an arm chair on the elbow of which his

right hand rests, the left hand on his breast; on a table at his side are books open, a green drapery and books in shelves seen behind – size, 5 ft. 7 in. by 4 ft. This noble full-length portrait, wonderfully golden in tone, full of dignified character, and of the most masterly treatment, is in a beautiful pure state. It is signed and dated 1634. Mr. Ellison's daughter married Mr. Daniel Dover, of Ludham, Norfolk, into whose hands these pictures accordingly passed and from him they descended to his posterity, the Colby family, of Yarmouth, the representative of which was the late Rev. S. Colby, Rector of Little Ellingham, Norfolk.' and no. 23: 'Rembrandt. Portrait of Mrs. Ellison, wife of the preceding: she is in a black silk dress and broad rimmed hat, with large white ruff, seated in an arm chair, on the elbow of which her hand rests, a green drapery suspended behind – size, 5 ft. 7 in. by 4 ft. This admirable work is also signed, and dated 1634.' (together for 1850 guineas to dealer Fisher, London).

– Coll. Baron Eugène Schneider, Paris; sale Paris 6–7 April 1876, no. 29 (bought in). After the sale bought by the son, Henri Schneider, from the estate for 60 000 and 50 000 francs.

– Coll. Eugène Schneider, Paris<sup>6</sup>.

– Dealers Rosenberg and Stiebel, New York, from whom bought by the museum in 1956.

## 9. Summary

In style and execution this painting and its companion-piece (no. A 99) are very characteristic portraits from Rembrandt's early Amsterdam period. The great liveliness of the man's portrait in particular, the effective handling of paint and the treatment of light that throughout serve to emphasize the main items of interest and to create a strongly plastic effect, are wholly in line with Rembrandt's work from these years. The reliable signature on the wife's portrait and the history of the paintings which provides strong circumstantial evidence, mean that these two portraits can be looked on as not only very typical but also very well documented works by Rembrandt from 1634.

## REFERENCES

- 1 *De Navorscher* 10 (1860), p. 290, 14 (1864), pp. 78, 147, 176.
- 2 C. Hofstede de Groot, 'Varia omtrent Rembrandt III, Elison of Alenson?', *O.H.* 19 (1901), pp. 91–94.
- 3 H. F. Wijnman, 'Rembrandts portretten van Joannes Elison en zijn vrouw Maria Bockenolle naar Amerika verkocht', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 44 (1957), pp. 65–72, esp. 71.
- 4 H. F. Wijnman, 'Een drietal portretten van Rembrandt (Joannes Elison, Maria Bockenolle en Catrina Hoogsaet)', *Jaarboek* . . . *Amstelodamum* 31 (1934), pp. 81–96, esp. 85–88.
- 5 H. Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting in England* . . . II, Ed. Wornum, London 1862, p. 428 note 2.
- 6 HdG 645.

**A 99 Portrait of Maria Bockenolle** (companion-piece to no. A 98)

BOSTON, MASS., MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, ACC. NO. 56.511

1634

HdG 646; BR. 347; BAUCH 477; GERSON 163

Fig. 1. Canvas 174.5 × 123 cm



Fig. 2. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 3. X-ray



Fig. 4. Detail (1:1)



### 1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved, authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1634, which is, besides, well documented.

### 2. Description of subject

The figure is shown full-length, seated in an armchair and turned slightly to the left, looking at the viewer. Her right hand rests on the arm of the chair, while the left is held against her waist. She wears a black skirt and bodice, a thin white ruff and, on her head, a broad-brimmed black hat under which can be seen the white lace edge of a cap. Behind her a wall receives most light at the lower left; on the right is a curtain, partly gathered up. The floor is plain.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined 9 October 1970 (B. H., P. v. Th.), in the frame and in moderately good daylight and artificial light. Four X-ray films, of the head, left and right hands and lower lefthand corner, were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 174.5 × 123 cm, consisting of two vertical strips of almost equal width.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Because of the limited amount of radiographic material only part of the bottom and lefthand side were examined for cusping. The cusping measured at the bottom has a pitch of *c.* 7.5 cm and extends inwards some 15 cm. That on the left has a pitch of 8 and 8.5 cm, with a



Fig. 5. X-ray



depth of c. 9 cm. Threadcount for the lefthand section: 14 vertical threads/cm (13.5–14.5), 12 horizontal threads/cm (11.5–13). Threadcount for the righthand section: 14 vertical threads/cm (13.5–15), 12 horizontal threads/cm (11.5–12.5). In view of the format of the two sections one may assume the warp to run vertically. The weave has the same, quite open structure in both sections. The yarn quality appears identical in both directions, and there are frequent thickenings both vertically and horizontally. This canvas is very close in thread density and weave structure to that of the companion-piece no. A 98.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A greyish brown is visible in the background where the paint is applied quite thinly with a hard brush.  
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: In the area of the eyes and the shadowed part of the nose the paint is worn, as it is in the hand on the right. The backrest of the chair has suffered very badly at the top; otherwise the condition is good. Craquelure: a clear canvas-type craquelure is evident everywhere.

DESCRIPTION: The face is done very carefully with mainly small strokes in which, besides pink and flesh colours there is a little orangy yellow. The eyes, bordered by very thin, reddish lines, show little modelling. The brown-grey of the irises has suffered somewhat, as have the black pupils. There are quite bold white highlights on the nose. The nostril on the left is indicated with a small touch of dark brown-red set in lighter red surroundings, while the other is partly bordered by a greyish paintstroke that continues below the tip of the nose. The mouth-line is formed from thin brushstrokes, and at both sides

Fig. 6. Detail with signature (reduced)



runs out into the shadow areas of the corners of the mouth. The convexities of the area round the mouth are modelled with care, with a little blue-green used for the shadows. In the shadow half of the face and forehead whitish paint is used to show reflexions of light. The contours of the chin and jawline towards the light are painted with a certain vagueness.

The lace cap is bordered, where it adjoins the face, with small strokes in brown and black. The hat is executed in dark to very dark grey, against which its band stands out in black. A reserve was left in the white paint of the collar for the cast shadow falling on it from the head. Close along the chin an opaque blue-grey is placed over the first, brownish lay-in. The lower edge of the ruff, where the dark dress shows through, is suggested effectively with rapid touches of grey.

The hands are done with few variations of colour, but modelled carefully. That on the left has a noticeably ruddy shadow by the ball of the hand, and is otherwise executed in broad fields of paint.

The clothing is painted broadly, with very long strokes of grey to indicate the fall of the folds. The bodice shows more detail. The backrest of the chair is purplish brown, with scant suggestion of form. The curtain is brushed very broadly and freely, with yellow used for the sheens of light. The lefthand border merges into the dark paint of the rear wall; at the bottom, too, the dark shadow part of the curtain merges imperceptibly into the floor. A zone along the figure on the left is in a grey that covers more fully than elsewhere in the background, and is painted with a less distinct brushstroke. To judge from a trace of black showing through, the background has here been extended over the clothing after the latter had been painted. For the rest, the rear wall is in a more translucent paint, applied with a very apparent brushstroke. The floor is done with a fairly thick and opaque yellowish paint, with no detailed rendering of the planks or grain structure.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

Insofar as the films available permit a judgment, the manner of painting observed at the paint surface is confirmed by the radiographic image. A dark horizontal line, which cannot be explained, is seen running through the forehead and to the right of it, with a rather vague, lighter zone to either side of this. The line runs more or less with the edge of the hat, but is almost dead straight. A vertical band about 8 cm wide, lighter than the surroundings, can be seen to the right and left of the seam in the centre of the canvas. This may be connected with a layer applied at the seam when the ground was being brushed on, or during the lining.

#### *Signature*

At the lower right in brown <Rembrandt.ft.1634>, written quite firmly and making an entirely authentic impression.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### **4. Comments**

See no. A 98.

#### **5. Documents and sources**

See no. A 98.

#### **6. Graphic reproductions**

None.

#### **7. Copies**

None.

#### **8. Provenance**

See no. A 98.

#### **9. Summary**

See no. A 98.

### 1. Summarized opinion

A very well preserved, authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1634.

### 2. Description of subject

A stylishly-dressed young man is seen full-length, standing turned a little to the right and looking at the viewer. He holds a glove in his outstretched left hand; the other hand, placed on his hip, is for the most part hidden beneath the cape that hangs from his shoulders. He wears a doublet with slashed sleeves and breeches, both in the same black and grey striped material as the cape, a wide, lace-edged collar and a broad-brimmed hat. Rosette-like bows with dangling aiguillettes are set along his belt, bundles of pleated lace hang from his garters, and there are very large rosettes on his shoes.

He stands on a floor of alternate light and darker tiles, in front of a wide step that projects forward to the right with the tiled floor continuing behind it. To the right can be seen a fringed curtain that hangs down to the floor in front of the step. The light falls from the left, and the figure casts a short shadow onto the floor and curtain.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 23 April 1971 (J. B., S. H. L.), in poor light and in the frame, under conditions that made a thorough examination impossible.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 207 × 132.5 cm (sight size); presumably a single piece, as no seam was apparent.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light colour shows through in the thin brown of the shadowed cheek.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: To the extent that the circumstances made assessment possible, the condition appears on the whole very good. Some slight wearing in the thin shadow areas hardly affects this judgment. Traces of restoration (of a fairly long tear?) can be seen in a horizontal band along the lower edge of the doublet to the right of centre. Craquelure: fine, irregular but evenly distributed cracks, especially in the face and collar.

DESCRIPTION: The palette is governed mainly by greys ranging from light to very dark; the warmer flesh colour in the head, seen against the white of the collar and the black of the hat, provides an effective contrast with these greys.

The background is executed in a thin grey that covers fairly fully, somewhat darker to the right and indicating the hanging curtain and the shadow cast by the figure. The floortiles in the foreground are alternately in a patchy grey and a brownish grey, with rather irregular joins in brown-grey; above the grey band of the step they are painted in greys.

The lit part of the head is done with a reticent brushstroke in a creamy flesh colour, with a little pink on the lefthand cheek, in the lit wing of the nose and the nose-tip, on the chin and – as a minute trace – below the eye on the right. The shadow part of the face is painted predominantly in thin browns with a little grey. The eyelids are rimmed with strokes of brown, which to the right merge into the brown of the

shadow. The whites of the eyes are in a broken white on the left and a thin grey on the right, and the irises in grey ringed with a rather darker grey in which are placed quite large catchlights in a thin light grey. The lower edges of the eyes are shown with pink, below which there is a greyish shadow on the left and a brown shadow on the right. The lefthand eyebrow is in very thin, translucent greys, and the righthand one in a firmly-brushed brown. The cast shadow from the nose is done in opaque browns, darkest by the eye and the wing of the nose. The mouth-line is set down with a number of strokes of dark brown that are partly overlaid by the matt red of the bow-shaped upper lip and the light red of the lower. Around the mouth is a thin grey glaze that to the right becomes a thin brown. The small moustache is on the right, like the tuft of beard on the chin, done with small strokes of an opaque brown, while that on the left is shown by means of a brown-grey glaze. Along the underside of the chin the reflexion of light is suggested by an opaque flesh colour with a grey glaze. On the left the hair is painted in browns and greys, becoming darker and mainly grey towards the bottom and with brushwork that suggests the curls. Darker greys predominate on the right.

While the hand on the left is shown merely as a patch of brown, that on the right is painted with a bold brushstroke that models the forms in creamy and pink flesh colours, with brown shadows between the fingers and along the underedge, and with a brown cast shadow from the cuff. Spots of a black underlying layer glimpsed through the paint of the fingers suggest that the hand was painted over the paint used for the curtain.

In the lit area on the left the upper part of the collar is executed in a light grey with three firm strokes of white; the lace edging shows a white layer with black to pick out the pattern and white highlights along the border. The shadow area of the collar is for the greater part a grey-brown, and light grey where the light glances off the curves of the folds. The cuff on the right is done in a similar fashion, quite cursorily but with a strong suggestion of form.

The costume is otherwise done wholly in black and a rich variety of greys. In the cape, doublet and breeches strokes of a lighter grey, white and black show the play of light and shade on the sewn-on strips. Taken all together, they give a suggestion of pools of light and shadow; in the darkest shadows they become a very dark grey. The rosette-like bows along the belt, the lace ornament at the garters and the rosettes on the black shoes are painted in greys with thicker whites and light grey to render the material; the stockings are a light grey with horizontal strokes of light grey, thicker towards the bottom, to show the highlights on the wrinkles.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

None.

#### *Signature*

In dark brown in the grey of the step on the left <Rembrandt.f. (followed by three dots in a triangular pattern) 1634>; makes a spontaneous and reliable impression.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

### 4. Comments

Partly because of its good state of preservation, no. A 100 is easy to assess, and is quite convincingly

Fig. 1. Canvas 207 × 132.5 cm



Fig. 2. Detail (1:3)



a work by Rembrandt. The head, modelled carefully with a relative economy of means, and the collar done with great confidence and (in the half-shadows) with a strong impression of depth, attract the most attention. Equally typical of Rembrandt is the effect of plasticity in the dress, achieved without much in the way of detail by a masterly coordination of dark and light stripes that taken together serve to suggest the billowy surface of the cloth and the bulk of the body. The contours, in larger and smaller curves, make their contribution to this, though with the wealth of internal detail they have a less vital function than is usual in Rembrandt's large portraits. Wholly typical, finally, is the way the effect of the light is limited to the figure itself, with its cast shadow; the tiled floor and curtain – done with a freedom, and even a lack of clarity, that is characteristic of the artist – provide an almost neutral setting whose function consists mainly of giving a summary suggestion of depth, and of accentuating the figure's movement towards the right.

Together with its companion-piece (no. A 101)

the *Portrait of Marten Soolmans* forms the only extant set of lifesize portraits from Rembrandt's hand to show full-length, standing figures. This type of portrait – originally used in courtly circles – rapidly became popular in Holland around 1600 among citizens of some standing (e.g. Laurens Reael, one-time governor-general of the Dutch East Indies, and his wife, painted by Cornelis van der Voort around 1620, Rijksmuseum inv. no. A. 3741 and A. 3742; Cornelis de Graeff, burgermaster of Amsterdam, and his wife painted by Nicolaes Eliasz., Berlin GDR, Staatliche Museen, nos. 753 A and 753 B) and sometimes also by rich but not socially prominent burghers (Willem van Heythuysen by Frans Hals, painted around 1625, Munich since 1969). Of the Soolmans-Coppit couple, the wife belonged to an old Amsterdam patrician family, and it is not impossible that this explains the social pretension of their portraits. Comparing them with the earlier Amsterdam specimens (e.g. those already mentioned), one is struck by how reticently Rembrandt deals with the setting for his figures, and how an

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)

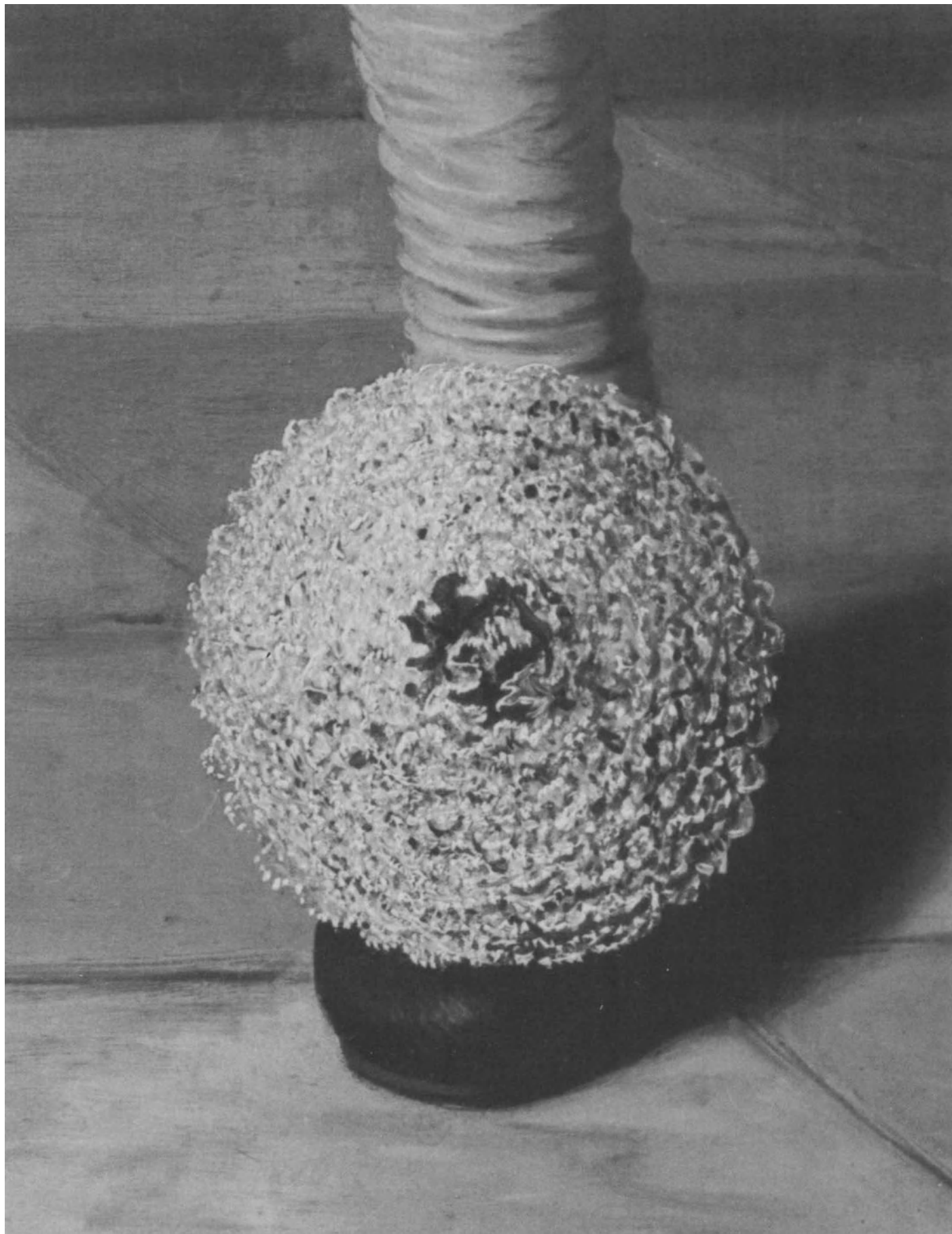
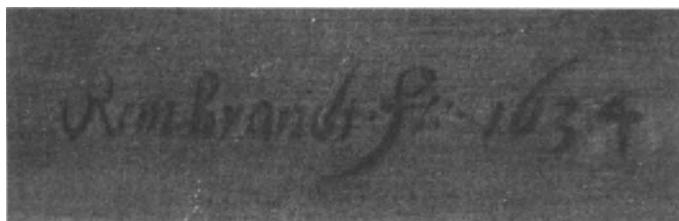




Fig. 4. Detail with signature (reduced)



atmospheric affect of depth prevails, achieved mainly by the fall of light and shade on the figures themselves.

It is clear that Rembrandt carefully matched the compositions of the two portraits. The poses of the figures are obviously related one to the other – that of the man is fairly static, with the hand stretched out towards the woman, while the woman has one foot forward and the upper part of her body leans slightly backwards, giving a feeling of gentle movement to the left, that is strangely reminiscent of some of Van Dyck's Genoese female portraits. The settings, too, are matched – the curtain hanging to the right behind the man continues in the woman's portrait (with the hem raised a little); in the woman's portrait there is in the tiled floor, at some distance, a plinth that projects obliquely to the front. No attempt has however been made to give the perspectives of the two floors a common vanishing point – in both instances this lies to the left, some way outside the picture area. One gets the impression that the diagonally-placed perspective lines were for Rembrandt more a means of achieving diagonal movement in the picture (counteracted by the suggested movement of the woman coming down off a step) than part of a systematic rendering of a spatial relationship.

In 1798, when both paintings left the possession of the Daey family in Alkmaar, they were known as being the portraits of Willem Daey and his wife, and later as those of Captain Maerten Daey and his first wife Machteld van Doorn. They were always referred to as such in the literature until in 1956 I. H. Van Eeghen<sup>1</sup> showed that this identification (disproved by the fact that Maerten Daey and his first wife were in 1634 living not in Amsterdam but in Brazil) was based on a misunderstanding. At the death of Maerten Daey in 1659 mention was made not only of two portraits of Daey and his first wife, but also of the portraits of his second wife Oopjen Coppit and her first husband Marten Soolmans (see below under *Provenance*). It is highly probable that nos. A 100 and A 101 are identical with these portraits which hung in the entrance-hall (because of their large size, according to the plausible interpretation by Dr Van Eeghen).

Marten Soolmans (1613–1641) was born in

Amsterdam, and came from a well-to-do Antwerp family. After a period of study in Leiden he married, in 1633, Oopjen (Obrecht) Coppit (1611–1689). Most probably, therefore, nos. A 100 and A 101 can be looked on as wedding portraits. The couple later lived in Naarden, but in 1650 Oopjen Coppit – who had in the meantime been widowed and remarried with Maerten Daey – settled in Amsterdam again. When her second husband died in 1659 there was a large number of paintings and drawings listed in the inventory, including 'an old man by Rembrandt' and 'a painting of Joseph and Mary, done by Rembrandt'. The latter was left to Jan Soolmans, her son by her first marriage, and evidently came from the possessions of the Soolmans–Coppit marriage; it may be identical with the large *Holy family* in Munich (no. A 88) which probably, like the *Portrait of Marten Soolmans*, dates from 1634. For other instances where those commissioning portraits also owned another Rembrandt painting done in the same year as the portraits, see entries nos. A 48, A 88 and A 95.

The probability that the portraits were ordered on the occasion of the sitters' marriage sheds some new light on the way they are represented. The emphatic gesture with which the man holds a glove in one hand stretched out towards the woman may be seen in connexion with the ceremonial and symbolical significance that the glove has held as a matrimonial pledge from the Middle Ages into recent times (cf. *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens* III, Berlin–Leipzig 1930/31, cols. 1407–1408). It is less clear what the meaning might be of the woman's black veil – which may tentatively be connected with her father's death in 1635 (see no. A 101, 4. *Comments*) – and, in particular, of the ring she wears hanging from a gold-coloured ribbon attached to her necklace. Could this be a demonstrative way of wearing a wedding ring as a token of marital fidelity? The same motif occurs in the Edinburgh *Portrait of a woman* (no. C 82), in the Berlin *Hendrickje Stoffels* (Br. 116), and – before it was overpainted – in the *Portrait of a woman* belonging to the University of California (Br. 351).

##### 5. Documents and sources

A mention that may relate to nos. A 100 and A 101 concerns the provenance, and is dealt with there.

##### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

##### 7. Copies

None.

## 8. Provenance

\*– Most probably described together with the companion-piece, no. A 101, in the inventory of the estate of Maerten Daey drawn up in Amsterdam on 3 November 1659, as hanging in the entrance-hall: ‘twee conterfijssels Marten Soolemans en Oopie Coppit’ (two likenesses of Marten Soolemans and Oopie Coppit). The paintings were obviously in the possession of Soolmans’ widow after his death, and when she married Maerten Daey. After her death in 1689 the portraits were not listed in the estate of the son of her first marriage, Jan Soolmans (1636–1691), nor in that of the son of her second marriage, Hendrik Daey (1651–1712). They must however have come into the Daey family at some time, when they were wrongly seen as being portraits of a member of the family and his wife<sup>1</sup>.

– According to John Smith’s *Catalogue . . .* of 1836<sup>2</sup> both portraits were in 1798 bought from Hendrik Daey (in Alkmaar) by R. Priuscenaar (probably to be read as Pruischenaar) in conjunction with Adriaan Daey, for 4000 guilders, and were sold in the following year to Mr van Winter, the brother-in-law of the then owner ‘de Heer van Loon’ of Amsterdam, for 12 000 guilders. According to information kindly supplied by Professor Jhr M. N. van Loon, the buyer must have been Pieter van Winter (1745–1807), who besides being a merchant in Amsterdam and a member of various governing bodies, was also a man of letters and art collector. The next owner was not (as Smith says) his brother-in-law, but his son-in-law Jhr Willem van Loon (1794–1847), husband of Anna Louisa Agatha van Winter (1793–1877). The two paintings were evidently sold on the death of the lastnamed, in 1877.

– Coll. Gustave de Rothschild, Paris<sup>3</sup>.

– Coll. Baron Robert de Rothschild, Paris.

## 9. Summary

As lifesize, full-length portraits, nos. A 100 and A 101 are fairly exceptional in Rembrandt’s oeuvre. In their execution they are highly characteristic of his portraits from the mid 1630s. The strong effect of plasticity (without however any detailed rendering of form) seen in the figures, together with the restrained but effective impression of depth in the setting, is wholly consonant with the busts and three quarter-length works from that period. The man’s portrait is in sound condition, though the woman’s is poor in some areas (the head and collar).

The identification of the sitters as Marten Soolmans and his wife Oopjen Coppit is based on a probability deduced from the paintings’ pedigree; the earlier assumption that they were Maerten Daey and his first wife can, because of details of their life history, be ruled out.

## REFERENCES

- 1 I. H. van E[eghen], ‘Marten Soolmans en Oopjen Coppit’, *Amstelodamum. Maandblad . . .* 43 (1956), pp. 85–90.
- 2 J. Smith, *A catalogue raisonné of the works of the most eminent Dutch, Flemish, and French painters* VII, London 1836, p. 123 no. 340.
- 3 HdG 637.

HDG 638; BR. 342; BAUCH 478; GERSON 165

Fig. 1. Canvas 207 × 132 cm



Fig. 2. Detail (1:2)



### 1. Summarized opinion

An authentic work that has suffered from over-cleaning in the head and collar and, to a lesser extent, in the hands; because of the decisive resemblances in treatment to the companion-piece it too can be dated in or around 1634.

### 2. Description of subject

A fashionably dressed woman is seen full-length, standing with her right foot forward, turned a little to the left and looking at the viewer. She wears a high-belted, wide, black garment ornamented with nubs and bands, with a wide lace collar and cuffs. In her right hand she holds a fan of black ostrich feathers, attached to her belt by a gold chain; with the left hand she lifts her long skirt slightly. Her hair stands out wide, held together by a narrow, diadem-like cap, and over it she wears a black veil that hangs down her back; a choker of four lines of pearls encircles her throat, and from this a plain gold ring hangs by a gold-coloured ribbon. A beauty spot is seen on her left temple.

She is standing on a floor of alternate light and darker marble tiles, in front of a grey curtain with a fringe along the hem, below which on the left a concave skirting-board is seen to project obliquely forward. To the extreme right can be seen steps over which her black skirt partly trails; this, together with the right foot placed well out in front of her and the lifting of the skirt with her left hand, gives the impression of her just having come down the steps and walking towards the left. The light falls from the left.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 23 April 1971 (J. B., S. H. L.) in poor light and in the frame, under conditions that made a thorough examination impossible.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 207 × 132 cm (sight size); presumably a single piece, as no seam was apparent.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Shows through light in thin, dark areas of the black garment, and in the thin brown-greys of the shadow side of the shoe.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Badly flattened. The head, neck and collar have been severely overcleaned and partially restored, as have the hands to a lesser extent. The black costume, on the other hand, is in general well preserved. Craquelure: fine, irregular but evenly distributed cracks, mainly in the face and collar.

DESCRIPTION: As in the companion-piece (no. A 100), the palette is based on the contrast between the flesh colour and white and the dominant greys and black of the costume and background.

The curtain is in thin, more or less translucent grey and dark grey, painted with a lively brushwork over a layer the broad strokes of which are plainly visible. To the right the grey paint is somewhat thicker and more opaque than elsewhere. The

Fig. 3. Detail (1:2)



manner of painting of the tiles is similar to that in the man's portrait, though the patchy variations of colour give a stronger emphasis to the impression of marble.

The lit part of the head is done in a pale flesh colour, using mostly quite long brushstrokes that follow the plastic form and the contours. A great deal of pink is used on the ridge of the nose and, somewhat thinner, on the cheeks (where there is local retouching). The brown showing the shadow on the right, and the opaque zone of reflected light along the jaw, have suffered, as has the grey to the right of the upper lip and along the lower lip. Most of the dark accents, such as the grey-brown of the eyebrows, the borders of the eyelids and the brown cast shadow below the nose also show wearing, and have been restored to a greater or lesser degree. The eyelids are in a flesh colour, yellowish on the left and more reddish on the right; the cast shadow of the eyelids on the eyeballs are done in black. The lower edges of the eyes are in a fairly thick pink, the white of the eye on the left is a thick broken white, that of the other eye a thinner light grey. The irises are done in a grey ringed with dark grey, lightest at the lower right opposite catchlights in off-white. The mouth-line is painted as an unbroken line of brown; the upper lip is a light red, while the lower (which is worn) is a pinkish red with a few highlights. On the woman's left temple a worn, round spot of black indicates a beauty spot.

The throat area is worn and flat, and in the pearls it is mainly the catchlights that have survived, the rest being filled in by restoration. The hair shows the remains of small strokes in brownish and grey colours. The veil, shown in black and grey, is better preserved.

The collar has been badly flattened and worn, so that neither the white edgings of light nor the decorative pattern done in greys and black now create the intended effect.

The hand on the left presents a ruddy flesh colour with pink on the highlights and brown in the shadows. The other hand is done with mostly vertical strokes in the flesh colour and a little pink, and modelled convincingly with brownish shadows. In both hands the areas of shadows have been somewhat overcleaned, including the pearls at the righthand wrist which has itself been painted with crosswise strokes of a reddish flesh colour (now somewhat worn, and gone over with grey).

The garment is executed fairly broadly, with great confidence, in greys and black, and apart from a few local retouches is well preserved. The belt and rosette-shaped bow are placed on a grey underlayer, with thick accents of white and grey.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

None.

#### *Signature*

None.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### **4. Comments**

After what has already been said about the com-

Fig. 4. Detail (1:1.5)



panion-piece no. A 100 (the *Portrait of Marten Soolmans*), only two problems remain in respect of no. A 101 – the state of preservation, and the dating of the painting in relation to the mourning that the subject is obviously wearing.

The condition of the woman's portrait leaves a great deal to be desired, especially in the head and collar; while the man's portrait is remarkably well preserved, that of the woman has been severely overcleaned in these areas. Since both paintings

have been in the same hands throughout, one can but assume that at some time the woman's portrait received rougher handling. Winkler<sup>1</sup> suggested that treatment undergone by the painting in Amsterdam in 1956 might be to blame. This cannot be accepted – the painting was, it is true, given a new lining canvas on the occasion of the Rembrandt exhibition held that year in the Rijksmuseum (when a glued lining had to be removed), but the harm must have been done well before then. The pale tint of the face,



Fig. 5. Rembrandt, Study in black and white chalk (Ben. 428). Hamburg, Hamburger Kunsthalle



mentioned by Winkler, was already noted in Lord Ronald Gower's *Pocket Guide to the public and private Galleries of Holland and Belgium* of 1875, where he talks of 'the shadows in the somewhat sickly face . . .'.<sup>2</sup> There is no reason to assume that this paleness is an outcome of restoration.

Van Luttervelt<sup>3</sup> pointed out that the black veil worn over the head – as well as the plain gold ring at the woman's throat – show that she is depicted in mourning. Since, moreover, the painting (unlike the man's portrait) is undated and the sitter looks as if she is older than 23, he suggested that the man's portrait was done in 1634 without a companion-piece, and the woman's only after the death of her husband in 1641. One must say that the portraits offer too close a stylistic connexion to make such a surmise acceptable; the manner of painting is identical, and as Van Gelder<sup>4</sup> and Gerson<sup>5</sup> have already commented it is impossible to separate one painting from the other. (The statement by Smith<sup>6</sup> that the woman's portrait is signed and dated 1643 must be due to a misunderstanding – there is no signature to be found on the painting, and the date probably results from an inversion of the last two figures of the date on the man's portrait.) Possibly Oopjen Coppit's mourning is for the death of her father Dr Hendrick Coppit in March 1635 (cf. J. E. Elias, *De*

*vroedschap van Amsterdam*, Haarlem 1903–1905, I, p. 189), with the portrait being completed only in the spring of that year.

The presence of the black veil gives reason to suppose, furthermore, that a drawing in black chalk heightened with a little white of a *Woman seated in an armchair*, in Hamburg (Ben. 428; our fig. 5), including the same rather unusual item of dress, may well have been a first design for the portrait of Oopjen Coppit. If this assumption is correct, then Rembrandt will initially have thought of showing the woman seated, more or less as in the New York *Portrait of a woman in an armchair* of 1633 (no. A 79) which has as its pendant (no. A 78) the *Portrait of a man rising from his chair* in Cincinnati.

## 5. Documents and sources

See no. A 100.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

None.

## 8. Provenance

See no. A 100.

## 9. Summary

See no. A 100.

## REFERENCES

- 1 F. Winkler, 'Echt, falsch, verfälscht', *Kunstchronik* 10 (1957), pp. 141–144, esp. 142.
- 2 Chr. P. van Egghen, 'Rembrandtieke emigranten', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 43 (1956), pp. 90–92.
- 3 R. van Luttervelt, 'Bij het portret van Oopje Coppit', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 43 (1956), p. 93.
- 4 [J. G. van Gelder in:] 'Diskussion', *Kunstchronik* 10 (1957), pp. 144–147, esp. 146.
- 5 Gerson 164; Br.-Gerson 342.
- 6 J. Smith, *A catalogue raisonné of the works of the most eminent Dutch, Flemish, and French painters* VII, London 1836, no. 551.

**A 102 Portrait of Dirck Jansz. Pesser** (companion-piece to no. A 103)

[1634]

LOS ANGELES, CAL., LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART, NO. M. 69.16

FRANCES AND ARMAND HAMMER PURCHASE FUND

HDG 739; BR. 194; BAUCH 374; GERSON 168

Fig. 1. Panel 68.9 × 53.2 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



### 1. Summarized opinion

An authentic work that is in the main reasonably well preserved, dating from 1634. It has however been altered from its original oval shape into a rectangle and in the process has lost some area along the edges of the panel.

### 2. Description of subject

Bust of a man, with the body turned three-quarters to the right and the head towards the viewer. The sitter wears a broad-brimmed black hat and a white ruff. His black clothing is not shown in any detail, but a vague indication of a dark, black band over the man's right shoulder suggests that he is wearing a black cloak with a velvet revers. The light falls from the left, and the figure casts a vague shadow towards the right.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 11 April 1969 (S. H. L., P. v. Th.) under poor light and on 28 October and 4 November 1971 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good artificial light and out of the frame. Four X-ray films of the whole painting were received later.

#### *Support*

**DESCRIPTION:** Oak panel, grain vertical, originally oval c. 71 × 53 cm. Single plank. The (one must assume) originally oval panel has been reduced, by sawing off small segments, to a 12-sided panel around the edges of which a total of 16 small blocks of wood have been added to bring it to a rectangular shape; the whole was (presumably at the same time) brought to a thickness of c. 0.4 cm, enclosed with wooden strips, and attached to a second cradled, rectangular panel of 68.9 × 53.2 cm, about 0.7 cm thick. After 1971 the cradle was removed, and the support provided with a moisture barrier. **SCIENTIFIC DATA:** None.

#### *Ground*

**DESCRIPTION:** A light yellowish brown is visible at many places, e.g. in parts of the background, in the man's right eyebrow, in the cast shadow on the forehead, in the beard and at the contour of the collar.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** None.

#### *Paint layer*

**CONDITION:** Good in the thickly painted parts. There is some wearing in the thin, dark areas of the head. The integrating of the painting of the parts added to the original panel has led to a certain amount of overpainting of the clothing and background. In the background the additions show a distinct, craquelured greenish grey, and brown overpaintings run along the edges of the 12-sided panel. These retouches also necessitated retouching of the signature, which is to the right below centre and close to the edge. Craquelure: apart from that just mentioned, none was observed.

**DESCRIPTION:** The background is to a large extent executed in grey, opaque around the figure but becoming thinner further out and letting some of the ground show through in the scratches of the freely placed brushstrokes. The cast shadow on the right is brushed broadly, in a somewhat translucent grey-brown.

The lit parts of the head are painted thickly, with a clearly visible and mainly short brushstroke. The flesh tone varies

from yellowish to white (overlaid, on the cheekbone, with strokes of flesh colour), some red (on the ridge of the nose) and light pink (in highlights on the nose). In the shadow half of the face a bold, oblique stroke, at some distance from the reddish line that runs (with a break halfway along) across the ridge of the nose, forms the upper part of the cast shadow of the nose. The shadow half is otherwise executed with dabs of rather indeterminate colours, and in an orangey pink that appears thickest and lightest on the partly illuminated part of the cheekbone below the man's left eye. The shadow cast by the hat, against which a number of firm strokes of a yellowish flesh tint stand out above the eyebrow, is brushed over the ground in thin greys and browns.

The eye on the left shows a partially unsharp edge to the white of the eye (which on the left is a thick yellowish white, and on the right a very thin grey), on both sides of a grey-brown iris that to the lower right becomes a lighter grey; a spot of white stands on the border between the iris and the not entirely round pupil (done in black) to provide the catchlight. A small stroke of a fairly bright red is seen in, and next to, the inner corner of the eye. The upper eyelid, with a distinct sheen of light, is edged at the bottom by a line of brown, gone over a number of times, that suggests the shadow on the eyeball and to the right merges into a black (on top of which is placed the red of the corner of the eye); at the top there is a series of strokes of brown that suggest the fold of skin. The lower edge of the eye is shown with small strokes and blobs of pink, a little red and some off-white (for the glisten of the rim of moisture). Around the eye-pouch there is an area of shadow formed with strokes of pinkish and brownish flesh tint, on top of which there are, coming from the left, some quite thick strokes of a yellowish flesh colour. The eyebrow is executed with distinct strokes of black and cool grey that here and there leave an underlying layer exposed.

The righthand eye is (allowing for a certain amount of wearing) done far more cursorily. The white of the eye consists on the left of a stroke of opaque light grey on a brownish underlayer, and on the right of scarcely more than this layer. A thin black shows the pupil and the circumference of the greyish iris, and lies over the brown border of the eyelid. The lower edge of the eye is indicated summarily in an orangey pink that also appears elsewhere in the area of shadow.

The nostrils are done as thick patches of black, and the mouth with a black line and a stroke of red for the lower lip. Black is also used in the moustache where it lies as curling lines over strokes of brown and ochre brown, as well as in the beard and hair done mainly in a variety of greys. The man's right ear has a remarkably angular contour, and is painted thickly in various tints of pink, brown, red and a yellowish flesh colour.

In the lit parts the collar is executed in fairly thick white paint, with the bottom layer (which can be seen as an underpainting) done in firm and fairly straight strokes running in various directions. On top of this are placed loosely-painted curving lines of white, with broad strokes of light grey for the shadows. In the half-shadow the paint is applied with still greater fluency. The cast shadow from the head on the ruff is given some internal detail in brown, and towards the edge is painted in an opaque grey.

The hat is executed mainly in a fairly thin black, which becomes thicker in the deepest shadows and, especially, along parts of the outline. The black costume shows a thick and deftly-placed contour against, and partly over, the collar.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** None.

#### *X-Rays*

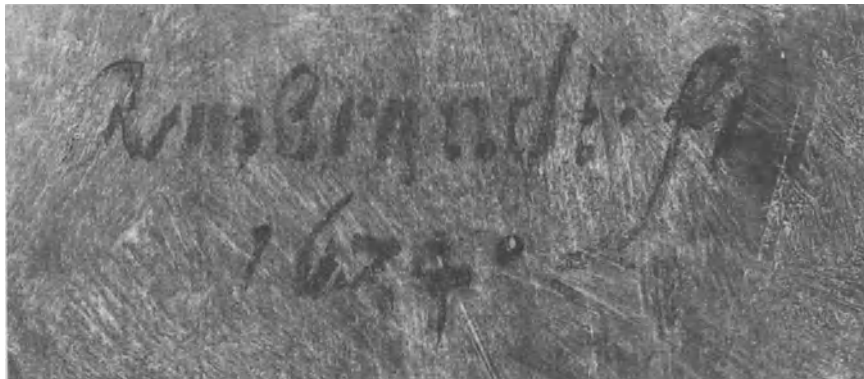
The cradle, and nails and (at the lower left) a dovetail used to

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)





Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1)



attach additions to the panel after it had been reduced to a 12-sided shape, dominate the radiographic image.

The background shows up light everywhere, most so on the left and right next to the collar and along the contour of the hat. There is no appreciable discrepancy between the figure in its completed state and the shape left in reserve for it in the background. The brushstroke in light parts of the painting can be made out very precisely. The close match with what is seen at the surface, and the nature of the X-ray image, give the impression of a swift and sure execution.

#### Signature

In very dark paint, on the right next to the body and in the cast shadow on the background (<Rembrandt. ft. | 1634>). Some of the letters and figures are worn and some have plainly been retouched – e.g. the *R* and the *e* and, most clearly of all, the *t* and the *ft.*, which is at the very edge of the remaining part of the original panel. The script would seem to lack the spontaneity of the inscription on the companion-piece (no. A 103). Examination by the handwriting experts Ir. H. Hardy and Mrs R. ter Kuile-Haller at the initiative of Prof. Dr W. Froentjes yielded a negative result. Given the fact that sometimes only one of two pendants appears to be signed (cf. nos. A 100 and A 101), it is conceivable that the inscription on the *Portrait of Dirck Jansz. Pesser* was copied after the authentic signature on its companion-piece (cf. Introduction, Chapter V, p. 105).

In the left background is the inscription <AE:47>.

#### Varnish

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

Though the radical alteration in the original format of the panel has not left the paint layer untouched, no. A 102 can nevertheless still be described as a partially well preserved painting that is somewhat worn in the thin areas. It is quite convincingly a work by Rembrandt. The combination of a bold brushstroke with an extremely convincing effect of plasticity found in, for instance, the area of the eyes and nose, and the highly effective and confident treatment of the collar with its strong three-dimensional function in the composition, are typical of Rembrandt's portraits from the years around 1634–35. Characteristic in this respect is, for instance, the treatment of the ear using mostly

straight or angular brushstrokes, and more generally the way that wrinkles in the light (around the eye on the left) or the cast shadow of the nose have been depicted using undisguised strokes or dabs of paint. On this point there is a close resemblance to other portraits from 1634, such as that of Johannes Elison in Boston (no. A 98) and that of an 83-year-old woman in London (no. A 104). No more than minimal attention has been paid to defining the clothing, in either internal detail or even the contours.

Hofstede de Groot<sup>1</sup>, Bauch<sup>2</sup> and Gerson<sup>3</sup> mistakenly saw the shape of the present 12-sided remains of the original panel as having 10 sides, and thought this to be the original shape. In view of the irregular form of the polygon and the frequent use of the oval in portraits from the 1630s, the panel was undoubtedly originally oval. It is impossible to say exactly when the laborious task of altering the format was carried out (it was also done on the companion-piece no. A 103); if the cradle was attached at the same time, then the appearance of the cradle still fixed to the woman's portrait might perhaps point to the first half of the 19th century. Seen in a narrower and curved frame, the curves of the hat and collar must have produced a stronger three-dimensional effect as well as a more evident effect of linear rhythm.

In the literature it has, for reasons that are obscure, been assumed that no. A 102 and its pendant A 103 come from a family called Raman, and may portray members of that family. The identification of the two sitters we make here is based on the combination of the following three pieces of evidence – a wax seal with family armorial bearings that was transferred from the original back of the woman's portrait onto the cradle; the age indicated on the man's portrait; and the likeness between the man's portrait and a drawing in the Rotterdam City Archives that is known to be a portrait of Dirck Pesser. The uncommonly clear wax seal (fig. 5) shows a shield supported by two lions (parted fesswise, chief gules, the base parted palewise, dexter



Fig. 5. Wax seal transferred onto the cradle of no. A 103



argent, sinister sable) with as crest a hat with two plumes of cock's feathers; these bearings, printed from the same stamp, appear as those of Salomon Johan, Baron van Gersdorff, resident in Utrecht in 1783, in the records of the notary Cornelis de Wijs of Utrecht (Utrecht City Archives: fol. 444 recto, according to a note in coll. J. Musschart, Central Bureau for Genealogy, The Hague). The first member of this family to settle in the Netherlands was Wolfgang Abraham, Baron van Gersdorff (born between 1660 and 1670, d. 9 September 1719 in The Hague), Counsellor and Envoy to the Republic of the Netherlands of the King of Poland as Elector of Saxony. He married as his second wife, on 6 February 1705, Anna Maria van der Linden (1670–1729), daughter of the Rotterdam magistrate Jan van der Linden (d. 1700) and Anna van der Wolff. The thought comes naturally to mind that Rembrandt's portraits came into the Van Gersdorff family's possession through this marriage, and that they depict forebears of Anna van der Linden. According to genealogical research carried out for us by Mrs M. Buikstra-de Boer, the details of the life of one of these forebears match exactly the age given on the man's portrait – it is known that the maternal grandfather of Anna van der Wolff died on 1 September 1651 at the age of 64, so that in 1634 he would in fact have been 47 years of age. He was Dirck Jansz. Pesser, a wealthy brewer in Rotterdam; together with his brother Dammas and

Fig. 6. *Portrait of Dirck Jansz. Pesser*. Anonymous pen and wash drawing. Rotterdam, Gemeentelijke archiefdienst

his brother-in-law Jacob van Couwenhoven he was among the leading Remonstrants in Rotterdam (for genealogical data see: *De Nederlandsche Leeuw*, 1937). On 18 December 1612 he married Haesje Jacobsdr. van Cleyburg, who died in 1641 at the age of 58 and would thus have been about four years older than her husband; Rembrandt's female portrait does not conflict with this, and the fact that it does not bear the indication of age one might expect may perhaps be explained by this circumstance. Finally, there is the drawing already mentioned in the Rotterdam City Archives (H. C. H. Moquette, *Catalogus van de Portretverzameling* . . ., Rotterdam 1917, no. 1389; fig. 6). This drawn portrait (probably done from a painting) of Dirck Jansz. Pesser, in later life and with somewhat sunken features, offers sufficient resemblance to Rembrandt's man's portrait to make the identification at least permissible.

The identification of this pair of portraits throws a certain amount of new light on Rembrandt's clientele in 1634. That he did stay in Rotterdam in that year is already known from a deed signed by him there on 22 July (cf. HdG *Urk.*, no. 38; Strauss *Doc.*, 1634/7). It is noteworthy that after the portrait of the Remonstrant minister Wtenbogaert (no. A80) commissioned by the Remonstrant Abraham Anthonisz. Recht, these portraits too must have been ordered by a leading supporter of this less strict branch of Dutch Calvinism.

It is not known whether Dirck Pesser and his wife

owned other paintings. Their only daughter and heir, Maria Pesser, and her husband Reynier Dircksz. van der Wolff must have had a sizeable and important collection, which after the wife's death in Rotterdam was sold on 15 May 1676 (Hoet II, pp. 340–344). Besides 43 Italian paintings some of which were very valuable, the collection included among the separately numbered Dutch masters, as no. 14, 'Een Paracelsus, een Half Figuur, door Rembrant. 200 – 0 [guilders]'. From the relatively high price one can take it that this was quite a large piece. It cannot be identified with certainty, but one could think of the Prague *Scholar* (no. A 95), which like the portraits of Dirck Pesser and his wife is dated 1634 and might come from their possessions. For other instances where those commissioning portraits also owned another Rembrandt painting done in the same year as the portraits, see nos. A 48, A 88 and A 95.

#### 5. Documents and sources

See no. A 103.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

\*– Together with the companion-piece (no. A 103), in the possession of the Van Gersdorff family in the 18th century, according to a wax seal from the back of no. A 103 with family armorial bearings as used by Salomon Johan van Gersdorff in 1783 (see 4. *Comments* above). Probably came into the Van Gersdorff family through the marriage of Wolfgang Abraham van Gersdorff (1660/70–1719) to Anna Maria van der Linden (1670–1729), great-granddaughter of Dirck Jansz. Pesser and Haesje van Cleyburg.

– Still together with no. A 103 in single ownership when (in the first half of the 19th century?) both paintings were sawn and had pieces added and were cradled (at the same time?).

– Dealer F. Kleinberger, Paris<sup>1</sup>.

– Coll. A. de Ridder, Frankfurt-on-Main (cat. 1910, p. 35). Sale Paris 2 June 1924, no. 55.

– Sale dealer N. K[atz], Paris 25 April 1951, no. 60.

– Dealer Julius Weitzner, New York (c. 1955–1958).

– Dealer P. de Boer, Amsterdam.

– Coll. H. Kohn, Wassenaar (until 1969).

– H. Shickman Gallery, New York; acquired by the museum in 1969.

#### 9. Summary

Despite some wearing in the thin areas and alteration (probably in the first half of the 19th century) from an oval to the present rectangular format, no. A 102 can still be seen as a characteristic work

by Rembrandt from his Amsterdam years. The admittedly retouched signature and date of 1634 can be regarded as basically reliable. Typical for the year 1634 is the large measure of independence of the free brushwork, which nevertheless creates a great effect of depth and plasticity. On the basis of a combination of facts – mainly the family armorial bearings on the back of the pendant, no. A 103, and the age given for the sitter in the man's portrait – it can justifiably be assumed that this shows the Rotterdam brewer Dirck Jansz. Pesser.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 HdG 739.
- 2 Bauch 374.
- 3 Gerson 168; Br.-Gerson 194.

HDG 882; BR. 354; BAUCH 492; GERSON 169

### 1. Summarized opinion

A generally well preserved, authentic work with a reliable though not intact signature and date, to be read as 1634. It has however been altered from its original oval shape into a rectangle and in the process has lost some area along the edges of the panel.

### 2. Description of subject

Bust of a woman, with the body turned three-quarters to the left, the head slightly to the left and the gaze directed straight ahead. She wears a white cap, a ruff, and black clothing in which an overgarment, with some adornment, open to the front can be made out from a black bodice. The light falls from the left, and the figure casts a shadow on the rear wall to the right.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined at various stages during and after restoration, on 22 May 1973 (S. H. L., P. v. Th.), 20 September 1974 (J. B., B. H., E. v. d. W.) and 12 February 1976 (B. H.). Seen in excellent daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of a full X-ray. An X-ray print of the whole painting was received later.

#### *Support*

**DESCRIPTION:** Oak panel, grain vertical, originally oval c. 71 × 53 cm. Single plank. The (one must assume) originally oval panel has been reduced, by sawing off small segments, to a 12-sided panel around the edges of which a total of 16 small blocks of wood have been added to bring it to a rectangular shape; the whole was (presumably at the same time) enclosed with wood strips and cradled. (The work done on the panel is identical to that on no. A 102, except that in that case a wooden supporting panel was added, and the cradle attached to this.) The result is a rectangle measuring 68.6 × 53.4 cm. During restoration in 1974–76 the added sections were not detached, though the paint on them was removed.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** None.

#### *Ground*

**DESCRIPTION:** A light yellowish brown is visible at many points, e.g. in a discontinuity between the cheek and the background on the left, in the cast shadow of the head on the collar, the eyebrows and irises, the shadow side of the nose, the thin part of the collar by the righthand shoulder and, showing through, in thin areas of the dark clothing and of the background at the top right.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** None.

#### *Paint layer*

**CONDITION:** Generally good, though some wear may have affected the background. Craquelure: none seen.

**DESCRIPTION:** On the left next to the body the background is painted in an almost uniform, opaque light brown-grey in which there is little brushwork to be seen; dark patches in this passage are hard to explain. The paint becomes thinner upwards, until above the head it changes abruptly into a broadly-brushed dark brown that leaves the ground exposed in the brush scratches; immediately to the right of the cap

there is a zone done in an opaque brown, probably connected with the final defining of the contour. To the right, level with the forehead, this area merges into an opaque grey in which, unlike the corresponding area to the left, a clear and mostly short brushstroke can be seen. The cast shadow to the right by the shoulder is executed in a thin and boldly-brushed greyish brown.

The flesh colour in the lit parts of the head varies from a remarkably warm yellowish tint to a pinkish red. It is thickest on the bridge of the nose and the forehead above it, and on the right above the eyebrow where a light pink applied with short strokes running in various directions has been used. Around the eyes the strokes tend more to follow the shape of the eyes and eye-pouches. The cheeks are painted more smoothly; at the chin the paint is again thick, as is the grey-pink reflexion of light that along the jawline to the right stands out against a thin greyish area of shadow. The dark grey of the eyebrows, painted wet-in-wet with the flesh colour using small dabs of the brush, leaves a brownish underlayer – evidently part of the monochrome underpainting – exposed at the ends.

The two eyes are dealt with in almost identical fashion, using strokes of a light pinkish red in both corners, and white highlights as small strokes on the pink eyelids and as spots along the lower eyelids and at the corners of the eyes. The light and dark tints of grey used for the whites of the eyes leave small discontinuities in the paint; the irises are executed in very thin, translucent brown, and on the edge of the pupils (done roughly in black) there are small strokes of white to show reflexions of light. To the right of the bridge of the nose an accent in thin brown indicates a hollow next to the corner of the eye.

Along the ridge of the nose a long, whitish yellow highlight has been built up from a series of diagonally-placed crosswise strokes; there is a strong white highlight on the tip of the nose. Around the light patch on the wing of the nose, which is painted in a thin, ruddy flesh colour over an underlying brown, a grey has been placed over a warm-coloured underlayer; the cast shadow below this, with unsharp borders, is in dark brown with a little grey. The mouth is formed of a mouth-line set down with lively strokes of a thick black, and of bright pinkish red lips with rather lighter strokes placed on the lower lip.

The hair is shown in grey, partly on top of the flesh colour, with some white in the middle above the forehead. The cap is executed for the most part in firm, parallel strokes in light greys, and on the highest light at the top and to the right in the curve with short strokes of a thicker and lighter colour, and with thick edges of white. In the upturned edge, and slightly above this, a light yellow-brown hints at a gold band showing through the material of the cap. The contour is enlivened at some points, against the background and on top of it, with glancing strokes of dry white paint.

In the lit areas the collar was first done with white brushed in various directions (which can be regarded as an underpainting), and on top of this the folds and outer edges of the stiffened piping have been indicated, and strengthened with strokes of white along the edges. On the right the collar has clearly been extended out over the background. A thin dark brown forms the cast shadow of the head on the collar.

The clothing is painted in black, with occasional plainly visible broad, zigzag strokes; the sheen of light is done in dark grey, on the shoulder using long, curved brushstrokes. The dark paint is, insofar as it can be made out, placed just over the background all along the righthand contour; on the left the contour is, in its present state, rather fragmented, and its

Fig. 1. Panel 68.6 × 53.4 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray

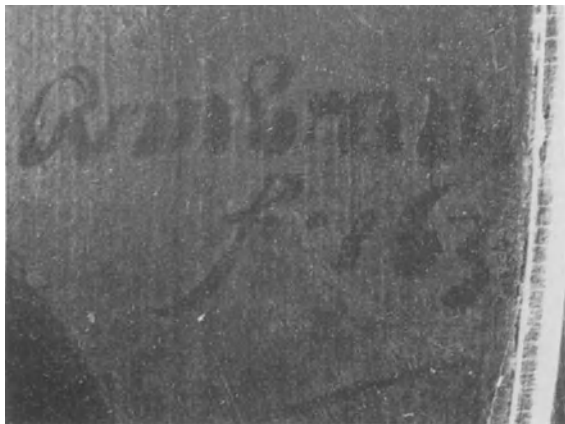


Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)





Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1). Photograph before restoration



relation to the paint used for the background is unclear (see however *X-Rays*).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The radiographic image is dominated by the cradle, the nails used to affix the blocks to the 12-sided reduced panel, and a wax seal attached to the cradle.

The background shows up fairly light everywhere, most markedly so next to the body outline. The dark reserve left for the trunk is at right, considerably narrower than in the finished painting – obviously the black here extends some way over the grey background. On the left, however, the border of the reserve corresponds approximately to the present contour, and suggests that here the paint of the background has been butted up against that of the black dress, possibly at a late stage. In the face the passages described as being thickest at the paint surface appear lightest in the X-ray.

Apart from the extension of the collar over the background that is also evident in the X-ray, there is no trace of alterations in shapes having been made.

#### *Signature*

In very dark grey on the right next to the body, in the cast shadow on the background, with the final letters and figures intersected by the join between the original panel and the added wood (<Rembran.. | f. 163(4)>), with an oblique stroke under the second line. Although it seems to have been touched up here and there, the majority of the letters and figures still show enough of their original and spontaneous handwriting to prevent any doubt as to their basic reliability; it is true that, through the use of a thick brush, the strokes are broader than usual and (possibly also as a result of this) the letters become slightly larger from left to right. The final figure of the date has survived only in fragmentary form, but it can quite readily be completed to make a 4. The oblique line under the date also occurs in a number of signatures from 1632 (no. A 61) and 1633 (nos. A 78, A 82 and A 84).

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks; a heavy layer of varnish was removed during cleaning in 1974–76.

#### 4. Comments

The radical change in the original format of the panel, which to judge from the appearance of the cradle may be placed in the first half of the 19th

century, has not left the paint layer untouched, but the condition of no. A 103 can nevertheless be termed generally good, though slightly problematical in a few parts of the background. This is quite convincingly a work by Rembrandt. Though the brushwork is less broad than in the associated man's portrait, the area round the eyes, nose and mouth executed freely in fluent strokes, thicker dabs and lumpy blobs of paint, and the extremely economically rendered cap, here too give a strong feeling of plasticity against the background done mainly in a cool grey. The treatment of the ruff is, by comparison, more matter-of-fact, and the black costume is painted only sketchily. There is every reason to consider no. A 103 to be the pendant to no. A 102, not only because of the subsequent work done on the panel (which points to a common pedigree) but also through the pictorial execution; the date must, in line with that of the other painting, be read as 1634 and not, as has always been stated in the literature, 1636.

For other aspects, in particular the identification of the sitter as Haesje Jacobsdr. van Cleyburg, see 4. *Comments* under entry no. A 102.

#### 5. Documents and sources

A small piece of wood has been transferred from the back of the original panel to the cradle, carrying a wax seal with the armorial bearings of the Van Gersdorff family – a shield supported by two lions, parted fesswise, chief gules, the base parted palewise, dexter argent, sinister sable, with as crest a hat with two plumes of cock's feathers. For the conclusions drawn from this with respect to the provenance of the painting, see no. A 102 under *Comments* and *Provenance*.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

For the period when it was together with the pendant, see no. A 102 under *Provenance*.

Subsequently:

– Coll. Lord Kinnaid, Rossie Priory, Scotland, until the 1970s; acquired by the museum in 1985.

#### 9. Summary

Despite a change in format from oval to rectangular (probably carried out in the first half of the 19th century), no. A 103 is a mostly well preserved and characteristic work by Rembrandt from the mid-1630s. The execution, though somewhat less free, is closely similar to that of the companion-piece no. A 102. The signature and date are not entirely

complete and intact, but are basically reliable; the date should be read as 1634. A wax seal on the back provides the key to identifying the sitters of nos. A 102 and A 103 as the Rotterdam brewer Dirck Jansz. Pesser and his four-years-old wife Haesje Jacobsdr. van Cleyburg.

### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved, authentic work, reliably signed and dated 1634. It is impossible to be entirely certain that the oval format is original.

### 2. Description of subject

A woman, according to an inscription 83 years of age, is seen down to the waist, with the head and slightly forward-leaning body facing the viewer, and the gaze directed slightly downwards. On her head she wears a white, two-part cap the upper part of which is held to the lower with pins; the wings curving out to each side are wrapped round a metal headband at the bottom. A white ruff is worn round the neck, while the remainder of the clothing is black – a coat ('vlieger') opening wide to the front, the panels of which show dark grey revers, a short bodice closed at the centre with a row of small buttons, and a wide, pleated skirt. The figure stands out against a neutral background, and the light falls from the left.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in May 1968 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good light and out of the frame; four X-ray prints together covering the whole of the painting, and one of the head, were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 68.7 × 53.8 cm. Single plank. The panel is surrounded by a border of varying width, assembled from pieces of wood of a different type and attached later, bringing the dimensions of the whole to 71.1 × 55.9 cm. From the fact that in the X-ray the grains of the original panel and of the added border slightly overlap each other along the inner edge of the latter, one can deduce that the added border was given a steep, narrow bevel matching a similar bevel along the edge of the original panel, so as to obtain a wider contact area when the two were glued together. Further strengthening is provided by five small wood blocks stuck across the join at the top and two at the bottom. Although the edges of the original panel consequently cannot be seen, the steepness of the presumed bevelling differs radically from 17th century usage; it is thus impossible to deduce from it that the panel was originally oval. The presence of a strip of uneven width without any original ground or paint along the edge of the panel suggests however that the oval shape is original.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Locally visible by the contour of the collar on the left; of a warm ochre colour, and presumably thin since the grain of the wood is apparent here and there. According to a report from Mrs Joyce Plesters of the National Gallery (1975), a brown tint showing through on the breast belongs more to the panel itself than to the ground.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Microscope examination by Mrs C. M. Groen of cross-sections prepared by Mrs Plesters identified a white chalk ground and a layer containing lumps of white lead and some light yellow, orange and dark brown particles, the latter layer obviously being the 'primuersel'.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Apart from a few slightly worn patches in the dark

clothing, the painting is in sound condition. It was cleaned in 1956<sup>1</sup>. Craquelure: none seen.

DESCRIPTION: The manner of painting is on the whole free and firm; in the head and to some extent in the collar and cap the paint has been applied more thickly, becoming impasto at some points. The background is done with quite wide strokes, at the top in a dark and slightly translucent brown-grey and further down in a progressively lighter and more opaque brown-grey. The translucency of the wings of the cap has been rendered by applying a thin white over the paint of the background; at the top and in the edges of the cap a thicker white has been used. At the top, especially to the left, the outline of the cap is a little lower than was initially planned, and a light underpainting can be seen under the grey paint of the background.

The face is painted with animated, often slightly curved strokes in a flesh colour, pink, white and yellow. Impasto accents of black are found in the eyes, the shadow of the nose and in the mouth-line. The shadow side of the face is painted more thinly than the lit parts; in the strip of shadow along the forehead, temple and cheek there is an ochre colour that appears to belong to the underpainting. The reflexion of light on the cheek and chin is placed with a rather longer brushstroke, and applied a little more thickly. To the right beside and below the face a heavy, brown-black shadow had a reserve left for it in the white of the collar; part of a brown underpainting can still be made out at this point. The lit collar is done with fairly thick white paint, with crisp edgings of light on the edge of the folds and strokes of translucent grey for the cast shadows from the wings of the cap. By the underedge black paint used for the costume lies under the greyish tone of the collar, in order to create the effect of it showing through the material.

In the clothing the brushstroke generally follows the fall of the folds; a deep black is applied thinly and somewhat translucently, alternating with a more opaque grey-black in the revers of the coat and in the subdued lights on the folds of the skirt.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: A cross-section taken by Mrs Plesters at the lower edge of the collar showed that here the structure of the paint layer comprises a thin layer of deep black paint of very fine consistency placed over the ground, with on top of this a very pure white lead. As has already been said, the white of the collar here lies over the previously-applied black of the clothing.

#### *X-Rays*

The radiographic image matches what one might expect from the paint surface. In the head and its immediate surroundings there are concentrations of radioabsorbent pigment in the upper left part of the cap, in the forehead on this side, in strokes of paint below the eyepouch on the left and on the ridge of the nose, and to the right in a number of broad strokes on the collar. For the rest, the lively image of the brushwork in the head confirms the impression of a manner of painting that was direct and spontaneous from the outset. In the upper part of the collar can be seen strokes running across the direction of the pleats and belonging to the underpainting; these are overlaid by crisp touches of radioabsorbent paint used to indicate the edgings of light on the pleats; they also appear in the upstanding edge of the collar. As can already be noted at the paint surface, the shadow on the collar to the right, which appears uniformly dark, had a reserve allowed for it; this is found also to have been the case for the shadowed underedge on the left at the bottom of the wing of the cap.

A remarkable feature is that just inside the edge of the panel

Fig. 1. Panel 68.7 × 53.8 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray

Fig. 2. X-ray



Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)

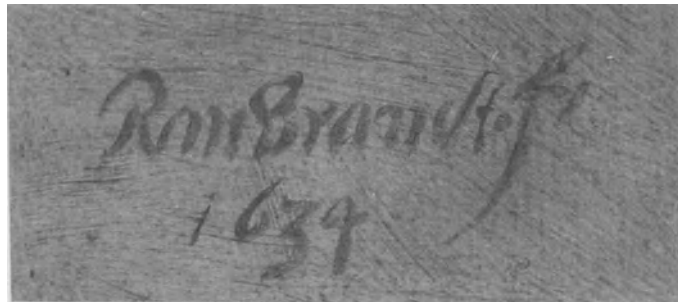




Fig. 4. X-ray



Fig. 5. Detail with signature (1:1)



the primed and painted area, showing up as vaguely light, has an irregular border at some places (cf. *Support*). The five wood blocks at the top and the two at the bottom used to strengthen the border attached to the panel (see *Support*) can be seen as light patches; the border itself appears slightly darker than the primed panel.

#### Signature

On the right in the background next to the collar, in grey-brown <Rembrandt.ft/1634>; makes a reliable impression. Somewhat lower down in the left background, and in a purplish grey, there is the inscription <AE. (in monogram) SVE. (the last two letters in monogram) 83>.

#### Varnish

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

The most noticeable features of this painting are the great directness and freedom of the treatment. These qualities are to be found in all passages, and are evident both in the manner of painting and in the approach, which incorporates incidentals. These include the somewhat lop-sided posture of the shoulders and upper body, which suggests that the woman is seated, as is also indicated by the fact that the coat is open wide at the front, with the two panels of the garment spreading out to both sides of the lap. The shoulder-caps (the 'bragoenen' hiding the attachment of separate sleeves to the rest of the coat) enliven the silhouette. The treatment of the face, where the brushstrokes have plainly been placed wet-in-wet, show that the working-up of the painting was rapid; as is common in Rembrandt's portraits done on panel in this period, the underpainting is left partly exposed in the shadows. One has to assume that in the wings of the cap and the lower border of the ruff the work occupied more stages, with the translucent effect being prepared by the laying-down of the area lying behind followed later by the application of a thin white, with a fairly broad brushstroke. The painting as a whole is marked by a most effective alternation of light and dark areas, and an open, lively manner of painting. It thus fits into the picture we have of Rembrandt's portraits, and of his development towards a great freedom of execution that can be sensed in the year

1634. This portrait can indeed be described as a prime example of this shift, and comparison with an earlier – and in subject-matter very similar – portrait like that of the 62-year-old woman in a private collection in Tel Aviv (no. A 63) shows up the difference very clearly; in that work dating from 1632 the approach is much less relaxed. The free manner of painting seen in no. A 104 manifests itself not only more strongly but also earlier in representations of figures that seem to have an imaginary character than in the commissioned portraits. As an outstanding example of this manner of painting the London portrait is thus somewhat exceptional within the group of formal portraits, and can best be compared with *tronies* of old men from the firstnamed of these groups. A parallel that comes to mind is the Munich *Bust of a man in oriental dress* of 1633 (no. A 73). Although the free manner of painting can thus on the one hand be seen as a stage in the course of development, it seems on the other to be linked to the rendering of an old, wrinkled face. (Conversely, with a youthful subject it is precisely the broad form and the smooth modelling that is accentuated, this then being coupled throughout with a slower build-up of plasticity in homogeneous areas; cf. nos. A 100 and A 101).

A number of copies have been made directly or indirectly after the London portrait (see 7. *Copies* below); one of these, a sepia and wash drawing by Jan Stolker identifies the sitter as Françoise van Wassenhove, widow of the Remonstrant minister Eduard Poppus, who died in 1624. Given the notoriously fanciful character of many of Stolker's identifications plus the presumed age of Françoise van Wassenhove in 1634 (c. 60 years), there is insufficient ground to give any credence to this.

It cannot be verified, from the work done on the back, whether the panel has always been oval. The fact that a lost drawing by Hendrik van Limburg probably reproduced it as oval (see 7. *Copies*, 2) does at all events remove any documentary worth from the rectangular format of a mezzotint by Jan Stolker based on this (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 1). If a painted copy dated 1636 (see 7. *Copies*, 1), which is oval, does in fact come from that year, this would prove that the original has indeed always been that shape.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Mezzotint by Jan Stolker (Amsterdam 1724–Rotterdam 1785). Inscribed in state II: *Remb<sup>t</sup>. Pinx. J:Stolker Fec. & Excus/Avia | S.Cruys Excud:* (Charrington 165). Reproduces the picture not very faithfully, in reverse and in a rectangular

field. Instead of translating 'Avia' as 'grandmother' MacLaren<sup>1</sup> prefers the more general interpretation of 'old woman'. It may be mere chance that during the 19th century another print (see 3. below) and a painted copy (see 7. *Copies*, 1) were thought to represent Rembrandt's grandmother. For a sepia and wash drawing by Stolker, see below under 7. *Copies*, 2.

2. Mezzotint by Charles Howard Hodges (London 1764–Amsterdam 1837). Inscribed below: *C. H. Hodges fecit | het Origineele Schildery is berustende in de | Versameling van de Heer C. S. Roos te Amsterdam | Uitgegeven door C. H. Hodges, Amsterdam 1814* (Charrington 77). Reproduces the picture very faithfully in the same direction as the original and in an oval field matching the present panel (without the addition).

3. MacLaren<sup>1</sup> reports a line engraving, not known to us and not seen by him, by Johannes Pieter de Frey (Amsterdam 1770–Paris 1834), presumably 'the print listed as Rembrandt's mother, 1801' in G. K. Nagler (*Neues allgemeines Künstler-Lexikon* IV, Leipzig 1837, p. 489) and C. le Blanc (*Manuel de l'amateur d'estampes*, Paris 1854–88, vol. II, p. 254, no. 18).

## 7. Copies

1. Hofstede de Groot<sup>2</sup> and MacLaren<sup>1</sup> mentioned an oval copy in the collection of the Marquis of Linlithgow in Hopetoun House near Edinburgh. In the 19th century Waagen gave a brief description of this copy: 'Portrait of his grandmother. A repetition of the picture in the possession of Sir Charles Eastlake [= no. A 104], but neither of such fine body nor so broadly painted. This is dated 1636, that of Sir Charles Eastlake 1634' (G. F. Waagen, *Treasures of Art in Great Britain* III, London 1854, p. 311; there is an illustration of this copy in *Hopetoun House*, Pilgrim Press 1955, p. 23). It is noteworthy that here the word 'grandmother' crops up again (it previously appeared in the inscription under a mezzotint by Jan Stolker, see 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 1), and that the copy is dated 1636.

2. Sepia and wash drawing by Jan Stolker, London, British Museum (A. M. Hind, *Catalogue of drawings by Dutch and Flemish artists . . . in the British Museum* IV, London 1931, p. 173, no. 3). Inscribed: *Françoise van Wassenhoven. | Rembrandt Pinx': 1647. - J. Stolker Del.* Reproduces the picture in oval form, though shortened at the bottom compared to the original and with a changed indication of the age of the sitter and date: *Aetatis 72. | 1647*. This change was probably intended to match this information to the apocryphal identification of the subject mentioned beneath the portrait. On the back, in Stolker's handwriting: *Franchoise van Wassenhoven, Huysvrouw van Eduardus Poppius. Naar Een tekening die de Heer Hendrik van Limburg naar 't origineel Schildery getekent hadt, gevolgt door I. Stolker. dit Zelve Portrait is door my in Zwarte kunst gbragt* (Franchoise van Wassenhoven, wife of Eduardus Poppius. After a drawing that Mr Hendrik van Limburg had done after the original painting, followed by I. Stolker. This same portrait has been done in mezzotint by me). From this it is evident that Stolker did not know the original and that the prototype he used, a lost drawing by Hendrik van Limburg (The Hague 1681–1759), probably reproduced the painting as oval. One can thus attach no documentary importance to the fact that Stolker's mezzotint (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 1) shows it as rectangular.

3. In another wash drawing by Stolker, also in the British Museum (Hind, op. cit., p. 173, no. 1), an imaginary picture of Rembrandt in his studio, the *Portrait of an 83-year-old woman* is shown hanging on the wall; the picture is octagonal and in an octagonal frame, and shortened at the bottom while the

area of background is larger (for illustration see Vol. I, no. A 12, fig. 6).

4. MacLaren<sup>1</sup> mentions a further oval copy which in 1890 was owned by Edward T. Noonan, Chicago (letter and photograph of 1890 in the National Gallery archives).

5. Painting attributed to Thomas Gainsborough (*Burl. Mag.* 11, 1907, p. 99).

6. Panel, rectangular 65 × 49 cm, M. C. B. Sale, Brussels 10 December 1928, lot 57; from the collection of Dr Staehelm-Herzog, Basle, reproduced in the sale catalogue, pl. XXIII and XXIV.

## 8. Provenance

– Sale Klaas van Winkel (and others) Rotterdam 20–21 October 1791 (Lugt 4796), no. 6: 'Rembrandt. Een oude Dames Portrait, hebbende een witte Kraag om den hals en een witte Muts op het hoofd, in 't zwart gekleed op een ligte agtergrond, op paneel ovaal, hoog 29 en breed 24 duim (Rhylandse Voetmaat) [= 75.4 × 62.4 cm], 1634' (Rembrandt. An old woman's portrait, wearing a white collar at the neck and a cap on her head, dressed in black against a light background, panel oval, 1634).

– Dealer C. S. Roos, Amsterdam, in 1814 (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 2).

– Coll. Chevalier Sébastien Erard, sale Paris 7–14 August 1832, no. 121 (bought in, 4000 francs).

– Same coll., sale London (Christie's) 22 June 1833, no. 16 as 'Rembrandt's mother' (bought in, 220 guineas).

– Coll. William Wells, Redleaf; in 1835 exhibited as 'Rembrandt's mother' in the British Institution (no. 50).

– Coll. William Wells, sale London (Christie's) 12–13 May 1848 (2nd day) no. 115, as 'The Artist's Mother' (252 guineas to Charles Eastlake).

– Coll. Sir Charles Eastlake; acquired in 1867 by the National Gallery, London from his widow.

## 9. Summary

The *Portrait of an 83-year-old woman* is an authentic, reliably signed and dated work from 1634. The execution is characteristic of Rembrandt's development towards a free, relaxed way of working that is seen in his portraits and figures from the year 1634, though it is more evident in the latter category of works than in the commissioned portraits. The wrinkled skin of the model has here prompted this contrasty and free treatment. It is wholly possible that the oval format is original, though the panel itself offers no conclusive evidence on this point. An 18th-century identification of the sitter as Françoise van Wassenhove warrants no credence.

## REFERENCES

- 1 N. MacLaren, *The Dutch School* (National Gallery Catalogues), London 1960, pp. 322–324.
- 2 HdG 856.

Paintings Rembrandt's authorship  
of which cannot be positively  
either accepted or rejected

## B8 Half-length figure of a man in oriental dress

WASHINGTON, D.C., THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART

ANDREW W. MELLON COLLECTION, NO. 499

HDG 351; BR. 180; BAUCH 170; GERSON 182

### 1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved – though slightly reduced – painting that could be an uncompleted work by Rembrandt from around 1633.

### 2. Description of subject

A man is seen down to the hips against a neutral background, with the body a little to the left and the head turned a fraction to the right. The light falls from the left, mostly on his rubicund face with its dark beard and a large, variegated turban with a plume. The remainder of the figure is shrouded in semi-darkness. Draped over the shoulders and held at the front by a chain, like a cloak, there is a dull brown tabard with an edging of fur running round the neck, and with a half-length sleeve, slashed and braided, hanging down in front of the body. On the right this garment is raised over his left hand, which rests on a staff. With his right hand he grasps, between thumb and index finger, a black sash worn over a dark red tunic.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 6 April 1970 (J. B., S. H. L.) in some daylight plus good artificial light and out of the frame, with the aid of a UV lamp and one X-ray of the head, a copyfilm of which was received later. Examined again on 1 March 1983 (J. B., E. v. d. W.) with the aid of a microscope and nine X-ray films together covering the whole painting, and a tenth of the head.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 98.2 × 74.3 cm (measured along the stretcher); the original canvas, cut off along the edges, is folded round the stretcher about 0.6 cm. To judge by the incomplete signature by the lefthand edge (see below) the canvas must at all events have been wider at that point. The very limited extent to which cusping is seen along all four sides (see below under SCIENTIFIC DATA) points, however, to the canvas having been reduced in size on the other sides as well. As is evident from the weave pattern (see: *X-Rays*) the canvas has been tilted slightly clockwise in the process.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Along the bottom and righthand sides there is indistinct cusping, along the top and lefthand sides cusping is visible to some extent and extends inwards c. 10 at the top and c. 13 cm at the bottom. Threadcount: 16.8 vertical threads/cm (15.5–18), 15 horizontal threads/cm (14.5–15.5). The greater frequency of short thickenings in the horizontal threads makes it likely that the warp is vertical. In thread density and weave characteristics the canvas is so similar to that of the Anholt *Diana with Actaeon and Callisto* (no. A92), that both canvases may be seen as coming from the same bolt.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light brown that can rather be interpreted as an underpainting shows through in the dark red sleeve of the tunic, and in the tabard sleeve hanging down in front of the body.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: The paint layer appears to have been somewhat flattened, and has – apart from the relatively thickly painted parts of the lit head and turban – suffered a little. There are

numerous retouches in the background; large, thin over-paintings are found in the sleeve hanging down in front of the body and in the darker parts of the tabard to the right. In general the paint of the clothing, and especially the grey-brown tabard, is worn. There seems to be damage in the form of breaks in the paint surface at the top in the turban, at the upper right in the background and diagonally downwards to left of the hand holding the staff. Craquelure: an evenly distributed, irregular pattern in the relatively thickly painted parts, and a very fine and rather more regular pattern in the thinner areas.

DESCRIPTION: The background is done in an almost uniform brownish grey, and only along the two shoulders, where the paint is somewhat lighter and thicker, can one see clear, broad brushstrokes following the contour of the figure.

The head is painted in a variety of flesh and shadow tints placed side by side without any appreciable difference in the thickness of the paint. The flesh tint is quite pale on the forehead (with brown for the wrinkles), while it is more pinkish on the lit cheeks; the fold running down from the nose is shown with a little thin red. A quite strong pink is used on the ridge of the nose, along which are placed oblique strokes of white. The underside of the nose is marked by a black line that runs out broad to the right. Lines of black are used in a similar way at the border of the two irises against the upper eyelids. In the eye areas, just as in the shadow along the nose to the right, repeated use is made of a purplish brown next to a thin brown – in the lower and upper border of the upper eyelids, in the corners of the eyes, in the irises, in the shadow of the eye-socket on the right (which is rather worn) and in the shadow on the eye-pouch on the left (here partially covered by strokes of somewhat thicker flesh colour coming from the left). Grey shadow tints are used in the cheek on the right and in the adjoining eye-pouch. Whitish catchlights are placed on the flesh colour of the eyelids, which on the left is a warm, orangish brown; next to the pupils there are catchlights on the irises – as a curved horizontal stroke on the left and a curved vertical stroke on the right. Both eyes are limited at the bottom by a band of pink along which small strokes and dots of white represent the eye moisture. The eyebrows, moustache and beard are executed with strokes of dark and light grey, done partly wet-in-wet with the flesh colour.

The turban is painted with quite bold strokes in a variety of tints – yellow with light yellow spots and oblique strokes, green-blue with whitish spots and strokes, a single small band of pink with purplish brown (with a scratchmark that does not penetrate to the ground) and a golden-ochre colour. The border with the flesh colour of the forehead is marked by dark lines. A chain around the turban is done in a fairly thin brown and golden ochre and a thicker yellow, and indicated more distinctly than the chain on the cloak; the stone in the plume-holder is in a purplish red with a few strokes of light red, and with a thick white catchlight at the centre. The plume is shown with strokes of grey with a number of scratchmarks (that again do not go right down to the ground).

The neck is painted in a somewhat dirty orangy-brownish grey. The same colour occurs again in the hand on the left, where it merges into grey in the shadow; lines of black are placed between the fingers and along the thumb-nail, and the whole makes a rather flat impression. The same can be said for the hand on the right, executed mostly in an almost grey colour with a little brown especially in the thumb and index finger; again, black lines outline the fingers and the lefthand edge of the thumb where this stands against the clothing.

The tunic is brushed thinly in a dark purplish red (that is badly worn) with grey showing the shadow. The sash is in a

Fig. 1. Canvas 98.2 × 74.3 cm





Fig. 2. X-ray

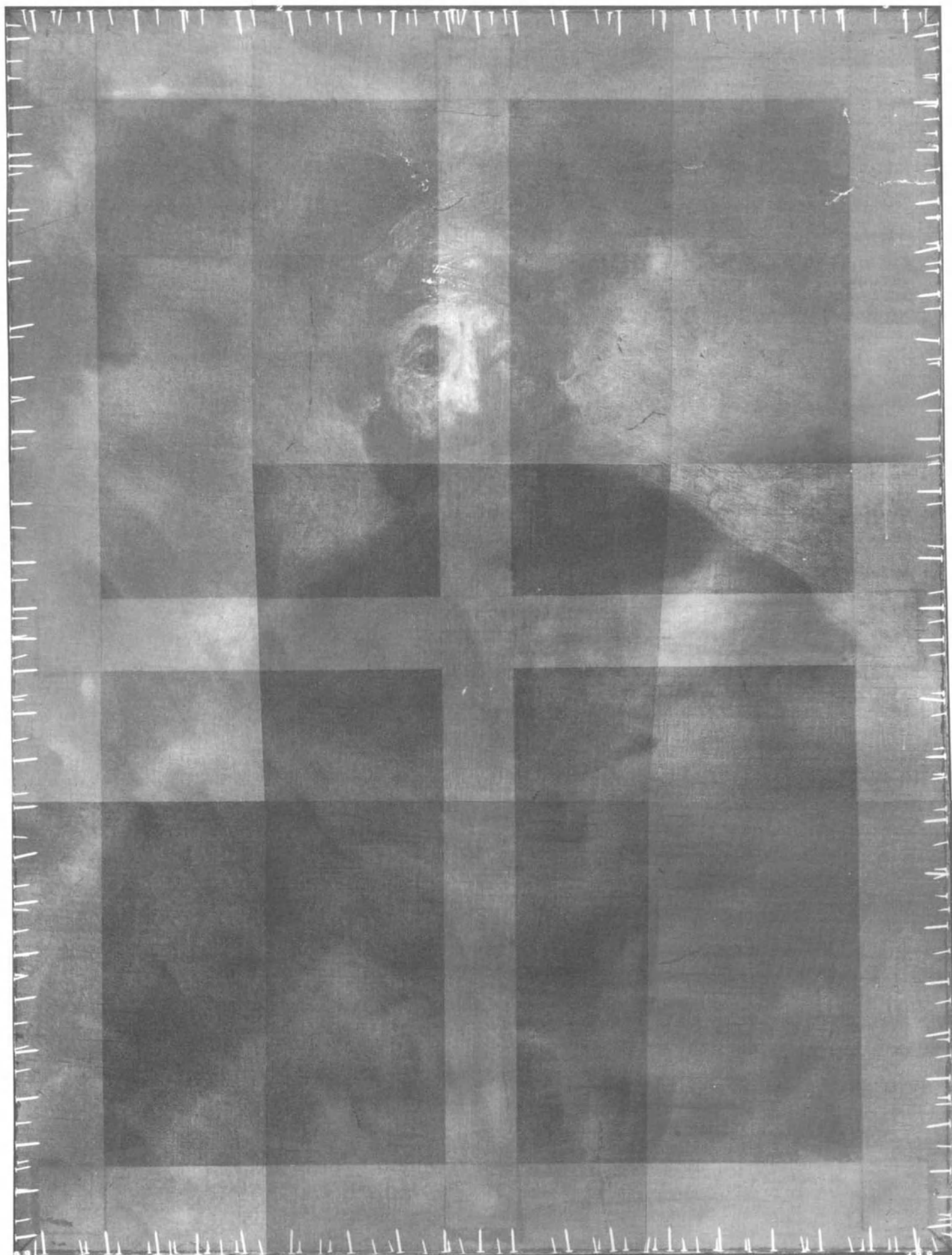


Fig. 3. Detail (1:2)



flat black that continues into the area of shadow along the underside of the hand and arm on the left (where the paint may well not be entirely in its original state). The tabard, worn like a cloak, is grey-brown and has black to show the shadows and a braided slash in the hanging sleeve; on the left along the contour brown has been used to suggest a sheen of light. The effect of this contour is otherwise weak, unlike the contour on the right which shows a clearer articulation and contributes to a suggestion of plasticity. The staff is done in a dark (and worn) brown-grey, with quite thick areas of black to either side.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

Especially on the lefthand side and in the lower half the radiographic image is determined by broad strokes of a radio-absorbent material that must be connected with the ground or with an adhesive on the back used during the lining of the canvas. What can be made out of the paint layer is mainly the radioabsorbent paint of the background, laid with broad brushstrokes around the reserve left for the head and shoulders. In the lit parts of the head one can see a finer stroke, coinciding fairly closely to what can be seen at the paint surface. Probably there was more to be seen of the ear on the left in the initial lay-in than there is in the final execution.

Paint losses show up dark in the turban and to either side of the head where there are gaps in the paint layer.

The weave pattern points to the canvas having been tilted slightly clockwise.

#### *Signature*

On the left adjoining the obviously trimmed edge of the painting, a little below half-height, in a very thin but continuous (and not noticeably worn) brownish grey that is a little darker than the background colour, and appearing rather vaguely as *<mbrandt.ft.>*. The letters are noticeably slim, and in this respect seem untypical. At the place where the inscription is written the paint of the background appears to be somewhat worn, though there is no indication that the signature was gone over later. If this observation is correct, this would mean that the inscription was appended only when the paint of the background was already exhibiting signs of age. This must have been done while the canvas was still a larger size than it is today and – on the evidence of an etching by G. F. Schmidt (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 1; fig. 5) – already was in 1756.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

To start with, the condition in which we see the picture today calls for some comment. It is evident from the incomplete signature and, especially, from the weave and the cusping, that the canvas was trimmed on all four sides and tilted clockwise by a few degrees; this must have happened prior to 1756, when the picture was reproduced in its present state by G. F. Schmidt (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 1; fig. 5). A more intractable problem is that of the contradiction there seems to be between the high degree to which the head and turban are worked up and the very cursory indication of the hands and the

whole of the clothing; even making allowance for the fact that in Rembrandt there is as a rule a difference between the head and the accessory passages from the viewpoint of detail, the total discrepancy and abrupt demarcation one sees here in this respect must be termed highly unusual. A comparison with the New York *Man in oriental dress* of 1632 (no. A 48), made by Gerson<sup>1</sup> in order to demonstrate the quality and authenticity of no. B 8, shows the extent to which, in that painting, the optical homogeneity was kept within a figure of this kind. In the colour, too, there is an evident and unbridgeable gap between that painting – where a strong lighting effect is achieved in a range of blond colours – and no. B 8 where the mattness of the clothing and hands provides no counterweight to the comparatively colourful head. However, comparison with a single work by Rembrandt from 1632 offers too narrow a basis for judgement on this painting; one can, furthermore, wonder whether the Washington painting must not be looked on as uncompleted. Any positive answer to this has to remain purely hypothetical, but such a supposition would explain a good deal. It would explain, most of all, how it is possible for such a Rembrandtesque head as that in no. B 8 to form part of a whole that otherwise makes such an un-Rembrandtlike impression. The head is not only done with remarkable sensitivity and convincing spontaneity, but also shows striking similarities with Rembrandt work from 1633, matching the *Portrait of Johannes Wtenbogaert* (no. A 80) even into the details. The X-ray of no. B 8, too, shows a remarkable resemblance to that painting. It is very tempting, therefore, to think in terms of their coming from the same hand. One would then have to assume that Rembrandt worked up only the background, turban and head, and that all the rest – the neck and hands shown in more or less brownish grey and a little black, and the dark red with grey-brown, grey and black of the clothing – is in the state in which he underpainted these passages. Though the painting in its present state seems to fit only poorly into Rembrandt's work – because of the relatively narrow frame in which the figure is seen – this objection has already been answered since the canvas was originally larger. On top of this the painting shows a fairly strong compositional resemblance to the Stockholm painting of *The apostle Peter* of 1632 (no. A 46). This similarity, added to that already mentioned to the 1633 *Portrait of Johannes Wtenbogaert*, would point to a dating in 1632 or '33, and because of the marked difference in colour-scheme from the New York *Man in oriental dress* of 1632 the latter year would seem more likely. The form of the angularly-painted hands corresponds

Fig. 4. Detail, infrared photograph (1:2)



Fig. 5. Etching by G. F. Schmidt (reproduced in reverse)



closely to that of hands found repeatedly in Rembrandt's work around 1640 – first seen in the Washington *Man in Polish (?) costume* of 1637 (Br. 211) – and one can readily imagine that Rembrandt's hands were already at an earlier date showing in the underpainting the character that they would later take on in the worked-up state as well. As a Rembrandt of 1633, no. B 8 might – even in its unfinished state – conceivably be seen as representing a new type of picture, produced by the artist under the influence of Jacob Adriaensz. Backer who arrived in Amsterdam in that very year (cf. what has been said in the comments under no. A 70). From the viewpoint of both the colour-scheme and the type or model used for the figure, one may detect traces of the impression made by Backer's *John the Baptist admonishing Herod and Herodias*, dated 1633, in the Fries Museum, Leeuwarden (Sumowski *Gemälde* I, no. 5).

The in many respects plausible Rembrandt attribution, to which the signature is unfortunately unable to lend any real support, has at least one notable consequence, and there is also at least one objection that must be levelled at it. The most important consequence naturally has to do with what, in this uncompleted painting, we have to regard as being the underpainting – not monochrome but for the most part broadly brushed in subdued colour, with a summary modelling shown

mainly in black. The character of the brushwork is seen, even better than at the paint surface, in an infrared photograph where – other than in the impenetrable blacks – it is plainly visible. We already know that underpainting in flat colours was done in the 17th century, and that Rembrandt occasionally made use of it (cf. Vol. I, p. 23). In this instance, too, one finds that (in line with common custom) this coloured underpainting did not belong to the first lay-in – it was, where the execution of the clothing that is now visible is concerned, done after the background had been painted; this is evident from the overlapping of the background paint by that of the clothing. Perhaps one has to assume that this kind of preparation in colour on top of the first lay-in was used more frequently than we have been aware of up to now, and it cannot be seen as an argument against the hypothetical attribution of no. B 8 to Rembrandt.

More of an objection is the fact that an almost literal correspondence – in the modelling of the eye areas and the nose, and the rendering of the moustache – exists with a portrait and *not*, as one would more readily suppose, with a *tronie*. A *tronie* that offers (albeit on panel) a likely comparison is the Munich *Bust of a man in oriental dress* of 1633 (no. A 73), but there the execution especially is so much freer and less subtle than in this head (in line with what one expects in a *tronie*) that the ultimate conviction needed for attributing no. B 8 is not achieved and the thought of a close follower cannot be totally discarded. At all events, the picture must have been produced in Rembrandt's workshop, as is also borne out by the similarity between the weave of its canvas and that of the Anholt *Diana with Actaeon and Callisto* of 1634 (no. A 92), which points to the two canvases coming from the same bolt.

Surveying the arguments for and against, it has to be said that for the time being it is hard to offer any opinion. The overall impression – that the Washington painting is, compared to the effective lighting and effect of depth in, for instance, the New York *Man in oriental dress* of 1632, and also with the almost cavalier execution of the Munich painting of 1633, flat and scarcely infused with the formal energy typical of Rembrandt – is perhaps due too much to the (presumably) uncompleted state to carry all that much weight. It seems reasonable to give this painting – the only one in this section of the present volume – the benefit of the doubt.

One of the authors (E. v. d. W.) wishes, despite the unusual features described above, to express his belief in the authenticity of this apparently unfinished painting.



## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching in reverse (fig. 5) by Georg Friedrich Schmidt (Schönerlinde near Berlin 1712 – Berlin 1775), inscribed in the background: *Rembrandt pinx. / G.F. Schmidt fecit aquaforti 1756*. In the bottom margin: *du Cabinet du Sieur Godskoffsky*. The painting appears to be already reproduced here in its present dimensions.

## 7. Copies

None.

## 8. Provenance

- In 1756 in coll. Johann Ernst Gotzkowski (1710–1775) in Berlin, as shown by the caption to the etching by G. F. Schmidt (see 6. *Graphic reproductions* above).
- In 1764 acquired from Gotzkowski together with 224 other paintings by Empress Catherine II of Russia (1729–1796; czarina from 1762) as her first purchase. In the *Catalogue Raisonné des Tableaux qui se trouvent dans les Galeries, Sallons et Cabinets du Palais Impérial de S.-Petersbourg, commencé en 1773 et continué jusqu'en 1783 incl.* (manuscript in the Hermitage, Leningrad) described as no. 124: 'Paul Rembrant. Portrait d'homme coëffé à la Turquie. Il a la main droite appuyée sur un livre. Cet excellent morceau a été gravé à Berlin par Georges Frédéric Schmidt. Demi figure sur toile. haut 1 ar[chine] 6 V[erchokk] large 1 ar.  $\frac{3}{4}$  V. [= 97.7 × 74.4 cm]'.<sup>1</sup>
- The Hermitage Museum, Leningrad.
- Coll. Andrew W. Mellon from 1932. Donated to the National Gallery of Art in 1940.

## 9. Summary

The painting, which must have been reduced slightly in size, probably on all sides, presents a singular contrast between the fairly detailed head and turban and the very cursorily indicated clothing and hands. It is reasonable to assume that the painting is only partly completed, and otherwise shows an underpainting in flat colour as this was placed over the first lay-in (and over the background, already painted). In view of the strong resemblance between, especially, the head and that in Rembrandt's *Portrait of Johannes Wtenbogaert* of 1633 (no. A 80). Rembrandt's authorship certainly cannot be ruled out; a dating in 1633 would then be the most likely. It still seems strange that the manner of painting in the completed passages is so much less free than one would expect from a *tronie* (as opposed to a commissioned portrait).

## REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> Gerson 182; Br.-Gerson 180.



Paintings Rembrandt's authorship  
of which cannot be accepted

## C 45 Bathsheba at her toilet

RENNES, MUSÉE DES BEAUX-ARTS, INV. NO. 794.1.44

HDG 42; BR. 492; BAUCH 8; GERSON –

### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved painting – slightly trimmed at the bottom – that can be regarded as an old copy after a lost original by Rembrandt that probably dated from 1632 (or 1631?).

### 2. Description of subject

The scene is probably based on 2 Samuel 11:2: 'And it came to pass in an eveningtide, that David rose up from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself . . . '.

In the foreground a young woman, lit from the left, sits on a rock, with her body turned to the right and her left leg crossed over the other. She stretches out her bare left foot to a bespectacled old woman kneeling or squatting next to her, who bends over the foot and is attending to it. The young woman has jewels in her hair, at the ear and around her throat, and has let her white shirt fall so that the upper part of her body is bare; a wide, pleated sleeve of this shirt covers here right forearm, and in her right hand she holds a posy of flowers. The shirt hangs partly over a dark grey-green (brocade?) garment. The young woman is sitting on her dark red velvet cloak, which partly hides the rock on which she sits; a green belt with a tassel hangs down in front of the rock.

Dark foliage rises to the left. In the middle ground, two figures are walking along the edge of a clump of trees, while beyond this a palatial building can be seen, bathed in the full light; on top of this there is a touch of blue – presumably the clothing of King David.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 26 April 1971 (J. B., S. H. L.) in good daylight and out of the frame. An X-ray film of the whole painting was examined in the Laboratoire du Louvre.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain horizontal, 24.5 × 20.6 cm. Single plank. Thickness 0.9 cm. The back shows rough plane-marks. It is bevelled along the top and righthand edges (the latter somewhat irregularly), unbevelled along the bottom and has incomplete bevelling at the left. The lefthand edge shows rough splinters due to crude sawing. There are woodworm flight-holes in the lower half of the panel; along the bottom edges the woodworm passages lie open, which indicates a later reduction in size here (as may be confirmed by the absence of bevelling). As evidenced by the splintering on the left taken together with the horizontal grain, the panel was taken from a larger horizontal one; the picture's composition (which is reflected in a number of other versions) proves that this happened before this panel was painted on.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Shows through light in the dark brown at the lower left. At the bottom left there are horizontal traces of the ground having been brushed on.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good, apart from a little paint loss along the lefthand side; a few retouches at the top right in the sky and

at the lower right in the indication of the terrain. Craquelure: small, horizontal cracks in the young woman's body, and a somewhat irregular pattern in the sky.

DESCRIPTION: In general the paint is applied quite thickly, with frequently visible small brushstrokes. The sky has been done with mostly horizontal strokes of thick grey paint, and the palace in opaque greys with highlights in yellow. The trees on the left are painted in thick, dark green paint, through which a thinner layer can be glimpsed at some places; the tree at the top of this area is painted in a light green, partly over the grey of the sky. The group of trees to the right in the middle ground is executed with little touches in thick green. The foreground on the left is coarsely done in browns and grey-brown, where the ground shows through, while that on the right is in darker paint (with brown retouches).

The lit flesh areas in the young woman are painted using small, painstaking brushstrokes – running lengthwise along the back – in a flesh colour that is yellowish on the back and light pink in the head. The highest lights, on the tip of the shoulder, the back of the hand and the forehead, have been done in thick paint using a dabbing stroke. Along the contour of the back a line has been drawn in brown and occasionally in grey; a similar line runs along the edge of the shirt and is evidently intended to represent a cast shadow from the shirt on the body. The shadowed flesh areas are modelled vaguely in thin brown with some pink, using short brushstrokes in the head; the breast is painted in a rather thicker, flat brown-grey. The shirt is set down in a flat light grey, on top of which have been placed touches of a thicker off-white. The dress is done with a fairly flat dark grey, with small, thicker dabs and strokes of grey-white and a little green. The draped cloak shows a sheen in light pink over a quite thin, dull wine-red; to the left, a hem is indicated in ochre-brown paint with small spots of yellow. The belt has small strokes of thick green paint, with thick dots of yellow to indicate gold ornament; along it to the right there is a cast shadow, partly done in a thick brown. Thick spots of grey, yellow and yellow ochre show the jewels in the hair, around the throat and along the overgarment. The flowers the young woman is holding are painted quite thickly in green, blue-green, pink, off-white and ochre yellow. The old woman is shown in a very dark brown and muddy grey.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The rather finicky treatment is clearly reflected in the radiographic image of the lit areas; the flesh tones nowhere present a strong light against the folds of the shirt. The area of trees to the left shows up to some extent. The young woman's foot is seen slightly larger, and lower down, than it is today.

#### *Signature*

On the rock on which the young woman is sitting, in brown <RHL (in monogram) : 1632>. The R is not closed on the left. Because of the excessively painstaking execution, the inscription does not make an authentic impression. The use of the RHL monogram without the addition of 'van Rijn' would be most exceptional in 1632.

#### *Varnish*

There is a slightly yellowed layer of varnish.

### 4. Comments

The painting is marked by a laboured yet clumsy execution and poorly articulated rendering of form

Fig. 1. Panel 24.5 × 20.6 cm



Fig. 2. Formerly ascribed to Rembrandt, etching (B. 127 II; reproduced in reverse)



and materials. A characteristic feature is the ineffectual treatment of such elements as cast shadows (along the shirt, on the back and hand) and highlights (on jewels). These weaknesses suggest strongly this is a copy, and this idea is supported by the fact that a number of other painted versions, and one etching, of the same composition exist. The use of impasto and the colour-scheme in no. C 45, are such that one can form a mental picture of how the lost original might have looked. That this original was by Rembrandt is highly likely. The year 1632 appearing on the painting would not fit badly – the original would then have just preceded the *Young woman at her toilet* in Ottawa (no. A 64), probably from 1632 or 1633, in which a similar subject is seen, with a similar colour-scheme, on a larger scale. A somewhat earlier dating of the lost original cannot, however, be ruled out; there is sufficient similarity with the etching *Diana bathing* (B. 201), datable at 1631, to support this, and the absence of ‘van Rijn’ to the RHL monogram – as it almost invariably occurs in signatures from 1632 – may be taken to point in the same direction.

It is impossible to date the Rennes picture with certainty, but nothing contradicts the impression it gives of a 17th-century origin. The nature of the panel, which appears to have formed part of a larger one of a horizontal format, betrays a certain amount

of improvisation, and differs sharply from that of more carefully chosen panels for valuable paintings. The manner of painting, though lacking subtlety, is not inconceivable in Rembrandt’s entourage or even his studio. There is no need to date the picture as late as the end of the 17th or the beginning of the 18th century, as Bergot has done on the basis of information we supplied<sup>1</sup>.

As no. C 45 was long looked on as an original, etching B. 127 (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 1; fig. 2) was, since this ceased to be ascribed to Rembrandt himself, counted as being done from this painting. As there are a number of painted versions none of which can claim to be the original (see 7. *Other copies*), there is however no cogent reason for this assumption. How far the etching and the various painted copies derive from the lost original, or depend one on the other, is hard to say. Some versions, including the etching, have taller proportions, while others, including the Rennes picture (which appears however to have been trimmed) tend more towards a square shape.

The subject was described in the 18th century (see 8. *Provenance*) as ‘an old woman cutting a young woman’s nails’. In more recent times, inter alia in Bode and Hofstede de Groot<sup>2</sup>, the Rennes picture has been called ‘Bathsheba after her bath’. The identification as Bathsheba observed by David (visible in cursory form) from the roof of his palace (shown quite emphatically) can be regarded as the most likely. Twenty years later Rembrandt was, in his large painting now in the Louvre (where David’s palace is not seen, but Bathsheba is recognizable from the letter in her hand), virtually to repeat the type and pose of the old woman at Bathsheba’s foot.

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching in reverse, 12.4 × 9.4 cm (fig. 2). Formerly regarded as a work by Rembrandt (B. 127). Linked by L. Münz (Münz II, p. 179, no. 323) with etchings signed by an undocumented R. Verbeecq; earlier ascribed by Middleton to Bol. David’s palace is here only vaguely visible and the figure of David not at all, so that the iconographical significance of the scene becomes less obvious. Numerous other details make it unlikely that it was done from the copy in Rennes; it is more probably after either the original or another copy. The rather narrow proportions match roughly those of copies 1 and 2 below.

## 7. Other copies

1. Panel 73.25 × 55 cm. Kaliningrad Museum. Photo in RKD, The Hague.  
2. Support unknown, 72 × 52 cm, London, coll. Prof. Dr Janos Plesch (1947/48). Photo in RKD, The Hague.

3. Panel 45 × 36 cm, dated 1633. Switzerland, private coll. Photo in RKD, The Hague.

4. Panel 22.5 × 20 cm. France, private coll. Photo in RKD, The Hague.

One of these copies may be identical with 'Een Landschap waar in een jonge Juffrouw die de nagels van de voet laat snyden door een oude Vrouw met een bril op, door, of in de manier van denzelven [Rembrandt]' (A landscape in which a young gentlewoman has her toenails cut by an old woman with spectacles, by or in the manner of the same), coll. Willem van Wouw, sale The Hague 29–30 May 1764 (Lugt 1389), no. 40 (4–14 guilders), or with 'Het Nagelknipstertje (bekend door de eigen geëtste Prent).P.' (The woman cutting nails (known through the artist's own etched print). Panel), sale Amsterdam 25 January 1830, no. 65 (19.5 guilders to Gruijter). These two mentions were wrongly related to no. C 45 by Hofstede de Groot<sup>2</sup> (cf. 8. *Provenance*).

### 8. Provenance<sup>1</sup>

– Coll. Christophe-Paul, Marquis de Robien, président à mortier au Parlement de Bretagne (1698–1756). Passed through inheritance to his son Paul-Christophe, who emigrated in 1791.

– Described as confiscated with the Robien collection 'le 23 Prairial de l'an 2 de la République française' (1793) as no. 44: 'une vieille femme qui coupe les ongles a une Jeune fille, fond de paysage sur bois 9 – 7 [pouces, = 24.3 × 18.9 cm] – Rimbrant – bien conservé' (manuscript 'Saisie révolutionnaire de 1793', kept in the museum at Rennes).

### 9. Summary

The painting can, because of its clumsy execution, be regarded as a copy, and gives the impression of being based on a lost original by Rembrandt, probably from 1632 (or 1631?). It may have been produced in Rembrandt's circle or even his studio. One etching and at least four other painted versions are known.

The identification of the scene as showing Bathsheba being espied by King David is the most likely.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 F. Bergot in: *Musée de Rennes. Peintures de la collection Robien*, Rennes [c. 1973], p. 52 no. 47, p. 82 no. 44.
- 2 W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt VIII*, Paris 1905, no. 558; HdG 42.

## C46 The adoration of the Magi (grisaille)

LENINGRAD, THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, NO. 7765

HDG —; BR. —; BAUCH —; GERSON —

### 1. Summarized opinion

A fairly well preserved work that may be considered an old copy, perhaps done in Rembrandt's studio, after a lost original possibly from 1632, the date that appears on this painting.

### 2. Description of subject

The oldest of the three kings kneels in the foreground, which is partly lit by light falling from the left; he is seen in right profile, with bared head (his turban lies on the ground in front of him), bowing before the Child in Mary's lap who is turned towards him. Mary sits to the right in front of a wooden partition; in front of her, in the darkness, there is a bottle-basket, and Joseph's saw lies in the straw that can be seen, partly lit, around her feet. Joseph stands behind her to the right in the semi-darkness, bending slightly forward with a straw hat held before him. To the extreme left a figure with a curved sword, wearing a turban wound round a plumed fur hat (presumably the Moorish king), leans forward towards the right; the light falls on his shoulder and headdress. In front of him, in the semi-darkness, a dog is partly visible. A page in a striped costume kneels immediately to the left behind the oldest king, and is less brightly lit than the latter; he is holding a goblet in his hands, and turns his head backwards to the right.

Behind these figures three steps lead up to a raised platform on which there are a number of figures, most of them only dimly lit. This group is dominated by the towering figure of the third king who, with his head facing to the front, stretches his left hand out towards Mary and the Child; a staff is held in his other hand. To the left behind him one can see the head and a hand of a servant holding a parasol above his head, together with a number of figures engaged in conversation or looking on; these include a small boy and a priestlike figure with a smoking censer – the only one who is visible full-length. To the right, next to and behind the standing king, are two boys glimpsed in the gloom, a few more distant figures, a horse and some camels.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 16 August 1969 (J. B., S. H. L.) in good daylight, out of the frame and with the aid of a microscope, UV lamp and two X-ray films together covering the whole of the painting. Examined again in April 1982 (E. v. d. W.).

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Not easy to make out, but according to a publication by Mrs I. Linnik<sup>1</sup> paper stuck on canvas, 44.8 × 39.1 (± 0.1) cm, not counting four battens stuck along the edges.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Not seen.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Generally good, so far as can be judged through a heavy layer of varnish. A few restorations can be made out with the naked eye, partly corresponding to paint losses visible in the X-rays but not apparent under ultraviolet radiation

(evidently because of the thick layer of old varnish). These occur mainly in a narrow band that runs almost vertically over the full height slightly to the right of centre (through the elbow of the kneeling king and the outstretched hand of the king standing in the middle), and in patches to the right of this below the wide sleeve of the kneeling king, lower down in the straw (where Mary's feet are) and, higher up, both diagonally up from and below the outstretched hand of the king standing in the centre. It seems as if the paper was at some time folded (or perhaps pressed against a hard vertical batten?).

DESCRIPTION: The paint layer gives the impression of being opaque, and in parts quite thick. The canvas to which the paper is stuck is visible as a structure only occasionally, to the right of the Moorish king on the left, and in a dark part of the king standing in the centre. The greatest impasto is in the kneeling king's turban lying on the ground, and in his hair and the hem and sleeve of his cloak.

The lit parts of the foreground and the figures to the front are in thickish paint, ranging from more or less yellowish to a warm brown with highlights in yellow-white and white, while darker passages are in a somewhat thinner and fairly flat dark brown. The paintstroke sometimes serves a graphic function, for instance in the hands and faces of the kneeling king and Mary, drawn with small dark lines and spots, in the lighter brown zigzag on Mary's sleeve, and in the dark lines used to show the bottle-basket before her. These draughtsmanlike renderings are everywhere rather cursorily (in the lastnamed instance even coarse), and the paintwork in the passages mentioned is moreover somewhat flat. Where the surface is enlivened with highlights, these make only a minor contribution to a suggestion of form – e.g. in the whole of the kneeling king's cloak, especially its hem (where the effect is confused) which is bordered by a heavy contour whose significance is not made entirely clear. The same is true for the turban lying on the ground, where the jumbled highlights do not convey any suggestion of plasticity. The kneeling page is drawn with quite flat brushstrokes – this applies both to the head and hands, done rather coarsely in browns, and to the stripes on his costume, painted quite thickly in a dark greyish brown, yellowish brown and yellowish white.

The browns used in the middle plane are rather cooler than those in the foreground, and the forms are sketched for the most part very broadly and not very surely, in thinner paint; this is true not only of the secondary figures, but also of the figure of the standing king, executed in a rather slack and uncertain manner. The human and animal figures partly visible to the right of him show particularly poor articulation and clumsy characterization.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The X-rays published by I. Linnik in 1969<sup>2</sup> and around 1971<sup>1</sup> are surprising first of all in showing a remarkably high level of contrast, even in areas that have been executed only in brown halftones; it may be concluded from this that in these passages the nuances have been achieved by an admixture of radio-absorbent, probably white paint. The strongest white appears – other than in the highlights on the figure of the kneeling king – around his cloak; not only (as one would expect from the surface) along the bottom outline, but also along the top and some way along his back, where there is now the kneeling page and a dark area of shadow. Parts of the page and of the goblet he is holding show up in varying degrees of clarity in and above this light area. It is evident that in the first lay-in no allowance was made for the presence of the page, so that the lower half of the cloak of the kneeling king was put in a reserve



Fig. 1. Paper stuck on canvas 44.8 × 39.1 cm

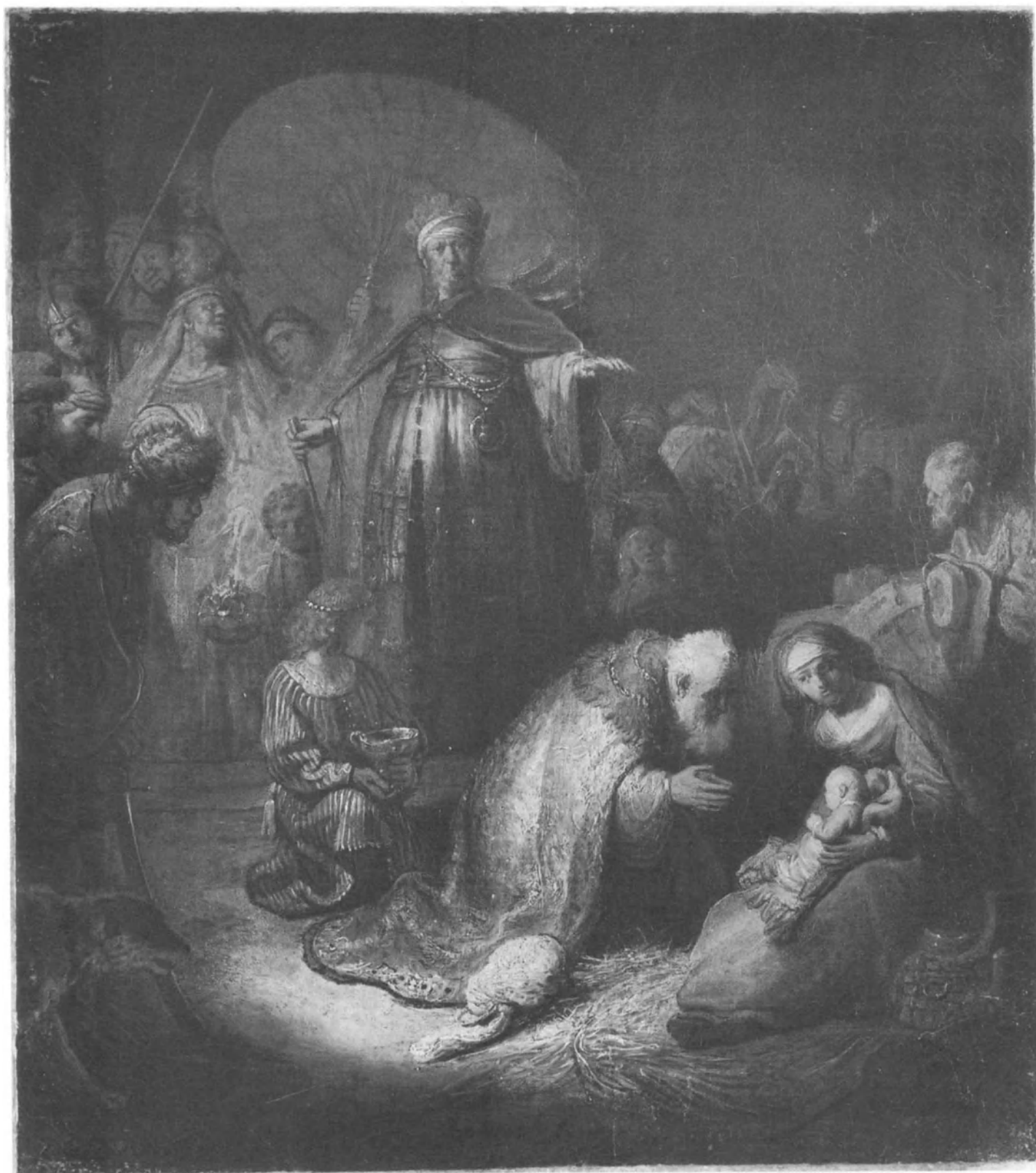


Fig. 2. Detail (1:1.5)



in a larger part of the lit foreground than is visible today. When the page was added, the cloak was done smaller and the excess part of the reserve was incorporated into the lit ground with light paint that shows up less light in the X-rays than that alongside it.

A further striking difference from what might be expected from the surface is the fact that the heads of the figures and the horse on the right alongside the standing king show up as dark reserves in a light area that partially coincides with the present indication of camels. Other patches appearing remarkably light can be seen along the bottom of the lefthand edge of the parasol, at the lower left of the garment worn by the standing king and (rather shapeless) along the back of the Moorish king in the left foreground and on the left beside his head.

The use, in the halftints, of paint mixed with a relatively large amount of white probably explains why Mary's shoulder and arm show up remarkably light.

A small but important difference from the present day surface image can be found in the right hand of the standing king, which in the final execution holds a staff. In the X-ray there is not only no reserve for the staff (which is not all that surprising), but the hand is seen with the fingers extended; he was obviously not originally meant to be holding a staff.

In the background there are arched shapes, mostly seen as dark reserves, not all of which coincide with the present parasol or other motifs that are now visible.

Paint losses described earlier show up dark.

#### Signature

At the lower centre, beneath the turban, in dark brown

<Rembrandt. f [followed by a configuration of three dots] 1632.>. The 3 is no longer complete, due to the vertical damage in the paint layer; the R is so worn on the left that it appears to be open; otherwise, the signature is in a good state of preservation. This formulation is not met with in 1632 – all the signatures on paintings from that year have 'RHL (in monogram) van Rijn', apart from that on the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* (no. A 51) which has the spelling 'Rembrandt' but is itself not above suspicion. Furthermore, the letters and figures are written very jerkily and clumsily, and are quite different from those of authentic signatures. The signature is consequently hard to regard as genuine.

#### Varnish

There is a thick and yellowed layer of varnish.

#### 4. Comments

A larger version of the same subject, done on panel and now in Gothenburg, that will be discussed later (see 7. *Other copies*, 1) was published by Granberg in 1912 as an original from Rembrandt's hand, and subsequently won a measure of acceptance. When I. Linnik, in 1969, published the smaller version in Leningrad<sup>2</sup> she rightly assumed that the large painting was a copy, and looked on the Leningrad grisaille as being the original. Before discussing the authenticity of the two paintings, it may be said that

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



the design is in all probability attributable to Rembrandt. The type of the composition, with the action split between two planes separated by empty space and with figures leaning inwards from both sides, is strongly reminiscent of the Los Angeles *Raising of Lazarus* completed around 1631 (no. A 30). The design of the figures seen in light of varying intensity also reminds one of the *Simeon in the Temple* of 1631 (no. A 34), as well as of the early passion paintings in Munich (nos. A 65 and A 69), datable in c. 1632/33; in particular, the dominating function of the standing king reminds one of the horseman in the *Raising of the Cross*. With all these similarities to various works by Rembrandt the original nature of the composition is so great that it is

hard to attribute it to anyone else. The overall conception points to it being produced in the early Amsterdam years, and the date of 1632 that appears on the Leningrad grisaille fits in well with this, even though the inscription cannot be regarded as authentic (see *Signature* above). Linnik<sup>1</sup> has understandably assumed a strong influence by Rubens on the composition. There is a very general resemblance to, for instance, Rubens' painting of the *Adoration of the Magi* in Brussels (Musée des Beaux-Arts, cat. no. 410), which was reproduced in an engraving in 1620/1621 by Nicolaes Lauwers (V.S. nos. 68, 68A); that composition also has a youth (shown in profile) bearing a goblet. Yet comparison reveals more differences than similarities – in the

Fig. 4. Detail with signature (slightly reduced)



Rubens the massive figures form a continuous succession, whereas it is the grouping around a void that forms the basis for Rembrandt's composition. Only one detail is borrowed direct from a Rubens prototype – the dog entering the picture from the left is, in its type and function, quite surely based on the (barking) dog that Rembrandt knew of from a print after a different version of the subject (the painting now in Lyon) already used by him as a prototype in 1627 (cf. no. A 9, fig. 7).

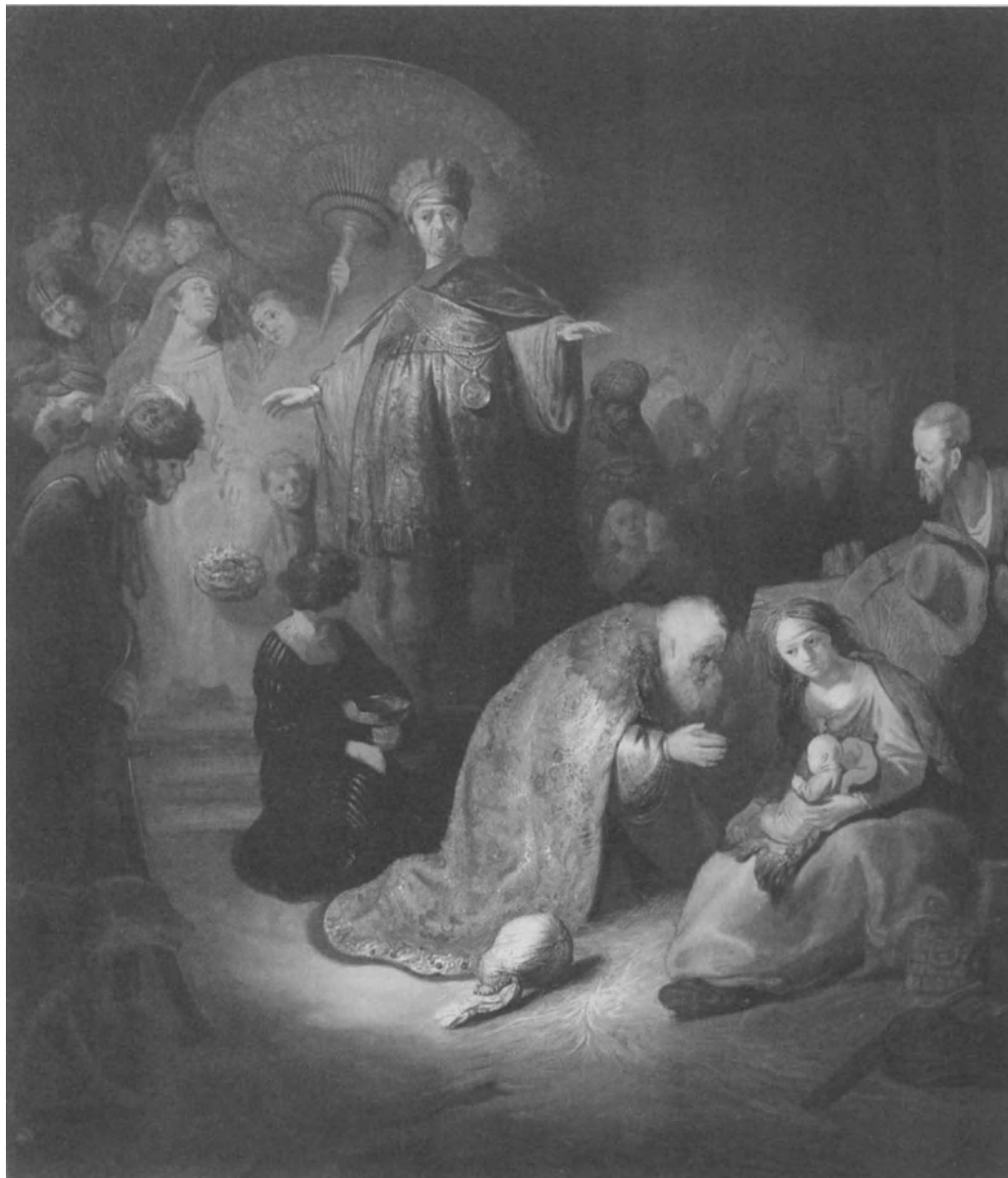
Linnik<sup>2</sup> believes the Leningrad grisaille to be authentic; she puts forward a strong argument for doing so – the X-ray makes it clear that the kneeling page was added after the ground on which the train of the cloak of the kneeling king lies had already been painted, something that one would certainly not expect to find in a copy. Other changes this author inferred from the X-rays are less evident; but in general the radiographs do show differences from what one would expect from the surface. Though these differences may not be easy to interpret, they give the impression of a search for form during the course of the execution. Linnik furthermore points to the analogy with other Rembrandt grisailles that (in fact, or by assumption) served as a preparation for etchings; to this one can add that no. C 46 is painted on paper (a fact that was still unknown in 1969) like, for instance, the London *Ecce homo* (no. A 89) and, like the latter, was later stuck on a canvas.

Despite this, in itself, quite convincing combination of findings, the attribution of no. C 46 to Rembrandt comes up against serious obstacles that make the doubts expressed by Haverkamp-Begemann<sup>3</sup>, Guratzsch<sup>4</sup> and Ember<sup>5</sup> understandable. In the first place, the quality of execution falls far behind what one would expect of Rembrandt, and the manner of execution differs clearly from that of the *Ecce homo*. The London grisaille shows, in the front figures of the central group, fine detail using touches of thick paint that give a clear and convincing articulation to the heads and hands, and that show the draperies with a strong differentiation of material and structure and

a marked plasticity; figures and groups of figures directly adjoining this area are left in a sketchlike state, and their structure is only very broadly indicated by means of bold dark lines and a few opaquely-painted patches of light. Very little of either kind of execution is to be found in the Leningrad grisaille. Where detail is explored in lit passages, such as the clothing and turban of the kneeling king, the surface is admittedly enlivened with numerous small highlights, but these do not add up to a convincing whole suggesting material and structure. Elsewhere the painting is fairly flat and the drawing weak, e.g. in the figure of Mary and the secondary figures to the left in the middle ground. The signature and date of 1632, written in an aberrant manner and with a formulation unusual for that year, must be seen as apocryphal, and can do nothing to offset the disappointing quality of the painting.

Nor can the X-rays be seen as an unequivocal argument for the work's authenticity. Apart from one unmistakable and very noteworthy alteration – the kneeling page, added at a late stage – at least part of the differences from what one might expect from viewing the paint surface may be explained as the result of unevenness (uncommon in Rembrandt) in the way paint has been used; for instance, light patches along the bottom lefthand edge of the parasol and in the hanging garments of the third king to the right of the page's head stem from the use of paint that does not vary much in colour from that surrounding it, but which evidently differs strongly in radioabsorbency either through being applied more thickly or through having a different composition. Be that as it may, the view that the larger Gothenburg painting might be a copy after the Leningrad grisaille is untenable precisely because of the X-ray image – on three points the larger painting does not match the grisaille in its completed state, but does match an earlier version of it. This involves first the standing king's outstretched right hand without a staff, which on the X-ray evidence was changed in the grisaille to hold the staff only at a later stage. Secondly, the standing king wears in the Gothenburg picture a fairly short tunic, which in the grisaille first had the same shape but was lengthened at a later stage with (or over?) paint part of which shows up much lighter in the X-ray and may correspond to an earlier version of the lit leg. And thirdly, the Gothenburg version shows a markedly light area surrounding the heads to the right alongside this king; in the grisaille this was, on the evidence of the X-rays, apparently also the case at first (though it was bordered not by the figure's sleeve, but by a curved line) and was toned down

Fig. 5. Copy after Rembrandt. Gothenburg, Konstmuseum



subsequently. These three details are relatively minor, but one is bound to deduce that both the Gothenburg painting and the Leningrad grisaille are based on a common prototype – as one must assume, a lost original by Rembrandt showing the features common to the former and the first lay-in of the latter. It then remains difficult to explain how the painter of the grisaille came to leave out the page at first and then to put him in later on. It is conceivable that the copyist, working as he may have done in Rembrandt's studio, followed in this respect consecutive stages of the lost original during its production.

This common model seems also to be reflected by another painting (see 7. *Other copies*, 2). This, though of scant artistic value and showing various motifs in a different way, is of documentary interest as it

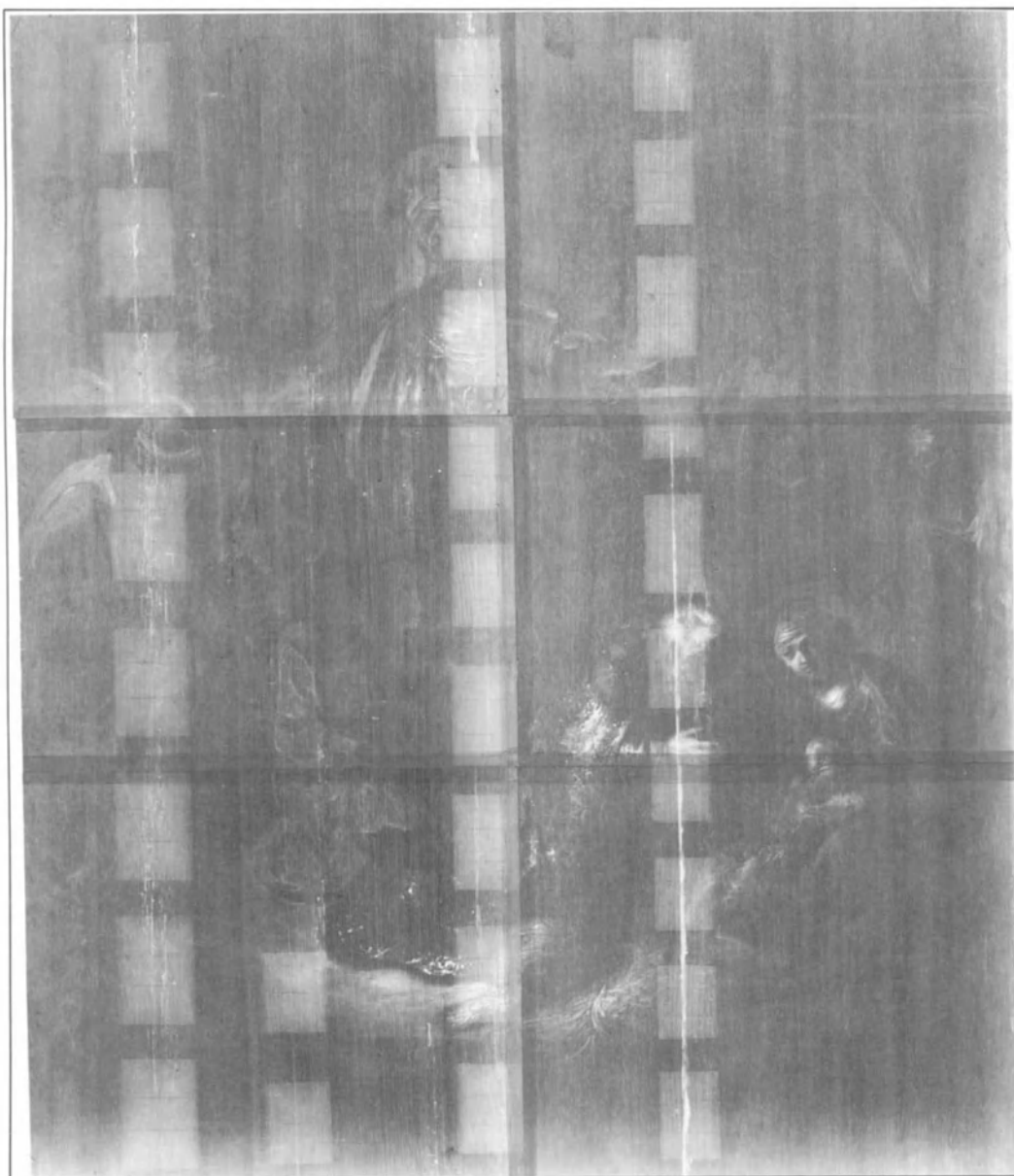
shows the king standing in the centre with a short tunic as in the Gothenburg painting, while the appearance of the page's right hand is comparable to that in the Leningrad grisaille.

It is impossible to say with any certainty whether we should imagine Rembrandt's lost original as a grisaille or as a fully-fledged painting. The fact that the Gothenburg work makes, in its manner of painting and particularly its colour-scheme, a very un-Rembrandtesque impression would not seem to argue for the latter possibility. That grisailles by Rembrandt were already being copied early on may perhaps be deduced from the mention in Rembrandt's 1656 inventory of 'Een copije naar een schets van Rembrandt' (a copy after a sketch by Rembrandt) (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12, no. 89).

The composition of no. C 46 was imitated not



Fig. 6. X-ray of the Gothenburg copy



infrequently; apart from the versions discussed above, a number of works by contemporary artists contain reminiscences of it. This is true of Salomon de Koninck's *Adoration of the Magi* in The Hague (Mauritshuis, cat. no. 36) and some paintings of the subject by Benjamin Gerritsz. Cuyp, as noted by Ember<sup>5</sup>; this author wrongly concluded that the Gothenburg painting too should be attributed to that artist.

Mention should also be made of a painting that, because of its different dimensions, cannot be identical with no. C 46: this was in the sale of paintings left by Nicolaas Antoni Flinck and in part coming from his father Govert, Rotterdam 4 November 1754 (Lugt 847) as no. 24 'Een aanbidding door de drie Koningen aen het kintje Jezus, in de manier van Renbrandt, in 't grau, door denzelven

[Govert Flinck], hoog 26½ duim, breed 21½ duim [68.9 × 55.9 cm]' (The adoration of the Babe Jesus by the three Kings, done in the manner of Renbrandt, in grisaille, by the same (25 guilders 10 stuivers) (cf. Hoet-Terw., p. 104, no. 44)).

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Other copies

1. Panel c. 75 × 65 cm (the presence of an aluminium frame makes it difficult to take accurate measurements), Gothenburg, Konstmuseum (gift of Gustaf Werner, 1923)



(figs. 5 and 6), Br. 541. Examined in March 1969 (B. H., E. v. d. W.). The panel has presumably been planed at the back and reinforced along three joins and/or cracks with small stuck-on blocks. The execution is marked by a dark grey underdrawing visible almost everywhere over a light grey-brown ground. The painting is sometimes very thin and at other times thick, but does not follow any clear pattern in this. Apart from more detailed passages such as the cloak of the kneeling king and Joseph's head, the painting is mostly cursory and broadly done and in the secondary figures this results in heads that are almost caricatures. The colour-scheme, which tends to paleness and has little sensitivity, contributes to an overall appearance that is unusual for a 17th-century Dutch painting. To the right the painting gives a hint of the construction of the stable – a post, a joist and a beam – that is not now visible in the Leningrad grisaille. Published by O. Granberg as a Rembrandt (*Inventaire général des trésors d'art . . . en Suède II*, Stockholm 1912, p. 102, no. 371; 'En ny Rembrandt', *Konst* (March 1914), pp. 21–23; 'Fyre nyare Rembrandt-tafler', *Tidskrift för Konstvetenskap I*, 1916, pp. 99–106). The painting was then in the coll. F. Rapp in Stockholm, after having been bought in 1904 from the Amsterdam dealer J. Goudstikker as a work by Salomon Koninck, and subsequently in Granberg's own collection. The Rembrandt attribution was taken over by W. R. Valentiner (*Rembrandt, Wiedergefundene Gemälde*, Stuttgart–Berlin 1921, Kl. d. K., p. 21) and by A. Bredius (Br. 541). Bode doubted the attribution (according to an editorial in: *Burl. Mag.* 27, 1915, p. 49), as did Bauch (Bauch 1933, p. 225; Bauch 1960, pp. 231, 283; Bauch 1966, p. 49), who wrongly reinstated the old attribution to Salomon Koninck. The reason for the latter probably lay in the superficial resemblance to Koninck's *Adoration of the Magi* in The Hague (Mauritshuis, cat. no. 36). Ember<sup>5</sup> unconvincingly attributed the painting to Benjamin Gerritsz. Cuyp.

2. Canvas, relined, 87.5 × 71 cm (measured along the stretcher), private collection. A mediocre picture that reproduces the main features of the composition. The main deviation from the representation of the subject as it is seen in the Leningrad and Gothenburg paintings is found in the group to the left of the king standing in the centre, which is altogether different, while all but one of the figures to the right of him are omitted.

## 8. Provenance

– Perhaps identical with 'een klijnder stuck, synde de drie Koningen van Rembrandt' (a smaller piece, being the three Kings by Rembrandt) described in the inventory of the estate of Constantyn Ranst, Amsterdam c. 1714 (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 28, 1910, p. 15). The mention of 'a small Rembrandt painting, The Adoration of the Magi' in the inventory of the Prince of Orange collection drawn up c. 1714, reported by Linnik<sup>1,2</sup>, cannot be traced in S. W. A. Drossaers and Th. H. Lunsingh Scheurleer, *Inventarissen van de inboedels . . . van de Oranjes*, The Hague 1974–1976.

– Coll. Vorontsov-Dashkov, a collection formed in the first half of the 19th century<sup>6</sup>.

– Coll. I. I. Paskevich née Vorontsova-Dashkova; following the October Revolution in 1917 it was donated to the Hermitage by the State Museum Fund, 1923<sup>6</sup>.

## 9. Summary

No. C 46 was published in 1969 as a work by Rembrandt. The composition was already known

previously from a painting in Gothenburg that is certainly a copy after what was most probably a lost Rembrandt original. It is however hard to assume that the Leningrad grisaille is this original, because of the disappointing execution. Moreover the X-rays show that the painting matched the Gothenburg painting in three details in the first lay-in but differed from it in the completed state. There must therefore have been a common prototype, which one may assume Rembrandt to have painted in 1632 either in the form of a fully-fledged painting or (more likely) as a grisaille. It remains hard to explain why one figure – that of the kneeling page – that must have been in the original was not initially in the grisaille, and was added only at a late stage. It is conceivable that the Leningrad copy was made in Rembrandt's studio and in the course of its execution reflected in this respect consecutive stages of the lost original.

## REFERENCES

- 1 I. Linnik in: *Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn. Paintings from Soviet Museums*, Leningrad [c. 1971], no. 4.
- 2 I. Linnik, 'Die Anbetung der Könige von Rembrandt', *Pantheon* 27 (1969), pp. 36–41.
- 3 E. Haverkamp-Begemann, 'The present state of Rembrandt studies', *Art Bull.* 53 (1971), pp. 88–104, esp. 95.
- 4 H. Guratzsch, 'Die Untersicht als ein Gestaltungsmittel in Rembrandts Frühwerk', *O.H.* 89 (1975), pp. 243–265, esp. 247 and 257.
- 5 I. Ember, 'Rembrandtsche Elemente in den Werken Benjamin Cuyp', *Acta Historiae Artium Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 24 (1978), pp. 278–285, esp. 282–284.
- 6 V. Loewinson-Lessing in: *Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn. Paintings from Soviet Museums*, Leningrad [c. 1971], p. 10.

## C47 The flight into Egypt

FORMERLY LONDON, COLL. LORD WHARTON

HdG —; BR. —; BAUCH 61; GERSON 68; BR.-GERSON 552A

### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved work by a Rembrandt pupil (Ferdinand Bol?), datable in the later 1630s or early 1640s.

### 2. Description of subject

The scene is based on Matthew 2:14, which relates how Joseph 'took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt'.

In a nocturnal landscape lit only by the moon and, in the foreground, by a lantern hanging from the ass's saddle, the Holy Family travels towards the left along a path set almost parallel to the picture plane. To the right the path is lost behind a rise in the ground covered with shrubbery, where on the extreme right there is the trunk of a tree whose branches and foliage, lit from below, spread out over the figures. Mary, seen frontally, is seated on an ass which Joseph leads by the halter. With her right hand she grasps the saddle-knob from which the lantern and a calabash gourd dangle, while on her left arm she cradles the Child in the cloak hanging down from her head. The strongest light from the lantern falls on the fingers of her right hand, her face and the neck of the ass; the striding figure of Joseph, seen almost in profile, is lit more weakly along his back, neck and right arm. He holds a staff in the left hand. On the far left, at some distance, a few trees can be seen; between the two figures, above far-off buildings and trees, the full moon appears among sparse clouds in the sky.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 25 August 1971 (J. B., S. H. L.) in good artificial light and out of the frame.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 52 × 49.1 (± 0.1) cm. Thickness c. 1.1 cm. Single plank. The back is painted dark, and is irregularly bevelled along the four edges.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light brown shows through at many places – in the tree trunk on the right, in the foliage, the trees to the left, the foreground, the ass and the sky.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good. There are thin retouches in the sky at the top left and in the centre, and small local retouches especially along the righthand edge. Craquelure: extremely fine cracks can be seen only in the thicker passages (the lantern and the lit leaves).

DESCRIPTION: Only in the lighter areas is paint applied at all thickly. The sky is painted in a thin, dark grey, through which the ground can be sensed. To either side of the moon, painted in thick white, the lit clouds are indicated with strokes of grey and white, with the ground again visible between them. The buildings in the distance are done in dark grey, with edges in a lighter grey.

The branches and leaves of the tree are painted predominantly in browns, with some brownish grey-green in the leaves which are rendered with tiny brushstrokes; those above Mary have been given light rims, using thicker paint. The trunk on

the right, and the branches, are executed with quite flat strokes. The foreground, too, is done with brown paint, dark and very thin on the left, and thicker with a few light edges in the plants.

Mary's clothing is indicated with poorly articulated strokes in browns, while the cloak thrown over her head is in grey. The back of her right hand is in a thin, flat brown, and the lit parts of the fingers are done with fairly flat strokes in a flesh colour. Her face is painted in browns, on top of which has been placed a yellowish colour to show the lit parts, and a carmine red for the mouth and nostrils.

The lantern has been drawn (not all that convincingly) in brownish paint, with its panes in light yellow. The ass is sketched quite thinly in browns, with the ground showing through to some extent; a few light accents have been placed, in thicker paint, at the eye and on the nose, without contributing much to the suggestion of plasticity.

The figure of Joseph is indicated, unsharply, in dark grey with edges of light placed in rather thicker paint along his back and right arm.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

None.

#### *Signature*

Below Joseph's feet in dark brown paint, in part difficult to read, <Rem(bra)nd(t?). f. 163(.)>. The letters shown here between brackets are only vaguely visible; the last digit of the date, which has been read as a 4<sup>1</sup>, cannot be deciphered with certainty. Insofar as they can be properly seen, the letters follow an uneven line, and are rather irregular in size. The script does not make a convincing impression, and there must be serious doubts as to the signature's authenticity.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

### 4. Comments

The acceptance that this picture (which came to light only in 1950) won<sup>1</sup>, especially after it had been exhibited in London in 1952/53<sup>2</sup>, is understandable because of its Rembrandtlike character, but on closer study the attribution cannot be maintained.

The main feature of the painting is the thin and almost monochrome execution over large areas. Only in the lit passages is there an almost graphic brushwork, giving distinct form mainly to the foliage of the trees and plants and to the figure of Mary. This treatment is comparable to a tendency noticeable in Rembrandt's work from c. 1634 onwards – cf. some passages in the Moscow *Incredulity of Thomas* (no. A 90) – and most conspicuous in a number of pictures from 1638, such as the Buckingham Palace *Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene* (Br. 559) or the *Susanna* in The Hague (Br. 505), probably from the same year. Yet a comparison with such works demonstrates just how schematic and relatively flat the rendering of form achieved in this way remains, never reaching the crispness of Rembrandt in comparable passages. This is most true of the figure of

Fig. 1. Panel 52 × 49.1 cm



Fig. 2. Rembrandt, *The Flight into Egypt*, etching (B. 54 I)

Mary and of the weakly drawn lantern. The play of light on the ass and on the figure of Joseph do not – in spite of a certain freedom in the brushwork – make an effective contribution to a suggestion of plastic form, and the visual impact of the half-lit repoussoir in the foreground remains weak. Unusual features of the composition, framed as it is by trees on either side, and the exceptional motif of the moon as a light source might still be explained as resulting from a specific approach to the subject matter. The execution is, however, evidence that the painting comes from another hand – from an artist who though certainly under Rembrandt's influence lacked his formal clarity and power in critical passages. The unconvincing signature provides no argument against this view. Comparison with the Rembrandt works just mentioned suggests a dating in the later 1630s or early 1640s.

Besides the manner of painting, the approach to the subject has a close link with Rembrandt's work, especially with a number of etchings, though without wholly matching any particular one of these. The closest resemblance is between the figure of Joseph and that in the early etching B. 54 (fig. 2), which can be dated 1627/28, where – isolated in later states due to the plate having been cut – he also walks towards the left, in the same pose but for the position of his staff. The tree on the right shows a general formal resemblance (in reverse) to that in the small etching of 1633 (B. 52). The figure of Mary, turned towards the viewer, does not occur in

this way in any of the etchings from the 1620s and 1630s.

The idea that comes most naturally to mind is of one of Rembrandt's pupils from the years 1635–1640, who besides using a motif from an early Rembrandt etching also took the motif from Elsheimer (known through a print by H. Goudt) of the full moon, and who found an unmistakably personal form for the whole conception. And yet this personal stamp does not make it possible to identify the artist with any certainty; it is quite possible that in his later work he adopted a different style, and is thus not recognizable here. It is known that both Flinck and Bol (the former joined Rembrandt's workshop c. 1634, and the latter c. 1636) painted more landscapes than are known of today. Though no. C 47 cannot be called a landscape, landscape motifs do play an important role in this painting. If one had to choose between these two pupils, the preference might perhaps fall on Bol. In drawings attributed to him, such as *Elijah and the angel* in Boston and *The prophet of Bethel* in Leipzig (Sumowski *Drawings* I, nos. 137 and 254), one finds a very similar structure to the landscape, using similar tree repoussoirs. The use of somewhat ineffective edges of light – e.g. in Joseph's sleeve and in the foliage – recurs in a landscape that, though certainly later, is attributed to him on good grounds (in private American ownership; cf. Blankert *Bol*, cat. no. 183). At the time of his second marriage in 1669, Bol's possessions included 'een maneschijn van Bol' (A. Bredius in: *O.H.* 28, 1910, p. 234). Where the similarity between the figure of Joseph here and that in Rembrandt's etching B. 54 is concerned, it may also be commented that more than once Bol took over figures quite literally from earlier work by Rembrandt – the clearest example of this being his large *Three Marys at the tomb* of 1644 in Copenhagen (Statens Museum for Kunst, cat. no. 77; Blankert, op. cit., no. 17) in which two figures have been borrowed from the Paris *Angel leaving the family of Tobias* of 1637 (Br. 503) and one from one of the first four states of the etched *Raising of Lazarus* of 1631/32 (B. 73). Taken together, these items of evidence are however insufficient ground for definitely attributing no. C 47 to Bol.

##### 5. Documents and sources

None.

##### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

##### 7. Copies

None.

### 8. Provenance

- Coll. Lord Clinton, sale London (Sotheby's) 19 July 1950, no. 114.
- Coll. Lord Wharton.

### 9. Summary

Although in its manner of painting no. C 47 shows a certain resemblance to Rembrandt's work, especially that from around 1634–1638, the rather ineffective treatment of essential passages indicates that this should be attributed not to his hand but rather to that of a pupil (Ferdinand Bol?). This pupil made use of the figure of Joseph from Rembrandt's early etching B. 54. A dating in the later 1630s or early 1640s seems the most likely.

### REFERENCES

- 1 J. G. van Gelder, 'Rembrandt and his circle', *Burl. Mag.* 95 (1953), pp. 34–39, esp. 37; E. Plietzsch, 'Ausstellung holländischer Gemälde in der Londoner Akademie', *Kunstchronik* 6 (1953), pp. 121–132, esp. 122.
- 2 Cat. exhibition *Dutch Pictures*, London (Royal Academy of Arts), 1952–3, no. 35.

## C48 The good Samaritan

LONDON, THE WALLACE COLLECTION, CAT. NO. 203

HDG 111; BR. 545; BAUCH 55; GERSON –

### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved work the attribution of which to Rembrandt cannot be accepted, in spite of a rediscovered signature and date of 1630. Probably a copy done in Rembrandt's workshop after a lost grisaille (perhaps dating from 1632) for his etching of the same subject of 1633. An attribution to Govaert Flinck and a date of 1633/34 appear to be acceptable.

### 2. Description of subject

The subject is taken from Luke 10:25–37, and more particularly from verses 34 and 35 – the arrival of the Samaritan at the inn with the man who had fallen among thieves on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho.

On the sandy foreground stands the Samaritan's white horse, held by a groom while a servant lifts down the semi-naked, wounded traveller. On the horse's back is a blue-green saddle-cloth with a richly-worked edge. Behind the group can be seen a high stoop with a parapet in front of the inn door, reached by stone steps on the right, where the Samaritan stands talking to the innkeeper whom he has just paid. He is clad in a tunic, with a shiny shoulder-belt and with a cloak over the left shoulder; he wears a turban with a plume.

The inn has a plastered wall with bare brickwork in many places, and with a projecting upper storey in timber. There are brick arches under the stoop and over the door, which is flanked by pilasters; to the right is a window with an arched top, through which a young man with a plumed cap watches the scene. To the left of the inn a group of trees stands behind a well with a lifting-arm from which a woman is drawing water. Alongside here there is a bowl on the ground, and in front of the well a cock and a hen. In the distance to the extreme left is a mountainous landscape in which the vague shape of buildings and an obelisk can be made out.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in May 1968 (B. H., E. v. d. W.), and again after cleaning in 1976, in the October of that year (J. B., E. v. d. W.), on both occasions out of the frame. An X-ray film of the whole was received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 24.2 × 19.8 cm. Thickness 0.8 cm (left) to 1 cm (right). These dimensions do not include two battens, 0.5 cm wide, that are attached along the two sides and another 1.1 cm wide along the top edge. The two side battens bring the panel out to match the length of the batten attached at the top, so that it may be assumed that all these additions were made at the same time, even though only the top batten is painted on. That these battens were added at some later stage is plain not only from the fact that only the top one has been painted on, but also from the fact (seen from the X-ray) that the ground on the panel does not continue in the same way on the upper batten; one may gather, from Binet's etching published in 1771 (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 1; fig. 5) that they were added before that date. The back has, at the sides and top, bevelling that continues over the battens and that was therefore probably done after the additions were made.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology examination (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) shows, measured at the bottom edge, 119 annual rings + 1 counted; not datable.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish brown, applied with long strokes running slightly at a slope from top left to bottom right, is visible especially at many points in the wall of the inn. From the radiographic image one can see that these strokes do not continue onto the strip added to the top of the panel. The same yellowish-brown tint is exposed in a strip in the lower left foreground, and over the whole of the righthand lower corner the diagonal brushstrokes can also be seen beneath a layer of translucent dark brown. The ground tint also shows through in the sky and, very slightly, in the buildings in the distance.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good. There is some local damage along the bottom edge and, to a lesser extent, along both sides. During cleaning in 1976 overpainting at the lower left was removed; this is reproduced in Binet's etching published in 1771, and thus must have been done before that date (see also *Signature* below). This overpainting showed a coarse craquelure similar to that in the paint on the added batten at the top. Craquelure: none seen in the picture's present state.

DESCRIPTION: The paint surface is characterized by a generally opaque and quite thick use of paint; this is applied with varied and mostly readily detectable brushstrokes. In the wall of the inn, however, there is a remarkable amount of the tinted ground left visible. In the figures the paint is invariably thickly applied, but otherwise the handling of paint varies – the shape is clearly defined in the main figures and the horse, using small strokes and dabs of the brush, while the minor figures are indicated sketchily, especially the groom in the foreground, who is shown with broad strokes of grey and brown with a blue-green for the sash hanging from his waist, and the man looking out of the window, who is done in a flat dark flesh colour and a few strokes of blue and, in his cap, a little purple. The most striking colour accents are used in the central group – in the horse, rendered in grey and white and wearing a blue-green saddle cloth with an edge in an ochre colour, yellow and white, in the head of the servant worked up relatively thoroughly in ruddy flesh tints, and in the wounded man whose back shows a clear yellowish tint; the fingers of the servant are formed with a thickly-applied reddish-brown flesh colour. To this central focus of colour is added the figure of the Samaritan, who wears a purplish-brown tunic with a meticulously rendered yellow and white shoulder-belt and a blue-green turban. Below the belly of the horse is a patch of dark paint which (as the X-ray shows) has been laid over a light layer. Immediately above the hindquarters of the horse there is an area of thick, light purple that is hard to identify as a shape and is followed upwards by the brick red of the arch. Brick-red and purple occur again in the adjoining passage to the left, the former in the brickwork of the well and the latter (though darker) in the clothing of the woman drawing water at the well. Colourful and quite carefully-worked details here are the bowl alongside the well and the cock and hen in front of it; the paint here is sometimes thickly applied, as in the lifting arm and the well-rope. In the surrounding areas, too, the use of colour is varied though less pronounced. Over the translucent yellow-brown of the wall of the inn the details are partly sketched in thin brown and partly done opaquely in a mixture of tints – grey and ochre-colour in the arch above the door and the area adjoining it to the right that continues



FIG. 1. Panel 24.2 × 19.8 cm (1:1)

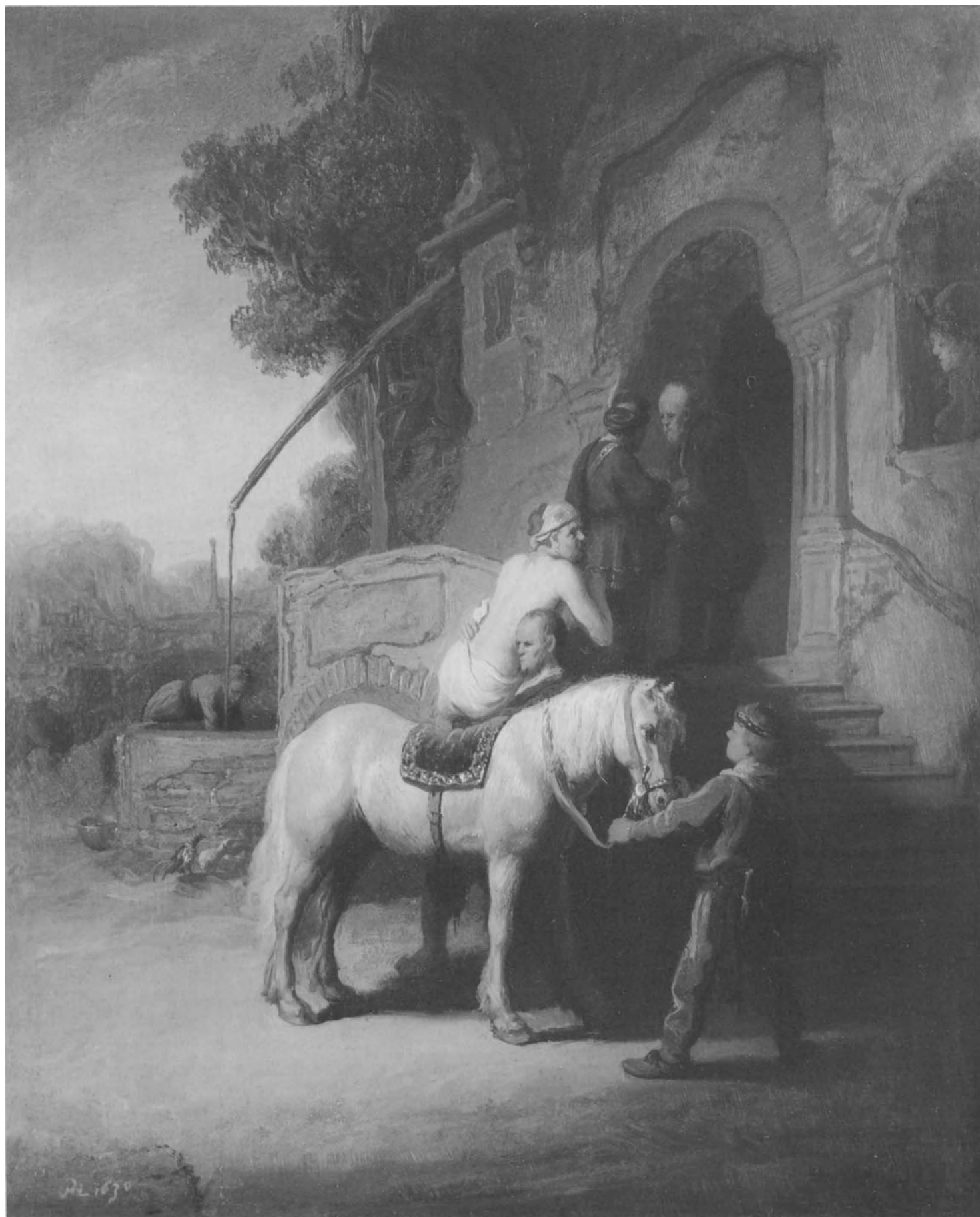


Fig. 2. X-ray



upwards, and brown and white in the pilaster to the right of the door with a strip of shadow in green-grey. In the area of wall to the left of the Samaritan the paint covers fully and is brushed out flatly, as it is in the parapet of the stoop. (On the evidence of the X-ray the appearance of the paint layer here is connected with an underlying layer.) At the top the timber storey is painted in a fairly transparent dark brown. A touch of strong red in the roof of the inn provides a contrast with the adjacent area of trees which is executed in dark green, greyish green and brown, worked up in ochre-coloured paint. The paint is here applied with short brushstrokes and dabs; the branches are shown with curved strokes. The sky has, over the yellow-brown tint of the ground that shows through, a progression of colour from a dark grey at the top to white at the bottom, applied with mainly horizontal and occasionally slightly curving strokes. The mountains are sketched in a pale green, laid opaquely over the white with fluid strokes. The ground in front of the inn is, in most of the lit areas, rendered with wavy strokes in a mixture of grey and brown.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

In the radiographic image the additions at the top and sides are quite distinct from the original panel. The diagonal strokes used to apply the ground do not continue onto the added batten at the top.

There are, especially at the bottom, vaguely-bordered patches showing up light in the X-ray and having no relation with the picture, which hard to interpret; they may perhaps be vestiges of an earlier painting. There are other aspects, too, from which the distribution of light and dark areas in the X-ray does not wholly coincide with what one would expect from the surface – for instance, the sky might be expected to have a greater degree of radioabsorbency. In both this area and that of the foreground there is a distinct image of brushwork, with in both cases a predominance of horizontal and curving strokes, with those in the foreground sometimes wavy. There is more radioabsorbency in the figures of the wounded man and the horse and in the head of the servant; modelling brushwork, with thin strokes, is clearly apparent here, though once again the X-ray image does not match what the distribution of light and dark and the handling of paint seen at the surface would lead one to expect – the greatest radioabsorbency is shown by the belly of the horse on the left along the saddle-cloth and by the mane along the top of its neck. To the right there is hardly any detectable image to be seen, apart from the pilaster to the right of the door and the figure of the man looking out of the window.

In the area containing the part of the wall to the left of the Samaritan, the group of trees adjoining this to the left and the parapet one can see a concentration of quite long and more or less vertical strokes that show up remarkably light. These bear no relation to the picture in its present form, but do coincide with the noticeably opaque layer of paint at this point. It seems likely that this is radioabsorbent paint used to alter or correct the composition by covering over an existing feature. The even light image of the parapet in its present form runs over these strokes. In the part of the wall to the left of the Samaritan there is also a sharp, light line that does not coincide with anything to be seen at that point today, and that does not offer any other hint enough to warrant an interpretation. In brushwork it resembles the dispersed, thin stripes that can be found in the figure of the young groom and in the lifting-arm and rope by the well.

Minor differences in the borders of areas can also be seen by the foot of the servant lifting the wounded man down from the

horse (which in the first lay-in had a smaller, or no, reserve left for it in the paint of the lit foreground), and in the higher top edge given to this foreground directly above the foot and under the horse's belly, where as already noted at the paint surface it is today virtually obliterated with dark paint.

#### *Signature*

At the lower left in a light brown that contrasts with the darker tone of the paint at that point <RHL (in monogram) 1630>. The monogram is roughly similar to that used by Rembrandt in paintings from 1630 (cf. nos. A 28 and A 29, but does show differences. The tail of the *R* is less pronounced, and the crossbar of the *H* is not continuous (for which reason Clark<sup>1</sup> read it as *RL*) and if it were so it would then be unusually long. Of the digits, the 3 has an unusually slack construction. Up to 1976 the signature and date were concealed by a dark old overpainting.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

Up to now opinions have varied as to whether this little painting can be regarded as an autograph work by Rembrandt. The most longstanding view, held by, among others, Hofstede de Groot<sup>2</sup>, Bredius<sup>3</sup>, Münz<sup>4</sup> and, after a cleaning of the painting in 1976, Clark<sup>1</sup>, is that it is indeed autograph and was used by Rembrandt for his etching of the same size in 1633 (B. 90); some authors such as Michel<sup>5</sup> and MacColl<sup>6</sup> posited an earlier date of production as an explanation for inadequacies in composition and execution. Because of these weaknesses in quality the Rembrandt attribution had already been rejected by Martin<sup>7</sup> in 1921 and, later, by Gerson<sup>8</sup>. What prompted Clark to argue against this rejection was the cleaning carried out in 1976 at his instigation, when a – surprisingly overpainted – signature and date of 1630 came to light. His argument added little that is cogent to the discussion, however, and the script of the signature gives no reason to accept it at once as being autograph.

The problem of attribution is closely linked with the relationship between the painting and the etching (B. 90) already mentioned, which in its fourth and final state bears the date of 1633 (fig. 3). The scene in the etching is reversed with respect to that in the painting; the dimensions of the picture area and the distribution of forms within this area are (leaving out the battens added to the painting at a later stage) exactly the same in both. There are differences in the lighting and the degree of detail, both of which are in the etching more evenly spread over the whole picture than they are in the painting, as well as in a number of details. The etching shows in the foreground an alternation of light and dark, a strip of vegetation, a defecating dog (which just overlaps one leg of the horse), a barrel and a fodder-

rack; the most clearly visible of the servant's legs is in the etching clad in a gathered trouserleg and he wears a cap, whereas in the painting the leg is for the most part bare and his head is uncovered. The young groom wears a plumed cap, while the painting gives him a band around his hair; the wall of the inn shows, in the etching, a wooden panelling alongside the steps, while in the painting the plastered brick wall is continuous apart from an indistinct edging. A buttress supporting the wall (?), seen in the etching behind the Samaritan, is absent from the painting. The coincidence of format and layout points to a close connexion between the etching and painting, while the divergences in detail make it highly unlikely that the painting is a copy of the etching. Both the fact that it reproduces the picture in the etching in reverse and the differently-portrayed details virtually rule out this possibility, and set the painting apart from the not infrequent painted copies after this and other Rembrandt etchings.

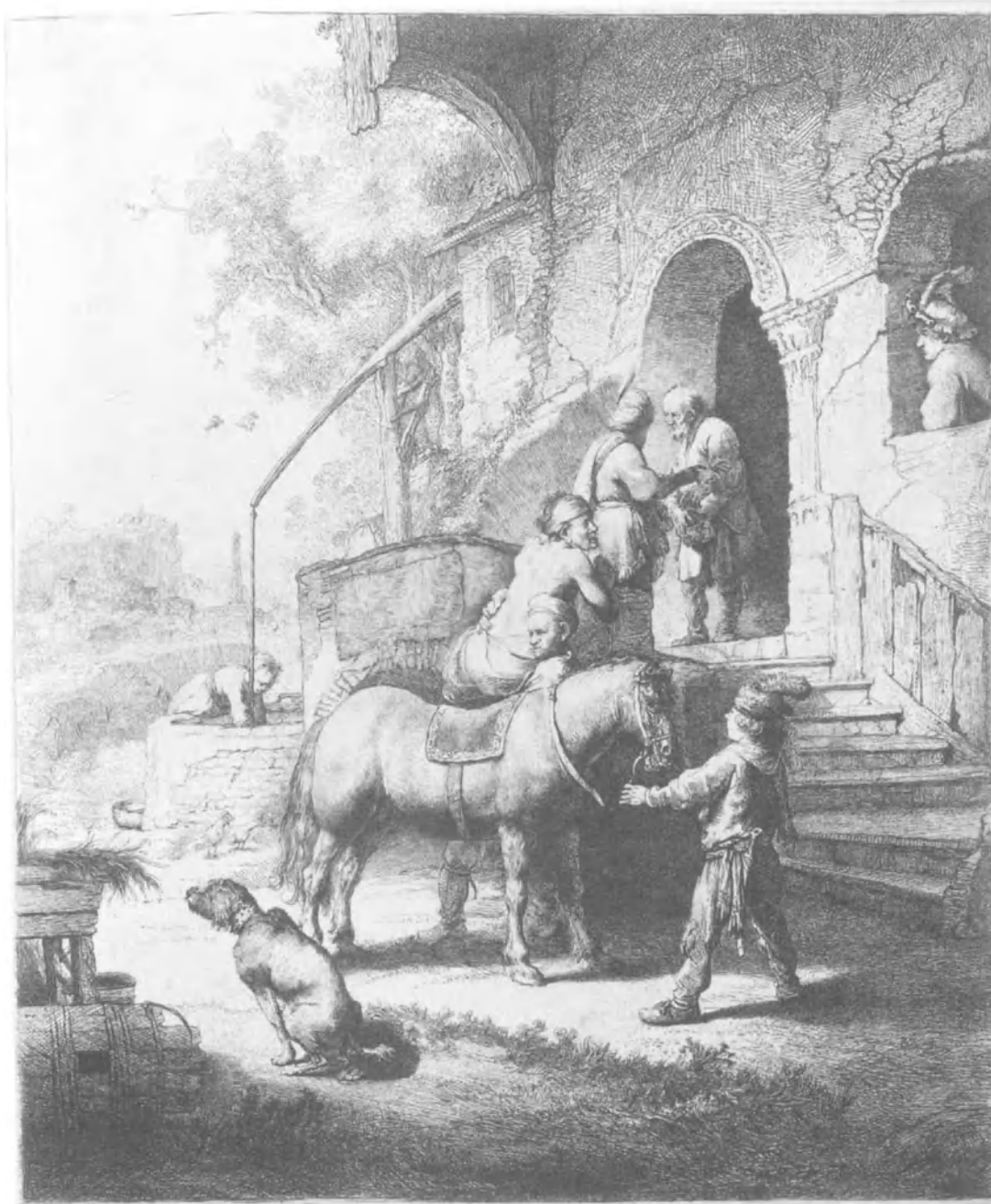
This really leaves only two possibilities – either the painting is in fact, as was long assumed, by Rembrandt himself, intended or (as Clark believes) merely used as a prototype for the etching, or it is a copy by another hand of a lost preparatory sketch by Rembrandt that would then probably (as in the case of the London *Ecce homo* (no. A 89) and in line with a generally-observed practice) have been a grisaille. To decide between these two possibilities one must, besides judging the quality of execution apparent at the paint surface, also take account of what can be seen in the X-ray. One also has to ask whether the date of 1630 uncovered in 1976 – whether it is authentic or not – can be taken as accurate evidence.

The execution prompts no doubt as to its 17th-century origin. The use of a light ground – even though it was evidently not all that carefully smoothed out – and the way it shows through in areas of translucent brown fit into the mental image we have of a Rembrandt painting, even though the effect of this is not (partly because of a lack of rhythm in the brushstroke in these passages) comparable with what is seen in Rembrandt's work of 1630 in this regard (cf. nos. A 28 and A 29). In general it is hard, in the way the forms are sketchily essayed in the poorly lit areas, to recognize the rhythm of Rembrandt's brushwork. More fully worked up, in locally thicker paint or sometimes even impasto, are the group in the centre (the horse, the wounded traveller and the servant's head and hand), the flight of steps, and the well with the metal bowl, cock and hen. It is perhaps precisely these passages that give rise to the most doubt about the paintings's authenticity, in that they do not offer

the succinct suggestion of form, based on an effective variation in the handling of paint, that one has learned to expect from Rembrandt. In fact the depiction here depends more on differences in colour than on the definition of the shapes, which notwithstanding a quite detailed treatment with strokes and touches of thick paint has remained flat – very different from what Rembrandt achieved either around 1630 (in the *Simeon in the Temple* of 1631 in The Hague (no. A 34), for example) or in 1633 (in the *Christ in the storm* in the Gardner Museum, Boston, no. A 68). For all that, the colour certainly cannot be described as un-Rembrandtesque, and the blue-green, purplish brown, red and light accents in the midst of browns and greys are not at variance with what can be seen in Rembrandt's work from the early 1630s. The weakest in this respect, as well as in rendering of form, is the landscape, which in clear suggestion of depth and in integration of colouring trails far behind the little that can be taken as comparative material in Rembrandt's work, such as the vista in the 1632 *Rape of Europa* (no. A 47). Particularly interesting, of course, is the comparison with the London *Ecce homo* of 1634 (no. A 89), a work that in view of its function as a painted grisaille for an etching is eminently suited to throwing light on the question of whether no. C 48, too, was painted by Rembrandt with this purpose in mind. The *Ecce homo* is, to start with, a grisaille (done on paper) and there is no evidence to be found that there is a grisaille (which would in this case have to be on wood) hidden beneath the paint layer of no. C 48. The grisaille is typified to a very high degree by a difference in treatment – a for the most part very thoroughly worked-up main group contrasts with a more or less cursory indication of the surrounding figures and buildings. It has to be said that neither the very pregnant rendering of form seen in the former, nor the free execution, dominated by its own intrinsic rhythm, of the latter kind of passage can be found in the *Good Samaritan*. It is precisely this comparison that makes it difficult to recognize in the painting the way Rembrandt gave shape to his preparation for an etching, while at the same time one fails to find the crispness one would expect in a fully-fledged painting, however sketchily done.

It must be added that insofar as the X-ray provides a picture of the structure of the paint layer this is not remarkable for any similarity with the radiographic image normal for Rembrandt's works. The thin strokes used to model the body of the horse differ markedly from the short and overlapping touches seen in the usual image, and the greatest concentration of white does not, as would be typical

Fig. 3. Rembrandt, *The good Samaritan*, 1633, etching (B. 90 IV, reproduced in reverse)



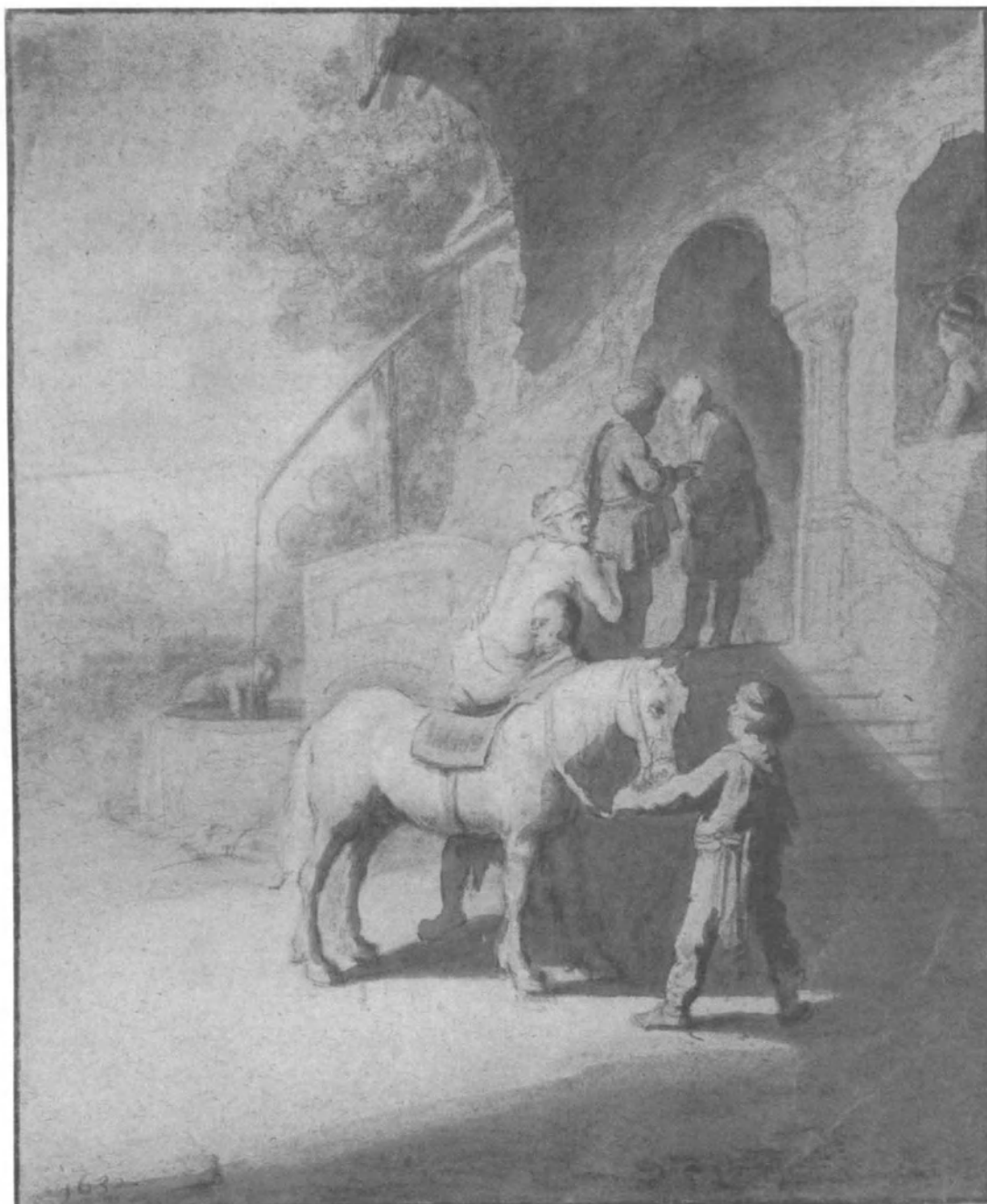
of Rembrandt, correspond with the light values used in the picture.

And yet the same X-ray image does not at first sight support the notion that the painting must be regarded as a copy. One would then surely not expect it to contain differences from the paint surface that, while they may partly be interpreted as signs of the panel having been used previously (something quite conceivable in the case of a copy), partly also give the impression of being connected with an alteration made to the picture. Not only does the lit ground below the belly of the horse continue further upwards than it does at the paint surface today, and did the foot of the servant have

a smaller or no reserve left for it, but one's attention is drawn by a bundle of more or less vertical strokes to the left of the wounded traveller. They give the impression that an unsatisfactory passage may here have been covered over before the present top layer, remarkable for its thickness and opacity, was applied. If this unsatisfactory area too belonged to a picture painted on the panel previously, there would be nothing against the assumption that the painting is a copy done on a panel used previously. One is however struck by the fact that the area just mentioned partly coincides with a part of the etching that is far from being the most convincing. The buttress that in the etching (but not in the painting)



Fig. 4. Circle of Rembrandt (Claes Moeyaert?), drawing in black chalk and brown wash on grey paper. Amsterdam, Henk J. Stokking (1982)



stands against the wall of the inn behind the Samaritan has the character of a structurally-unclear, ad hoc solution. Unless one assumes that the alterations that, in whatever way, were made to the painting are connected with an earlier painted picture, the most likely explanation is that both the painting and the etching go back to a lost sketch, possibly a grisaille from Rembrandt's hand, and that this sketch – like that for the *Ecce homo* – contained areas showing varying degrees of detail, the most roughly sketched of which could be open to more than one interpretation. Nevertheless, the exact correspondences in terms of scale and layout between the painting and etching show that the

former must be in this respect a faithful copy after the lost prototype.

The notion that there was in fact a now unknown grisaille by Rembrandt, on which he himself based his etching B. 90 with one or two additions and alterations and which is copied in colour in no. C 48, does find some support in a drawing of the same subject (see 7. *Copies*, 1; fig. 4). Its scale and layout are again identical to those of the painting and (in reverse) of the etching. In all the motifs that differ between the painting and the etching the drawing follows the version seen in the painting – the dog, barrel and rack in the foreground are missing, the servant lifting down the wounded man



Fig. 5. Etching by L. Binet (reproduced in reverse)



does not have a head-covering or gathered-in trousers, the groom is not wearing a plumed cap, and so on. At first sight, therefore, one would be inclined to look on the drawing as being a copy after the painting; on closer inspection, however, it has a number of features that it would be hard for the draughtsman to have borrowed from the painting, and that match the etching to such an extent that the existence of a common prototype becomes very probable. The young man looking through the window, for instance, leans quite clearly with his elbow on the windowsill; the patch under the belly of the horse forms a continuation of the vaulting of the stoop seen above its hindquarters; the wounded man clearly wears a bandage about his head with his hair spilling out some way over it; and in particular the shadow side of the Samaritan forms a lively contrast against the partly-lit figure of the inn-keeper in the door opening alongside him. One gets the definite impression that the painter of no. C 48, partly as a result of failing to grasp the form he was depicting and partly through using dark colours (as in the two figures on the stoop), allowed effects and relationships to be lost that one may assume, on the ground of the etching and the drawing, to have been present in the common

prototype. If this is so, there can be no reasonable doubt that this common prototype was a grisaille done by Rembrandt in preparation for the etching. This grisaille would then, like the painting and drawing derived from it, not have shown the dog, barrel and rack, items that Rembrandt added only in the etching.

It is interesting in this connexion that the drawing bears the date 1632. It is of course possible that this date relates only to the drawing; but it is certain that if Rembrandt did make a grisaille for the etching B. 90 dated 1633, then it would be more likely to have been done in 1632 than, as the inscription on no. C 48 would have one believe, in 1630. This would put the lost grisaille close to the Munich *Descent from the Cross* begun in 1632 (no. A 65), with which in composition and motifs – a repoussoir figure standing legs apart to the right, and the central placing of a naked body – it shows more affinity than any other work.

The execution of the painting, especially the colour scheme, would seem to point to Rembrandt's circle. An attribution to Simon de Vlieger, made by Van Dyke<sup>9</sup>, was based on a certain resemblance to that artist's *Return of the falconer* in Amsterdam (Rijksmuseum, inv. no. A 1981), dated 1637. What similarity there is however relates to the motif depicted rather than the manner of painting, and provides insufficient basis for an attribution. There is a much more convincing relationship, particularly in the way pale greens have been used in the distant landscape, the trees are indicated with highlights over flat touches of green and browns and the foreground is treated in a variety of rather flat greys and ochre colour, with the corresponding passages in the much larger picture of the *Rest on the flight into Egypt* in a private collection (no. C 6; see also *Corrigenda et Addenda* in this volume). A connexion between the two paintings was already observed by Clark<sup>1</sup> and Wright<sup>10</sup>, who concluded that both were done by Rembrandt. Although this attribution is untenable (see above), it is highly probable that the Wallace Collection *Good Samaritan* was done by the same assistant in Rembrandt's studio who was responsible for at least the landscape in the *Rest on the flight into Egypt*. With regard to the latter picture we have already suggested (Vol. I, p. 486) that 'if one wants to see a Rembrandt pupil in this then Flinck would be a more likely candidate [than Dou], on the grounds of his painting of the same subject dated 1636' at Bayeux. It is confirmed by similarities in the landscape backgrounds in some further signed works by Flinck, including the 1636 *Portrait of Dirck Jacobsz. Leeuw* (Amsterdam, Doopsgezinde Gemeente; Von Moltke *Flinck* no. 211, Sumowski *Gemälde* II no. 685) and the 1640 (?)

*Double portrait of Dirck Graswinckel and his wife* (Rotterdam, Museum Boymans-van Beuningen; Von Moltke no. 466, Sumowski no. 713) as well as two signed landscapes in The Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston and in a private collection respectively (Sumowski nos. 719 and 718).

It therefore seems safe to assume that Flinck, who entered Rembrandt's workshop in 1633 and stayed with him for one year, started his production as a studio assistant by copying Rembrandt's grisaille sketch – possibly dating from 1632 – for the etching of the *Good Samaritan* of 1633, and by painting the *Rest on the flight into Egypt* or, at least, the landscape in that picture.

### 5. Documents and sources

None.

### 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Louis Binet (Paris 1744–1800), inscribed: *Rembrant pin – Binet sculp. | Du Cabinet de Mr. le Duc de Choiseul | De la grandeur de 10 pouces sur 8 [= 27 × 21.6 cm]*, included as no. 43 in: *Recueil d'estampes gravées d'après les tableaux du Cabinet de Monseigneur le Duc de Choiseul*, Paris 1771 (fig. 5). Reproduces the picture in reverse including the additions and overpaintings that the painting showed until 1976.

An engraving by Charles Errard, mentioned by Hofstede de Groot<sup>2</sup>, is in view of the presence of the dog, barrel and rack in the foreground made after Rembrandt's etching B. 90; the same is true of a print by Salomon Savery.

### 7. Copies

1. Drawing on grey paper in black chalk, with a brown wash, 25 × 20.5 cm, inscribed 1632 at bottom left (fig. 4). Dealer Henk J. Stokking, Amsterdam (1982). Both the scale and layout of the drawing correspond to those of no. C 48 and (in reverse) of etching B. 90. The paper and manner of drawing and the handwriting used for the date point to a 17th-century origin; the manner of drawing reminds one more of Claes Moeyaert than of a Rembrandt pupil. In lacking the dog, rack and barrel, and the wooden panelling alongside the steps, in the headgear of the young groom and in the showing of a tree-trunk in the lower lefthand corner, the drawing does not match etching B. 90, but does correspond with no. C 48. For a discussion of the assumption that both the drawing and no. C 48 were made after a lost grisaille by Rembrandt, see 4. *Comments* above.

### 8. Provenance<sup>11</sup>

– Coll. De Julienne, sale Paris 30 March–22 May 1767 (Lugt 1603), no. 130: 'Rembrandt van Ryn. Le bon Samaritain: c'est un joli Tableau peint sur bois, de 9 pouces 9 lignes de haut sur 7 pouces 6 lignes [= 26.3 × 20.2 cm]. La composition de l'Estampe au no. 77 annoncée dans le Catalogue de Rembrandt, composé par feu E. F. Gersaint, est d'après ce Tableau. Rembrandt pour enrichir son Estampe a augmenté des plantes ou herbages, un chien, un tonneau renversé proche d'une petite cloison de planches.' (1551 livres, example in RKD: to the Duc de Choiseul for 1564 livres, acheté par le Prince de Conti à sa vente 1580 livres).

– Coll. Duc de Choiseul, sale Paris 6–10 April 1772 (Lugt 2020), no. 9: 'Rembrandt. Un petit Tableau connu sous le nom du Samaritain; le fini en est précieux, & l'effet admirable. Il porte 7 pouces & demi de large sur 9 de haut. B. Il a été gravé par Rembrandt.' (1580 livres to Hakart).

– Coll. Prince de Conti, sale Paris 8 April – 6 June 1777 (Lugt 2671), no. 285: 'Rembrandt Van-Ryn. Le Samaritain, dont on connoit l'estampe gravée par Rembrandt lui-même. Ce tableau est bien empâté d'un précieux fini & d'un bon effet: hauteur 9 pouces, largeur 7 pouces 6 lignes, sur bois. Il a été dans le Cabinet de M. Jullienne, & ensuite dans celui de M. le Duc de Choiseul, no. 9 du Catalogue de sa vente.' (1150 livres to Langlier).

– Sale [coll. Nogaret], Paris 18ff March 1782 (Lugt 3392), no. 49: 'Rembrandt Van Rhyn. Le Charitable Samaritain, dont on connoit l'Estampe gravée par Rembrandt. Il vient de la vente du Cabinet de Mgr. Le Prince de Conti No. 285. Bois 9 pouces Haut 7 pouces 6 lignes de Large.' (900 livres to Le Brun).

– Coll. C. A. de Calonne, sale London 23–28 March 1795 (Lugt 5289), 4th day no. 35: 'Rembrandt. The Good Samaritan, a small gem of Rembrandt's. His cabinet pictures are invaluable.' (£ 65–2–0); sale London 27 ff April 1795 (Lugt 5299a), no. 114 (from the superb Collection of M. de Calonne): 'Rembrandt. The Good Samaritan. The cabinet pictures of this esteemed master are very rarely to be met with; this charming little picture formed one of the ornaments of the collection of the Duke de Choiseul.' [In RKD example Rembrandt crossed out in pen and ink].

\*– Possibly coll. Bryan, sale London 17–19 May 1798 (Lugt 5764), 1st day no. 38: 'Rembrandt. The good Samaritan, a very excellent picture, possessing all that admirable effect for which he is so eminently distinguished.' (£ 73 s. 10).

– Coll. E. Coxe, sale London 23–25 April 1807, 3rd day no. 61; sale London 30 April 1815, 3rd day no. 84 (£ 147 s. 10).

– Coll. Thomas Emmerson, sale London 15–16 June 1832, 1st day no. 55 (£ 36–0–0).

– Coll. the third Marquess of Hertford, London; by descent to Sir Richard Wallace (illegitimate son of the fourth Marquess). Bequeathed by Lady Wallace to the Nation, as part of the Wallace Collection, 1897.

### 9. Summary

This painting was long held to be an autograph work by Rembrandt, done as a preparation for his etching of the same subject dated 1633. When compared to Rembrandt's work of the early 1630s, the execution does not however persuade one of its authenticity. On the one hand there is more, and more uniform, detail than in the London oil sketch for the *Ecce homo* (and it is moreover not, like this, a grisaille), yet on the other it lacks the differentiated suggestion of form one might expect to find in a fully-fledged painting. In view of the coincidence of scale and layout of the composition with the etching in reverse, one may assume the painting to be a copy made in Rembrandt's circle after a lost grisaille from his hand. This grisaille also seems to be reflected in a drawing dated 1632, which is very like no. C 48 in details, but shows relations and effects that have been lost in the painting though they can be found in the etching. The date 1632 may also

apply to the lost grisaille. The unconvincing signature and date of 1630 revealed during cleaning in 1976 are not an adequate argument against the conclusion reached here.

Similarities in execution with landscape passages in signed works by Govaert Flinck justify an attribution to that artist, who entered Rembrandt's studio in 1633 and stayed with him for a year.

## REFERENCES

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- 2 HdG 111.
- 3 Br. 545.
- 4 Münz II, p. 94.
- 5 E. Michel, *Rembrandt*, Paris 1893, pp. 104–105.
- 6 D. S. MacColl, 'Rembrandt at the Wallace Collection', *Burl. Mag.* 45 (1924), pp. 15–21, esp. 16.
- 7 W. Martin, 'Rembrandt-Rätsel II', *Der Kunstwanderer* 3 (1921–22), pp. 30–34, esp. 33.
- 8 Br.-Gerson 545.
- 9 J. C. van Dyke, *Rembrandt and his school*, New York 1923, p. 175.
- 10 C. Wright, 'Rembrandt's "Rest on the Flight into Egypt"', *Pantheon* 39 (1981), pp. 212–216.
- 11 *Catalogue of pictures and drawings, Wallace Collection*, London 1968, p. 263.

## C49 The Descent from the Cross

LENINGRAD, THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, INV. NO. 753

HdG 135; BR. 551; BAUCH 59; GERSON 66

### 1. Summarized opinion

A mostly well preserved painting with an unreliable signature and date of 1634. Because of its stylistic features it can be regarded as having been produced in Rembrandt's studio, presumably during the early 1640s.

### 2. Description of subject

The cross stands at some distance, before a dark background; against it stand two ladders at the rear and two more to the right and left. At the top of the two ladders to the rear stand two men, one of whom is busy with pincers drawing out the nail pinning Christ's left hand to the cross while the other clings to this arm with both hands. Christ's body hangs against a white shroud draped over one arm of the cross; it is supported under the armpit by a man standing on the lefthand ladder, and held around his upper legs by a man dressed in yellow standing (on an unseen ladder?) to the right in front of the stem of the cross. These figures are lit by a torch held by a youth standing on the righthand ladder and leaning forward while he hides the flame from the viewer with the cap held in his outstretched left hand. The aura of light from this torch, and perhaps from an invisible light-source beneath it, spreads out over a few partly visible figures seen below the youth, including an old man with a small white beard, dressed in light blue, who holds up the end of the shroud (possibly Nicodemus); it also illuminates the turban of a figure with a staff seen from behind and full-length in front of the cross, who holds his cloak to his left shoulder with the right hand (probably Joseph of Arimathea), and a woman who, immediately to his left, kneels at the foot of the cross (probably Mary Magdalene).

To the right of the cross is a group of standing figures, among whom a middle-aged, thin-faced woman (undoubtedly Mary), with closed eyes and half-open mouth, is supported by a woman to the left and an older man to the right of her. The light falls from the left onto this group, and seems to come from the same torch (plus perhaps a second light-source) as lights the central group, although the swooning figure of Mary is more strongly illuminated than those around her.

In the right foreground, just catching the light from the torch, are a dog and a few plants (including thistles).

To the left in the foreground is a group of kneeling and standing figures occupied in spreading out the bier-cloth or keening. The face of a slit-eyed young woman is lit so strongly from the left that one must assume the presence of a third source of light on the extreme left. Just behind this group in the semi-darkness a woman kneels by the foot of the lefthand ladder, wringing her hands. Behind this ladder can be seen another female figure with a black cloth draped over her head.

Vague shapes of architecture can be made out in the dark background.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 19 August 1969 (J. B., S. H. L.) by good daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of X-ray films together covering the whole painting, one film and print of some of which were received later. Examined again in May 1982 (E. v. d. W.) by good daylight and in the frame.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 159.3 × 116.4 cm (measured along the stretcher). Single piece.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Cusping visible to left and right (not measured). Threadcount: 11.5 vertical threads/cm (11–12), 10.3 horizontal threads/cm (9.5–11). The weave shows more and shorter thickenings in horizontal than in vertical direction. In view of these features the warp probably runs vertically. The strong similarity in weave characteristics and vertical threadcount with the canvas of the Leningrad *Flora* (no. A 93) suggests that the two canvases came from the same bolt of cloth, though there is some difference in their width.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Not observable with certainty; a light brown seems to show through in the background above the left arm of the cross.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

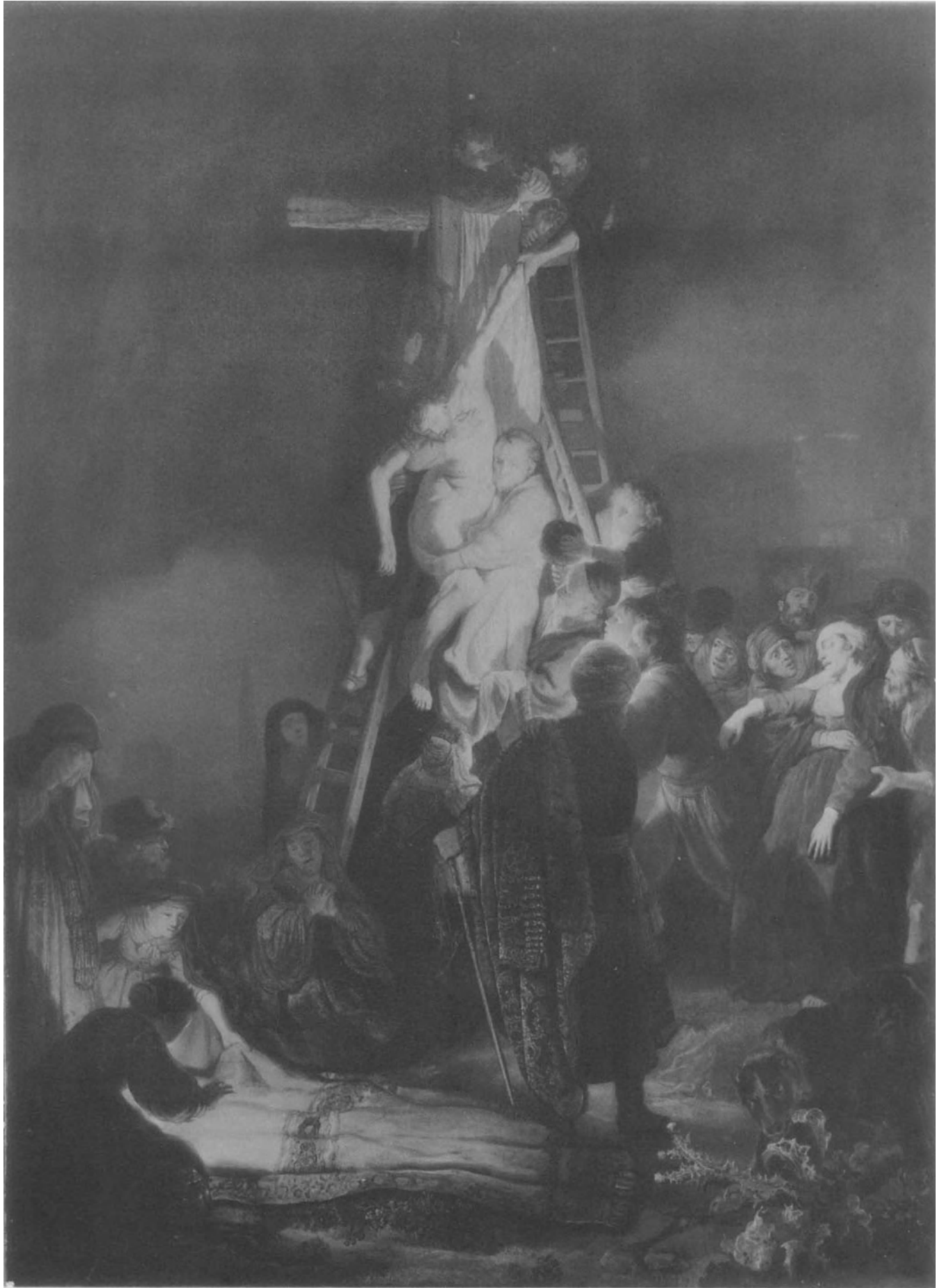
#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: In general well preserved in the vital areas, despite local cupping of paint and some paint loss and restorations. These are most extensive along the edges, especially in the lower left corner and along the lefthand and top edges. A sizeable patch of paint loss, apparently partly repaired with fragments of the original paint, can also be seen in the cap with which the youth on the ladder shields the torch, and continues along the contour of the back of the man clad in yellow to the left of him. The background has been thinly overpainted along the righthand edge, above the righthand group of figures, in a dark colour; this overpainting seems to extend over part of the background. There also seem to be overpaintings in the clothing of the woman wringing her hands at the foot of the lefthand ladder. Craquelure: an irregular pattern, larger or smaller depending on the thickness of the paint.

DESCRIPTION: The overall colour-scheme is dominated by the contrast between the lifeless grey of the background and the most brightly-lit central group. The latter comprises the light yellow of the man clasping Christ's upper legs, the light blue of the old man (Nicodemus?) holding up the hem of the shroud, and the red on the lit shoulder of the man standing a little further to the right (immediately alongside the figure, seen from the back, of Joseph of Arimathea). A duller red appears in the sleeve of the woman to the left of Mary, a brighter shade in the headdress of the old man on the other side of her, and blue in the matt blue turban of the woman to the left of Mary. Elsewhere, apart from the lit flesh areas in the central group, the range of colours is subdued. The group of figures on the right is done in broken tints (in which there are light accents of red and white), and the foreground and lefthand bottom corner in browns, ochre, brown-grey and wine-red.

The brushwork and intensity of rendering of form and detail vary markedly from one area to another, and sometimes from one figure to another. The guiding principle seems to have been that figures closest to the main source of light (the torch held, shielded behind his cap, by the youth on the righthand ladder) are rendered the most thoroughly, while the others are worked up less fully the further they are from it or where they are in the shadows cast by other figures. The application of this principle does not however everywhere lead to a consistent result. For instance, the two men leaning over the arms of the cross are sketched very coarsely indeed (in a ruddy brown and grey-browns), while the groups of figures in the left foreground and on the right alongside the cross are done quite differently from them and from each other. Within the latter group Mary,

Fig. 1. Canvas 159.3 × 116.4 cm



shown fainting, is done in a fair amount of detail (with a pale yellow facial colouring with grey-brown shadows) as if seen in normal studio lighting, and so is the man to the right of her; the woman on the other side of her is executed more in brownish shadow tones, the figure to the left again in similar colours is merely sketched with a quite flat brushstroke, and the man to the left further back still is indicated even more flatly. The two heads projecting above this group are handled differently again – the man on the left in browns with fine internal detail, the woman on the right cursorily and quite coarsely.

The figures on the left in the semi-darkness – the woman behind the ladder, the old man to the left of her and, partly, the weeping woman to the far left – are all done in a broad but evocative manner using black or thin, dark browns with a little ochre colour, and the partly-lit dress of the weeping woman shows ochre yellow and light green highlights on a brown basic tone. The woman seen rimmed by light and kneeling in the left foreground (partly badly affected by paint loss) is executed mainly in a dark wine-red, with a yellow-brown sheen of light on the clothing and a rim of light in ochre yellow along the face. The young woman kneeling behind her is shown in brown-grey and browns in her clothing and a flat light ochre brown with black internal detail and ochre yellow highlights in the flesh areas. The woman wringing her hands at the foot of the ladder has a more lively and thorough treatment, in brown-grey with touches of ochre yellow and internal detail in black.

The most colourful and thickly painted figures are those close to the centre of light. The man clasping Christ's body is, where his head is concerned, rendered with short strokes of thick pink and white, bordered to the left with dark brown (effectively suggesting the shadow cast on Christ's body) and with a little brown and dark brown in the eyes, while his clothing is in light yellow with hands of white sometimes placed thickly over this. The youth with the torch is painted in a similar fashion – the head with strokes of thick pink and flesh colour with a brown cast shadow by the nose and fairly detailed eyes, curls of hair in browns with some pink, and clothing seen in the light done in a light brown-grey. The head of the bearded man lower down, lit by the torch and by reflected light, has a thick pink along the lefthand edge of his face and on the lip, a thinner brown on the shadowed nose and grey on the forehead; his tunic is executed in a fairly thick clear blue with brown in the shadows. A smoother manner of painting is used in the profile of the young man next to him, which is lit from below and also shows a light flesh colour on the chin and in the eye sockets, and elsewhere a light brown shadow tint. A broader and coarser brushstroke is used to show the adjacent profile figure, whose head is sketched in a pink flesh tint with a reddish brown shadow and whose clothing is in a terracotta red in the light and brown in the shadow.

Christ's body is modelled carefully but – especially in the head – not all that effectively, in a yellowish flesh colour with brown shadows and a thin grey as the transition between light and shade; the darkest folds of skin are traced in dark brown, and the gaps between the toes of the righthand foot with insistent lines of black. There are light highlights on the lower abdomen and righthand thigh. The face has internal detail in a little brown and grey, with a highlight on his closed left eye. The blood on the forehead and right arm is executed in a bright red with a few catchlights in white.

The man up the ladder to the left is sketched mainly in greys with a ruddy flesh tint and strokes of red and brown in the semi-lit hand, and is similar in treatment to the two men leaning over the cross. To judge by a dark area to the left of

his bent left leg and back, the outline of this leg (raised higher) and of his back originally had a reserve left for it in the background that extended further out; the background has been filled in at this point with autograph retouching.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The X-ray image appears to show, at least in part, a freely brushed underpainting involving paint containing white lead. This applies especially to the body of Christ and the figures near it. Between his hanging hand and his upper legs can be seen the head of a man who was abandoned in the final execution and who was presumably meant to support Christ's body from the left. The arms of the man in yellow supporting the body from the right is interfered with by brushstrokes indicating Christ's upper legs, which may be taken to mean that the present posture of the man in yellow was not planned from the outset. Various cast shadows on the shroud do not appear to have clearcut reserves left for them.

#### *Signature*

At the bottom slightly to the left of centre, in grey-brown and a little ochre colour (<Rembrandt.f.1634>). The lower half of the 3 cannot be made out (due to wearing?). The shape of the letters and figures is stiff and wooden; the shape of the *R* differs clearly from that in authentic Rembrandt signatures, and is open on the left with the stem terminating in a curl at the bottom. Would not appear to be authentic.

#### *Varnish*

A fairly heavy and yellowed layer of varnish.

#### **4. Comments**

This painting is marked by a conspicuous variety of ways paint is handled in the various passages. As has been indicated in the description of the paint layer, it may be assumed that the differences in the lighting between the various parts of the picture has given rise to these variations, but the result is an obtrusive lack of coherence in more than one respect. Stechow<sup>1</sup> and Kuznetsov<sup>2</sup> have assumed that the artist was thinking in terms of three light sources, but even then it is hard to understand how Mary, at some distance from the two light sources in the centre, comes to be illuminated by a fairly strong, cool light (as are, to a lesser extent, the figures to either side of her) while the group in the left foreground is lit only by a soft, warm glow that can be interpreted as coming from a third, hidden source. Most of all, however, one is struck by the differences in manner of painting that occur within one and the same area – e.g. in the most strongly lit figures in the centre that are done partly with quite thick paint applied with discrete strokes and partly with much smoother paint – as well as by the differences between the various passages. A certain amount of variation in treatment is certainly in line with Rembrandt's practice of differentiating pictorial emphasis and intensity in accordance with the lighting of individual figures and passages and their dramatic importance. Here, however, the principle



Fig. 2. Detail (1:3)

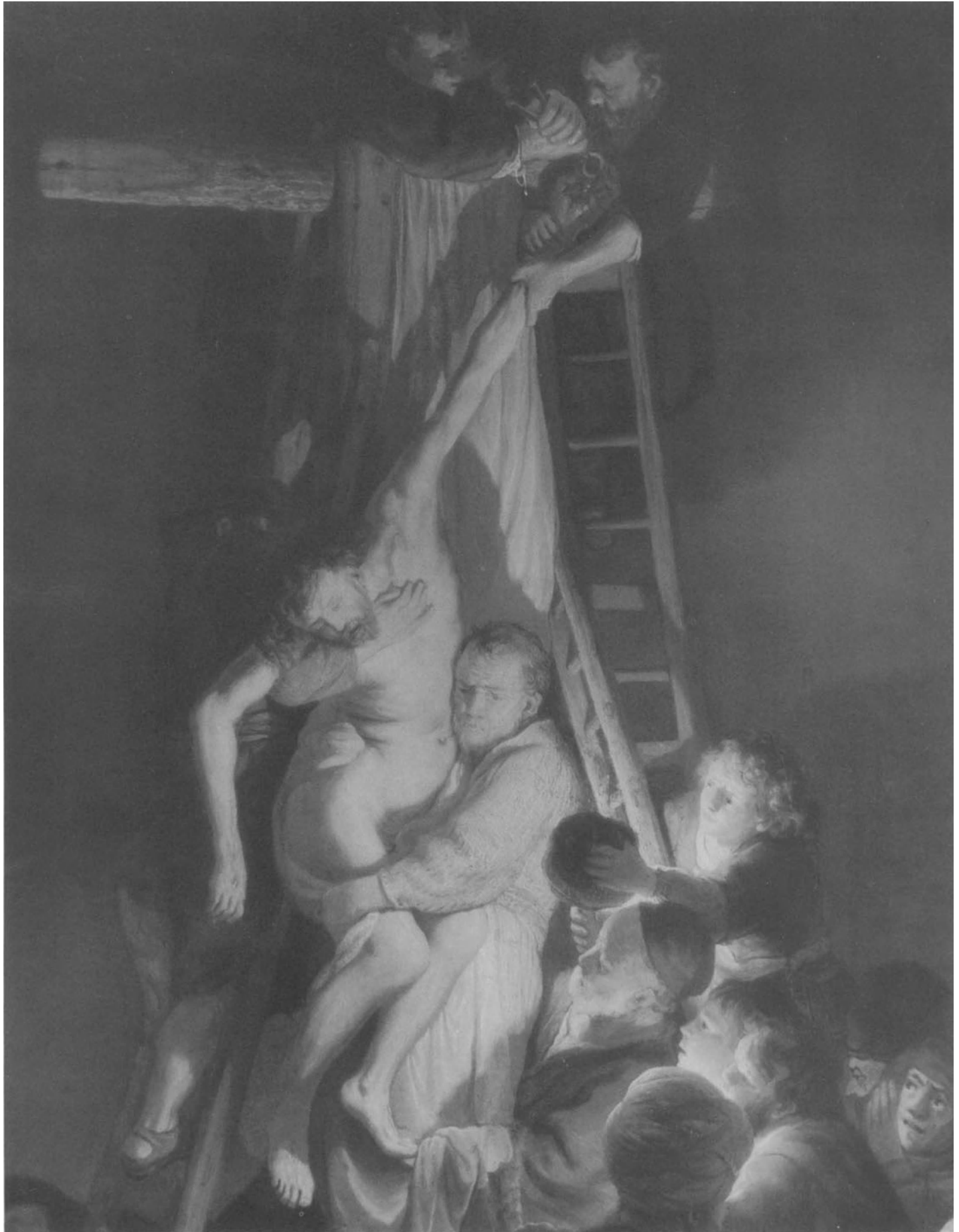


Fig. 3. X-ray



Fig. 4. Detail (1:1)

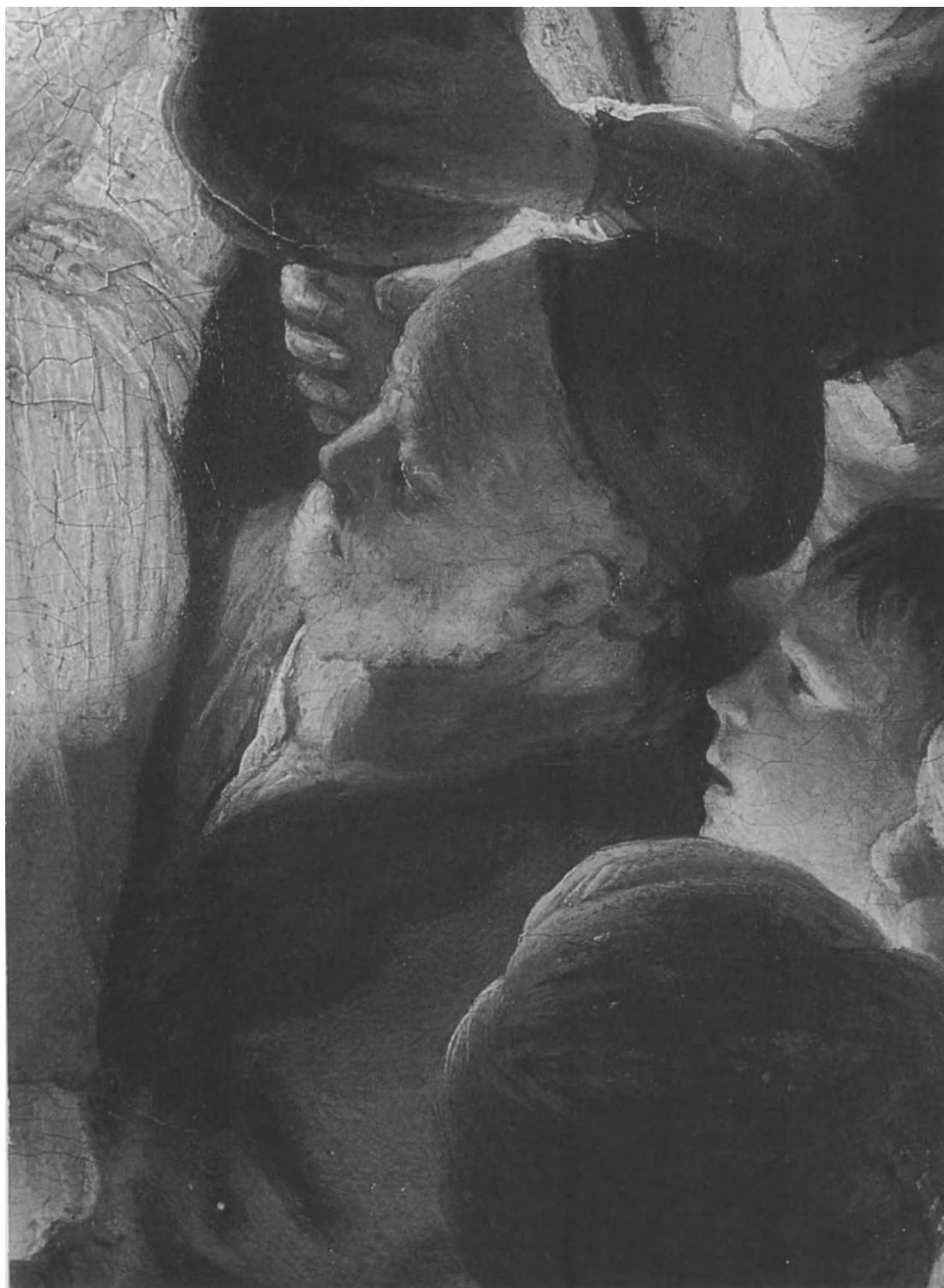


Fig. 5. Detail (1:1)



has been applied to excess and without convincing logic as to either lighting or dramatic intention. As a result the various groups of figures appear somewhat disconnected and the composition as a whole, which is overcrowded in the righthand half and in general lacking in spatial clarity, contributes only to an impression of incoherence. This makes one even wonder whether different hands may have been involved in the execution of the painting, a surmise prompted also by the differences in the rendering of form, linear rhythm and detail between the crisp and plastic definition of the figures in the centre, the sometimes sketchy but at other times quite thoroughly modelled figures towards the edge at the right, and the peculiarly stylized figures in the left foreground, which are enlivened with edges of light but are otherwise flat and, moreover, show an excess of dramatic expression bordering on the sentimental. Whether these differences can be explained by the participation of a number of hands will be discussed below; one thing is certain, however – Rembrandt solved a problem like this quite differently in 1634, the year that appears on the painting. His *Incredulity of Thomas* in Moscow from that year (no. A 90) may illustrate this aspect of his style, which may also be found in the Munich Passion Scenes. In spite of at least equally strong chiaroscuro contrasts, the gradations of light are related to one another far more convincingly, and despite the decrease in the amount of detail from the centre out towards the edges the suggestion of space and plasticity forms a continuum that also finds expression in the constant rhythm of the linear pattern. In its colour, too, the Moscow picture shows how in 1634 Rembrandt knew how to safeguard the unity of a composition by concentrating contrasting, cool colours in the lit centre, and allowing the colour to become darker and warmer towards the less brightly lit periphery. In this respect, too, no. C 49 with its variegated central area and the widely disparate colouring towards the edges, does not fit into Rembrandt's work. The picture shows, moreover a certain un-Rembrandtlike elegance in the main figures and a corresponding unfamiliar linear rhythm in their contours. At places there is a tendency towards rendering lit surfaces in smooth paint in a manner that is unknown from Rembrandt's work, and the same can be said of the facial characteristics of many of the figures. While Rembrandt, too, provided a certain amount of variation in the facial types of his protagonists, the painter of the Leningrad *Descent from the Cross* specifies the facial types of his figures to a degree that impairs the stylistic unity. Finally one may take it that the signature and date that appear on the painting are not authentic.

The almost general acceptance that this painting has enjoyed up to now was based on the (to some extent correct) belief that it is a larger and more developed version of Rembrandt's *Descent from the Cross* of 1632/33 in Munich (no. A 65). Weisbach<sup>3</sup> spoke of a 'wirkungsvoller und ergreifender' repetition, Gerson<sup>4</sup> of an 'excellent reworking of the 1633 version, wholly by Rembrandt himself', and only Benesch<sup>5</sup> called the painting 'kaum eigenhändig'. Stechow<sup>1</sup> stressed the simultaneous appearance of the two motifs of Mary seen fainting, as she does in the Munich painting in its completed state, and the outspread bier-cloth as seen in the etching that Rembrandt made after it in 1633 (B. 81) and (although this is apparent only from the X-rays and was of course unknown to Stechow) in an earlier state of the Munich painting.

In fact, the connexion between no. C 49 and the Munich painting or the corresponding etching is less direct than has been supposed up to now and hardly any closer than that between, say, Carel Fabritius' *Raising of Lazarus* in Warsaw and Rembrandt's much earlier etching of the subject (B. 73). At least one motif, the body of Christ, matches almost precisely that in the etching and, in reverse, that in the Munich painting; the man standing on the lefthand ladder corresponds closely to the man seen in a similar position in the painting and, in reverse, in the etching, and both might have been taken from either. The etching must have been the origin of the motif of spreading out the bier-cloth, though this does not take place on the right as in the etching but on the left as initially in the painting. Different from both are the illumination from presumably three hidden light sources, the group of standing figures including Mary, the figure of Joseph of Arimathea seen from the rear and a number of features such as the much larger number of figures and the positioning of the cross, which is no longer set obliquely but parallel to the picture plane. The colouring, too, differs markedly from that in the Munich painting, where the cool colours in the centre dominate the whole. Finally, the contours in no. C 49 have as mentioned before – apart from borrowed passages that still have the somewhat jerky rhythm of the figures in Rembrandt's work from 1632/33 – been given a more flowing line that is accentuated by the use of rims of light.

Notwithstanding the differences just described between the Leningrad *Descent from the Cross* and Rembrandt's work, one cannot help feeling that the former was most probably produced in the artist's immediate circle or even his studio. This idea is borne out by the observation that the canvas on which it is painted is of the same unusual type as that of the 1634 *Flora* (no. A 93), also in Leningrad



Fig. 6. Detail (1:3)





(see Introduction, Chapter II, p. 30). This fact would also seem to indicate that the two paintings were painted at approximately the same time. Both of them do in fact carry the date of 1634 and the fact that the inscription on the *Descent of the Cross* does not make an authentic impression, should not cause one to take the year it gives too lightly. It is however hard to reconcile this information with the picture's style, which would suggest a considerable later date.

The lighting using a shielded light source is of course known mainly from caravaggesque paintings; in Rembrandt it occurs only a few times, in one of his Leiden works (the Berlin *Rich man*, no. A 10) and again in the Munich *Entombment* of 1635–1639 (Br. 560) and the related sketch in Glasgow (Br. 554). In the 1640s there was some interest in Rembrandt's circle in the problems of lighting of this kind, as can be seen from the *Supper at Emmaus* of 1648 in Copenhagen (Br. 579), which was probably painted in his workshop; Rembrandt himself used a lighting effect of the sort in 1646 in his Munich *Adoration of the shepherds* (Br. 574). The colour-scheme points even more clearly to the 1640s. The light accents of red and blue scattered through the middle and the right half of the composition, and the strong yellow in the centre, remind one most of a work such as the same *Adoration of the shepherds*, and in any case would not seem to be imaginable before the 'Night watch' of 1642 (Br. 410). Similar effects of light and colour can be found in an early work by Ferdinand Bol, the Dresden *Jacob's dream*, which A. Blankert (Blankert *Bol*, p. 28, cat. no. 5) dated with a high degree of probability in 1642 and interpreted as evidence of very close contact with Gerbrandt van den Eeckhout. A link with a work tentatively associated with Bol is provided by the extensive use, in the left half of the composition, of flattish lit edges comparable to those in the *Flight into Egypt* formerly in the collection of Lord Wharton (no. C 47). A further weak pointer in the direction of Bol might perhaps be detected in a certain resemblance between the figure seen from the rear in the centre foreground (Joseph of Arimathea) and a similar figure in Bol's large canvas of *Moses with the tablets of the law* painted for the Amsterdam City Hall around 1663 (cf. H. Schneider in: *Jb. d. Pr. Kunsts.* 47, 1926, pp. 73–86; Blankert, op. cit. cat. no. 47); this latter figure is however, as Schneider remarked, borrowed with almost total fidelity from a print after Rubens' *Assumption of the Virgin Mary*, and thus cannot be regarded as an independent analogy for the figure in no. C 49. Nevertheless it is remarkable that the figure is in both cases flanked on the left by a woman in lost profile, a motif that is lacking in the Rubens print, and the fact alone that the Leningrad picture

reminds one of Bol's work in more than one respect would seem to militate against a date of 1634. Or should one, in view of the canvas type that points to that date, consider the possibility of a protracted genesis or several phases of execution?

It may be useful to revert at this point to the question, mentioned earlier, of whether different hands should be held responsible for the painting. If so, this would not only account for the considerable differences of style between various passages, but also provide an explanation for the apparent contradiction between the most likely date of 1634 for the picture's inception (as suggested by the canvas type) and many of its stylistic features that would rather seem to point to a much later date. Working from the theory that a painting was, after having been underpainted, worked up from the rear (and extreme foreground) to the front (Vol. I, pp. 25–30), one would expect the entire background, the body of Christ, the uppermost men lowering it, and the second row of figures on the right to have been executed earlier than for instance the man clad in yellow receiving Christ's body, some of his neighbours, the figure seen from the rear (Joseph of Arimathea), the swooning Virgin Mary and her bearded companion as well as the majority of the figures on the left. Is it possible to distinguish between the various painting styles described above in such a way that they coincide with what one may possibly consider different phases in the execution? In some areas such a separation of hands seems perfectly possible, especially in the righthand group (fig. 5) where the swooning Virgin and the bearded man next to her show a refinement of execution that seems incompatible with the broad treatment of the heads immediately above them, which recurs in the body of Christ and the men lowering it. The main obstacle to such an interpretation lies in the fact that in the group of figures receiving the body of Christ (figs. 2 and 4) the supposedly different manners of painting appear inextricably interwoven, and any attempt to distinguish here more than one hand results in a distribution that follows so complicated a pattern as to make a collaboration seem most unlikely and a genesis in more than one phase practically inconceivable. Even the left bottom area, where a certain roundness of the forms and the smooth application of warm-coloured paint with lit edges might well suggest the participation of a different hand, turns out on closer inspection to have enough in common with the neighbouring areas to discourage any such idea.

We are left, then, with a next-to-insoluble problem in more than one respect. For all its lack of homogeneity, the painting's execution would nevertheless seem to be due to one hand. Though one can

be fairly sure that the painter was a pupil of Rembrandt, it is impossible to identify him with any certainty. Some features are somewhat reminiscent of the early Bol, and a date around 1640 is the most likely one from the viewpoint of style. Yet as the structure of the canvas is similar to that of the 1634 *Flora* it would be logical to suppose the picture to have painted, or at least started, about that year. One might speculate that it was designed and underpainted in or about 1634 (by Rembrandt himself?) and completed only much later. One might even argue that such an early inception of the painting is likely because the 1632/33 *Descent from the Cross* now in Munich may still have been available then as a prototype, in addition to the etching B. 81. The validity of this reasoning is, however, doubtful; as has been indicated earlier, the Munich painting cannot be considered an indispensable source for the composition, and the deviations from both the painting and the corresponding etching are considerable. These deviations are concerned not only with individual motifs but also with stylistic essentials such as the relative scale of figures and their spatial relationship, the effect of depth and the distribution of light in the composition. In view of them, a dating of the lay-in around 1634 loses its probability, and then if the canvas must be thought of as having entered Rembrandt's studio about that date, the painting does not show any signs of it having been worked on before many years later.

All things considered, it seems impossible to arrive at a completely satisfactory solution that accounts for the various contradictions described above as well as for the curious fact that the painting was copied at least once in Rembrandt's studio and once by a former pupil (see 7. *Copies*, 2 and 1 respectively). The latter was Heinrich Jansen, whose presence in Rembrandt's workshop from 1645 till 1648 provides a *terminus ante quem* for the painting. It is conceivable that Rembrandt (perhaps for financial reasons?) allowed works of this kind to be described as his own work when the inventory of his possessions was drawn up in 1656 (see 5. *Documents and sources*).

It is plain from the pedigree of the painting, which can certainly be traced back to the collection of Valerius Röver snr, that it was already around 1730 looked on as a major work by Rembrandt. In Napoleonic times it did not enter the Musée Napoléon, but found a place at Malmaison, the residence of the Empress Josephine.

##### 5. Documents and sources

The 1656 inventory of Rembrandt's belongings lists: 'Een afdoeningh van 't kruijs, groot van Rembrant, met een schoone goude lijst' (A descent from the cross, large by

Fig. 7. Copy 1 by Heinrich Jansen. Sønderborg, S. Mary's Church

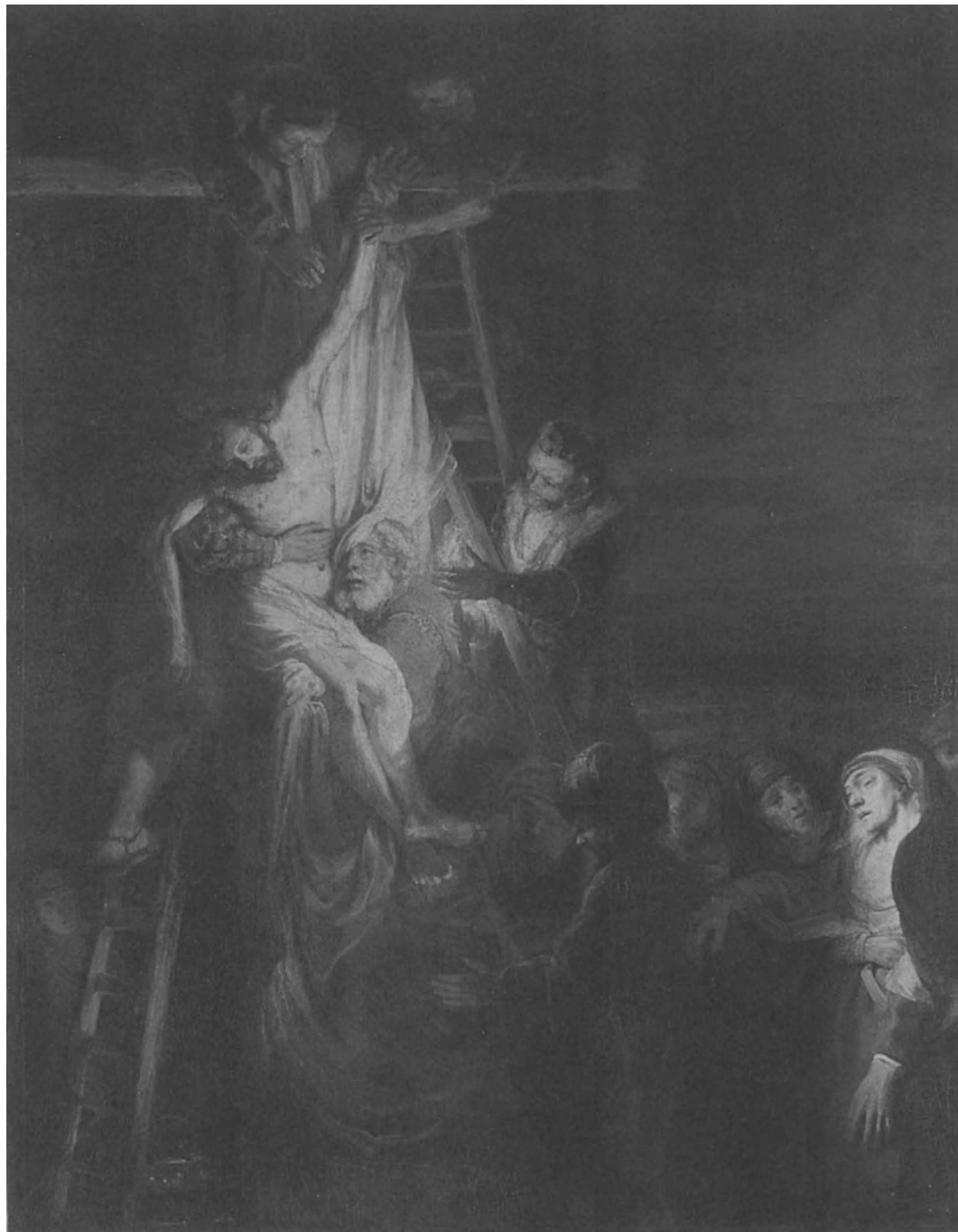


Rembrandt, in a fine gold frame) and 't Afdoeningh van 't kruijs van Rembrant' (the Descent from the cross by Rembrandt) (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12 nos. 37 and 293). It has been usual to identify the first of these with no. C 49. Though there is no real evidence for it, this supposition may perhaps be right, at least if one can assume that in 1656 Rembrandt allowed to be described as his work pieces that had been painted in his workshop as variants of autograph works. In that case, the second 'Afdoeningh van 't kruijs' could be considered for identification with the version in Washington mentioned below (see 7. *Copies*, 2). Assuming that works by pupils were already going under Rembrandt's own name during his lifetime, no. C 49 might be identical with the painting described in the inventory of the estate of the art dealer Johannes de Renialme in 1657: 'Een affdoeningh van 't Cruys door Rembrandt – f 400,-' (A. Bredius, *Kunstler-Inventare I*, The Hague 1915, p. 236 no. 301). The valuation put on it is to be sure on the high side, but lower than that of other history paintings described as Rembrandts – a *Christ and the woman taken in adultery* was valued at 1500 guilders, and a *Raising of Lazarus* at 600 guilders (ibid. p. 230 no. 291 and p. 231 no. 294). If the lastnamed painting is identical with a painting of this subject that was still in Rembrandt's possession in 1656 (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12 no. 38; cf. no. A 30), this would mean that De Renialme bought a number of pictures at a sale of Rembrandt's possessions.

While no. C 49 was in the collection of Valerius Röver, Delft, Jan Baptist Wellekens (1658–1726) mentioned the painting in a long poem 'Op de Uitmunten Kunstverzamelingen van den Edelen Heere Valerius Röver' (On the outstanding art collections of Valerius Röver, gentleman) written in 1723, published in: J. B. Wellekens, *Verscheiden Gedichten*, Amsterdam 1729, pp. 1–66, esp. 5–6:

Daar wij uw Kruisberg zien zo wonderbaar verbeelt:  
De droeve Moeder zwijmt, en elk zijn treurrol speelt.  
(There we see your [Rembrandt's] Mount Calvary so wonderfully depicted: the sorrowing mother swoons, and each plays his role in the tragedy.)

Fig. 8. Copy 2. Washington, D.C., The National Gallery of Art, Widener Collection



See, on this, S. Slive, *Rembrandt and his critics*, The Hague 1953, pp. 172–173.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

1. Epitaph for Hans Jebsen in S. Mary's Church, Sønderborg (island of Als, Denmark), by Heinrich Jansen (Flensburg, Holstein 1625–1667) (fig. 7). Judging by the photograph a faithful copy in a frame that has been adapted for the purpose. Jansen, a merchant's son from Flensburg, is known to have come from Copenhagen to Amsterdam in 1645 and to have

worked with Rembrandt for three years. An epitaph in S. Mary's, Flensburg, is signed and dated 1648; a Rembrandt-*esque* *Presentation in the Temple* in Copenhagen (inv. no. 1524 as Jacob de Wet or Aert de Gelder) has a signature and the date 1649. The Sønderborg epitaph is dated 1650. In 1651 Jansen left his homeland for Spain and Italy; after his return in 1654 his style had changed completely. See B. C. K[replin] in: *Thieme-Becker* XVIII, Leipzig 1925, pp. 396–397; Sumowski *Drawings* VI, p. 2863, and illus.; cf. our vol. III under *Christ appearing to Mary Magdalene*, Buckingham Palace (Br. 559), 7. *Copies*, and our vol. IV under the Braunschweig copy after Rembrandt's lost *Circumcision*.

2. Canvas 142 × 110.6 cm (measured along the stretcher). Washington D.C., National Gallery of Art, no. 657, Widener Collection (figs. 8 and 9); HdG 133, Br. 584, Bauch 84. Examined on 8 April 1970 (J. B., S. H. L.). The present

Fig. 9. Detail of Copy 2 (1:2)



canvas has paper stuck along all four edges. An inscription in Russian on a piece of canvas stuck to the present stretcher states that the painting was transferred from old onto new canvas by È. Sivers in S. Petersburg in 1854 (the pedigree given by Hofstede de Groot, HdG 133, mentions only English collections between 1834 and 1909). The paint surface shows, along the present edges, the marks left by an old stretcher; from this one may deduce that the painting has had its present format for some long time. There is no evidence of a radical reduction in size through which large parts of the composition might have been lost. The present composition does make a rather unbalanced and (because the foreground figures are cut off at the knees) incomplete impression. The scene is taken from no. C 49 on a slightly larger scale, with the omission of a

number of figures and changes to a few others. For instance, the youth with the torch has become a man who only partly shields the flame with his hand; the figures immediately to the left alongside and below him have become one old man (Nicodemus?) whose clothing differs in its colour (a flat red) from the light yellow of the man in no. C 49; the way the body of Christ is supported by this man and by the one to the left on the ladder has been somewhat altered. The turbaned man seen from behind (Joseph of Arimathea) has been considerably changed – he is placed further back (behind Mary's hand) and is seen more in profile. In the sky, stripes of red-brown against a dark grey show that it is evening.

The condition of the paint leaves much to be desired. As was confirmed under ultraviolet light, there are numerous over-

paintings spread over the background and along various figures, as well as, for example, in the faces of the man with the torch and the woman to the left of Mary, and in considerable parts of the man with the turban. Yet the poor state is not responsible alone for the coarseness that marks the execution in general. Accents of light and shade are set down with rudimentary strokes of the brush (in the figure of Christ, for instance, and especially in his feet), and in general the rather impasto handling of paint does not result in a form of convincing plasticity either in the figures or in, for example, the shroud and ladders. The lack of skill in both painting and the use of a compositional motif is demonstrated clearly by the man with the turban (Joseph of Arimathea). The remnants of a signature (*Remb.*) that can be read with difficulty close to the bottom below the hanging shroud, offer such a clumsy script that there can be no claim to authenticity.

The painting was long looked upon as an autograph work by Rembrandt, as late as by Bauch in 1966 (Bauch 84). Gerson was the first not to see Rembrandt's hand in it (Br.-Gerson 584); he regarded 'the execution of this painting as very definitely by a pupil', and pointed out that the technique is based on that of Rembrandt in the 1650s. This author was thinking of a pupil such as B. Fabritius or S. van Hoogstraaten. The Washington painting is indeed certainly not by Rembrandt, but it may very well have been produced in his circle. In its execution and similarity to the Leningrad version it reminds one of free copies in Rembrandt's style of the 1650s after earlier compositions, like that in Dresden (cat. no. 1566) after Rembrandt's Munich *Entombment* completed in 1639 (Br. 560). The Dresden painting carries a Rembrandt signature (certainly not autograph) and the date 1653; the latter could well be a sound indicator. If one assumes that Rembrandt did allow such variants done by pupils to be included in the 1656 inventory of his belongings as being his own work, then it is possible that two paintings of the *Descent from the Cross* mentioned in it relate to the Leningrad and Washington versions (cf. 5. *Documents and sources*).

## 8. Provenance

– In 1709 allocated, from the possessions of Valerius Röver snr (d. 1693) to Mathijs and Valerius Röver, and after the death of the former in 1725 described by the latter in 1730 in the following words: '1. een zeer capitaal en konstig stuk van Rembrandt van Rhijn, het allerbeste, dat van hem is bekend, verbeeldende de afneming van het kruijs, getaxeerd op –f 800: – hoog 5 voeten, breed 3 voet 8 duim [= 157 × 115.1 cm]. N.B. Voor dit stuk is mij Ao 1710 door de Churfurst van de Phaltz geboden duizent gouden ducaten; als mede door de prince Eugenius [van Savoye], naderhand door de Grave van Morville Ambassadeur van Vrankrijk, etc. Ao. 1730. een nieuwe vergulde lijst en gordijnen voor laten maken f 47:–' (1. A most capital and artful piece by Rembrandt van Rhijn, the very best that is known by him, depicting the descent from the cross, valued at –f 800 . . . NB: In the year 1710 I was offered by the Elector Palatine one thousand gold ducats for this piece; also by the Prince Eugene [of Savoy], more lately by the Count of Morville Ambassador of France, etc. In 1730 I had a new gilt frame and curtains made for it f 47.-); Amsterdam, Universiteitsbibliotheek no. UB II A 18. (E. W. Moes in: *O.H.* 31, 1913, p. 16, cf. *ibid.*, p. 7).

– Following the death of Valerius Röver in Delft in 1739, sold by his widow Cornelia van der Dussen in 1750 to Wilhelm VIII, Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel; in the *Haupt-Catalogus* begun in 1749 it is described on p. 53 under the heading 'Cabinet v. Delft' as: '554. Rembrant (van Rhyn) die Abneh-

mung Christi vom Creuz [height] 5 Schuh [width] 3 Schuh 8 Zoll [= 156.9 × 115 cm]'.<sup>1</sup>

– Brought to France in 1806 and presented by Napoleon to the Empress Josephine, Malmaison.

– Bought from the Empress Josephine in 1814 by Czar Alexander I<sup>6</sup>.

## 9. Summary

Although based, in respect of various motifs, on Rembrandt's *Descent from the Cross* of 1632/33 (no. A 65) and on the etching done by him after this in 1633, no. C 49 must because of its style be looked on as by a different hand. It appears to have been produced in Rembrandt's studio, presumably in the early 1640s although the exceptional type of canvas used recurs in a work of 1634 and therefore would suggest an earlier date. The lack of homogeneity in the execution tempts one to think of participation by more than one hand but an attribution to a single pupil (who remains to be identified) is more likely. In the 1650s another version of the composition was produced in Rembrandt's studio.

## REFERENCES

- 1 W. Stechow, 'Rembrandts Darstellungen der Kreuzabnahme', *Jb. d. Pr. Kunsts.* 50 (1929), pp. 217–232, esp. 223–224.
- 2 Yu. Kuznetsov in: *Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn. Paintings in Soviet Museums*, Leningrad [c. 1971], no. 9.
- 3 W. Weisbach, *Rembrandt*, Berlin-Leipzig 1926, p. 133.
- 4 Gerson 66; Br.-Gerson 551.
- 5 O. Benesch, *Rembrandt. Werk und Forschung*, Vienna 1935, p. 13.
- 6 V. Loewinson-Lessing in: *Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn. Paintings in Soviet Museums*, Leningrad [c. 1971], p. 9.



## C50 Bust of a bearded man (John the Baptist?)

LOS ANGELES, CAL., LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART, NO. A 47.29.12

HDG 171; BR. 608; BAUCH 140; GERSON 102

### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved painting that was probably painted in the mid 1630s in Rembrandt's immediate circle.

### 2. Description of subject

The figure is seen slightly askew, almost down to the waist, with the body turned three-quarters right and the righthand shoulder higher than that on the left; the bearded face is tilted slightly forward, and the man looks at the viewer. He wears a dark brown cloak over a greyish undergarment. The light falls from the left, and a shadow is cast on the rear wall to the right.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 2 November 1971 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good artificial light and out of the frame, with the aid of two X-ray films covering practically the whole painting; prints of the montage and the head were received later, together with a colour transparency taken after cleaning in 1982.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Panel, probably oak, grain vertical, oval 65.6 × 48.9 cm. Single plank. Back planed and cradled; since the original back of the panel can consequently no longer be examined, there is no evidence to suggest whether the present oval format is original or not.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Yellow-brown, visible within individual brushstrokes in the translucent paint of the background, beard and clothing.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good. Craquelure: there is a fine craquelure in the translucent brown areas, especially on the shoulder on the left and in the moustache and beard. In the more thickly applied brown paint there are small shrinkage cracks. No cracks were seen in the flesh colours, even in the thickly painted passages. DESCRIPTION: The background is painted thinly, with broad and quite coarse strokes; especially at the top the underpainting, in a dark translucent brown, is exposed. A cloudy cool grey, that becomes thicker lower down, is applied with broad brushstrokes around the figure and in the whole of the right-hand half. The cast shadow on the right is placed over the grey paint of the background, in a semi-opaque brown. On top of this there was (prior to cleaning carried out in 1982) a cross drawn with thin brushstrokes, the forms filled in mainly with hatching strokes in an ochre and grey-brown paint.

The lit part of the face forms an island of opaque and impasto flesh tints, with brushwork that can be followed everywhere, bordered by a zone of transition to the shadow. The brushstrokes vary in direction, sometimes following the form and, at the edge of the beard and hair, following the lie of the hairs; in the highest lights the strokes are short and restless, resulting in somewhat confused areas on the highest light. The iris and pupil of the eye on the left are done in a quite thin and translucent brown, except in the shadow of the upper lid where the paint is applied quite thickly and opaquely. Opposite the off-white catchlight at the upper left the iris is a

red-brown with, on top of this, a touch of light yellow-brown. The borders between the iris and the white of the eye – which is almost white to the left and a cool grey to the right – are not sharply drawn. The border between the eye and the light pink edge of the lower eyelid is formed by a line of orange that merges via pink into the red of the corner of the eye. This merges downwards, without any clear margin, into the shadows of the eye-pouch which consists of thick paint in various tints of red, red-brown and dark brown. The upper lid is indicated by two long lines of dull dark brown that meet above the pupil. A firm stroke of light flesh colour above the eye contrasts sharply with the shadow tints to the right, which are painted wet-in-wet with strokes of a warm brown. The heavy eyebrow above this seems to lie one level lower than the surrounding layers of paint, and comprises a partly translucent dark grey over which are set strokes of grey and cool flesh tints. To the left these are placed on top of the flesh tone of the forehead. From the start of the eyebrow, above the nose, there is a stroke of greyish flesh colour that curves upwards and represents a wrinkle in the forehead. The eye on the right is built up from strokes of brown, some of which are thick and opaque while others are translucent; the contours are unsharp. The catchlight in the dull brown iris at the upper left is a tiny spot of off-white, opposite two touches of a grey-brown. The corner of the eye to the left consists of a random stroke of a madder lake-like red, while the white of the eye is a stroke of orangish paint. This orangish paint has been used by the corner of the eye to the right, too, as well as on the cheekbone where it is mixed with grey, the colour used along the lower border of the eye.

In the forehead, at the line of transition to the shadow side, the impasto flesh tint is cloudy and merges into a zone of very thin and translucent light brown paint that on one side continues into the hairline and on the other forms the transition to the grey-brown of the shadow. This area, which has a turbid appearance, continues downwards in an alternation of cooler and warmer tints. The cast shadow of the nose is in a pronounced warm brown and, along the nose contour, almost red.

The lit part of the nose is painted with strokes running in quite arbitrary directions. The white catchlight on the tip of the nose is an impasto, though the surrounding flesh colour is applied just as thickly. Below this the shadow is shown in a dull grey. The edge of the nostril and the lower edge of the wing of the nose are set down with rapid strokes of a light, madder-lake red, done wet-in-wet with a stroke of black that renders the cavity of the nostril. The lit area of the cheek is done with distinct brushstrokes in reddish and yellowish tints; at the transition to the beard and moustache grey tints are used wet-in-wet with the grey-brown of the hair. Below the nose, where the moustache divides into two, the paint is a translucent brown, and a few strokes of black are used. The upper lip consists of a few strokes of an opaque, subdued red-brown, and the lower lip of various tints of pink and red with light and dark strokes suggesting the tiny wrinkles. The lit part of the neck is done with long strokes of flesh colour, parallel to the edge of the cloak, with a long stroke of white applied wet-in-wet with the brown of the latter. In the shadow, strokes of an undifferentiated brown produce an area that lacks any suggestion of form or rendering of material.

The hair and clothing are, broadly, uniform in treatment and paint; which is a translucent dark brown, scratched open with strokes of the brush, to which the beginnings of a modelling have been applied. Almost everywhere this dark brown has remained visible in the shadow passages, and it is covered with a deep black only in the very darkest shadows while on the highest lights on folds in the cloak a semi-opaque



Fig. 1. Panel 65.6 × 48.9 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray

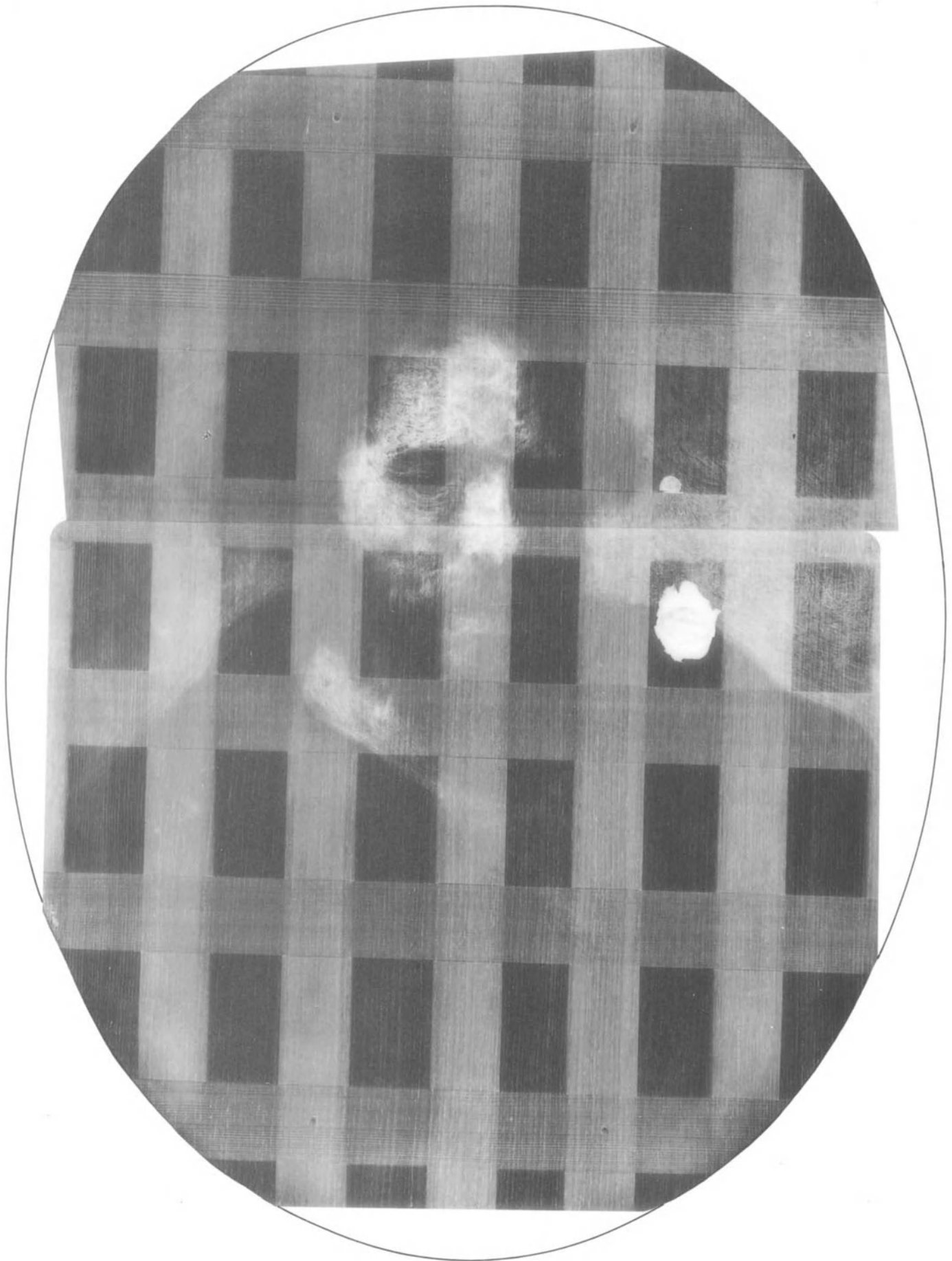
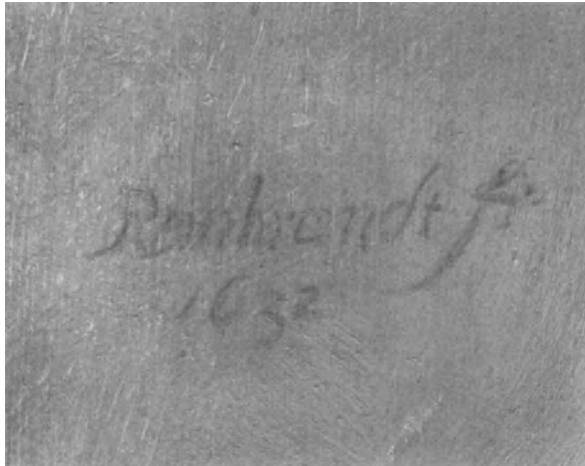


Fig. 3. Infrared photograph (before cleaning)



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1)



ochrish brown has been placed on top of it. The contours run, to right and left, in lazy curves; to the left the paint of the cloak moreover lies, in indecisive smears, slightly over the paint of the background, so that the contour is unclearly defined. In the hair the light parts of the curls have a slightly translucent ochrish grey, and the beard also has some ochrish yellow and red-brown with sheens of light. The curls of the hair and beard lie over the background and flesh areas. The undergarment is in a wholly flat, semi-opaque grey paint, placed on top of the brown underlayer.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The lit part of the face shows, in a more pronounced form, the brushwork that is also seen at the surface. In the right background an area containing white lead runs through where the shadow lies, from which it may be concluded that the cast shadow has been placed on top of the paint of the background. Otherwise the radiographic image offers no appreciable differences from the paint surface.

#### *Signature*

In the left background in light brown paint, running slightly upwards (<Rembrandt ft / 1632>). The script is very hesitant, and almost all the letters differ in their form from those of authentic Rembrandt signatures. The signature cannot therefore be looked on as authentic. The use of his first name spelt out in full is also most unusual in authentic signatures from 1632; there is thus no reason to suspect that the inscription, though not by Rembrandt himself, might have been appended by a workshop assistant under his supervision (see Introduction, Chapter V, p. 106), and thus show the correct date.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

Taken generally, the manner of painting does, in the combination of broadly-brushed browns and lightly-covering greys (the former belonging partly to the underpainting), and in the almost universally free brushwork, give the painting a Rembrandtesque appearance. It differs however on a number of points – in composition, but particularly in render-

ing of form and handling of paint – so much from Rembrandt's work that an attribution to him must be seen as out of the question.

Where composition is concerned the awkward impression one gets is perhaps misleading. So long as it is uncertain whether the panel still has its original shape, a judgment on the placing of the figure in the picture frame must be postponed. The placing in the presentday oval is, at all events, different from that usual with Rembrandt. The pose of the figure is surprising, with one shoulder low on the left and the other high on the right; yet it is not impossible that this could be explained in a perhaps somewhat larger composition. A further uncertainty has to do with the cast shadow on the right, and whether this is original or not. There is no reserve left for it in the grey paint of the background, and it is painted on top of the latter – something that does occur in Rembrandt in 1632 and 1633 (cf. nos. A 53, A 57, A 71 and A 72) – though not in an entirely homogeneous manner. It would not be surprising if this passage had been added later by a different hand, especially since there is no trace at all of the wet-in-wet manner of painting repeatedly encountered elsewhere in the work, and since an (admittedly partial) copy does not show the cast shadow at the relevant place (cf. 7. *Copies*, 1).

The most solid objections to a Rembrandt attribution lie in the way paint is handled. The impasto in the highest lights in the head with clearly visible brushwork that can also be seen in the X-rays does not result in a homogeneous suggestion of plastic form. On the forehead the transition to the shadow, and the shadow areas themselves, range from turbid to opaque, and lack the formal clarity and translucent consistency that such passages offer in Rembrandt's paintings on panel. The treatment of the eyes is highly untypical; the brushstroke here matches the form less than we are used to seeing in Rembrandt, the transition from light to shade above the lefthand eye is, like that along the ridge of the nose, remarkably abrupt, and the use of orange and various kinds of red alongside browns is unknown to us from any autograph Rembrandt work. The handling of the hair, beard and cloak, done in broadly brushed paint that does not cover fully – it has almost the character of an underpainting though, as it is along the edge placed on top of the paint of the background, it cannot be seen as such – with an indication of the lights in semi-opaque paint, brings to mind the Paris *Self-portrait* of 1633 (no. A 71); but here it is used far less effectively. The neck and the areas of shadow below and to the right of the beard are marked not only by a lack of sensitivity but also by a lack of formal clarity that is unimaginable in Rembrandt to such a

degree. The rendering of form is especially disquieting in the clothing: though it is still conceivable that in the undergarment in the shadow areas of the cloak Rembrandt would have paid so little attention to the suggestion of form and material, this leaves much to be desired even in the lit areas. Particularly strange are the contours lacking in suggestive power, with the lefthand one, vaguely indicated, contributing neither to plasticity nor to the suggestion of any specific material. One does not find a treatment of contours like this in Rembrandt's work from the early 1630s, and it seems incompatible with the importance that – to judge from his meticulousness on this point – he attached to it.

Though Rembrandt's authorship can be ruled out, it does – because of the general character of the execution – seem probable that the painting was done under his influence and in his immediate circle, in the mid 1630s and in connexion with works such as his self-portraits from 1633 and 1634 (the spurious inscription with the date of 1632 does not provide reliable evidence; see *Signature*). So far there are no other works that can be attributed to the hand responsible for this painting, for whom an almost exaggerated rhythm in the brushwork, a liking for rather abrupt chiaroscuro and a pronounced colour accent in the eyes seem to be characteristic. An attribution to Govaert Flinck, put forward by the museum, does not convince; Flinck's comparable works on panel do, it is true, exhibit in particular a fairly free brushwork, but this has more subtlety in the modelling, and the overall effect has greater atmospheric quality.

It is not entirely clear what the picture represents. Up to 1982 there was in the right background, partly coinciding with the cast shadow of the figure, a rather clumsy indication of a cross that identified the man as John the Baptist. This cross 'was put on at a very early date, probably in the 18th century' (letter dated 25 August 1983 from Mr Scott Schaefer, curator of European Paintings); it disappeared during cleaning in 1982, removing what had been the major reason for accepting the interpretation generally accepted up till then. Yet it is doubtful that the man depicted has to be regarded as anonymous, and the painting seen as a mere *tronie*; *tronies* as a rule show very young or very old men and women – partly in connexion with the idea of 'vanitas' that is usually more or less plainly present – and the man shown here in his prime does, with his hair style and broad cloak, make a strong impression of being intended as a biblical figure; he could be an apostle or, perhaps the most likely, have been meant from the start as John the Baptist. It is not inconceivable that the cross present up to 1982

substituted for an attribute of John that was lost during a possible reduction of the panel (see above). Already in 1654 and 1703 there were mentions of pictures of John the Baptist by Rembrandt (see 5. *Documents and sources*), though one cannot tell whether these relate to this painting.

## 5. Documents and sources

It is impossible to say whether either of the following mentions refers to no. C 50:

- In the inventory of the bankrupt Amsterdam lawyer Jan Ingels there is in 1654, in the entrance hall, the entry 'Een St. Jan van Rembrandt' (Strauss *Doc.*, 1654/1).
- On 17 May 1703 there was in the possession of Hyacinthe Rigaud 'De Raimbran . . . Un chef de saint Jean', valued at 100 livres (HdG *Urk.*, no. 387).

## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

1. Panel 47 × 36 cm. Partial copy showing the head and part of the chest, without the cast shadow. Whereabouts unknown (photo Schweizerisches Institut für Kunstwissenschaft, Zurich, arch. no. 3196).

## 8. Provenance<sup>1</sup>

- Coll. Lord Palmerston, Broadlands.
- Coll. Lord Mount Temple, Broadlands.
- Dealer Ch. Sedelmeyer, Paris (*Catalogue of 300 paintings*, Paris 1890, no. 118).
- Coll. Charles Stewart Smith, New York.
- Coll. Marion Davies, Los Angeles.
- Gift to the museum by Hearst Magazines, Inc. in 1947.

## 9. Summary

In assessing the painting allowance has to be made for the possibility that the panel was not originally oval, and that the cast shadow to the right is an addition by a later hand. Without this component no. C 50 shows, in its general appearance such as the handling of light and the use of bold brushstrokes that leave the ground visible, a similarity to a free way of working that one finds in Rembrandt's work from around 1633/34. In this instance, however, Rembrandt's manner has been applied with little sensitivity and not entirely effectively. The slack contours, the abrupt transitions between light and shade, and the use of colour in the eyes and nose differ so much from work by Rembrandt that the painting cannot be attributed to him. It must have been done under his influence and in his immediate circle around the middle of the 1630s, by a painter unknown from other works.

Because a cross in the right background has disappeared during cleaning it has become uncertain

whether the painting depicts John the Baptist, as had always been assumed until then; it is however possible that such was always the intention.

## REFERENCES

- 1 *A catalogue of Flemish, German, Dutch and English paintings XV–XVIII century*, Los Angeles County Museum, Los Angeles 1954, no. 46.



## C51 An old man in an interior with winding staircase

PARIS, MUSÉE DU LOUVRE, INV. NO. 1740

HDG 233; BR. 431; BAUCH 156; GERSON 91

Fig. 1. Panel 28.2 × 34.4 cm



### 1. Summarized opinion

An apparently well preserved painting from Rembrandt's circle or workshop, possibly dating from 1632 or else from the late 1630s.

### 2. Description of subject

This description includes motifs that today can no longer be seen (because of the thick layer of varnish) but are visible in 18th-century reproductions (cf. fig. 6).

An old man sits at the further side of a large room near an arched window with the light streaming in from the left. The rear part has a wood ceiling that meets a groined vault half-way up; the part to the front, shrouded in darkness, has a groined vault, stone flags, an arched door on the left and a fireplace on the right. The man sits beside a table with books,

and holds his hands folded together in his lap. At the near end of the table an empty folding chair stands in the darkness. To the right of him a cellar door is set in the rear wall, with a round basket hanging above it. Alongside this, a winding wooden staircase leads upwards; halfway up this staircase is a door, in front of which a slightly bowed figure of a woman stands with a kettle or basket in her left hand. Alongside her a sheet of paper, with illegible writing, hangs on the wall. To the extreme right in the foreground a woman with a pair of tongs in her right hand bends over a fire, lit by its glow; with her left hand she pulls towards her a kettle hanging on a chain above the fire. To the left of her, in the foreground, stands a small stool with a dish on top of it, and beneath it a bucket (?) on which rests a sieve, and a stool with a cushion. Pots and pans stand and hang to the side of the fireplace and against the closed-in banister of the staircase. A flat-bellied bottle stands on the crossbar of the window, and a bag hangs at the bottom of the stairs.

Fig. 2. X-ray



### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in October 1968 (S. H. L., E. v. d. W.) in daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of an X-ray film covering the whole of the painting; a copyfilm of this and an infrared photograph were received later.

#### *Support*

**DESCRIPTION:** Oak panel, grain horizontal,  $28.2 (\pm 0.1) \times 34.4$  cm. Single plank. The back shows coarse plane-marks, and irregular and vague bevelling along the four sides. There are woodworm holes along the crumbling top edge, where the sapwood obviously begins.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** Dendrochronology examination did not lead to a dating (letter of 5 March 1981 from Prof. Dr J. Bauch, Hamburg).

#### *Ground*

**CONDITION:** A yellowish colour shows through in the masonry arch above the cellar door, and in the basket hanging above it.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** None.

#### *Paint layer*

**CONDITION:** Good, so far as can be judged through the heavy layer of varnish, which makes the dark passages in particular virtually illegible. Craquelure: very fine, regular horizontal and vertical cracks in the light paint of the window area.

**DESCRIPTION:** The deepest shadows, executed in quite thin and very dark paint (and not clearly readable due to the thick layer of varnish), contrast with the generally rather opaque greys, the mostly thin browns used for the remainder of the interior, the strong white of the window on the left, and the impasto yellow (with a little orange) used for the fire on the right. The staircase is done in thin greys, with taut lines of

Fig. 3. Infrared photograph



brown drawn with the brush to represent the shadows of the treads. The wooden door to the cellar has vertical brushstrokes in thin and not entirely opaque browns and dark grey to indicate the joints between the planks; the masonry arch is shown in a little translucent grey, the lit floor in an opaque light grey, and the stone flags in the foreground in darker and more opaque grey with dark grey for the gaps between them. The rear wall is executed for the most part with small strokes of thin grey, but to the left of the figure there are a few irregular strokes of a thicker, lighter grey. The impasto off-white used for the window is set down mostly in strokes running horizontally and vertically. The tablecloth is done, in the light, in a pale blue, while a shawl (?) hanging down from the table is in a stronger blue. The old man is sketched with fine strokes in browns of varying translucency, placed over a brown that shows through, with a little grey-white in the hair and beard and dark dots for the eyes. The still-life motifs near the fire are done in a thin and translucent dark brown, with a few very

fine streaks showing a sheen of light in an ochre colour that recurs in the drawing of the fireplace.

The infrared photograph (fig. 3) clearly shows the distinction between opaque and less or more translucent passages, and, in the latter, the brushwork that provides a little more detail than is visible under natural light.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

Besides the most radioabsorbent areas that show up clearly – the window, the adjoining wall, the top of the table with its books, and the fire – one notices the greys of the brickwork arch above the cellar door, the less well-lit part of the rear wall, the floor, the staircase, the hanging part of the tablecloth and the figure of the old man as being less clearcut though clearly recognizable. The figure of the old man can be seen to have been painted partly out over the edges of a reserve, in the grey of the rear wall, that was too narrow for it.

Fig. 4. Detail (1:1)



The flagged floor to the front of the picture, in fairly dark but relatively thick paint, appears lighter than the paint of the floor further to the back. The three-legged stool to the right of centre (beside the old woman at the hearth) is just visible as a dark reserve.

Wax seals, the remains of adhesive from stuck-on labels, and the light paint of a stencilled inscription (M.R. No. 946) on the back, interfere with the radiographic image.

#### Signature

A signature at the bottom left mentioned by Vosmaer<sup>1</sup> as 'R. van Rijn 1633', read by Hofstede de Groot<sup>2</sup> as 'RHL van Ryn 1633' and of which Gerson<sup>3</sup> 'after careful examination . . . could decipher the last digit only as a one or two' could not be found by us. Foucart<sup>4</sup> reports, however, that 'un attentif et récent examen à la loupe (1979) prouve sans conteste qu'il s'agit de 1632'.

#### Varnish

A heavy layer of discoloured varnish hampers observation to a substantial degree, especially in the darkest passages.

#### 4. Comments

This little painting displays all the hallmarks of a 17th-century work and, more particularly, of one that shows similarities to Rembrandt's work. It is for the most part painted thinly over a light ground, and only the most strongly lit areas show some degree of impasto. The general approach to chiaroscuro, especially the way the staircase on the right disappears into the gloom (although according to an 18th-century print there must be a great deal more detail in the painting than can be seen in its present state), is unimaginable without the example set by Rembrandt. The treatment of the floor and wall is closely akin to what can be seen in the *Christian scholar*, probably from 1631, that survives as a copy in Stockholm (no. C 17); the interpret-

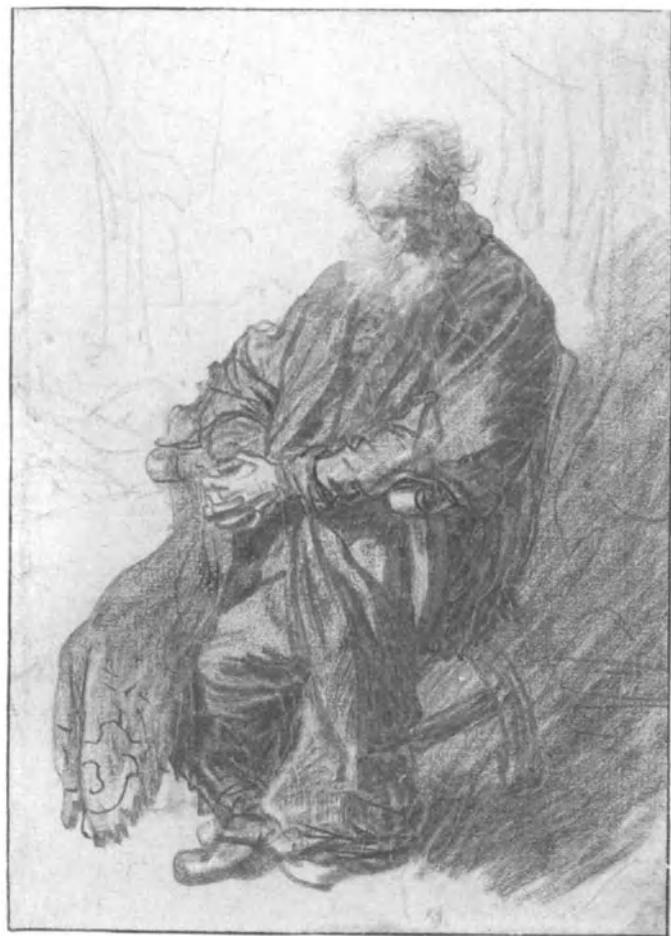
ation of the subject, too – an old man in a vaulted room with a high, arched window – is strongly reminiscent of that picture. Furthermore, the figure of the old man is a much reduced version of a red chalk drawing by Rembrandt in Berlin (Ben. 41; our fig. 5).

Yet there are serious objections to the Rembrandt attribution, which has never been doubted in the literature. The execution is, overall, skilful but nowhere, not even (in contrast to Rembrandt's habits) in the figures, is there strongly characterized form. The mostly fine brushstrokes, predominantly in greys and browns, are used to sketch in a way that one might well imagine in Rembrandt in background areas, but not maintained throughout the painting and right into the lit passages. In the (still-visible) figures this treatment leads to a sketchy rendering that is approximative and never has a clear character (this is all the more striking when compared with Rembrandt's drawn figure study); as a result the figures almost merge into their surrounding in a way that is atypical of Rembrandt. Because of this, and because of the almost monochrome nature of the painting, the surroundings (in which the still-life motifs show a relative firmness of modelling) dominate the scene. The fact that, as Slive<sup>5</sup> has convincingly shown, an engraving by Hans Vredeman de Vries published in Leiden in 1604 has been used for the spiral staircase admittedly does not in itself rule out Rembrandt's authorship; but in view of the absence of any similar borrowings this would be surprising.

This is not to say that there is no connexion between Rembrandt's work and the Paris painting. The similarities mentioned above are evidence that one does exist. There is no reason to think of it as a copy; it is rather a work from his immediate circle, or even his own workshop, in which one could point to the use – in however summary and simplified a way – of a drawing by him. (Here it must be commented that such drawings, where they have been used for paintings, have mostly been lost, whereas most of those that have survived have not been used for paintings; the Berlin drawing in question here, Ben. 41, was indented for a purpose unknown.) The painting was already passing as a work by Rembrandt in the 17th century (see 8. *Provenance*) and was always considered as such except when it was attributed to Dou in 1816<sup>4</sup>.

If no. C 51 is a work from Rembrandt's circle or from his studio, one then has to ask how it ties up with his work, and how it should be dated. The date always read previously as 1633, as 1631 or 1632 by Gerson<sup>3</sup> and 1632 by Foucart<sup>4</sup>, need not be looked on as binding. Yet it is possible that it was applied by the studio assistant who executed the painting

Fig. 5. Rembrandt, Study in red chalk (Ben. 41, reduced). Berlin (West), Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Kupferstichkabinett



and it may, therefore, provide reliable information. At first sight the date of 1632 is plausible enough, in particular because of the resemblance, already mentioned, to the Stockholm *Christian scholar*, the original of which was probably painted in 1631 and with which no. C 51 has much in common. The use of the Berlin drawing (Ben. 41), which can be dated around 1630, also points to a fairly early date. On closer examination, however, doubts begin to emerge. In the first place, the almost monochrome and overall broad and sketchlike manner of painting differs greatly not only from that of Rembrandt himself, but also from that of artists whom we know to have been under his influence in the early 1630s. The same can be said for the approach underlying this manner of painting, in which the interior, developed widthwise, very definitely dominates the figures – figures that are unrelated one to the other, and all three of which are, though placed at varying distances, of more or less the same size. Thinking in general terms, one would most readily put this little painting in the years in which the tonalistic peasant interior and landscape (by such artists as Van Ostade and Van Goyen) had reached their full development – closer to 1640 than 1630. And Rembrandt's work does offer some support for this later dating. First, Rembrandt himself was making

use of earlier model studies during the later 1630s – in the etching of *Joseph relating his dreams* dated 1638 (B. 37) he made use of a red chalk drawing of an old man (Ben. 20), which is dated 1631 and was at all events produced in Leiden. The motif of the spiral staircase occurs in a number of works by him or perhaps rather from his studio. It appears (in a slightly different form from that seen in no. C 51) perhaps for the first time in a lost work showing *Tobias healing his father*, of which a painting (of 1636?) in Stuttgart is probably a variant (Br. 502). An interior somewhat similar to that of no. C 51 occurs in the *Parable of the labourers in the vineyard* of 1637 in Leningrad (Br. 558), where there is no winding staircase but where the manner of painting – though more rich in detail – shows a great resemblance in its extremely limited range of colour. The spiral staircase appears again (this time very similar to that in no. C 51) in the etching of *S. Jerome in a dark chamber* (B. 105), which even dates from 1642. Yet even if one thinks of a date around 1640, it is not really possible to relate the approach and style of painting in no. C 51 to what we know of the early work of pupils from those years; so there is no clinching argument for an assumption of this kind. A drawing in Copenhagen, attributed to Rembrandt and showing a spiral staircase (Ben. 392), cited in this connexion by Slive<sup>5</sup> sheds little light – the similarity to the Paris painting is only a very general one, and neither the attribution nor the date are other than approximate. For the time being it is impossible to arrive at a firm conclusion as to a date for no. C 51; it may be thought to be either 1632 or in the late 1630s.

It is of interest, too, to wonder about the meaning of the picture. The earliest mention that refers with some probability to no. C 51 dates from 1673 and speaks of 'een wenteltrappeken met een oudt manneken sittende op eenen stoel' (a spiral staircase with an old man sitting in a chair) (see 8. *Provenance*). This description gives the impression that for the following generation – and perhaps for that of the artist as well – the picture was seen as a study in perspective, in which the winding staircase formed the main subject – which is entirely in keeping with the source Slive indicates for this component. By 1738 this notion had been lost, and the picture was said to show 'Tobias, ende eenen draeyenden trap' (Tobias, and a winding stair), which is certainly incorrect since there are two women in the picture and there is no specific motif from the story of Tobias. In the later part of the 18th century the painting enjoyed a great reputation in France as '*Le philosophe en contemplation*' and it helped to determine the image of Rembrandt's work to an unwarranted extent.



Figs. 6 and 7. Engravings by P. L. Surugue, 1754, after no. C 51 and its purported companion-piece



If no. C 51 can in fact be interpreted as primarily a demonstration of skill in perspective, combined with an atmospheric chiaroscuro that can be termed Rembrandtesque, then it has to be seen as a derivative – modified in this direction – of Rembrandt's *Christian scholar* (no. C 17). The iconographic significance that painting can still be assumed to have – appearing from an altar with a crucifix – has in this derivative been abandoned entirely in favour of spatial effect as an objective in its own right – a purpose that in the 17th century Netherlands is repeatedly described as such (e.g. in descriptions of paintings in 17th-century inventories as a 'perspective painting of . . . ' or 'a perspective of . . .').

The later history of the painting calls for comment on two further points. First, it was, sometime after 1738 and before 1759, given a companion-piece – '*Le philosophe en méditation*' (HdG 234; reproduced in: W. R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt*, Stuttgart–Berlin 1909 Kl. d. K., p. 111) – that for a long while passed as a work by Rembrandt but was not included by Bredius in his book in 1936, and was 'without doubt' attributed by Gerson<sup>3</sup> to Salomon Koninck. The painting must however be regarded as a typical fabrication of inferior quality that reproduces most of the features of no. C 51, in reverse; it has to be assumed, on the grounds of dendrochronology (letter of 5 March 1981 from Prof. Dr J. Bauch, Håmburg), that the panel of this painting comes from the years before 1650. Secondly, Hofstede de Groot<sup>2</sup> believed that the origin of both paintings could be traced to the sale of the Willem Six collection, Amsterdam 12 May 1734 (Lugt 441), where under no. 171 there is the description: 'Twee stuks Philosophies, van dezelve [Rembrandt]' (two pieces of philosophers, by the same) (50 guilders).

This combination is most unlikely; no. C 51 was still without a companion-piece in 1738, and at that time did not bear the title, used later, of 'Filosoof'. The 'Philosophies' in the Willem Six sale probably mean the heads of 'Zeno' and 'Lucianus' reproduced in mezzotint in 1699 by Bernard Picart (Paris 1673 – Amsterdam 1733) (reproduced in: W. R. Valentiner, op. cit., p. 527), the first of which matches a painting later known as a head of Christ (Br. 623). In the sale of Picart's estate, Amsterdam 15 May 1737 (Lugt 472), nos. 38 and 39 are described as: 'Het Hooft van Lucianus, door Rembrandt' (The head of Lucianus, by Rembrandt) and 'Het Hooft van de Philoof Zeno, van dito' (The head of the philosopher Zeno, by the same); they fetched the moderate price of 4 guilders and 8 guilders 10 stuivers respectively.

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Engraving by Pierre Louis Surugue (Paris 1716 – 1772) inscribed: *Rembrandt Pinxit. – Lud<sup>us</sup>. Surugue Sculp. 1754. | Te Philosophe en contemplation | Gravé d'après le Tableau Original de Rembrandt . . . Tiré du Cabinet de Monsieur le Comte de Vence, – Marechal de Camp des Armées du Roy etc.* Reproduces the picture in reverse.

A similar print by the same artist reproduces the '*Philosophe en méditation*' (figs. 6 and 7).

2. Engraving by W. Baillie inscribed: *45 | Du Cabinet de Mr. le Duc de Choiseul | de la grandeur de 12 pouces  $\frac{1}{2}$  sur 10.* One plate together with the companion-piece (44). Reproduces both paintings in the same direction as the originals, but rather broadly. Perhaps after the engravings by Surugue.

Other prints by Giuseppe Longhi (Monza 1766 – Milan



1832) in: *Musée Français*, by Antoine Abraham Goujon-Devilliers 'the elder' (Paris 1784 – 1818) in: Filhol, *Galérie du Musée Napoléon VIII*, Paris 1812, no. 575, and a number of German and English prints were clearly not done after the original.

## 7. Copies

None.

## 8. Provenance

\*– Coll. Peeter Wouters, merchant of Antwerp; described in his estate on 23 August 1673: 'Een wenteltrappeken met een oudt manneken sittende op eenen stoel, van Rembrandt van Ryn' (J. Denucé, *De Antwerpsche 'Konstkamers'*, Amsterdam 1932, p. 264).

\*– Possibly identical with: 'Een wenteltrap van Rembrandt van Ryn', described in the estate of Catharina Deyl, widow of the painter Nicolaes Rosendael of Amsterdam, 7 March 1687 (A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare II*, The Hague 1916, p. 544, no. 80).

\*– Coll. Comte de Fraula, sale Brussels 21ff July 1738 (Lugt 488), no. 136: 'Eene ordonnantie met Tobias, ende eenen draeyenden trap door Rimbrant. Hoogh 11 duym +  $\frac{1}{2}$ , breed 1 v. 2 d.  $\frac{1}{2}$  [= 28.7 × 33.8 cm]' (175 guilders).

Together with the so-called companion-piece.

– Coll. Comte de Vence. Described in: *Description du Cabinet de M. le Comte de Vence*, Paris n.d. [1759] (Lugt 1073), pp. 22–23: 'Dans le second Cabinet . . . Au-dessous sont deux Tableaux de Rambrandt, que l'on peut dire uniques; ils sont gravés tous les deux par Surugue sous le titre du Philosophe en contemplation, & du Philosophe en méditation. Jamais ce Peintre n'a poussé plus loin l'illusion de la lumière, & l'on croit voir réellement le soleil dans une chambre au point qu'il vous éblouit.' Sale 9–17 February 1761 (Lugt 1135), nos. 38 and 39: 'Rembrandt-Van-Rhein. Deux tableaux peints sur bois, chacun de 10 pouces 3 lignes de haut, sur 12 pouces & demi de large [= 27.7 × 33.7 cm]. Louis Surugue les a gravés tous deux sous le titre du Philosophe en méditation & du Philosophe en contemplation. Ces deux Tableaux sont d'une très grande beauté, le pinceau en est gras & onctueux, mais ce qui surprend encore plus les personnes de l'Art, c'est l'effet de la lumière occasionnée par un coup de soleil qui passe au travers des fenêtres & qui fait l'illusion; on ne peut pas trouver de plus précieux morceaux que ces deux-ci. Ils seront vendus séparément. (Les deux a été vendu à Mr. Le Duc de Choiseul)' (2999 livres 19 sous).

– Coll. Duc de Choiseul, sale Paris 6–10 April 1772 (Lugt 2020), nos. 7 and 8: 'Rembrandt. Deux petits Tableaux connus sous le nom des deux Philosophes. L'effet admirable des fenêtres qui éclairent leur laboratoire les a toujours rendus recommandables, & leur fini est précieux. Ils portent 12 pouces & demi de large sur 10 & demi de haut [= 33.7 × 28.3 cm]. T. Surugue les gravés.' (14,000 livres to Donjeux).

– Coll. Randon de Boisset, sale Paris 27 February – 25 March 1777 (Lugt 2652), no. 49: 'Rembrandt Van Rhyn. Le Philosophe en méditation, & le Philosophe en contemplation; tous deux sont dans un lieu voûté. Bois 10 pouces 3 lignes haut, 12 pouces 6 lign. largeur. Gravé par Louis Surugne. Cabinet Mgr. le Duc de Choiseul (1772)' (10,900 livres to Perrin, buying for Millon Dailly, nephew of Randon de Boisset).

– Coll. Comte de Vaudreuil, sale Paris 24–25 November 1784 (Lugt 3797), no. 28: 'Deux Tableaux connus sous le titre des

Philosophes: l'un en méditation, & l'autre en contemplation, gravés par Louis Surugue. Ils sont assis devant une table, & éclairés d'une seule croisée par où le soleil entre & frappe sur plusieurs parties de l'appartement. L'harmonie & le clair obscur sont portés au plus haut degré de perfection dans ses Tableaux. Ils viennent des Cabinets de MM. de Choiseul, & vendus 14000 l; & Randon de Boinet, no. 49 du Catalogue, vendus 10900 l. Haut 10 p. 3 l. largeur 12 pouc. 6 lig. B.' (13,000 livres to Paillet, buying for the King).

– Coll. Louis XVI of France.

## 9. Summary

This painting shows clearly Rembrandtesque features (in the handling of chiaroscuro and the rendering of wood and stonework) and motifs (the figure of the old man). Yet there are also differences from Rembrandt's work in the execution (which is equally broad in the figures and their surroundings) and interpretation (the interior is allowed to dominate the three mutually-unrelated figures). An attribution to Rembrandt himself, which was based *inter alia* on a signature that can no longer be seen, must be ruled out. The work probably originated in his circle or workshop; the date is rather uncertain, but ought perhaps to be put at either 1632 or the late 1630s. The primary purpose of the picture probably lies in the perspective depiction of the interior, with the winding staircase as the principal motif.

## REFERENCES

- 1 C. Vosmaer, *Rembrandt. Sa vie et ses oeuvres*, The Hague 1877 (2nd edn), p. 498.
- 2 HdG 233.
- 3 Br.-Gerson 431.
- 4 J. Foucart, *Les peintures de Rembrandt au Louvre*, Paris 1982, p. 19.
- 5 S. Slive, 'The young Rembrandt', *Bulletin of the Allen Memorial Art Museum* 20 (1963), pp. 120–149, esp. 124–125.

## C52 Bust of an old man

METZ, MUSÉE CENTRAL

HdG 405; BR. 181; BAUCH 147; GERSON 135

### 1. Summarized opinion

An apparently well preserved painting that may be an old copy perhaps done in Rembrandt's circle and possibly after a detail from a larger composition by him. The panel was perhaps originally rectangular.

### 2. Description of subject

A grey-bearded old man is seen to above the waist, with the body facing slightly to the left and the head a little to the right, and against a dark background. He looks straight ahead and slightly downwards. The face, lit from the left, has pronounced wrinkles on the forehead and, especially, between the frowning eyebrows. He wears a black cap with a gold chain along the rim; a dark cloak hangs open at the front, revealing several rows of gold chain with a pendant worn over a dark garment.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 17 June 1968 (J. B., S. H. L.) in reasonable light and in the frame.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 59 × 44 cm. Thickness *c.* 1.1 cm. Single plank. The back shows remnants of straight bevelling on all sides, narrowest along the bottom; from this one may suspect that the panel was originally rectangular.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A yellow-brown is visible in a scratchmark at the lower right below the mouth, and in a few small gaps in the paint of the background close to the cap. A similar colour shows through in thin patches in the area around the eyes.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good, so far as can be judged through the layer of varnish. Craquelure: none seen.

DESCRIPTION: In general the paint layer is fairly thick; because of this (or of the thickness of the ground layer?) the grain of the panel is scarcely if at all detectable at the surface. The paint surface is otherwise quite smooth, and only brushstrokes on the nose and forehead and the small dabs in the neckchain show a definite impasto.

The background is painted in a thick, opaque dark grey-brown (which, probably because of the varnish, makes a greenish impression), partly with long, broad brushstrokes running parallel to the contour of the head; only on the right by the outline of the shoulder is the colour a little lighter.

The face is painted quite thickly in both the lit and shadow areas; only in the eyes are there thinner patches, where sometimes the ground can be sensed. A carmine-like red is used in the modelling of the wrinkles on the forehead, the eye-sockets and the wrinkles under the eyes, in the deep fold to the left of the nose, in the lefthand nostril and in the cast shadow from the nose. On the ridge of the nose, small strokes of a light pink are placed over a pinkish red; lower down a pinkish white highlight has been placed on the lefthand side of the nose-tip. The shadow side of the face is done predominantly in a ruddy brown, and terminates to the right in a thick (and greenish-seeming) brown. The hair of the beard and

head is painted in brown-grey with curved scratchmarks done in the wet paint, only one of which (to the right below the mouth) exposes the underlying ground.

The cap and clothing are executed in a dark, flat colour with a cursory and barely effective suggestion of the chains in ochre-brown.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

None.

#### *Signature*

On the right, at half-height in the background, as vague vestiges in brown <Rem . . . . /f>. No opinion can be offered as to its authenticity. The date of 1633 mentioned in the literature<sup>1</sup> cannot be seen.

#### *Varnish*

There is a layer of yellowed varnish.

### 4. Comments

Gerson, who in his 1968 publication termed the painting 'too poor to be attributed to Rembrandt'<sup>1</sup> regarded it in 1969<sup>2</sup> as a 'work by a follower'. One can agree with this judgment because of the general opaqueness of the paint and the use of various reds and reddish tints in the modelling of the head. The lifeless background and lame treatment of the accessories do not contribute to a Rembrandtesque appearance, and the treatment of the contours and distribution of the light values produce little effect of depth and atmosphere.

It can also be commented that the oval is remarkably narrow (more than 4 : 3). Even if the panel was originally rectangular (see *Support*, DESCRIPTION) the figure must have been framed very tightly, and the turn of the head against the body cannot have achieved its proper effect. Because of this, and of the slightly sideways direction of gaze, the composition makes a somewhat fragmentary impression. If one nonetheless recognizes in the motif elements of Rembrandt's idiom from the early 1630s, then it would perhaps be most natural to think in terms of this being a copy after part of a larger composition that might have been a lost original by Rembrandt. Similar *tronies* reproducing heads from Rembrandt compositions in painting or in print have been identified (cf. Vol. I, pp. 44–46 and no. C 25). At all events it is likely that the painting was done in the 17th century, possibly in Rembrandt's immediate circle. The date of 1633 that was formerly seen on the painting may give a correct indication for either the prototype or this derivative.

### 5. Documents and sources

None.

Fig. 1. Panel 59 × 44 cm

Fig. 1. Panel 59 × 44 cm



## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

1. Panel, oval 59 × 46 cm. Nîmes, Musée des Beaux-Arts, cat. 1940, no. 431. Not examined by us, but to judge from the photo (in RKD, The Hague) a faithful copy.

## 8. Provenance

– Coll. Balthasar, Marquis d'Ourches; gift to the museum in 1866.

## 9. Summary

Because of its subject matter and general approach no. C 52 is reminiscent of Rembrandt's work, but in its execution it differs so significantly from this that it can scarcely be looked on as an original from his hand. If one adds to this the somewhat fragmentary nature of the composition (which it must have had even if it was originally rectangular), then it is not improbable that this is an old copy from Rembrandt's circle after a detail from a larger work that was perhaps from his own hand.

### REFERENCES

- 1 Gerson 135.
- 2 Br.-Gerson 181.

**C53 Bust of an old man**

KASSEL, STAATLICHE KUNSTSAMMLUNGEN KASSEL, SCHLOSS WILHELMSHÖHE, INV. NO. GK 233

HDG 373; BR. 152; BAUCH 146; GERSON 109

Fig. 1. Panel 58 × 46.5 cm

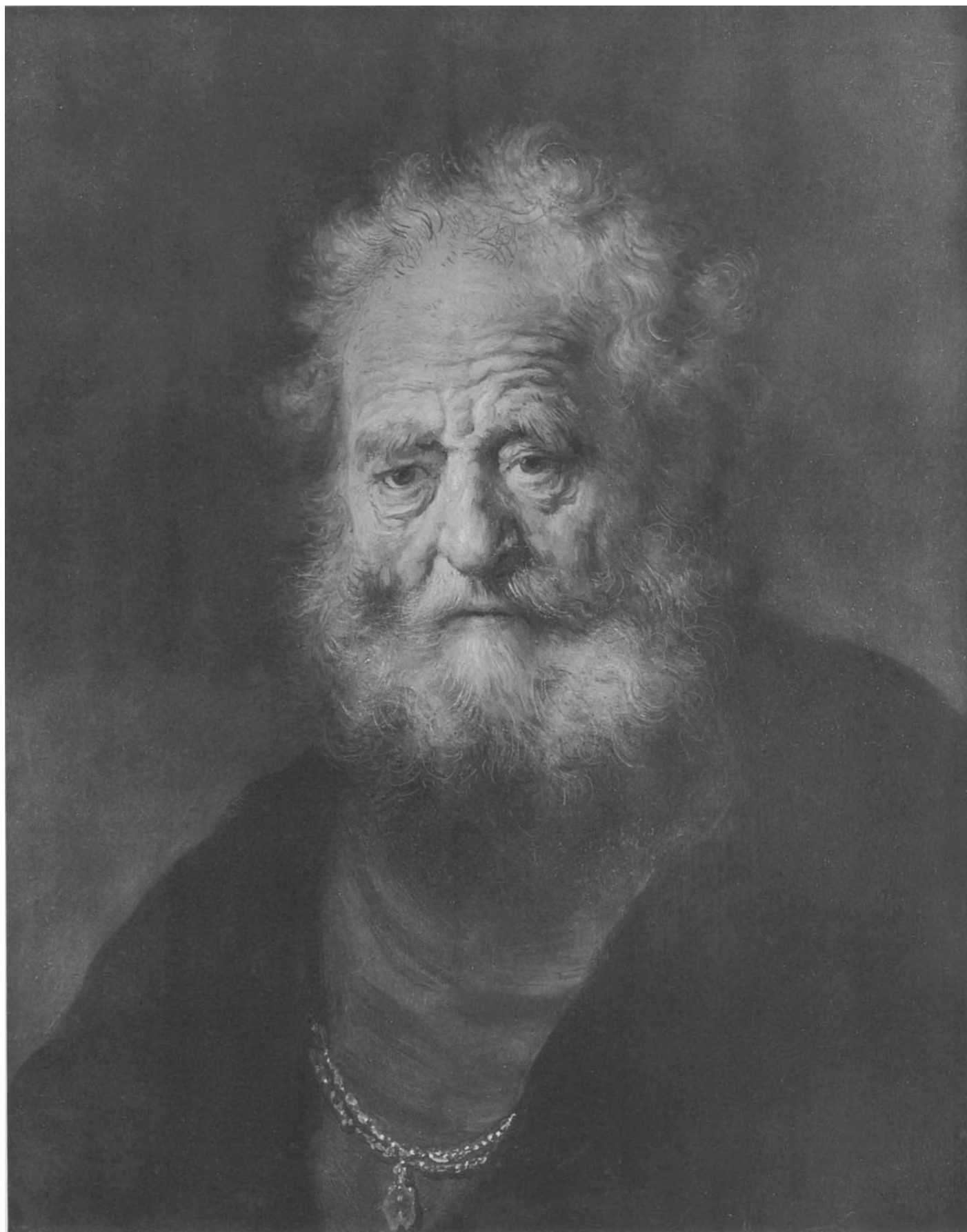
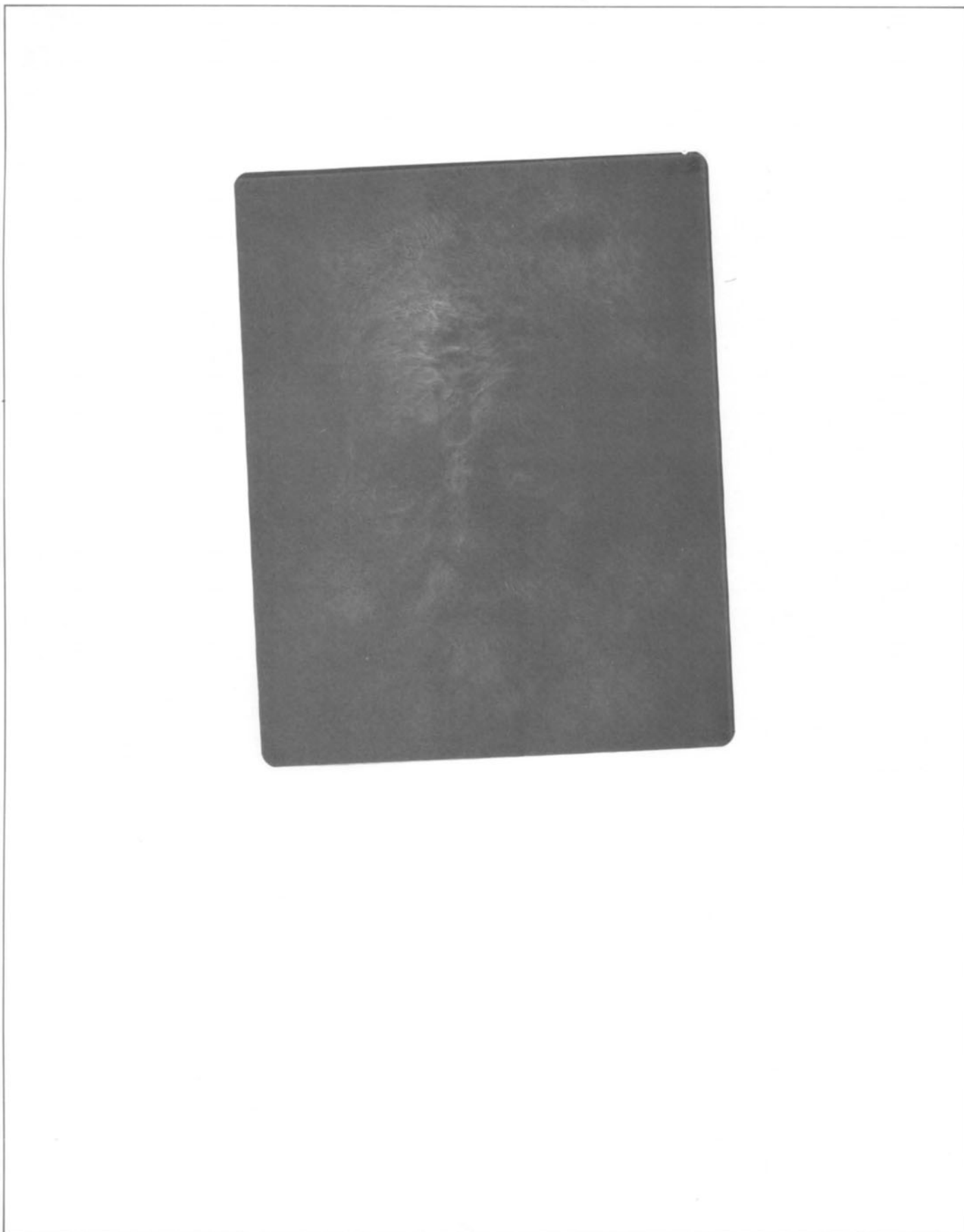


Fig. 2. X-ray





### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved 17th-century imitation of Rembrandt, painted in a markedly individual style.

### 2. Description of subject

The figure is seen to above the waist against a dark background, turned slightly to the left. He wears a black cloak hanging open at the front, revealing a dark brown garment that hangs in folds and a double-row gold chain with pendant. The light falls from the left, illuminating large areas of the deeply-wrinkled head and the hair and beard, which stand out in a mass of curls.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in October 1968 (J. B., B. H.) in good artificial light and in the frame. An X-ray copyfilm of the head was received later from Dr M. Meier-Siem, Hamburg.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 58 × 46.5 cm (sight-size). Thickness *c.* 1.2 cm. Three planks, with joins at about 11 cm from the right- and lefthand edges. There are a few wormholes on the left of the middle plank. So far as can be seen with the panel in the frame, only the lefthand edge of the back shows a narrow bevel.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) shows lefthand plank with 128 annual rings heartwood, dated 1262/63–1390; middle plank 162 annual rings heartwood (+ 4 sapwood), datable as 1437–1598(1602); righthand plank 188 annual rings heartwood, datable as 1405–1592. The middle plank gives  $1614 \pm 5$  as the statistical average felling date. The growing area of the middle and righthand plank is the Northern Netherlands, that of the lefthand plank the Southern Netherlands. The lefthand plank is furthermore remarkably old, and comes either from a tree cut up long before or from the innermost part of a thick trunk<sup>1</sup>.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown shows through in small scratches in the background and in scratchmarks in the hair. SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn<sup>2</sup> found a very thin reddish-white ground consisting of chalk, glue and a little ochre.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good. Craquelure: none seen.

DESCRIPTION: The background is painted in an almost even brown-grey that tends towards a green. There is no brushstroke recognizable as such, though here and there there are small scratches or what look like brushmarks, through which the ground can be seen.

The face is, in the lit areas and to almost the same extent in the shadows, painted with very thick strokes of varying length, and in a wide variety of colours – a dull yellow, reddish yellow, light and dark red, sometimes on top of a greyish-yellow basic tone, grey and dark brown. The forehead is modelled with thick touches of yellowish and salmon-coloured paint, with shadows in the wrinkles indicated with a ruddy brown that merges into brown towards the right. The wrinkled eye-pouches are done with partly sharply curved and partly overlapping strokes, on the left in various flesh tints and grey, on the right with strokes of yellow, red, grey and black; a

curve made up of dabs in a greenish grey runs beneath the latter.

The eye on the left shows, below a heavy lid indicated with strokes of a light red and almost total black, a white that is yellowish to the left and to the right of the grey iris is in a grey that is not markedly distinct from the latter; there is a weak catchlight to the left of the black pupil. Touches of light red mark the corner of the eye, with fine strokes of white giving the reflexions from the moisture along the bottom edge of the eye. The right eye is painted in a similar manner. Both eyebrows are done in quite thick strokes of grey and yellowish grey. Strokes of a heavy, dark brown show the shadow in the two eye-sockets. Heavy strokes in a thick red and dark red mark the shadow along the nose, and a thick, very dark and almost black paint shows the shadow under the nose, and the nostril.

The mouth is indicated mainly by means of a quite thinly painted mouth-line in a carmine-like red, with a cursory highlight on the lower lip. The surrounding area of moustache and beard is, like the head hair, set down in a yellowish grey that becomes thinner towards the edges, worked up with mostly fine brushstrokes and then given numerous curved (and sometimes S-shaped) scratchmarks. The latter occasionally expose the light yellow-brown of the ground, and at some points, in the forehead and hair, a grey (which might be connected with an underpainting).

The clothing is rendered cursorily and (other than in the chain) does not have the pronounced paint relief of the head. The garment hanging down in folds is in brown and, in the shadow below the beard, indicated with black placed on top of this brown and strokes of black in the shadows of the folds. The chain is set down in a greenish grey, on top of which an ochre-yellow and black are placed with white catchlights. The cloak is executed in a thin and almost even black, with a little brown.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Three paint samples were examined by Kühn<sup>2</sup>. White from the chain round the neck yielded white lead, consisting of 40% of basic and 60% of neutral lead carbonate; black from the clothing comprised vegetable black, bistre and some white lead; ochre yellow from the chain had yellow ochre and a little white lead.

#### *X-Rays*

The available X-ray film shows, in the head, a picture of brushstrokes appearing light that matches that observed at the paint surface. In the hair and beard the scratchmarks made in the wet paint are clearly visible, besides the less pronounced brushmarks. The background is seen as a dark radiographic image.

#### *Signature*

On the extreme right background roughly level with the eyes, applied flatly with a fairly thick brush (and hence not clearly legible) in grey <RHL (in monogram) *van Ryn* / 1632>. The excessive thickness of the stroke used to write the inscription is unknown in any authentic Rembrandt signature, and in itself virtually rules out any possibility of this being an authentic signature.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

### 4. Comments

The fact that up to now this painting has been accepted as a work by Rembrandt from 1632 can

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)

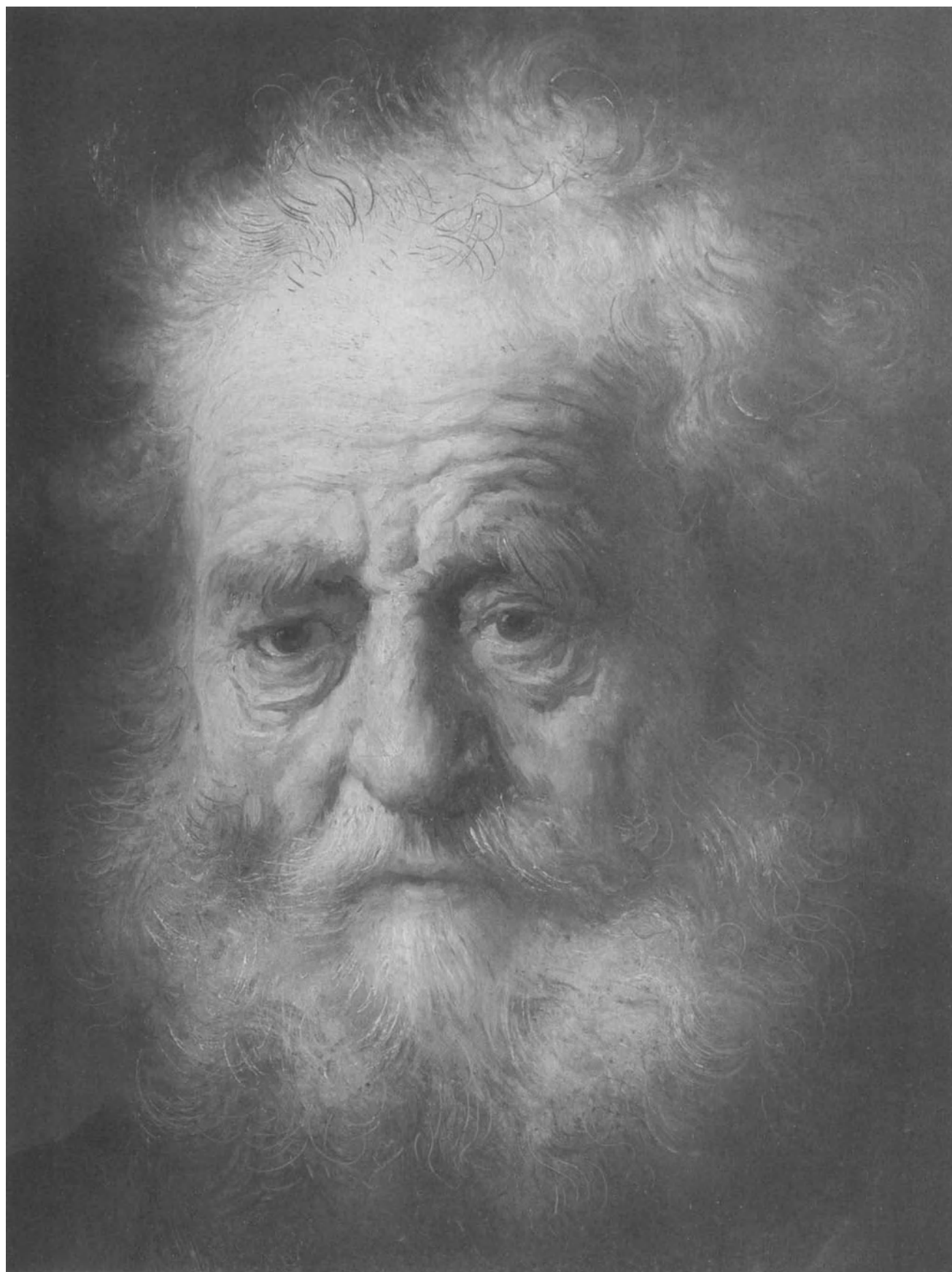
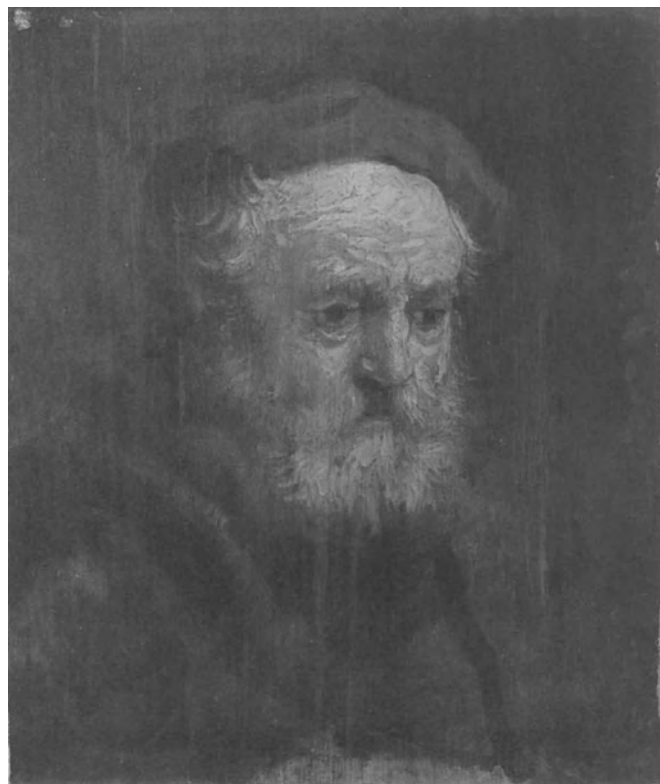


Fig. 4. Manner of Rembrandt. Richmond, Va., Virginia Museum of Fine Arts



probably be explained by a certain similarity with a number of authentic works (on canvas) showing old men and dating from that year. If one compares the facial features depicted in no. C 53 with those of the New York *Man in oriental dress* (no. A 48), or those of the Stockholm *S. Peter* (no. A 46), the resemblance in facial type, the shape of eyes, nose and mouth as well as the matching distribution of light and shade are unmistakable. The resemblance applies, however, only to the motif, and does not extend to the way it is treated. The subtle modelling achieved with an economical use of paint and colour in the two Rembrandt works just mentioned have in no. C 53 given way to an almost oppressively insistent rendering of wrinkles and folds using strokes, some bolder, some finer, of a mostly thick and invariably opaque paint in a wide variety of colours. This manner of painting – Gerson<sup>3</sup> understandably described the work as ‘powerfully painted’ – betrays a temperament that is also manifest in the excess of curls in hair and beard (rendered partly by long and over-numerous scratchmarks in the wet paint) and even by the over-heavy script in the (consequently scarcely legible) signature. It must be regarded as out of the question to link this temperament and this manner of painting with those of Rembrandt in 1632; the work we know of, in so many different forms, from that year has no place for this extraordinary play of forms, this variegated use of colour and this impasto-ridden use of paint. Even two years

Fig. 5. Manner of Rembrandt. New York, N.Y., The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Lillian S. Timken, 1959



later, when Rembrandt executed the London *Portrait of an 83-year-old woman* (no. A 104) with a far freer handling of paint than he had used in 1632 in the *Portrait of a 62-year-old woman* in a private collection (no. A 63), the relationship between the brushwork and the plastic form being portrayed is that of a more discreet and infinitely more subtle rendering, and the use of colour is subservient to the discipline of the interplay between the opaque flesh colour passages and the translucent areas of shadow. No. C 53 must be seen as an overblown imitation of a Rembrandtesque subject, executed in a totally un-Rembrandtlike way.

A number of observations of detail serve to underline the divergences from Rembrandt's way of working. By itself the fact that the clothing is treated summarily is nothing unusual for him; but here it obtrudes by contrasting too strongly with the highly emphatic rendering of the head and hair, so that there is a lack of unity. The basic tint of the chain (a greenish grey) is different from the ochre-yellow that Rembrandt invariably employed for such a motif. The outline of the body against the background is admittedly sinuous, but it does not have the characteristic intersections of the billowing curves. And finally the grey that becomes visible in the scratchmarks in the hair and forehead makes one suspect that the painting was prepared with an underpainting incorporating large areas of grey – something unknown of in Rembrandt.

If one comes to the conclusion that the style and manner of working differ to a decisive degree from those of Rembrandt, and are not to be found in his immediate followers, then one has to ask in what relation to his work no. C 53 can be seen. One definite fact is that the painting existed before 1693 (see 8. *Provenance*). Given furthermore the similarities already mentioned, in facial details, with works by Rembrandt then one certainly has to assume that well before the end of the 17th century free interpretations of his work were appearing outside his immediate circle. Such an assumption is also warranted by other paintings, almost always *tronies* of old men or young women (cf., for instance, nos. C 26 and C 59), although most of these were not executed with as much individualistic bravura as no. C 53. In this case one cannot point to any original that was followed, more or less closely, though it is quite likely that there were one or more *tronies* of old men extant that could have served as a model. This may perhaps also be evidenced by the existence of smaller variants showing a closely similar head seen at a slightly different angle and wearing a cap, which belong to a fairly large group of apparently also 17th-century, superficial pastiches; of these paintings, in the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Richmond, Virginia (Br. 232; our fig. 4) and the Metropolitan Museum, New York (acc. no. 60.71.16; our fig. 5) the former carries a spurious signature and date of 1643.

Dendrochronology examination of the panel does not help in arriving at an accurate dating. It has led to the unusual discovery that one of the three planks is particularly old and came from the Southern Netherlands, and the other two (from the Northern Netherlands) are on the oldish side even for a dating soon after 1630. This latter situation is however regularly encountered with paintings that we regard as old imitations (cf. Vol. I, nos. C 14, C 25, C 30, C 38 and C 41 copy 12).

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

– Coll. Valerius Röver snr (d. Amsterdam February 1693); cf. E. W. Moes in: *O.H.* 31 (1913), p. 7. After the death of his widow Catharina Elisabeth Bode, on 26 March 1703, the collection was in 1709 divided between their two sons Valerius

and Matthijs; a label on the back carries the following inscription in calligraphic letters: 'V. & M. Röver / N. 27'. The latter died childless on 7 March 1725, his share then passing to Valerius jnr.

– Coll. Valerius Röver, Delft. In a catalogue he made in 1730 with the prices from a valuation by the art dealer Jan Pietersz. Zomer, no. C 53 is described under no. 39 as: 'Een oude mans tronie van voren, met grijs hayr en baret, extra konstig, van Rembrandt, getaxeerd op f 30. N.B. Ao. 1724 is mij door den schilder [Philips] van Dijk f 200 voor deze tronie geboden' (An old man's head seen from the front, with grey hair and cap, extra artful, by Rembrandt, valued at 30 guilders. N.B. in 1724 I was offered 200 guilders for this by the painter van Dijk) (Amsterdam, University Library, ms. U.B. II A 18; Moes op. cit., pp. 7 and 17). After his death in Delft on 22 July 1739 the collection was sold by his widow Cornelia van der Dussen to the Landgrave Wilhelm VIII of Hesse-Kassel in 1750.

– Coll. the Landgrave of Hesse-Kassel. In the *Haupt-Catalogus* begun in 1749, described on p. 53 under the heading 'Cabinet van Delft' as: '555. Rembrant, d'Oude manns Tronie [height] 1 Schuh 7 Zoll [width] 1 Schuh 10½ Zoll (Rhineland feet) [= 49.4 × 58.5 cm: height and width evidently reversed]. The Kassel catalogue of 1783 describes the work under no. 963 in the first blue room. From 1806 to 1815 in Paris; the back bears a wax seal with the inscription 'Musée Napoléon'.

#### 9. Summary

No. C 53 on the one hand incorporates motifs that are clearly connected with Rembrandt works from 1632 and on the other displays a manner of painting that differs to a decisive extent from that of Rembrandt and his school. The brushstrokes in the head, placed forcefully against and over each other, using thick, opaque paint and in relatively variegated colours, do not match Rembrandt's more subtle and economical way of working. The excessive use of scratchmarks and (in contrast to the head) unarticulated treatment of the clothing and dark background combine to produce a lack of three-dimensional, atmospheric effect. It has to be assumed that the painting is an imitation done with exceptional bravura (though essentially un-Rembrandtlike), according to the pedigree well before the end of the 17th century.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 Cf. Bauch, Eckstein, Meier-Siem, pp. 491, 493.
- 2 Kühn, p. 196; H. Kühn, 'Untersuchungen zu den Pigmenten und Malgründen Rembrandts, durchgeführt an den Gemälden der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Kassel', *Maltechnik-Restaur* 82 (1976), pp. 25–33, esp. 30.
- 3 Gerson 109; Br.-Gerson 152.

**C 54 Bust of a young man in a turban**

WINDSOR CASTLE, H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH II, INV. NO. 63

HDG 354; BR. 142; BAUCH 136; GERSON 106

Fig. 1. Panel 65.2 × 50.9 cm



### 1. Summarized opinion

A fairly well preserved work from Rembrandt's immediate circle in the earliest Amsterdam years, attributable to Isack Jouderville.

### 2. Description of subject

Bust of a young man with the body three-quarters towards the right and the head turned slightly towards the viewer. He wears a turban, the loose end of which dangles down on the right, a neckchain over dark clothing, a collar-like (embroidered?) ornament and a small shawl. The light, falling from the left, leaves the righthand side of the figure in darkness. The background is neutral.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 5 October 1972 (J. B., S. H. L.), in good daylight and in the frame. Again on 16 February 1983 (E. v. d. W.).

#### *Support*

**DESCRIPTION:** Panel, probably oak, grain vertical, *c.* 65.2 × 50.9 cm (measured along the battens at the back). Thickness *c.* 0.9 cm. Single plank. Reinforced at the back with battens along the four sides and crosswise at the centrepieces of height and width. The beginning of bevelling can just be seen at the top. A wandering crack runs over the entire height a little to the right of centre, just through the sitter's nose. To either side of this crack, numerous woodworm flight-holes can be seen on the back; this may point to the panel being a radial board.  
**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** None.

#### *Ground*

**DESCRIPTION:** A light yellow-brown shows through in large areas of the background, and is often exposed to a varying degree in the shadow parts of the head.  
**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** None.

#### *Paint layer*

**CONDITION:** On the whole fairly good, if somewhat worn. In-paintings are seen along the crack. There is local wearing in thinly painted areas such as the shadow parts of the lefthand eye-socket, lower lip and chin, and in the turban and the black of the clothing. Craquelure: scarcely any apparent; there are a few small cracks in the thick, light parts of the face, and a fine pattern of cracks in the turban.  
**DESCRIPTION:** The paint is nowhere impasto, but there is frequently a visible brushstroke. In the light the face is done with careful strokes, with a somewhat dabbing touch above the eyebrow and on the cheekbone where the strongest light falls, painted in a pale flesh colour with a little pink on the cheek and a rather stronger pink on the wing and ridge of the nose. On the cheek a haze of grey forms the transition to a stronger grey bordering the jaw, which continues in the neck and below the chin into a thinner, greyish brown shadow. The earlobe, casting a brown shadow, is outlined to the right by a stroke of pink.

The lefthand eye is modelled with care. The upper lid, bordered by lines of brown, is in a softish pink with a light highlight and, to the right of a small thin area, in a little grey. The lower edge, in a pink flesh colour, shows a fine rim of moisture in white, and has shadows towards the right in greys

and brown. There is an extremely thin red in the corner of the eye; the white of the eye is executed, on the right, in a very thin (and worn) grey, and on the left in an off-white. The thin (and worn) brown of the crisply-edged iris lies on top of the ground which shows through to the lower left. The black pupil is not sharply defined.

The nostrils are indicated with dark brown and a little black. The light-coloured moustache is suggested with small lively strokes of grey, placed wet-in-wet in the flesh colour. Meticulous touches of a matt and brighter red model the upper and lower lips to either side of a mouth-line that runs unsteadily in black with a little brown. At the chin the flesh colour and grey are placed thinly over the warm colour of the ground, which shows through. Throughout this area allowance has to be made for the skilful restorations that have been carried out along the fracture-line in the paint caused by the crack in the panel. The shadow side of the face is painted in thin (less or more worn) and fairly flat greys; the glancing light on the cheek is formed by the ground, which is virtually exposed at that point. The eye on the right is shown in quite worn browns, with some greys in the white of the eye.

The hair on the left forms an area of opaque brown. The turban is done with long strokes of browns and yellow-brown, with a band of dark blue painted wet-in-wet. To the right these strokes run into a flatter grey-brown shadow area, in which the shape of a jewel is indicated indistinctly in a thick dark brown. The end of cloth hanging down on the right is painted over the background in a thin brown-black; at the bottom there are scratchmarks, some quite long and vertical, some squiggly, obviously meant to suggest a fringe.

The clothing is executed in a thin, flat and worn black (with local retouches) that on the left lies over the paint of the background, and on the right continues just beneath the background paint placed on top of it. The chain, on which hangs a cursorily-indicated, translucent jewel, is on the left in a thin ochre-yellow placed over the black and worked up with small strokes and dots of brown-yellow and white; in the shadow in front of the chest it is in a (slightly restored) brown, and to the right again in a thin ochre-yellow. There is no suggestion of a definite form. A collar-like ornament is rendered with strokes of grey and white set over the black. The shawl, done in the light with touches of brown and grey with strokes and dots of blue-green and whitish yellow, becomes lost in the dark shadow to the right.

The background is painted over the ground in a thin grey, with distinct brushwork, somewhat thicker where it runs along the outline of the figure. The total effect is rather patchy, and lacks any clear distribution of light and dark.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** None.

#### *X-Rays*

None.

#### *Signature*

To the right in the background level with the shoulder, in dark brown <RHL (in monogram).1631>. The script is confidently and firmly drawn, but the continuity in the *R* is, in the join between the bowl on the left and the stem and in the root of the tail to the right, not as clear as it usually is in a Rembrandt monogram.

#### *Varnish*

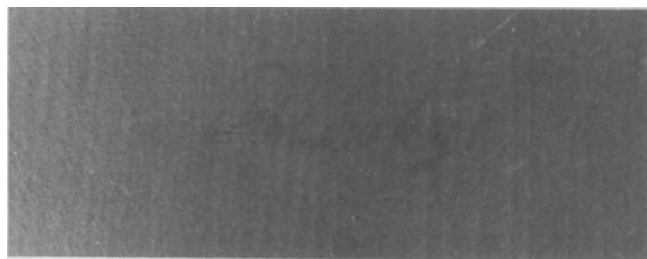
No special remarks.



Fig. 2. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 3. Detail with signature (1:1)



#### 4. Comments

The attribution of this painting to Rembrandt has never been doubted in the literature, not even by White<sup>1</sup> who thought the picture was done before Rembrandt moved to Amsterdam and under the influence of Jan Lievens. While quoting our attribution to a pupil in Rembrandt's earliest years in Amsterdam, White noted 'a pallor in the flesh tones . . . and a lack of strong modelling, which make it a not entirely satisfactory picture, although there seems no compelling reason to classify it as the work of a pupil rather than of the master himself'.

Although the painting cannot be fully assessed in the shadow areas, because of a certain amount of wearing, it may be assumed that the unevenness in quality is not due solely to its condition. In the lit parts the head is carefully modelled and sensitively painted. Here, the manner of painting is reminiscent of Rembrandt in its use of thin, translucent browns and greys and thicker, more opaque paint in the light flesh colour. There is a certain resemblance to Rembrandt's portraits from the early Amsterdam years and even more to a work like the *Self-portrait* of c. 1629 in The Hague (no. A 21), though all of these display a more adventurous brushwork and a greater range of nuances of colour. In general no. C 54 shows, compared to Rembrandt's work, a lack of strong accents and an excessive meticulousness in the modelling, e.g. in the treatment of the lit wing of the nose. As a result the face is lacking in a convincing relationship between the brushwork and a suggestion of plasticity and depth, and this impression is reinforced by the fact that neither eye has a catchlight (which is however reminiscent of the *Self-portrait* in The Hague). To these differences from what one would expect from Rembrandt's work during the early Amsterdam years one may add the poverty of execution of the clothing and background. The most successful feature is the turban, if not in its colour and spatial relationship to the head then at least in the suggestion of volume. In the clothing and the neckchain, however, the suggestion of material and plasticity that has been achieved bear no relation to the means employed; while some thought has gone into the contours – on

the right the background has even been extended over the clothing, suggesting that the contour was corrected – they remain fragmented and lacking in clarity, and do not help to suggest plasticity or depth. The scattered highlights in the neck ornament and shawl produce a chaotic effect, and do not result in any clear suggestion of shape or material. The background does not have Rembrandt's characteristic distribution of light and shade, and forms an indifferent backdrop comparable to that in the 1629 *Self-portrait* in The Hague, but completely unlike any background in Rembrandt's works from c. 1631. From all these findings one may conclude that there is nothing of Rembrandt's own hand in no. C 54, but that it probably was produced in his immediate circle, in all probability by a pupil familiar with Rembrandt's work from the later Leiden years. He may be tentatively identified as Isack Jouderville. Closely similar to his signed and unsigned works (cf. Introduction, Chapter III, pp. 76–87) are the dabbing brushwork in the lit parts of the face, the over-careful treatment of the – nevertheless somewhat lifeless – eyes, the carefully thought-out yet hesitant body contours and, especially, the chaotic highlights that are used to suggest ornament on rather shapeless textiles.

The signature shows a reasonable resemblance to those of Rembrandt, and the date of 1631 may well indicate the year in which the picture was painted. It is quite possible that the inscription stems from the pupil's hand that did the painting. This appears to be the case in a number of instances (see Introduction, Chapter V).

Certain features of no. C 54 (such as the manner of painting in the lit flesh areas, the thin greys in the cheek area and the poor execution of clothing and jewellery) recur in the *Bust of a young man in gorget and cap* in San Diego (no. C 55), similarly dated 1631. In view of equally pronounced differences, an attribution to the same hand would however seem unwarranted. The panel in San Diego is a little smaller than that in Windsor Castle, so it is improbable that they were once companion-pieces.

In this connexion it is interesting that the inventory of the estate of the painter Lambert Jacobsz. drawn up on 3 October 1637 (H. L. Straat in: *De Vrije Fries* 28, 1925, p. 72) lists consecutively, among other works termed 'after Rembrandt', '14. Een schone Jonge turcksche prince nae Rembrant / 15. Een soldaet met swart haer een Iseren halskraegh sluijer om den hals nae Remb.' (14. A handsome young Turkish prince after Rembrant / 15. A soldier with dark hair and iron gorget [and] shawl around his neck, after Remb.). There is, of course, no proof that the paintings described here are identical with nos. C 54 and C 55. Yet this possibility cannot be

ruled out. In all likelihood the designation of such pictures as 'after Rembrandt' may sometimes be taken to mean 'in the manner of Rembrandt' rather than 'copied from an original by Rembrandt' (see Introduction, Chapter III).

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

1. Canvas 60 × 50 cm, Berne, Kunstmuseum (cat. 1895, no. 79), wrongly attributed to Flinck by J. W. von Moltke (Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 247 with illustration).
2. Oval 88.7 × 47.1 cm, sale London (Sotheby's) 29 June 1960, no. 61.

#### 8. Provenance

- Perhaps identical, despite the differing measurements, with a painting acquired by King George III from coll. Consul Smith in 1762: '26 Rembrandt. His own Portrait in a Turban on board 2-1 × 2-1 [= 64.5 × 64.5 cm]' (cf. A. Blunt and E. Croft-Murray, *Venetian Drawings . . . at Windsor Castle*, London 1957, p. 20).
- Definitely in coll. King George III in 1775, on evidence of label on the back: 'A Man's Head in Black/with a Turbant on his head /By Rimbrant/ Sent by his Majesty 1775'<sup>1</sup>. In the King's Gallery at Kensington in 1818, taken to Windsor in 1835.

#### 9. Summary

Although to some extent resembling, in the manner of painting, Rembrandt's portraits from the earliest years in Amsterdam and even more his *Self-portrait* of c. 1629 in The Hague, no. C 54 cannot be attributed to him. It is over-meticulous and at the same time lacking in plastic differentiation in the lit areas, and provides so little suggestion of form and depth in the clothing and background that his authorship can be discounted. The painting does appear to have been produced in his immediate circle in 1631, and may be attributed to Isack Jouderville, a pupil of Rembrandt who was trained in his Leiden studio and followed him to Amsterdam.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 C. White, *The Dutch pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen*, Cambridge etc. 1982, no. 159.

## C55 Bust of a young man in gorget and plumed cap

SAN DIEGO, CAL., SAN DIEGO MUSEUM OF ART, ACC. NO. 3919

HDG 375A; BR. 144; BAUCH 137; GERSON 51

### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved painting from Rembrandt's studio in the earliest Amsterdam years.

### 2. Description of subject

Bust of a young man, turned slightly to the left with the gaze directed at the viewer. The face is lit quite strongly by light falling from the left, and a gorget with a chased edge also catches some of the light. The upper part of the gorget is covered by an olive-green neckerchief; the rest of the clothing is very dark. A chain, partly hidden under a cloak, runs diagonally across the chest. The man wears a brownish-purple cap with an ornamented band; along this there is a gold chain. Some cock's feathers in a jewelled metal holder are attached to the cap. The background is neutral.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 3 November 1971 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in excellent daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of ultraviolet light and an infrared photograph. A print of an X-ray mosaic of the painting was received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 57.7 × 46 cm. Comprises two planks, with the join at 21.5 cm from the lefthand edge. Back cradled (the cradle has since been removed). Evidence of woodworm along the join and at the righthand edge. SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Shows through in translucent areas of shadow in the face, and in the righthand corner of the eye on the right, as a yellow-brown. SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: The condition is generally good. UV light reveals a few small retouches along the join. Craquelure: none observed in the lighter areas; an extremely fine craquelure is seen here and there in the darker passages.

DESCRIPTION: The light parts of the face are painted quite thickly, with a distinct brushstroke, while the shadow areas are kept thin. The shapes are indicated with care, and the structure of the eyes drawn with fine lines. The dark, round pupils stand out crisply in the somewhat translucent brown irises, on which very fine and almost white rectangular catchlights have been placed. The white of the eyes is painted fairly thickly in the light, and more thinly in a brownish grey in the shadow. The lower edges are outlined with fine strokes of pink, and given small strips of light pink where they catch the light, with a white rim of moisture that is bordered at the top by a very fine scratched-in line. In the eye on the right the progression towards the shadow side of the face is rather confused. The quite pronounced eyebrows are painted in grey, with brushstrokes that can only occasionally be clearly followed; these lead gradually into the flesh tints of the forehead. At the centre of the forehead curved strokes of white have been placed over the quite thickly-applied flesh tint. Similar brushstrokes appear as highlights on the cheeks, where they follow the form – white on the left, and white and pink on the right. The nose shows a number of catchlights, the brightest at the tip. The

transition to a heavy shadow along the nose is fairly gradual, and in this shadow the modelling is suggested in shades of grey, reddish grey and yellow-brown. The nostril on the right is done in a thick black, that on the left more thinly and slightly ruddy in colour. The moustache is executed with distinct brushwork, in a dark grey; on the left the structure is reinforced with a few scratchmarks. The upper lip consists of a variety of strokes in a subdued red and red-grey. The somewhat impasto mouth-line is built up from small strokes of a dark grey, while the lower lip is given small touches of light grey placed vertically. Below the lip the shadow is indicated in a grey-red that runs into the dark grey of the tuft of beard on the chin, the hairs of which are suggested with both strokes and scratchmarks. In the short beard on the jaw the lay of the hair, tangled here and there, can readily be followed. The shadow side of the face offers a translucent layer over which a semi-opaque brownish yellow layer has been placed. The lefthand contour of the face is sharp by the hair, but becomes somewhat vague lower down. The transition from forehead to cap begins with a cast shadow against which the flesh tone is placed and which (especially to the right) merges vaguely into the flesh colour. The hair, in cool grey and brown, has little internal detail. The transition to the background is gradual.

The brownish-purple cap is painted fairly thickly, and is given a certain amount of internal detail. The motif used along the band across the forehead is a repeating pattern of three small vertical grey strokes. The chain on top of this is painted quite precisely in ochre-brown, with almost white catchlights. The jewelled holder in which the cock's feathers are stuck is painted in red, with catchlights in ochre-yellow and a very light whitish yellow. The feathers are placed over the cap and background with long strokes, and painted quite coarsely.

The neckerchief is done with long strokes running with the folds, in olive-green. The gorget is in cool and warm greys, the chased edge made up of squiggly strokes of a cool grey, ochre-yellow and white; towards the shadow the execution of this becomes coarser. Black shows through at various places. The clothing is painted in a virtually even and very dark grey, showing brushstrokes placed quite randomly, running in various directions and making no contribution to a suggestion of form. The chain is done fairly cursorily.

The background is made up of two layers: the lower layer is in a grey that becomes lighter towards the bottom right, and showing brushstrokes running in various directions. At the top this layer is, as is clear from the infrared photograph and from the X-ray, bordered by an arch. In the spandrels the yellowish ground shows through strongly even now, so that one may suppose that they were not painted on at this stage. At the centre above the cap, visible as a dark patch and in relief, one can detect an ostrich-feather that also appears in the infrared photograph and X-ray, and that must have belonged to the same stage of the painting. A slightly translucent layer of cool grey was then laid over the whole of the background, including the spandrels and ostrich-feather, and the cock's feathers were painted on top of this.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

Besides the spandrels already mentioned for which reserves were left in the first layer of paint for the background, dark reserves for the cap and hair can be seen, very much smaller than the shapes they have today. A reserve for the original ostrich-feather is vaguely visible. The first background shows a considerable range of radioabsorbency. The present contours of the body differ little from the reserve left for it in this

Fig. 1. Panel 57.7 × 46 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray





Fig. 3. Infrared photograph



Fig. 4. Detail (1:1)



first background. Dark traces of the first, scratched-in monogram (see *Signature* below) are vaguely visible.

The available print gives, in the lit parts of the face, the impression of quite wide, short strokes running in various directions.

#### *Signature*

At the bottom left in the background (<RHL (in monogram) 1631>). The hesitant execution using fine strokes, and the clumsy construction of the monogram, do not suggest that it is authentic. This signature is on top of an almost identical one that was probably scratched into the paint of the first background, while it was wet, using a blunt-tipped instrument. The signature was presumably gone over again when the second layer of background was applied.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### **4. Comments**

The present appearance of the painting poses a problem that affects an assessment. The question is whether the background one sees today was applied by the artist himself. The first layer would seem, in having a livelier brushwork and a more varied distribution of light and dark, more in line with what one would expect from a work by Rembrandt or one of his followers than the present somewhat flat and

unimaginative background. The present signature, with its painstaking carefulness, has also plainly been applied over an earlier one. One is thus inclined to ascribe the present background and signature to a different hand. Yet if one considers the cock's-feather plume painted over the second background layer, which is admittedly ineptly done but which like the plume-holder is similar in manner of painting to the rest of the adornments, then the homogeneous execution prompts one to attribute the changes in the background and plume to the artist himself.

The picture as it presents itself today does admittedly show a connexion with Rembrandt's *tronies* in the general approach to the subject, but it differs from them in the interpretation of form, the treatment of light and the manner of painting. One is struck by the lack of depth and plasticity and the unsuccessful connexion between the head and the shapeless body. The curiously simplified relationship between the lit and shadow areas of the face, separated by a continuously flowing, hazy dividing line, results in a peculiar stylization of the head. The brushwork, while slow and somewhat dabbing in the lit parts, shows a chaotic and ineffective use of scattered dots and strokes in the glistening ornament of the gorget. An attribution to Rembrandt himself may be ruled out, and many of the features mentioned recall works by (or attributable to) Isack Jouderville (cf. Introduction, Chapter III, figs. 26–36, 39). The treatment of light is very similar to that in the *tronies* from his hand, and so is the colour-scheme which, with the predominance of opaque and semi-opaque grey tints in various areas of the face, is even reminiscent of a work of a totally different subject such as the Denver *Minerva* (no. C 9).

Yet one cannot help feeling that an attribution of the San Diego picture to Jouderville is made less likely by the fact that two *tronies* the artist appears to have done in Rembrandt's Amsterdam workshop – the Windsor Castle *Young man in a turban* (no. C 54) and the Chapel Hill *Bust of a young woman* (no. C 58) – are appreciably closer to one another than they are to this picture, which shows a greater amount of decisiveness and articulation in the rendering in the face. It might also be conceivable that, while the other two works are mainly based on reminiscences of Rembrandt's Leiden works – the *Self-portrait* in The Hague (no. A 21) in particular –, the artist drew his inspiration for the San Diego *Young man* from a more recent prototype. If one makes a comparison with the 1632 *Portrait of a young man* in a Swedish collection (no. A 60), this suspicion seems to receive striking confirmation. Every feature, especially in the eyes (cf. Introduction, Chapter III, figs. 40 and 41), resembles down to the smallest

detail the corresponding one in the Rembrandt portrait. In the latter, however, an infinitely more convincing suggestion of depth and plasticity has been achieved, and the brushstroke has a freshness and spontaneity not to be found in the other work. It is therefore tempting to assume that if the San Diego picture was done by the same artist – in all likelihood Jouderville – who painted the *tronies* at Windsor Castle and Chapel Hill, the differences that exist between the firstnamed work and the other two are to be explained by the fact that the artist was in the case of the former working under the fresh impression of Rembrandt's *Portrait of a young man*.

There is however a serious obstacle to this solution. The Rembrandt portrait bears the apparently reliable date of 1632, while in the San Diego *Young man* an inscription with the year 1631 appears over an earlier (and apparently identical) one that was scratched into the wet paint and therefore must be considered contemporaneous with the painting. One may speculate on various explanations for what appears to be contradictory evidence. For the time being, one cannot go beyond saying that the San Diego picture is close to Jouderville's work in type and style but cannot be attributed to him with as much conviction as the pictures at Windsor Castle and Chapel Hill. Like these, it must at all events be considered as having been produced in Rembrandt's Amsterdam workshop.

For the possibility that such a painting was mentioned as early as 1637 as 'after Rembrandt', see entry no. C 54.

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

1. Panel 55 × 38 cm. Dealer P. de Boer, Amsterdam 1970 (as Jacques des Rousseaux). This copy shows neither the ostrich-feather that was painted out in the original, nor the cock's feathers seen in it today.

## 8. Provenance

- Coll. John Corbett, sale London 18 June 1904, no. 135.
- Dealer P. & D. Colnaghi & Co., London.
- Coll. Jhr. Henry Teixeira de Mattos, Amsterdam and Vogelenzang.
- Coll. Frank G. Logan, Chicago (from c. 1909).
- Acquired by the Fine Arts Gallery, San Diego in 1939.

## 9. Summary

Because of the meticulous but not really very effec-

tive manner of painting, and of the interpretation given to the subject-matter, the painting must be looked on as a work done in Rembrandt's studio during his first years in Amsterdam. It shows many characteristics that remind one of works by or attributable to Isack Jouderville.

**C56 Bust of Rembrandt**

BERLIN (WEST), STAATLICHE MUSEEN PREUSSISCHER KULTURBESITZ, GEMÄLDEGALERIE, CAT. NO. 808

HdG 525; BR. 23; BAUCH 304; GERSON 133

Fig. 1. Panel 56 × 47 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray





### 1. Summarized opinion

A generally well preserved painting, probably done in Rembrandt's workshop by the same hand as no. C 77 (Govaert Flinck ?) in or soon after 1633.

### 2. Description of subject

A young man with the features of Rembrandt is seen down to mid-chest, the shoulders set threequarters to the right, the head turned a little towards the viewer. The light falls from the left, leaving the righthand side of the figure in shadow; at the right a shadow is cast on the flat wall forming the background. On the opposite side the lit shoulder stands out clearly against a shadow that falls across the wall at that point as well. The area of the eyes is in shadow from the broad, slashed brim of an olive-green cap that has, around the flat crown, a small chain or cord into which a green-black plume is tucked on the right. The man wears a fluffy moustache and full, curling hair down to the shoulders. Over an olive-green tunic there is a gorget above which can be seen the edge of a white shirt. A chain round the shoulders lies up against the lower edge of the gorget at the chest; it is fastened at the shoulder, and hangs down again on the back.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in November 1968 (S. H. L., E. v. d. W.) in good daylight and out of the frame. Four X-ray films, covering the whole of the painting, were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 56 × 47 cm. Thickness c. 1.3 cm. The panel comprises three planks, with widths of (left to right) 8.3, 28.4 and 10.3 cm. Back bevelled to a thickness of 0.6 cm along all edges. The bevelling is remarkably straight and about 5 cm wide, other than on the right where the width varies from 3.5 – 4 cm. Vertical cracks run from the middle of the top and bottom edges; small blocks of wood have been glued to the back to provide stiffening at these points.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) has shown that the three planks come from different trees. The lefthand plank has 48 annual rings (not dated), the centre plank 273 rings (dated 1333–1605) and the righthand plank has 108 (+ 1 sapwood) annual rings (dated 1504–1611). The statistically average felling date of the tree from which the righthand plank comes is 1630 ± 5. Assuming that the central plank has been sawn along the border of the sapwood, and counting with the loss of 20 rings of sapwood (in view of the age of the tree), one arrives at an earliest possible felling date of 1625 for this tree as well.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Yellowish, visible in the lower edge of the lefthand eye and at the left above the mouth.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Generally good. There is wearing in the shaded eye area. The fact that the righthand eye is over-large and very dark may be due to restoration. Craquelure: small, horizontal craquelure lies over the light red lower lip, and cracking is also seen in the thickly painted parts of the cap.

DESCRIPTION: The colour-scheme is dominated by olive-green, browns and greys, and the main contrast is between the greyish-black gorget and the white edge of the shirt. The paint is generally applied thickly other than in the shadow areas on the cheek and chin on the right and in some parts of the clothing. The vertical grain of the panel can be seen in relief at many places. There is impasto in the cap, in the chain and, to a lesser degree, in the reflexion of light on the gorget.

In the lit areas the background consists of grey paint placed with short, wide brushstrokes over a black that shows through; these strokes run in a variety of directions, following the contour of the figure only at the cap. By the lefthand edge of the cap they lie slightly over the paint of the cap (which was thus painted earlier). In the dark areas at the upper right and level with the shoulders the brushwork becomes less apparent. To judge by the gradual merging difference of tone from the light to the darker passages, both were painted at the same time. The base colour of the cap is an olive green that in the light is worked up with deft touches of reddish, ochre-coloured and dull yellow paint; the dark accents are in black, and the little chain or cord is coloured ochre with dots of yellow. The plume is done with a fairly thick green, a darker green and black.

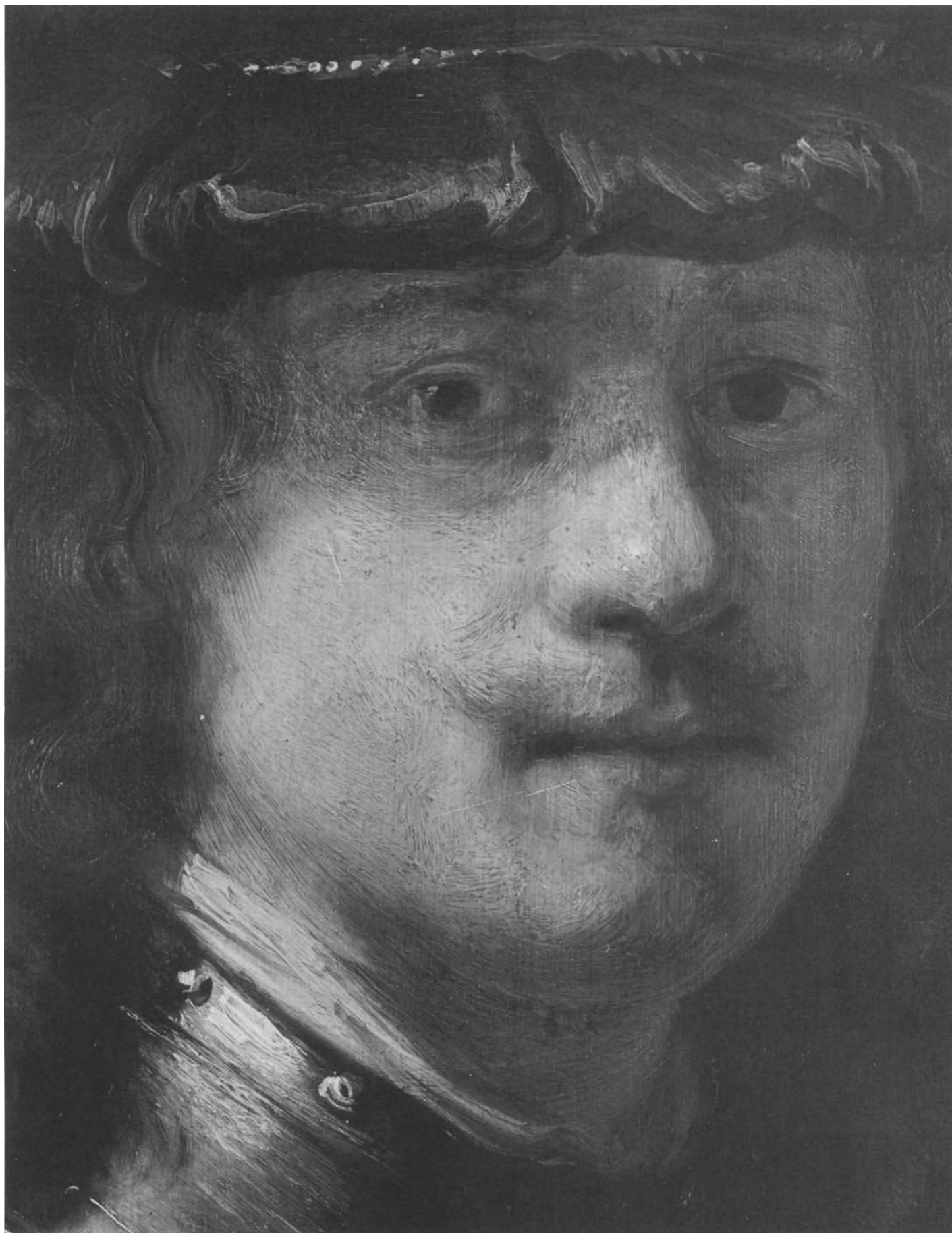
The hair is painted in brown and greyish tints with long, wide strokes that run with the fall of the curls; the sheen on the hair to the left is shown with fine strokes of yellowish paint placed over a dark underlying layer. The outline has here been worked up further, immediately after the application of the light background area, using both brushstrokes and scratchmarks; the latter, too, allow a darker underlayer to be glimpsed. To the right short, broad strokes of the light background lie partly underneath the loose, hazy curls of the hair (see also *X-Rays* below). Touches of a dark, opaque paint against the contour of the face accentuate the translucent quality of the shadow over the cheek, chin and throat. In the area of shadow below the cap and around the eyes the thickly-painted flesh tint is overlaid with a brown-grey that is half worn away; to the left at the temple and in the shadow of the nose on the cheek to the right there is a grey that has turned somewhat white. As can be seen from the X-ray, the lit area originally included the forehead, at a stage in which the sitter was shown not wearing a cap.

The eye on the left has a black, off-round pupil and an iris in a grey that covers only partially, with a dot of light at the upper left. The white of the eye is somewhat tinted. The upper eyelid is bordered at the top by thin strokes in grey and brown, and at the bottom by even thinner strokes gone over a number of times. The yellowish ground shows through a little at the lower eyelid. The eye on the right has probably been partly overpainted, as have the borders of the eyelid above it; the whole now appears rather sharp. This eye has a round, black pupil, a round, grey-black iris, and a brown-red in the corner. The edges of the upper eyelid are built up from a succession of strokes. There are thick strokes of paint both above and below the eye.

Continuous strokes follow the form of the jaw, chin and throat. Nose and mouth are indicated deftly and effectively, with a number of strong colour accents – a touch of carmine-red below the nose, and black with the same red for the nostrils. The mouth-line shows, from left to right, a progression of colour from black via red to grey-black; the lips are a bright red. Above the mouth the yellowish ground can be seen to the left, with a few strokes of flesh colour laid over it. The moustache above this is rendered in a very thin grey, mixed on the right with a few strokes of black.

The thin edge of the shirt is painted rather insensitively with broad strokes of white, and the gorget in similarly broad

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



fashion in an almost translucent grey-black with thick white on the highlight. On the lit shoulder an ochrish green is set, with bold but rather arbitrarily-placed strokes, over a brown layer that may form part of the underpainting. The adjoining shadow area on the shoulder and that over the chest are done in an occasionally thick and sometimes thinner brown and black. This layer very thinly overlaps the paint of the lit shoulder. The chain is handled very sketchily, and done in ochre-coloured, black and yellow paint.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

As Sumowski<sup>1</sup> reported, the radiographic image reveals that the sitter was initially shown without a cap; consequently the whole lefthand side of the face was shown lit in an early stage. In this part of the painting the rendering of form is defined by angular strokes around the eye that change into more or less straight strokes running downwards to the right on the cheek, and then in long and slightly curving strokes from the ear down to the chin and throat. The highlight on the forehead is in reality an accumulation of radioabsorbent components in successive layers of paint in the forehead and cap. For the rest, the strokes shown in the X-ray image on the cheek, nose and chin exactly match what is shown by the paint surface. This brings one to the conclusion that the areas of the face that appear light in the X-rays must not be interpreted as an underpainting, but were completed – including the lit forehead and the eye on the left, where the application of a cast shadow below the cap in a later stage made necessary a change in the tonal value. The catchlight in that eye is evidently a remnant of the earlier stage.

The dark reserves for the hair in the light image of the background reveal that originally the hair was planned to be shorter (as a locating guide, it may be noted that on the left the lower border runs level with the clearly-apparent wax seal on the back of the panel). On the left the shorter hair left part of an ear visible, and an eardrop with a catchlight.

The contour of the hair on the upper left does not coincide with the present position at which the hair projects from under the cap – the reserve is clearly taken further to the left. This means that what shows up as a light background in the X-ray matches an earlier, radioabsorbent background, which is seen also to run through the lefthand edge of the cap and then curves downwards and to the right, thus showing the lower margin of the hair. Insofar as brushwork can be made out in the X-ray image of the background, this coincides with the strokes of the light areas applied later. Here the sequence of working on the left and right was not the same – on the left the new background adjoins the contour altered by the addition of the cap and the lengthening of the hair, while on the right the short, broad strokes of the light area in the background lie partly underneath the hair (which was therefore added subsequently). These strokes are also plainly visible at the surface.

Strokes appearing light on both the gorget and the shoulder on the left, and stopping at the hair in its present form, provide strong evidence that the present appearance of both results from alterations made at one and the same stage. Two long, thin brushstrokes on the shoulder that are no longer visible but that show up light in the radiograph may be connected with the clothing in an earlier version. One of these runs left from the fastening of the chain, the other left of this again and diagonally downwards; they might be interpreted as slightly heightened lights on a cloak pulled forwards round the shoulder. From these observations it may be gathered that the gorget, too, was either added at a later stage or was at the least changed in its appearance, and that the costume beneath this

has certainly been gone over. There is a dark gap visible between the light background on the right and the shadow on the chin, which may be due to a correction of the contour.

Finally, one is struck by the fact that of the three planks making up the panel, that on the right shows up darker than the others; this is probably connected with the smaller amount of priming used, dictated by the denser structure of this plank (cf. *Support*, SCIENTIFIC DATA).

#### *Signature*

None.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

Despite the absence of both a signature and a date, the painting has always been accepted as an authentic self-portrait, dating from around 1633/34. In the invariably brief discussions of the work praise is given mainly to the vigorous approach, seen as proof of mastery. Unarguably, the deft and ebullient manner of painting is a characteristic feature of no. C 56. Nor can there be any doubt that this is a portrait of Rembrandt, and generally it does, in the type of the face, the pose of the figure and the distribution of light and shade, show certain similarities to the self-portraits from these years (nos. A 71, A 72, A 96 and A 97). The results of dendrochronology (see *Support* above) do not contradict the usual dating. Yet where the specific nature of the execution is concerned a closer examination shows that – compared precisely to these self-portraits – there are a number of differences that taken together make it hard to accept the Berlin portrait as authentic.

The X-rays yield important information as to the way the painting came to have its present appearance. As has been noted in the description of the X-rays, the figure had no cap at an earlier stage, and was shown with halflength hair. In all probability the gorget, too, was added only at a later stage, as was the chain; a cloak draped loosely over the shoulders disappeared that, to judge from a number of long, thin brushstrokes on the lefthand shoulder apparent in the X-rays, had been included at least in the sketch. The alterations to the figure made it necessary to alter the background, mainly in the upper half of the painting. As may be seen from the scratchmarks in the hair on the left, the background there was originally darker in tone. Bearing in mind that the brushstrokes on the lit cheek and chin that are visible in the radiograph match exactly those seen at the surface at these points, the X-rays show a head that existed not merely as a first lay-in but was virtually complete – a head that included lit areas on the forehead and

around the eye on the left that have now disappeared.

However, the X-ray not only provides evidence of the rather complicated genesis of the painting – it also tells us more about the question of authenticity. Especially in the lit parts of the face the pattern of the brushwork exhibits characteristic differences from that of the Rembrandt self-portraits. A characteristic feature of the Berlin painting is a dynamic whole made up of easy, broad brushstrokes that are angular round the eye, longer and embracing the form on the cheek and, especially, along the chin and at the throat. Something quite different is seen in the radiographic image of the self-portraits, which offer a complex of short, narrow brushstrokes that gradually build up the modelling. This difference can also be noted at the paint surface. The Berlin painting is different in having a free and, in general, somewhat coarse use of the brush combined with a generous application of the paint. Especially unusual is the fact that the broad treatment is not, as it is with Rembrandt, counterbalanced by a central focus in which a refined treatment determines the illusion of reality of the whole. Equally remarkable, compared to the self-portraits, is the rather cramped placing of the figure in the picture area (there are no real indications that the panel was reduced at a later date). In the whole of Rembrandt's production during these years there is no parallel to be found in any of Rembrandt's works from these years for the colour-scheme, quite dominated as it is by an olive green.

Alongside these clear divergences from the familiar picture there are considerations of quality that argue against an attribution to Rembrandt. These include the somewhat clumsy heaviness in the appearance of the figure, brought about particularly by the bulky shoulder area and the strong horizontal accent provided by the cap and feather, which are not really effective in creating depth. If the interpretation of the strokes on the lefthand shoulder already mentioned and present in the X-ray is correct, then the round back is due in part to a cloak that existed earlier, without the contour having been altered after its obliteration. In the chain the hurried manner of painting is far from effective – compared with this the two self-portraits in the Louvre (nos. A 71 and A 72) provide a much more persuasive suggestion of the same kind of jewellery, though rendered scarcely less cursorily. Equally ineffective are the scratchmarks halfway along the hair on the left, though these do correspond to a method that Rembrandt still used in the mid-30s. The execution of the upper part of the face, too, is weak. It is not just defects that arose only later, such as the wearing of the topmost, thin layer

of paint and the insensitive restoration of the eye on the right, that mar the appearance of the painting, but imperfections that stem from the application of the area of shadow over the eyes – the entire passage is rather flat and patchy, and the transitions from the face to the hair are noticeably weak. An exception to this is the eye on the left, which is painted as crisply as the bottom half of the face. Like the latter area, it must belong to the stage of the face that is still apparent in the X-rays – this is evidenced by the (now illogical) catchlight in the eye and by the yellowish ground that still shows through in the lower edge.

On their own, and even more so when taken together, the differences just described from genuine Rembrandt works make the Berlin portrait unacceptable as authentic. One tends rather to see it as the work of a pupil or follower. The radiograph gives some reason for a more precise supposition on this point. When it is compared with the Paris bareheaded *Self-portrait* (no. A 71) there are remarkable similarities in the appearance of the figure. The way the face is lit in that painting and has its features marked by this lighting, the turn of the head and the partly exposed and lit ear come remarkably close to the Berlin painting in an earlier stage, as evidenced by the X-rays. The fall of the hair, too, is a close match to what the X-rays of the present work suggest was its original appearance. There is some resemblance in the manner of painting, insofar as the Paris *Self-portrait* is the most cursorily treated of the works from this period, even though there is a clear difference between this and the overall broad treatment of the painting in Berlin.

The similarities between this work at an early stage and the Paris *Self-portrait* might be interpreted as evidence that the artist was initially striving after a result closer to the Paris *Self-portrait*, and may even have been basing himself on that work. In the subsequent course of the work drastic changes were made that introduced the green in the clothing (which differs radically from Rembrandt's use of colour) and a different distribution of light and shadow in the face. In this connexion it is noteworthy that a part of the earlier stage that remains, such as the lower half of the face, shows definitely more quality than the undifferentiated upper half of the face, the shoulder area and the chain, which date from a later stage of the work. Despite this discrepancy in quality one need not assume that the changes were made by another hand – the rhythm of the brushwork throughout the painting is too uniform for this to be the case. One can also take it that the rather coarse use of thick paint in the background and clothing has to be attributed to a great extent to these alter-

ations. As may be seen from the scratchmarks in the thick paint of the hair on the left, the background was there originally darker, so that on this point too the Berlin painting is closer to a work such as the *Self-portrait* in the Louvre. In gauging the relationship between the two works one has, finally, to take account of the possibility that the Paris painting was sawn down to its present oval shape only later, and may thus have also once been rectangular.

The motif of a head partly in shadow from a cap occurs repeatedly in Rembrandt, first in the 1629 *Self-portrait* in the Stewart Gardner Museum in Boston (no. A 20), the Liverpool *Self-portrait* of c. 1631 (no. A 32) and the Toledo *Young man* of 1631 (no. A 40). There is a resemblance with, especially, the Dresden *Young woman smiling* (no. A 76). Gary Schwartz<sup>2</sup> has even suggested, on the grounds of 'their many similarities – in pose, dress . . . , mood and, not least, size –' that it is 'at least possible that they (i.e. the Berlin and Dresden paintings) were intended as pendants, perhaps as engagement portraits [of Rembrandt and Saskia]'. However the two pictures do not go together, from the viewpoint either of colour (mostly olive green and brown in one case and green-blue and dark red in the other) or of scale and composition. A comparison does, indeed, make it clear how far they differ in their manner of painting; seen against the free but subtle execution of the Dresden work, that in Berlin appears heavy and coarse, and almost primitive in the relationship between brushstroke and the form being depicted.

The theory that the Berlin painting was done in Rembrandt's workshop by a follower, after an authentic self-portrait from 1633, is in line with thoughts expressed earlier by Gerson<sup>3</sup>: ' . . . since we know portraits of Rembrandt by Flinck, we must surely reckon it possible that other students painted his likeness. They probably copied self-portraits, which would have been the most readily available of all Rembrandt's paintings – and the likeliest starting points for experimentation'. Other paintings regarded as self-portraits can also be interpreted in this way. In the case of the Berlin painting it seems possible hypothetically to identify the author. The main means of doing so is comparison with the Dresden *Portrait of a man* (no. C 77). This presents on the other hand a number of striking similarities to the Berlin *Bust of Rembrandt* – in the somewhat primitive bravura of the brushwork, which does not always help to create clarity in the shape of the head or an effect of depth in the figure and background, and in the slightly flat or even linear treatment of the eye and nose area and (most of all) the hair. On the other, the Dresden painting (where a translucent underpainting on the ground is to a remark-

able extent left visible in the shadows and half-shadows) offers such a resemblance to the work of Govaert Flinck that the attribution of both works to him merits consideration. They would then both have been produced soon after Flinck – in 1633 at the latest – entered Rembrandt's studio. Where the Berlin painting is concerned, this dating is in line with the results of dendrochronology examination of the panel (see *Support*, SCIENTIFIC DATA), and with the notion that the first version of it was based on a work by Rembrandt dated 1633 (see further no. C 77 under 4. *Comments* and Introduction, Chapter III p. 88).

If this attribution of the Berlin painting were correct, then it would throw a remarkable light on the relationship between Rembrandt and the 16- or 17-year-old Flinck, who had just finished his apprenticeship with Lambert Jacobsz. in Leeuwarden before coming to work with Rembrandt. On the one hand Flinck would, in the freedom of brushwork and the overall approach to figure and background, have been following Rembrandt – certainly in the first version based on the Paris *Self-portrait*, but also in the final one with its lighter background –, and on the other he would (in the ultimate version) have been moving clearly away from Rembrandt's prototype in his use of colour, especially an extensive use of olive green – perhaps as a result of his earlier training. Flinck was, in the later 1630s, to show a preference for bright, contrasting colours, evident from his Amsterdam *Blessing of Jacob* earlier dated as 1638 (Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 8).

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Hofstede de Groot<sup>4</sup> mentions an engraving by Paolo Caronni (Monza 1779–Milan 1842).
2. Etching by Andreas Ludwig Krüger (Potsdam 1743–c. 1805).

## 7. Copies

None.

## 8. Provenance

- Possibly identical with: 'Rembrant. Portrait van hem zelve, met een Goude Ketting om. h. 21½ d., b. 18¼ (Rhineland feet) [= 56.1 × 47.6 cm]' (Portrait by Rembrant of himself, with a gold chain), coll. Comte de Wassenauer d'Obdam, sale The Hague 19 August 1750 (Lugt 736), no. 2 (202 guilders to Brouwer for Avet); not however in the Aved sale in Paris, 24ff November 1766 (Lugt 1563). It must be commented that there is no mention in this description of such a striking feature as the cap.
- Unknown collection or sale, to which a somewhat

delapidated label on the back refers in 18th-century handwriting: 'Nr. 19. Rembrandt van Rijn, Le portrait de l'auteur'.

– Perhaps Bildergalerie, Potsdam, from a mention in: C. F. Nicolai, *Beschreibung der Königlichen Residenzstädte Berlin und Potsdam*, 1786, 3rd edn III, p. 1210 no. 87 (though this entry may relate to the *Self-portrait* no. A 96)<sup>3</sup>.

– Transferred in 1830 from the royal palaces to the Königliche Museen in Berlin (lacquer stamp at right on the back).

– Kaiser Friedrich Museum, Berlin, cat. 1911, no. 808.

### 9. Summary

In spite of the absence of a signature and date, no. C 56 has always been accepted as an authentic self-portrait, and because of broad similarities to the self-portraits from 1633/34 has been dated in those years. Closer comparison with these works however brings one to the conclusion that the Berlin painting cannot be seen as authentic. The differences that determine this judgment involve the free but rather coarse manner of painting that typifies the Berlin portrait and which especially in the lower part must be termed hardly effective, the colour-scheme, atypical for Rembrandt, in which olive green plays a dominant part, and the weak execution of the shadowing on the upper half of the face, applied only at the final stage.

This latter is, according to the X-rays, connected with the addition (by the artist himself) of the cap; in the first version the painting must have shown resemblances to Rembrandt's 1633 *Self-portrait* in Paris (no. A 71). It can be seen as the work of an assistant who painted it in Rembrandt's workshop in or soon after 1633. There is reason to see the author as Govaert Flinck, who must have come to work in Rembrandt's studio in that very year.

### REFERENCES

- 1 Sumowski 1957/58, p. 235.
- 2 Gerson 133, p. 272.
- 3 Gerson p. 66.
- 4 HdG 525.



**C 57 Bust of a young woman** (commonly called the artist's sister)  
MILAN, PINACOTECA DI BRERA, CAT. NO. 614

HDG 694; BR. 87; BAUCH 454; GERSON 117

Fig. 1. Panel 60.5 × 50.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



### 1. Summarized opinion

A quite well preserved work, probably done in Rembrandt's circle or even workshop in or soon after 1632. It is doubtful that it was originally oval.

### 2. Description of subject

A woman is seen to just above the waist, the body three-quarters left and the head turned slightly towards the viewer. The light falls from the left. In her blond hair she wears a jewel from which a dark veil hangs down to either side. Over a white pleated shirt reaching up to the throat she has a dark overgarment fastened together at the top; lower down this gapes open to reveal a brownish undergarment. A broad edge embroidered with gold thread, among which colourful stones are set, borders the overgarment along the top and the fastening.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 13 September 1972 (J. B., P. v. Th.) in reasonable daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of two X-ray films, one of the head and the other covering the chest area; prints of these were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 60.5 × 50.5 cm. Single plank. Back planed post-1967 (when the X-rays were taken) to a thickness of 0.65 – 0.8 cm and given a modern cradle. The X-rays show a previous, much older cradle (see 4. *Comments*); they reveal parts of a fairly wide stiffening frame inside the edges of the oval, a continuous horizontal central batten and a vertical reinforcement made up of two battens. Along the lefthand side of the latter the panel is split over its entire height, with the split running through the lefthand wing of the subject's nose. Shorter splits are apparent in the background. As the original back surface is not intact and the earlier presence of bevelling cannot now be checked, it is impossible to say whether the panel has always been oval (though see below under *Signature* and 4. *Comments*).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light brown shows through the translucent paint of the irises, but is apparent nowhere else. Scratchmarks made in the lit parts of the hair expose a brown (probably from an underpainting), and those at the top of the hair reveal a dark paint layer (perhaps that of the background).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good, so far as can be seen through the layer of varnish (which is especially thick over the background); there are a few retouches along the splits mentioned above, mostly in the face. Craquelure: a few very fine vertical cracks in the shirt and forehead.

DESCRIPTION: In general the paint is applied thickly, most so in the cheek area to the left of the nose-tip. Only along the lefthand outline of the forehead and cheekbone, to the right along the nose, in the temple, the shadow of the cheek and the ear is the paint layer so thin that the grain of the wood can be seen in relief.

The background is opaquely painted everywhere, in a grey

that is very dark at the top along the head, a little lighter in tone to the right, and somewhat lighter and thicker at the lower left; in the lighter parts the brushstroke is visible, running in various directions.

The head is done opaquely almost everywhere, with some amount of impasto in the middle of the forehead, on the ridge and the tip of the nose and to the left of the latter; in the light it is in a pale flesh colour and a little pink on the cheeks, using partly fine and partly broad strokes that most (on the nose and around the eyes) follow the plastic form but sometimes (on the forehead and left above the bridge of the nose) run independently of it. Along the lefthand contour there is a narrow zone of thinner, light reddish-brown paint. The half-shadows along the side of the nose, along the temple, under the lower lip and at the righthand corner of the mouth are executed in a thinner, smoother light grey. Those along the chin are in a thicker grey, adjoined downwards by a zone of much thicker and lighter grey that indicates a reflexion of light and, in the most thickly painted part, has a number of brushstrokes set crosswise. Below the chin the shadow is shown in a warmer grey that continues to the right in a fairly flat, thickly painted area, of shadow; dark grey lines render the folds in the skin under the chin.

Both eyes have a rather flat effect. They show a fold of skin, drawn in light brown, above the eyelid; the latter has an unsharp lower border. The whites of the eyes are done in off-white and grey, and the irises in a thin and slightly translucent grey on which quite large catchlights of irregular shape have been placed in a thin off-white. The pupils are done in a thin black; the inner corners of the eyes have a little flat pink. The lower borders of the eyes are marked with a fairly thick flesh colour, but offer no reflexions of lights to represent the eye moisture.

The mouth-line is built up from small strokes of brown; the lips are painted with touches of reddish pink with two strokes of grey for shadows along the underside of the top lip.

The hair is executed with short brushstrokes of yellow paint that to the right and left extend over the background. Scratchmarks help to accentuate the hair – a few long and curving scratches at the top, and numerous squiggly ones by the cursorily indicated ear and to the left of it. At the very top a few spots of ochre yellow with a little red and some dots of broken white give a shapeless indication of a jewel. The veil is set over the background with strokes of grey, heightened to the left with a little ochre yellow to show areas of sheen.

The shirt is painted over a bluish underlayer (that shows through) with partly thin and partly thicker fine strokes of white, without there being any clear suggestion of pleats. The decorated edge of the overgarment is painted in a variety of shades of ochre yellow with varied and somewhat chaotic brushstrokes that in the shadow stretch out the paint thinly while in the light they apply it sometimes with a dragging movement and sometimes as thick dots and smears. Four square stones are indicated in carmine red, thin brown and thick ochre brown, with heavy catchlights. The overgarment itself is done in darker and slightly lighter greys; the outline on the left is vague. To the right a little reddish brown shows through. In the opening between the two panels of this garment broad strokes of brown are placed over a flat dark grey.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

In the lower section the background appears faintly as light. The dark reserve that can be seen to have been left in this for the neck on the right indicates that the veil was painted on top of the background. In the head the lightest areas correspond

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



for the most part with the highest lights that were described as painted thickest when discussing the paint surface. The hair, too, shows up very light, with dark traces of the scratchmarks. A dark zone left of the cheek along the contour of the head coincides with the thin layer of paint noted at the surface.

#### *Signature*

In the right background, just above the middle and placed so close to the edge that this can hardly have formed the original border of the painting, in a quite thick dark grey <PHL (in

monogram).van Ryn/ 1632>. The lack of spontaneity in the letters and figures and the absence of mutual cohesion between them do not produce a convincing impression, and prompt doubt as to the authenticity of the signature. There is no trace of the *P* having had a tail that would make it an *R*.

#### *Varnish*

Uneven cleaning has left large areas still under a thick layer of varnish, especially in the background but also in parts of the head.

#### 4. Comments

Although in its present state, marked by uneven cleaning, the painting is not entirely easy to assess, one can say that the execution differs considerably from Rembrandt's way of painting, and in general makes a poor impression. The differences are evident first of all in the brushwork. In the head the paint relief in the most thickly painted passages is not unlike that in Rembrandt's work from the early 1630s, but on a number of points the brushwork lacks the constructional logic one would expect from him; this is most clearly the case above the eye on the left where (as can also be seen from the X-ray) the curving brushstrokes on the forehead collide with the horizontal strokes above the eyebrow and in the reflexion of light to the right below the chin, where a few strokes are at right angles to the main direction of the brushwork, which follows the curve of the form. In the clothing the treatment is rather superficial and scarcely appropriate, being sometimes quasi-brilliant (as in the gold embroidery), sometimes finicky (in the pleated shirt) and sometimes cursory (in the veil, which is placed over the background); in all these instances there is scant suggestion of form. The same is true for the mouth, where a certain casualness of treatment results in a plastically-poor and fragmented effect, and for the dark eyes, which remain flat and sketchy and whose tonal value contrasts uncomfortably with the pale flesh colour of the scarcely-shaded eye sockets. The hair is strikingly yellow in colour (where Rembrandt might be expected to have used a more discreet palette) and shows up remarkably light in the radiograph. It contains an excessive number of not very effective scratchmarks done in the wet paint, especially in the shadow parts. The background (admittedly the most difficult to judge because of the thick layer of varnish) offers neither the very dark and smooth treatment seen a few times in Rembrandt (e.g. nos. A 55 and A 84), nor the more vividly graduated appearance that one usually finds with him, but something of an intermediate version – despite a minor variation between very dark and less dark grey, the effect is one of deadness. The X-ray, too, differs in more than one respect from the radiographic image normally associated with Rembrandt. It confirms and reinforces the impression (already given by the paint surface) of a rather unsystematic use of the brush in the face and of strong and not always logical concentrations of light that correspond roughly to the parts seen as thickest at the surface. In general the execution is typified by a lack of sureness of touch. From all this it may be inferred that the attribution to Rembrandt himself, which has never

so far been doubted in the literature, may be ruled out.

The execution of the painting does not argue against the belief that it comes from the 17th century, and a connexion with Rembrandt's work is unmistakable. The artist seems to have based himself on an authentic work by Rembrandt such as the *Bust of a young woman* of 1632 in Boston (no. A 50). The similarity is seen first of all in the pictorial presentation – a similar figure, seen in the same clothing from a different (and more usual) angle; all that has been added is the veil hanging down from the head, but as the X-ray reveals this may be an afterthought or even a subsequent addition. The resemblance also extends to aspects of pictorial execution. Although this achieves throughout only a modest effect of plasticity, the general character of the brushwork and the colour-scheme are sufficiently Rembrandtesque to justify the assumption that an immediate follower, possibly working in Rembrandt's workshop, was responsible for the painting.

There is external evidence that the painting was looked on, well before 1730, as a portrait done by Rembrandt of his wife. This is clear from a drawing in Teylers Stichting in Haarlem (7. *Copies*, 1; fig. 4) that was in the collection of Valerius Röver as a work by Rembrandt, as may be seen from Röver's inventory of the 1730s (under no. 46, a number also written on the back of the drawing; cf. P. Schatborn in: *N.K.J.* 32 (1981), p. 40), and that was described as a portrait of Rembrandt's wife together with that of himself. The latter work, also in Haarlem, is a similarly executed drawing after the *Portrait of the artist* of 1632 now in Glasgow (no. A 58). Both drawings are today, on the grounds of signatures that are difficult to read, ascribed to Dirck Dircksz. Santvoort, who died in 1680. It is hard to offer any opinion as to this attribution; but it is noteworthy that in an estate valued in Amsterdam by Hendrick Uylenburgh in 1647 that included a number of Rembrandt etchings there were 'Een Tronij na Rembrant van Dirck van Santvoort', valued at 10 guilders, and 'Een Tronij van Rembrant met een ebben lijst' (a *tronie* by Rembrant in an ebony frame) valued at 60 guilders (Strauss *Doc.*, 1647/4). It will presumably never be possible to verify that these paintings were the same as those now preserved in Milan and Glasgow; but it can be concluded with certainty that Santvoort did indeed paint a *tronie* after Rembrandt, and the Santvoort-like signatures on the drawings offer at the very least a remarkable coincidence. One has to allow for the possibility that Santvoort, who is known to have been to some extent under Rembrandt's influence (cf. no. A 16, 4. *Comments*) in his early years – his

Fig. 4. Copy 1. Haarlem, Teylers Stichting



earliest dated works are from 1632 –, produced the Milan painting and similar pictures ‘after Rembrandt’.

It is uncertain whether the painting has always had its present format; the back is no longer intact, so there is no evidence on this point. The placing of the signature right up against the righthand edge of the panel does however make one suspect that the painting (though copied in the drawing mentioned earlier as being oval) was originally larger, and in that case probably rectangular. The same applies to the Boston painting, the *Glasgow Portrait of the artist* (no. A 58) with which around 1700 it formed a pair, and to the Paris *Self-portrait* of 1633 (no. A 71) with which it perhaps formed a pair around 1800. The latter pairing may be assumed on the grounds of the remarkable cradle that no. C 57 had up until 1967, and of a similar cradle still partly shown by the painting in the Louvre. Both paintings were in the Musée Napoléon, whence no. C 57 was sent to Milan; Vivant Denon must have been struck by the difference in quality between the two works.

##### 5. Documents and sources

None.

##### 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Engraving by Philibert Boutrois (active in Paris c. 1775–1814) in: Filhol, *Galerie du Musée Napoléon V*, Paris 1808, no. 311, with inscription: *No. 311 – REMBRANT – Eco.<sup>le</sup> Flam.<sup>de</sup> / Dessiné par Plonski – Gravé par Boutrois / PORTRAIT DE FEMME*. Reproduces the picture in an oval, in the same direction as the painting; the veil and clothing show rather more internal detail than can now be seen in the original.

##### 7. Copies

1. Drawing in black and brown chalk heightened with white, on very thin (Japan) paper; oval 27.7 × 19.3 cm, signed on the right in the background DVA(S?), the last two or three letters in monogram, Haarlem, Teylers Stichting (no. OX65, as Dirck Dircksz. Santvoort (1610/11–1680)) (fig. 4). In the same collection there is a similarly executed copy after the *Glasgow Portrait of the artist* (no. A 58) (ibid. no. OX64). Both drawings are undoubtedly, as pointed out by P. Schatborn (in: *N.K.J.* 32, 1981, p. 40), identical with two drawings in an inventory by Valerius Röver of Delft from the 1730s (Amsterdam, University Library, ms. II A 17-4, nos. 45 and 46) listed as Rembrandts: ‘T. Pourtrait van Rembrand A<sup>O</sup>. 1634. met swart krijt en gehooft, Ovaal . . . . . / Een Dito zijnde de vrouw van Rembrand in t’ haïr gehult en een swarte kap achter ahangende met een tabbart over de schouders. Deeze twee zijn beïjde van Rembrand soo uijtvoerig en konstig geteekent als ietz van hem bekend is.’ (The portrait of Rembrand A<sup>O</sup> 1634. in black chalk and heightened, Oval . . . / A ditto being the wife of Rembrand framed in her hair and with a black cap hanging down behind with a tabard over the shoulders. These two are both drawn by Rembrand as thoroughly and artfully as anything known by him).

##### 8. Provenance

– Musée Napoléon; Filhol op. cit. (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*) no. 311: ‘Rembrandt, Portrait de femme . . . Peint sur bois, hauteur soixante centimètres ou un pied dix pouces; largeur cinquante centimètres six millimètres ou un pied six pouces six lignes’. Transferred to the Pinacoteca di Brera in 1813.

##### 9. Summary

Up to now it has never been doubted that no. C 57 is a work by Rembrandt; but the execution shows so many divergences from his work, and so many weaknesses, that the attribution to him must be seen as out of the question. An attribution to an assistant working in Rembrandt’s studio is probable, and there is some evidence that the author of the painting could be Dirck Dircksz. Santvoort. The artist based himself on the Boston *Bust of a young woman* of 1632 (no. A 50). The painting may originally have been rectangular.



**C58 Bust of a young woman** (commonly called the artist's sister)  
CHAPEL HILL, N.C., MOREHEAD PLANETARIUM, UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA

HDG 695; BR. 88; BAUCH 463; GERSON —

Fig. 1. Panel 53.3 × 39.3 cm



### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved painting that was done in Rembrandt's workshop, probably by Isack Jouderville. It is doubtful whether the panel was originally oval.

### 2. Description of subject

The woman is shown to just above the waist, turned a little to the right, in strong light that falls from the left. In her reddish blond hair she wears jewellery with glistening stones or pearls, and from her ear hangs a translucent eardrop. Around her neck a thin neckerchief lies in concentric folds; apparently underneath it can be seen a string of pearls. She wears a very dark green garment with adornment that may consist of gold-thread embroidery; on the shoulder on the left this glistens in the light. There is also a gold chain over the shoulders, gathered up in the middle. The flat background shows a little light to the right.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 29 April 1970 (J. B., S. H. L.) in unfavourable circumstances, in the frame on the wall under artificial light, and with the aid of an ultraviolet lamp.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 53.3 × 39.3 cm (sight size). Single plank. Further information was kindly supplied by the museum's director, Innis H. Shoemaker, after the painting had been taken from the wall (letter dated 15 August 1983). Thickness  $c. 0.9 \pm 0.1$  cm. The back has remains of straight bevelling at top, bottom, right and left to a thickness of  $c. 0.7, 0.5, 0.5$  and  $0.6$  cm respectively. It is therefore doubtful whether the panel originally had this oval shape.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown is exposed in large patches in the neckerchief and in smaller areas to the right in the background by the body contour, in the left background level with the forehead and by the neck. The same colour is entirely or almost entirely exposed at many points including the face, e.g. in the shadow of the eye-socket on the left, in the grey iris on that side and in the centre of the carmine-red upper lip.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Generally good. Under UV radiation it can be seen that a number of dark areas (in the eye area on the left, the right pupil, the crease in the cheek and the corner of the mouth on the left) have been retouched to an insignificant extent. Craquelure: a fine net pattern of cracks that reveal a light underlayer is seen in the shadows of the head and neck. DESCRIPTION: In large areas, in particular in parts of the background and of the lit side of the head and, especially, in the neckerchief, the paint is applied thinly and the grain of the panel is clearly apparent. The paint is thicker in the highest light on the forehead, and in the shadow areas on the lefthand cheek and on and below the chin; impasto accents are found in the neckerchief and, in particular, in the embroidery of the garment on the lefthand shoulder. Below a horizontal borderline across the lower chest the dark paint is conspicuously thin

(information kindly supplied by Mr Evan H. Turner in a letter dated 16 April 1983).

The background is done in greys, thin and dark at the top, covering more fully downwards and to the left, and on the right thicker and lighter with clear strokes along the neck and shoulder that follow the contour. The paint of the neckerchief and clothing evidently lie over that of the background, while higher up one gets rather the impression that the shadowed cheek and the background have been carefully butted up one against the other.

In the lit part of the head there is mostly a yellowish flesh colour applied comparatively thinly and without any clear brushstroke; only the highest light on the forehead is painted more thickly, with a dabbing action, and the bright pink on the cheek shows on the left (where it is mixed with some white and flesh colour) a brushstroke that follows the curves of the plastic form. Along the jawline there is a thin, cool grey that becomes darker towards the chin. The shadow part of the head is done predominantly in a quite flat, opaque grey that is thickest by the corner of the mouth on the right; below the eyepouch there is a reddish area. The cast shadow to the right of the nose is executed in a red-brown that on the ridge of the nose is led into by a thin grey over the flesh colour and by a thin and somewhat grubby flesh colour. In the nose, painted on the side towards the light in a pale flesh tint, a little pink has been used for the wing. A spot of thick carmine red forms the nostril. Alongside the wing of the nose a thin grey with a little brown has been used to show the crease in the cheek; the same colours recur, rather darker, in the lefthand corner of the mouth.

The eye-socket on the left consists for the greater part of a thin brown with some thin grey (beside which the ground is exposed), and continues as a very thin brown indicating the eyebrow. The fold of skin above the eyelid is formed by a darker brown that on the left ends, with a few strokes, in a light brown patch. The eyelid itself, in pink, flesh colour and a little grey, has a yellow-white highlight and merges into brown towards the right; at the lower edge it is bordered by a vague line of grey and a little exposed ground, especially to the left of the iris. The latter is painted in a thin brown-grey, and there is on the left a vague catchlight with, opposite this, strokes of lighter grey. The lower edge of the eye is formed by a quite broad stroke of a ruddy colour that becomes a brown further to the right. The inside corner of the eye is indicated vaguely in brown, while the outside corner is similarly indistinct in its structure. The shadow to the right below the eye is shown in a somewhat patchy brown; some grey provides the transition to the flesh colour. The eye on the right, with a noticeably large iris and an eyelid running out broad to the right, is done in browns with a little grey and brown-grey, and rather clumsily. The mouth shows a thick mouth-line (especially to the right) done in a dark brown-black, which towards the left is partly masked by the carmine red of the upper lip. The lower lip is shown quite formlessly in a thin pink on the left, and on the right in shades of carmine red. The fairly broadly brushed, somewhat yellowish tint of the lit part of the neck merges into a grey area of shadow; the cast shadow below the chin is in a flat, darker grey-brown.

The hair is shown in a thin, reddish light brown, with thicker strokes of a pale flesh colour and some grey; thin strokes of paint float hazily out over the background. Grey dots are used to indicate a jewel. A few strokes of a light brown flesh colour are used to show the ear, with two thick spots of yellow for the ear-pendant with the translucent stone in it, modelled in greys with a white-grey catchlight.

The folded neckerchief around the throat, with a vague hint

Fig. 2. Detail (1:1)



of a string of pearls, is done in the lit part with very thin strokes of flesh colour and whitish paint placed over the partly-exposed ground, and enlivened with thin and thicker strokes and touches of green and grey-white, thicker dots and strokes of a dull yellow and yellowish flesh colour; the shadow part to the right is in thin, darker greys, and is rather lacking in form.

The lit part of the clothing on the left is painted in blue-green with small strokes and touches of white and with dark, thick clumps on which there are odd shapes in ochre yellow and light yellow to indicate ornamentation and the chain; in the shadow the latter are done in thin ochre yellow. To the right the principal colour is a thinner dark brown (though painted in part in thick clumps) that occasionally leaves the ground exposed, with a few accents in a thick dull yellow.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

None.

#### *Signature*

None.

#### *Varnish*

Uneven cleaning has left a substantial layer of varnish over large areas.

#### 4. Comments

The painting offers a strange contradiction in that it shows a very Rembrandtesque subject – immediately calling to mind his Boston *Bust of a young woman* (no. A 50) – combined with an execution that clearly differs from Rembrandt's manner of painting. The discrepancies involve laborious transitions from the mainly thickly painted grey areas of shadow in the head to the mostly thin and smoothly done lit flesh areas, the paucity in the suggestion of form, the hesitant and weak contours that result in scant effect of depth, and the treatment of the clothing and jewels that, despite an exaggerated paint

relief and a plethora of catchlights, lack any suggestion of physical consistency and shape. A comparison with the Boston *Bust of a young woman* does in fact make it very clear how far removed no. C 58 is from Rembrandt's work. Not unreasonably Gerson<sup>1</sup> thought it was a copy. Many of the features just listed make one suspect that this is a work by Isack Jouderville. The massive character of the shadow side of the face, and its relation to the lit half, are together with the plastically amorphous and weakly-contoured appearance of the body strongly reminiscent of the Windsor Castle *Bust of a young man in a turban* from the same year (no. C 54). Almost as good as his signature is the presence of numerous highlights spread chaotically over the lit shoulder. There is a resemblance in this respect not only with almost all the *tronies* by Jouderville but also with the Denver *Minerva* (no. C 9), where a thin neckerchief similar to this one is marked with numerous isolated catchlights (see Introduction, Chapter III pp. 76–87).

If we are in fact dealing here with a work by Jouderville, then the Chapel Hill painting was probably produced a year later than the one in Windsor Castle, under the fresh impetus of Rembrandt's Boston *Bust of a young woman* of 1632, though still with clear reminiscences of Rembrandt's *Self-portrait* in The Hague, datable in 1629 (no. A 21), that played a role in the earlier works. There are quite evident echoes of that *Self-portrait* in the distribution of light and shade in the head, and in the shape of the eyes and mouth area. This, too, is in line with the mental image we can form of the artistic personality of Jouderville, whose creativity seems to have been based on a very limited number of prototypes from Rembrandt's work, among which the Hague *Self-portrait* occupies an important place.

Judging from the remnants of straight bevelling at the back, the panel may have originally been rectangular and have been reduced to the present oval at some time prior to 1767 (see 8. *Provenance*). Unlike the picture at Windsor Castle, the painting does not carry a Rembrandt signature and date, but these may have disappeared when it was reduced. One can assume that Jouderville executed it while an assistant in Rembrandt's workshop. In this respect the painting may be compared with similar female *tronies* in Milan (no. C 57) and Richmond, Virginia (Br. 90), though they are clearly from different hands. Probably it was paintings like these that were listed in 17th-century inventories as 'after Rembrandt', from which it need by no means be concluded that they were all faithful copies of lost originals. One must rather imagine that a type introduced by Rembrandt – in this instance the

Boston *Bust of a young woman* – was repeated in a free manner by a variety of assistants, who may or may not have used the same model to sit for them.

If our reconstruction of the history of the painting (which differs somewhat from that posited by Hofstede de Groot<sup>2</sup>) is correct, then the painting was, remarkably enough, in two French collections in the latter half of the 18th century together with the Boston prototype, which was also oval at that time though it need not have always been so (see 8. *Provenance*).

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

1. Canvas 58 × 43.5 cm, earlier coll. Von Dohna (photo RKD). Not examined by us. Shows the bust in a dark painted oval framing, on a rectangular canvas.

## 8. Provenance

Not, as Hofstede de Groot<sup>2</sup> assumed, coll. Comte de Sommariva, sale Paris 18 February 1839, no. 90; cf. no. A 50. – Together with no. A 50 in coll. de Julienne, sale Paris 30 March–22 May 1767 (Lugt 1603), no. 131: 'Rembrandt van Ryn. Deux Bustes de jeunes femmes gracieuses: l'une vue de face & l'autre de trois quarts; elles portent leurs cheveux, des boucles à leurs oreilles, le haut de leur chemise couvre la gorge; leur robe est d'un gros vert noirâtre, l'une bordée d'une dentelle d'or, & l'autre enrichie d'agrémens. Rembrandt van Ryn 1632 est marqué sur un de ces deux morceaux; ils sont sur bois de forme ovale dans des bordures dorées. Chacun porte 22 pouces de haut sur 16 de large [= 59.4 × 43.2 cm]. (1210 francs to Donjeux).

\*– Together with no. A 50 in coll. Duc de La Vallière, sale Paris 21ff February 1781 (Lugt 3221), no. 47: 'Rimbrandt Van Ryn. Deux Bustes de forme ovale: ils représentent des portraits de jeunes Femmes coëffées en cheveux; leur habillement noir est enrichi de broderies & chaînes d'or. Ces deux Tableaux d'une fonte de couleur admirable & d'une belle harmonie, méritent un rang distingué dans les ouvrages de ce grand Peintre. Haut. 22 pouc. larg. 15 [= 59.4 × 40.5 cm]. B[ois].'

– Sale London around 1800 (see Demidoff sale catalogue, below).

– Coll. F. A. W. C. Baron Van Nagell van Ampsen (according to the Demidoff sale catalogue acquired at the end of the 18th century at a sale in London), sale The Hague 5 September 1851, no. 53 (4020 guilders to Roos).

– Coll. Anatole Demidoff (S. Donato), sale Paris 18 April 1868, no. 12 (21 600 francs).

– Coll. Marquis Landolfo Carcano, sale Paris 30 May – 1 June 1912, no. 171 (365 000 francs to Durand-Ruel).

– Probably coll. John McCormack, New York (letter from Evan H. Turner dated 16 April 1983).

– Minneapolis, coll. F. W. Clifford (1935)<sup>3</sup>.

– Dealer M. Knoedler & Co., New York, 1949 (letter from Innis H. Shoemaker, dated 15 August 1983).

– Coll. John Motley Morehead, Rye, N.Y.

#### 9. Summary

The subject matter, strongly reminiscent of Rembrandt's Boston *Bust of a young woman* of 1632 (no. A 50), is treated in a manner plainly different from that of Rembrandt. Features such as the opaque shadow areas, the hesitant body contours and, especially, the exaggerated but ineffective highlights in the costume suggest the authorship of Isack Jouderville, who must then have painted it in Rembrandt's workshop in 1632. The panel may originally have been rectangular.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 Br.-Gerson 88.
- 2 HdG 695.
- 3 Br. 88.

## C59 Bust of a young woman (commonly called the artist's sister)

ALLENTOWN, PENN., SAMUEL H. KRESS COLLECTION,  
ALLENTOWN ART MUSEUM, NO. 61.35.G

HdG 696; BR. 86; BAUCH 453; GERSON 116

### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved work, more likely to have been produced in Rembrandt's workshop than outside it.

### 2. Description of subject

The figure, turned three-quarters right, is seen just to the waist. The light falls from the left front, and most of the head is lit. The young woman looks towards the viewer. At the back of her head of wispy, reddish-blond hair she wears a headdress of ribbons and jewels. Over a black overgarment, open at the front, there is a wide lace collar, on top of this a transparent, folded neckerchief and three rows of a gold (or amber?) chain with an end hanging free. There is a string of pearls round the throat higher up. An undergarment visible at the front is gathered with a belt with a silver-grey bow.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 24 April 1970 (J. B., S. H. L.) in reasonable daylight and out of the frame. An X-ray print of the head and shoulders was received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 63 × 49.8 cm. Two planks, with the join about 11 cm from the righthand side. Back planed down to a thickness of c. 0.5 cm, and cradled. A vertical crack runs a little to the right of centre from the bottom edge up to just below the mouth.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light brown-yellow is completely or almost completely exposed at various places – on the left of the neck along the string of pearls and in the shadow below the chin, to the right below the earlobe, at various points in the neckerchief, and in the bow at the belt.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good. Craquelure: not seen with certainty.

DESCRIPTION: In general the ground and paint are so thinly applied that the structure of the woodgrain is everywhere clearly apparent in relief. Only in the gold chain, the detail of the clothing on the left, and in the bow and headdress is there any impasto.

The almost even dark grey of the background, that becomes a little lighter only at the lower left and right, lies thinly over a trace of brushwork that must be connected with an underlying paint layer (cf. *X-Rays*).

In most of the head a pale flesh colour, with a hazy pink especially on the cheek, chin and wing of the nose, is applied almost completely smoothly, with flat highlights on the highest lights done with only occasionally perceptible brushstrokes. A grey glaze is used in several of the areas of half-shadow, such as along the jawline, below the bottom lip, and below the chin; other areas of shadow show a thin brown. A darker brown is used for the nostrils.

The eyelids are bordered at the top by a fold of skin shown in thin brown, and have an unsharp lower edge. The sharply-outlined irises are painted in thin dark grey, where on the left the greyish paint used for the white of the eye continues underneath. On the thin black of the pupils, that are partly

covered over by the grey of the irises, there is a (strangely placed) faint grey catchlight. The lower edges of the eyes are vaguely defined with a little flesh colour, bordered to the left by some greyish-pink and to the right shadowed with a very soft grey, and a reticent indication of glistening moisture. The outer corners of the eyes have a spot of pink that extends a little along the upper eyelids.

The quite broad mouth-line is done in a thin brown that is partly masked by the pinkish red of the upper lip. The lower lip consists of a patch of pinkish red with lighter spots.

The hair is done very thinly, in light yellow-brown that occasionally, at lit places, is somewhat thicker and alternates with a ruddy brown. Along the edge the brushstrokes waver out over the background. The ear and the reddish-brown ribbons hanging down from the headdress are unsharp. The headdress itself is indistinct, and rendered with little suggestive power in short black strokes, red-brown and grey with spots and strokes of a dark yellow colour; the pearls embellishing the headdress are edged with thick grey and heightened with thick white, the uppermost jewel is in ochre-yellow with yellow highlights and a thick patch of carmine red on which there is a thick stripe of pinkish red.

The string of pearls is a confused amalgam of patches of grey with thick dots of grey-white, alternating with dots of brownish yellow. The neckerchief is done streakily in grey, with here and there a small stroke of grey-white; downwards this area merges vaguely into patches of grey and black that render the underlying lace collar. The gold chain is set down in brown and worked up with shapeless yellow accents; on the highest light it consists of a thick, crusty mass of yellow, brown, grey and dark yellow paint.

The black clothing shows, mostly on the left, indistinct internal detail in relief. Dark grey suggests a split in the sleeve, and the undergarment, seen from the front, in which there are also strokes of brown and a little dark green. The bow has narrow, thick strokes of white in the light.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The background shows areas of brushstrokes showing up relatively light on either side of the figure's shoulders, and a reserve left for the figure that extends considerably further outwards than the present outline along the head and shoulder on the right, whereas on the left a narrower reserve was left for the shoulder. Apparently this is due to a lighter background that was painted over at a later stage, when the contours of the figure were given their present position. In the head the radiographic image is marked by patchy, merging light areas with little distinct brushwork, and hardly matches the paint surface in its distribution of light and shadow. The righthand contour of the head can be seen to have been shifted a little towards the right compared to the radioabsorbent area visible in the X-ray. The image of the vertical members of the cradle has been suppressed by the introduction of radioabsorbent material into the interstices while X-raying the picture.

#### *Signature*

In the right background in black <RHL (in monogram followed by a slightly sinuous, backwards-sloping line) *van Rijn./1632.*>. Apart from one or two differences – the figures are remarkably small compared to the letters, and the crossbar of the *H* runs diagonally up to the right – the manner of writing closely resembles that of genuine Rembrandt signatures; and yet the form lacks the spontaneity that would convince one of the signature's authenticity.



Fig. 1. Panel 63 × 49.8 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)



*Varnish*

No special remarks.

**4. Comments**

The treatment in this painting, everywhere lacking a convincing definition of forms, makes it hard to understand why the Rembrandt attribution has never been challenged in the literature until recently. Alan Burroughs, however, noted already several weaknesses in a private report of c. 1935 and concluded from a study of the surface and X-rays

‘that this is not Rembrandt’s technique, nor does it approach him in mastery of anatomical knowledge.’ Gerson, in a letter of 1969, also rejected the Rembrandt attribution, as did Eisler<sup>1</sup> who in 1977 reported the two opinions just cited and suggested that the painting might be the work of a studio associate. This had already been intimated by Burroughs, whom Eisler quoted as writing: ‘The numerous portraits of this same model, unequal in aesthetic value and treatment, indicate that Rembrandt used her in his school or set up his own

Fig. 4. Detail with signature, infrared photograph (1:1)



portraits of her for pupils to interpret in their own way.<sup>7</sup>

The painting's execution justifies the rejection of the old attribution. The indistinct brushwork in the whole of the head and the lack of clarity in the depiction of the clothing and jewellery are clear evidence that it is quite untenable. The X-ray image provides further proof of this in that it shows an image that differs from what one may expect from a painting by Rembrandt in the distribution of light and dark in the face and in the absence of his characteristic brushwork. Though there can be no doubt on this score, the question of whether the picture was done in Rembrandt's circle in the early 1630s or in a totally different milieu at some later time is difficult to answer with any certainty. At first sight, the overall mediocrity of the execution does not encourage the former idea, and there are a few specific features that speak against it. The light seems, judging by the cast shadow of the nose, to fall from the front which is unusual, and the face consequently does not have one side in shadow as it would normally do in most Dutch paintings from the 1630s; this lends the picture a strange appearance. The dress, though containing elements of fashionable costume from those years, presents a surprising mixture; a vaguely indicated lace collar and a high-set belt with a bow (partly hidden by a wide coat) are combined with a fanciful headdress, a translucent neckerchief and a necklace, such as one would expect from a *tronie* but not in this combination. One might feel tempted to conclude from these unusual features that the picture is a later concoction, made up of reminiscences of various Rembrandtesque works including the Boston *Bust of a young woman* of 1632 (no. A 50) or another version of the same plump girl with reddish blond hair who used to be called the artist's sister. Against this idea, and in favour of an origin closer to Rembrandt and his workshop in the early 1630s, there are two arguments. The first has to do with the painting technique. What little brushwork can be seen in the face gives the impression of differing from a recognizably Rembrandtesque manner in degree rather than in principle, and of helping to achieve modelling in basically the same way. Similarly, the brushwork in

other passages may be interpreted as a less competent, rather superficial imitation of Rembrandt's manner of painting that need not be thought of as being of later date. The X-ray confirms this in that it shows the nature of the first lay-in and of later corrections in contours and tone to be fully in line with what can be frequently found in paintings by Rembrandt and his following. A second reason why it is perhaps less likely that no. C 59 was done outside Rembrandt's circle at a later date is provided by the similarity in motifs, which connects the picture with various prototypes that must have existed in Rembrandt's workshop in the early 1630s. Apart from the Boston *Bust of a young woman* already mentioned, these would seem to include the Stockholm *Young woman in profile*, also from 1632 (no. A 49), which shows a similar headdress, and the Chapel Hill *Bust of a young woman* (no. C 58), attributable to Isack Jouderville working in Rembrandt's studio in 1632; in the last-named the motif and treatment of the translucent neckerchief and the string of pearls covered by it strike one as particularly close to what is found in no. C 59. Such an amalgam of motifs familiar from paintings all dating from 1632 and produced by Rembrandt or his followers makes it likelier that it was done in that milieu than later and elsewhere. With due caution, no. C 59 may therefore be considered – in line with what Burroughs and Eisler have thought – a not too successful product of a studio associate of Rembrandt's, in or shortly after 1632. It may even be that the inscription it bears, though not acceptable as an authentic Rembrandt signature, was applied by the artist who did the painting, and that the date of 1632 is accurate.

The painting was already under Rembrandt's name in the collection of Philippe d'Orléans (d. 1723), as a companion-piece to Rembrandt's *Portrait of the artist* of 1632 now in Glasgow (see no. A 58, fig. 6) which had earlier formed a pair with another bust of a young woman, the one now in Milan (no. C 57).

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by François Robert Ingouf le jeune (Paris 1747–1812) with the inscription: *Ingouf le Jeune Sculp.* | *Peint par Rembrant Vanryn – Gravé par Ingouf et Voyer*, on one plate together with an engraving by François Voyer after no. A 58 and with the shared inscription: *Flamand.-Flamande.* | *De la Galerie de S. A. S. Monseigneur Le Duc d'Orléans* (see no. A 58, fig. 6). Published in: *Galerie du Palais Royal, gravée d'après les tableaux des différentes écoles qui la composent . . . Dédiée à S. A. S. Monseigneur d'Orléans . . . par J. Couché . . .*, Paris 1786–1808, III [p. 9]. Shows the picture in reverse.

## 7. Copies

1. Copy as tapestry by Pierre-François Cozette, together with one after the Glasgow *Portrait of the artist* (no. A 58), coll. Abel-François Poisson, marquis de Menars, sale Paris late February and 18 March – 6 April 1782 (Lugt nos. 3376 and 3389), no. 91: ‘... Ces deux Tableaux sont exécutés par le Sieur Cozette en tapisserie à la Manufacture Royale des Gobelins, & supérieurement rendus; ils sont de forme ovale, sous glace de 24 pouces sur 17 de large [= 64.8 × 45.9 cm]’ (750 livres to Gomchou). – Fourth International Exhibition of CINOA, Amsterdam 1970, no. 85 (as dating from 1779).

## 8. Provenance

– Together with no. A 58 in coll. Philippe Duc d’Orléans (d. 1723) (cf. 6. *Graphic reproductions*): Du Bois de Saint Gelais, *Description des Tableaux du Palais Royal . . . dédié à Monseigneur le Duc d’Orléans*, Paris 1727, p. 364 (2nd edn 1737, p. 365): ‘Paul Rembran, Le Portrait d’une Flamande. Ovale, haut de deux pieds, large d’un pied six pouces [= 64.9 × 48.7 cm]. Elle est coëffée en cheveux plats et a un colier de perles avec des boucles d’oreilles de même et un colet qui lui monte fort haut, comme le portoient autrefois les femmes, et par dessus un autre colier qui est d’ambre, faisant plusieurs tours, dont le bout tombe sur le devant de son corps.’ – Thus not (as assumed by Hofstede de Groot<sup>2</sup>) identical with: ‘Deux portraits de forme ovale peints par Reimbrant. L’un un homme et l’autre une jeune fille’, coll. Contesse de la Verrue, sale Paris 27ff March 1737 (Lugt 470), no. 14. *Galerie du Palais Royal . . .*, Paris 1786–1808, III [p. 9] et ‘2<sup>me</sup> Tableau de Rembrant van Ryn. Peints sur Bois ayant de hauteur 23. Pouces sur 16. Pouces 6. Lignes de large [= 62.1 × 44.5 cm]. Mgr. Le Duc d’Orléans possède six Tableaux de Rembrant. Ils étoient autrefois au Palais Royal; mais on les voit aujourd’hui au Rincy où Feu Mgr. le Duc d’Orléans, les fit transporter avec les meilleurs Tableaux de l’École Flamande’.

– Sold from the collection of Philippe Egalité with the other Dutch and Flemish paintings to Thomas Moore Slade who acted also on behalf of Lord Kinnaid, Mr Morland and Mr Hammersley and brought to England in 1792. Exhibited at 125 Pall Mall, London, April 1793 as no. 114: ‘Portrait of Rembrandt’s wife by Rembrandt’ and valued at 150 guineas<sup>3</sup>.

– Bought by the 3rd Lord Egremont, Petworth, from Charles Birch, 27 January 1800 (50 guineas with the presumed companion-piece, our no. A 58)<sup>4</sup>.

– By descent to his eldest son, George Wyndham, created Lord Leconfield in 1859, Petworth (Collins Baker, cat. 1920, p. 101, no. 170), sold privately 1927<sup>4</sup>, probably to Colnaghi, London<sup>1</sup>.

– Coll. A. Contini-Bonacossi, Rome<sup>1</sup>.

– Samuel H. Kress coll. 1928; in the Allentown Art Museum from 1960.

## 9. Summary

Because of the weak execution and a number of aberrant features, the attribution of no. C 59 to Rembrandt must be considered untenable. The question of whether an immediate follower or a later imitator was responsible for it cannot be answered with certainty. While there are unusual aspects to the treatment of light as well as to the costume depicted, the technique used and connexions with some works by Rembrandt or from his studio may

be interpreted as evidence for an origin in Rembrandt’s circle in or shortly after 1632 rather than in a different milieu at some later time.

## REFERENCES

- 1 C. Eisler, *Paintings from the Samuel H. Kress Collection. European Schools excluding Italian*, Oxford 1977, pp. 136–138.
- 2 HdG 573.
- 3 W. Buchanan, *Memoirs of painting I*, London 1824, pp. 18–19, 196.
- 4 Exhib. catalogue *Primitives to Picasso*, London (Royal Academy of Arts) 1962, no. 124.

## C60 Bust of a young woman (commonly called the artist's sister)

PRIVATE COLLECTION

HdG 691; BR. 95; BAUCH 468; GERSON 143

### 1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved painting, done in the 17th century in imitation of Rembrandt and possibly in his circle.

### 2. Description of subject

A woman is seen to just above the waist, turned three-quarters left. Her head is tilted slightly forwards, and she looks at the viewer. Over a white shirt, the pleated edge of which leaves the throat exposed, and a blue-green undergarment she wears a wine-red, fur-trimmed overgarment; over this hangs a treble gold chain, held up at the centre and on the shoulders. Around her neck is a rope of large pearls; in her blond hair there is, at the back of the head, a piece of jewellery with pearls and a hanging veil, and above the forehead a jewel with a red stone. The light falls from high up and slightly to the right; the background is uniformly dark.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 7 April 1976 (J. B., S. H. L.) in good artificial light and out of the frame, with the aid of an ultraviolet lamp.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 62.5 × 55.6 cm. No cusping seen at the edges.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: None seen.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Flattened generally, but otherwise reasonably good so far as can be judged through the varnish, which is thick especially in the dark passages. In lit flesh areas retouches of a yellowish flesh colour have been applied in numerous patches, most extensively on the cheekbone and in large areas of the neck, probably to cover open craquelure. There are also insignificant retouches in the background, mainly on the left, and in the right of the red overgarment. Craquelure: an evenly-distributed, irregular pattern in the flesh areas.

DESCRIPTION: The background appears (through a thick layer of varnish) to be a uniform and opaque, very dark grey.

The lit parts of the face are painted predominantly in a creamy flesh colour without a great deal of visible brushwork, and there is a strong pinkish red on the cheek. Only on the bump of the forehead is there (done with clear brushstrokes) a quite large, white highlight, with some pink used to the right of it; to the right again, some grey is mixed into the flesh colour at the temple. Some grey provides a transition to a zone of translucent brown that runs along the contour of the forehead on the left. The ridge of the nose is marked with some pinkish white, while towards the tip more pink is used with a large, white highlight. Beside the wing of the nose, modelled in grey and brown with a little carmine red, the fold in the cheek is indicated with a pinkish red. The nostril presents a blackish colour – presumably belonging to the underpainting – showing through translucent browns, as does the cast shadow from the nose. The adjoining lit part of the upper lip and the lit part of the chin are painted in a pinkish flesh colour, with the shadow below the lower lip in browns; these merge into a greyish flesh colour that continues into the half-shadows in the

further side of the face. The convexity of the double chin is modelled in browns and greys; to the right this area continues as a light brown that forms a transition to the grey modelling the cheek and temple. The ear is shown cursorily with some pink. The cast shadow of the chin on the neck is in an opaque light brown and, in the deepest shadow, in translucent browns that tend towards a ruddy colour. The rest of the throat is painted in a yellowish flesh colour, with a greyish flesh colour for the half-shadow.

The eye-socket on the right is in a translucent brown over a greyish flesh colour, merging into the translucent greys of the eyebrow. The eye is indicated painstakingly, but rather insensitively. The pink eyelid is bounded by lines of dark brown. The pinkish red area in the inner corner of the eye continues a little way to the right along the border of the grey-white white of the eye. A strong, large white catchlight stands in the large, round black pupil; the iris is painted in a dark grey, over which, along and below the pupil, there is a crescent-shaped stroke of lighter, cool grey. Along the under-rim of the eye, formed by a long stroke of pink with a few spots of white indicating reflexions of light, a stroke of brownish pink forms the transition to the brown of the shadow on the eye-pouch that, via some grey, merges into the flesh colour of the cheek. The eye on the left is done virtually the same as the other, with similarly emphatic lines of brown to limit the eyelid; one of these runs through some way to the left (as if indicating lashes).

The hair is executed partly with greyish paint that to the left and top lies clearly on top of the paint of the background, with confused strokes of yellow-brown.

The overgarment is painted with broad strokes running in various directions (offering no distinct indication of form) in a fairly light red on top of a darker underlayer that is exposed in one or two places; the brushstrokes present thick edges that appear somewhat lighter in tone. The fur trimming is shown with strokes of brown placed over the white that, with a few strokes, represents the shirt; to the left the fur is done with coarser strokes of grey and, further down, with flicks of brown with some black placed over the red of the overgarment. The undergarment consists of a mixture of strokes in blue-green, dark grey and beige. The chain is shown cursorily with thick strokes of ochre yellow and yellow, with a little black, done partly wet-in-wet with the red of the overgarment. The pearls are modelled in greys with brownish edges of shadow and thick white catchlights, and separated by dots of yellow. The veil that hangs down from a rather vaguely indicated jewel at the back of the head is set over the paint of the background with casual strokes of, mainly, greys.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

None.

#### *Signature*

In the left background next to the shoulder, in thin strokes of dark paint (<Rembrandt. f. 1634>). The shaping is, as a whole, uncertain, and the form of the *t*, the *3* and the *4* (the last open at the top) differ from Rembrandt's usage. Clearly not authentic.

#### *Varnish*

A thick layer of varnish, especially in the dark passages.

### 4. Comments

The general appearance of no. C60 is that of a



Fig. 1. Canvas 62,5 × 55,6 cm



17th-century painting. This is suggested not only by the craquelure, but also by the execution that though hardly subtle makes use of familiar devices in the handling of light and shade. The relations of browns and greys to the flesh colour, the way the eyes are modelled and the eyelids outlined – to mention only a couple of points – correspond broadly to the image one has of work by Rembrandt and his circle. The handling of paint in the head is however insensitive, while that in the clothing and background lacks any suggestion of volume and depth, and especially any colouristic refinement; on these grounds an attribution to Rembrandt must be looked on as ruled out.

The question that then arises is of what relationship to Rembrandt the painting can be seen to bear. The idea of a copy comes to mind, especially since some passages (in particular the translucent browns in the shadow below the chin) gives the impression of imitating a painting done on panel; furthermore, all the *tronies* of bust size we know of from Rembrandt and his school in the 1630s are painted on wood and not, like this work, on canvas. One might then assume that certain jarring notes can be laid at the door of the copyist. This would apply in particular to the relatively wide proportions of the image area in which the figure appears disproportionately narrow (it is cut only by the bottom edge), in a way that is unhappy and quite unusual for a bust painting by Rembrandt; allowance must however be made for the possibility of the painting having been reduced in size, which would also account for the use of canvas. There is some support for the idea of a copy in the date of 1634 that the painting bears (remarkably enough the date is invariably given in the literature as either 1632 or 1633); the Rubenesque type of woman, with her protruding eyes and double chin, occurs in Rembrandt's work particularly in this year, the greatest resemblance being with the Madrid *Sophonisba* (no. A 94).

There are however objections to the notion of a direct copy after a lost original. In the first place, it is not certain that the signature and date were not added later – further technical investigation might bring greater clarity on this point. In the second place – and more importantly – the painting exhibits a feature that is hard to reconcile with Rembrandt's work from the early 1630s, namely the distribution of light and shade in the face. This is such that one has to assume a light falling from very high and a little to the right. The righthand side of the face, turned towards the viewer, has strong shadows beneath the chin and second chin, and the averted lefthand side of the face is only partially lit. No lighting of this description is to be found in

Rembrandt's portraits and other busts. The light always falls less emphatically from high up and almost always from the left, so that the heads turned towards the left show a less extensive cast shadow under the nose and chin, and a discrete area of shadow on the right along the temple and cheek. When, once or twice, the light does fall from the right (cf. the *Portrait of Jacques de Gheyn III* in Dulwich, no. A 56) then the lefthand side of the face is largely lost in shadow and a strong cast shadow from the nose bisects the face. The extent to which no. C 60 departs from Rembrandt's normal pattern in this respect makes it hard to suppose a lost original from his hand from which the present painting might have been copied. The fact remains that the overall approach and facial features do bear an unmistakable resemblance to the work of Rembrandt and his followers, and it would be unwise to deny the possibility of the painting having been done in his circle.

In particular there is a striking similarity to a very Rembrandtesque (and originally oval) *Portrait of a woman with a black veil*, done on oak panel, in the North Carolina Museum of Art, Raleigh, N.C. (acc. no. L 58.15.1, extended loan from Mr and Mrs Alex B. Andrews; cf. cat. *Masterpieces of art. In memory of W. R. Valentiner*, Raleigh 1959, no. 70 with reproduction, as Rembrandt). This portrait was probably painted around 1635 in Rembrandt's immediate circle, and shows the lighting that can be seen as normal for a female portrait. The similarity between no. C 60 and this painting, to which Von Moltke too referred (though he regarded the portrait, without giving his reasons, as done by Flinck between 1639 and 1642; see Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 346), is especially evident where the facial features are concerned. Whether it also extends to the manner of painting is doubtful; even if one makes allowance for the woman's portrait in Raleigh being painted on panel, one has to describe its execution as more sensitive than that of no. C 60. There is consequently no cause to attribute the two paintings to a single hand.

For the time being it does not seem possible to do more than posit that the painting was done in imitation of Rembrandt's work – though with clear differences in the way light is handled – by an unknown artist, during the 17th century.

The sitter is mostly identified in the literature as Rembrandt's sister, and occasionally as Saskia<sup>1</sup>. There is scarcely any resemblance to the sitter for the Boston *Bust of a young woman* (no. A 50) that was earlier thought to portray his sister. Wijnman<sup>2</sup> saw that painting as a portrait of Maria van Eyck, the wife of the art dealer Hendrick Uylenburgh, and thought that no. C 60 also depicted a member of the

Uylenburgh family. There is no good reason for this identification.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

- Coll. O. B. L. Mainwaring, London, 1892.
- Coll. A. Polovtsoff, S. Petersburg.
- Dealer Lawrie & Co., London.
- Dealer Ch. Sedelmeyer, Paris (*Catalogue of 100 paintings X*, 1906, no. 29).
- Coll. C. von Hollitscher, Berlin (cat. 1912, no. 60).
- Dealer Bachstitz, The Hague.
- Coll. Chillingworth, sale Lucerne 5 September 1922, no. 34.
- Coll. W. C. Escher, Zurich.

#### 9. Summary

Despite general features that make no. C 60 seem Rembrandtesque, the painting presents an insensitive execution, is strangely composed in the picture area (at least with the present format of the canvas), and a lighting that differs from that usual with Rembrandt and his school. These features make it likely that it was painted in the 17th century in imitation of his work, possibly in his circle. It is less probable that it is a copy after a lost original.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 Bauch 1966, 468.
- 2 H. F. Wijnman, 'Rembrandt en Hendrick Uylenburgh te Amsterdam', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 43 (1956), pp. 94–103, esp. 103.

## C 61 Bust of a young woman in a cap (commonly called the artist's sister)

PRIVATE COLLECTION

HdG 697; BR. 84; BAUCH 451; GERSON 114

### 1. Summarized opinion

An old imitation, probably done outside Rembrandt's circle.

### 2. Description of subject

A woman is seen to just above the waist, turned slightly to the right. She has a black velvet cap with a drooping green-blue plume, worn tilted to one side of the head; one chain runs along the rim of the cap, while another lies diagonally over the brown hair, evidently to keep the cap in place. A black garment lies over both shoulders, and above this can be seen a finely folded neckerchief held together at the front with a chain running obliquely; there is a string of pearls around the throat. The light falls from the left.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 4 September 1972 (J. B., P. v. Th.) in good daylight and out of the frame.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas stuck to a panel, oval 68.7 × 53.5 cm. The oak panel is bevelled all round the oval at the back. On the evidence of the mutilated signature the canvas was originally larger (rectangular?). In 1793 (see 8. *Provenance*) the support was described as wood; it may be assumed that the canvas had then already been stuck to the panel.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: In a thin area by the hairline there seems to be a cool, light tint showing through. None observed elsewhere, unless a grey in the lefthand eyelid could be the ground. As may be seen from the fine, regular weave of the canvas generally apparent in relief, the ground layer is relatively thin.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: The paint surface is in a reasonably good state. There are retouches in various dark areas – in the cap, the hair on the right, the background at the left above the shoulder, by the plume and above the cap, and in the dark clothing. There are traces of an L-shaped tear (horizontal arm about 2 cm, vertical 1 cm) by the tip of the nose. Craquelure: generally an irregular network, with very fine, long horizontal cracks in the feather.

DESCRIPTION: In general the paint is applied thinly and smoothly, other than in the impasto of the plume, the catchlights on and between the pearls round the throat and the rather thicker highlights on the nose and chin.

On the right the background is in an almost even mouse-grey, while elsewhere it is a darker grey; along the body outline on the right a slightly darker grey is applied with long brushstrokes.

The head is executed in the lit passages in a thin, pale flesh colour with a grey haze for the half-shadows. In the cheek area a flat pink has been used into which fine strokes of a warm orange flesh colour have been placed, continuing into the chin area which tends more towards a grey. The shadow side of the face is executed in variations of a greyish flesh colour with a broad brown zone in the cast shadow from the nose.

The eye on the left has a lid in flesh colour set on top of a grey (which may be the ground), and is bordered at the top by a long, curving stroke in brown and at the bottom by a stroke of brown that is wide at the centre and narrower to the two sides. The white of the eye is off-white to the left and grey to the right with a dark grey stroke along the iris; the inside corner of the eye is marked by a triangular patch of flat red. The crisply outlined iris is done in brown with a little ochre yellow at the lower right and a trapezoid white catchlight at the upper left; the large, black pupil is also sharply outlined. The lower edge of the eye is shown by a pink flesh colour over which a stroke of brown has been placed to the right to indicate the shadow in the eye-socket.

The righthand eye is drawn using even more strongly marked lines of brown, with a pink stroke on the lower edge. The inner corner is not shown.

The pale flesh colour on the ridge of the nose is applied quite thickly, with visible brushwork. A flat pink is used on the wing of the nose. The lefthand nostril is executed in a dark brown over a red that on the left (along the edge) projects from beneath it. The dark brown of the nostril on the right sits vaguely in the brown of the shadow.

The neck is painted with fine strokes that follow the curve of the throat, in grey and a pale flesh colour; on top of this and brushed in the same direction are orangish strokes (like those in the cheek) that in the transition to the grey shadow are covered over with a translucent grey. A grey line marks the righthand contour of the neck down to below the string of pearls. These pearls consist of touches of flat grey with white catchlights, and the gold beads between them are dots of ochre-yellow on which spots of white have been placed on the side towards the light.

The hair is painted in brown on the left, with a somewhat patchy dark brown suggesting curls alongside and below the cursorily-done ear; on the right the hair is executed in a vague, opaque grey over a thin brown.

The black cap, the contours of which have been set down heavily but not all that effectively, has grey sheens of light, including some to the left against the plume. The latter is painted in a thick greenish blue, with streaky brushstrokes indicating the lie of the hairs of the feather.

The neckerchief is set down in strokes of a thin grey, over which there are long white strokes and lines of dots and dabs of a thick, whitish paint; to the right strokes of dark grey show the curve. The clothing is in flat black on both sides, grey in the centre and with a vague indication in black of finely folded material.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

None.

#### *Signature*

In the right background against the edge beside the upper arm, in fine lines of thin brown over the grey of the background <RHL (in monogram). van (. . .) /163 (. . .)>. The careful but painstaking and unspontaneous writing gives a very definite impression of a signature and date that have been copied. Trimming of the canvas has resulted in only parts remaining of the R of 'Rijn' and of what was probably a figure '2'.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

Fig. 1. Canvas stuck on panel 68.7 × 53.5 cm (reproduced after W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt I*, Paris 1897)



#### 4. Comments

The picture has won general acceptance in the literature, including Bauch<sup>1</sup> and also Gerson<sup>2</sup>, though the latter had not seen it in the original. Because of its execution and several features of its general appearance the painting is however not acceptable as a work by Rembrandt, and would not even seem to be from his circle. The flat and very draughtsmanlike treatment of the head, the weak construction of the slightly squinting eyes, the vacuity of all the forms, the strange combination of pink and orange in the flesh tint, and the strongly dominant grey tone in the shadow areas are insuperable obstacles to the attribution. The dress depicted must also be termed unusual. The only clearly defined element of the costume shown – the tilted cap held in place by a chain – is somewhat reminiscent of a Spanish headdress from the third quarter of the 16th century, but it does not appear in the range of old-fashioned headgear for women used by Rembrandt and his circle. No. C 61 thus stands well apart from Rembrandt's work in its style and presentation, and it is impossible to tell with any certainty where and when it was painted. The fact that the ground appears to be grey is in line with the use of grounds during Rembrandt's lifetime.

It has to be assumed, from the mutilated signature, that it was originally done on a somewhat larger (rectangular?) canvas, and then stuck on an oval panel.

The existence of a tear in the canvas and the irregular craquelure pattern give reason to think that canvas was indeed the original support and that the marouflage is of a later date. Canvas was an unusual support for this type of *tronie*. All other early small-scale *tronies* by Rembrandt or his circle are painted on panel. On the other hand, the fact that the painting has apparently been reduced in size allows the possibility that the painting was larger and may have approached the original size of the Stockholm *Young woman in profile* (A 49), which is on canvas.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

1. A lithograph reproducing the picture in the same direction is in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, with the handwritten inscription: 'B . . . , La fille du Rembrandt'.

#### 7. Copies

1. Canvas, oval 56 × 46 cm, Le Mans, Musée des Arts, cat. 1932 no. 411, as by Alexis Grimou (Argenteuil

1678–Paris 1733). Grimou was known in his day for his imitations of Rembrandt, and various copies after Rembrandt are attributed to him (see: H. Gerson, *Ausbreitung und Nachwirkung der holländischen Malerei des 17. Jahrhunderts*, Haarlem 1942, p. 91; cf. also no. A 22, Copy 5, and Br. 213, Copy 4). To judge by a photograph, an attribution of this copy to him is however not really acceptable.

#### 8. Provenance

\*– Together with what is described as a self-portrait in coll. Choiseul-Praslin, sale Paris 18–25 February 1793 (Lugt 5005), no. 38: 'Par le même [Rembrantz]. Deux Tableaux de forme ovale; l'un représente le Portrait de Rembrantz, vu presque de face & coëffé d'une toque rougeâtre; l'autre est le Portrait d'une de ses filles, tournée de face & coëffée d'une toque de velours noir, mêlée de quelques broderies; un collier de perles ajuste son col, & ses épaules sont couvertes d'une draperie noire. Ces deux morceaux, d'un bon empâtement de couleur, produisent un grand effet, & doivent offrir un rapprochement précieux pour les Amateurs. Haut. 24 p. Larg. 18 p. [= 64.8 × 48.6 cm] B.' (1101 livres to Haudry and 700 livres to Sarazin respectively).

– Coll. Mme Gentil de Chavagnac, sale Paris 20 June 1854, no. 22 as: 'Portrait de la soeur de Rembrandt' (7100 francs).

– Coll. Comtesse Lehon, sale Paris 2–3 April 1861, no. 18 as: 'Portrait de la soeur de l'artiste' (3000 francs, bought in).

– Coll. Sir Frederick Cook, Richmond.

– Coll. Sir Herbert Cook, Richmond.

– Dealer Katz, Basle (1948).

#### 9. Summary

The execution, which is not only weak but also differs from what is usual with Rembrandt and his studio, indicates that no. C 61 was produced outside his immediate circle. Originally painted on a larger (rectangular?) canvas, it was stuck onto an oval panel.

#### REFERENCES

1 Bauch 451.

2 Gerson 114; Br.-Gerson 84.



## C 62 Bust of a boy

PARIS, PRIVATE COLLECTION

HdG 490; BR. 190; BAUCH 150; GERSON 145

### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved work that was probably painted by an assistant in Rembrandt's workshop or in his circle, possibly in 1633.

### 2. Description of subject

Bust of a boy with the shoulders turned three-quarters right and the face towards the viewer. The figure is placed in front of a neutral, dark background with the light falling from the left. He wears a wine-red beret the edge of which is decorated with a chain and, on the left, a jewel in which is stuck a yellow-brown and grey plume. The reddish-blond and slightly curly hair partly reveals the ear on the left; from it hangs a small ring with a pear-shaped pendant; on the right the hair falls to the shoulder. A grey neckerchief with stripes in mat yellow and white is wound round the neck. Below this can be seen a wine-red garment, over which is worn a chain set with stones; this is fastened at the chest and on the lefthand shoulder.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in April 1971 (J. B., S. H. L.) in good daylight, off the wall and in the frame.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 42 × 33 cm (sight size). Two planks with the join slightly to the left of centre, 14.8 cm from the lefthand edge. To the right of this there is a crack some 3 cm long, running from the top edge down into the plume. Back cradled.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light yellow-brown is quite clearly apparent in the shadow side of the face, at various points in the lit part of the face, in scratchmarks in the hair on the left, and at the extreme tip of the plume.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good. The paint along the join between the two parts of the panel has been somewhat restored, and this is visible mostly in the impasto area of the forehead and in the dark red by the chain. On the left a scratch runs obliquely across the background and into the top of the neckerchief. Craquelure: none seen.

DESCRIPTION: Apart from the lit parts of the forehead and neck, where the paint is in places applied very thickly, the face is done in predominantly thin paint; the grain of the panel shows through at many places, as does the yellow-brown tint of the ground. This is visible at places especially in the shadowed righthand half of the face; the modelling is sketched over this with strokes of a translucent dark brown. As a whole this area has a somewhat patchy appearance. Elsewhere in the face, too, one is aware of a broad, succinct but also rather coarse treatment, both in large passages and in the detail. In the latter it is apparent, for instance, in the simple outlining of the eyelids using strokes of brown paint, and in the short, broad strokes that mark the pattern of shadow at the nose, mouth and chin.

The highlight on the forehead is rendered with curved strokes in a thick flesh tint that tends towards yellow; to the

right a thin pink with some grey on top of it forms the transition to the shadow done in translucent brown, lightened with a little grey above the eyebrow. Around the eye on the left flesh tints are applied with broad brushstrokes. Down from this the strokes follow the roundness of the cheek on which a little pink has been placed (rather high up). The paint is thinner in the lower half of the cheek, and in the shadow area along the jaw the ground is slightly visible, with some thin brown and grey laid over it. The lit area of the throat displays the same thick, yellowish flesh colour as the forehead, with to the right a comparable transition via grey to the shadow in a thin brown.

The eye on the left shows, along the edges of the white and below the iris, a number of small gaps through which the ground can be glimpsed. The upper border of the top eyelid continues to the left in brown, and to the right runs into the translucently painted shadow of the eye-socket; the lower border is indicated with a firm touch of brown. On the left the white of the eye is done in a thick white, while to the right it has a thin grey and grey-brown; the iris, in dark greys, has a darker edge here and there. A fat, impasto catchlight is placed at the rim of the black pupil. The lower edge of the eye, in pink, merges in the righthand corner of the eye into pink and red, while downwards there are curved strokes of pink and brown for the shadow below the eye. In the other eye the limit of the upper lid is again shown with firm strokes of a thin dark brown. The white of the eye is executed in greys, through which the yellow-brown of the ground can be sensed; the iris and pupil are again in dark grey and black respectively. The lower edge of the eye is in pink that shifts to a somewhat opaque pink on the cheek below. With both eyes there is a cursory indication of eyelashes, using tiny strokes at the bottom edge.

The lit part of the nose, painted quite thickly with pink and white highlights on the ridge and tip, is similar in treatment to the cheek on the left. The edge of the shadow is rather hard and lacking in subtlety, as is the rendering of form in the lefthand nostril, using a broad, flat touch of reddish brown, and that of the fold in the cheek done in pink and brown. Below the nostril there is a patch where the ground is exposed, followed to the right by a broad brown stroke to show the cleft beneath the nose. The top lip is executed in pinkish red, with the strongly curving mouth-line in dark brown merging to the right into red; on the bottom lip there is pink and some white to the left, while further to the right a thinner red lies over the yellow-brown of the ground. On the left the shadow alongside the mouth is indicated in pink and red, while to the right the shadow is given form with free strokes of a translucent dark brown that follow the modelling and become denser below the mouth and along the chin. These strokes, like those in other shaded areas, help to shape the shadows by stepwise gradations of rather flat tones.

The hair is done in a ruddy brown that tends towards an orange, worked up above the forehead with thick strokes of matt yellow, and along the lefthand contour with strokes of greyish and yellow paint and a number of scratchmarks going through to the ground. On the right the curls that hang down to the shoulder are painted in thick and opaque grey. The ear on the left is done rather cursorily in a quite thick yellowish paint, with a little pink, brown and grey in the shadow. In the ear-drop a thin grey paint has been placed over the ground; the glisten of light is shown with grey-white.

For the rest, the general colour-tone of the painting is set mainly by a combination of wine-red and grey. The former is used for the cap, with shadow areas done in broad strokes running in a variety of directions, and for the monotonously and flatly done garment. In both these passages the jewellery

Fig. 1. Panel 42 × 33 cm



Fig. 2. Detail (1:1)



is executed in a mixture of fairly impasto light yellow and ochre with dark brown or black-brown for the shadows. The plume is rendered in an indeterminate yellow-brown and grey. The neckerchief is executed in greys that cover to a varying extent, worked up with strokes of matt yellow and whitish yellow.

The background is in an opaque dark grey, somewhat lighter in tone above the righthand shoulder.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

None.

#### *Signature*

In the right lower background, in fairly thick dark grey-brown <Rembrandt.f 1633>. The letters do not have a firm shape and are unevenly spaced, and the *f* and *3*'s have ended up heavy. Does not make an authentic impression.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### **4. Comments**

The question of whether this is an authentic work by

Fig. 3. Detail with signature (1:1)



Rembrandt must be answered in the negative. It is however evident that it was produced under the influence of his portraits and *tronies* from the early 1630s. From the point of view of painting technique this influence is seen in the way the lit and shadow parts of the face are handled – the former are built up with impasto paint, while the latter are thin and translucent, and the ground tint plays a part in the overall effect. The contrasts in the thickness of paint that coincide with the distribution of chiaroscuro are, in Rembrandt's painting, coupled with a variation in the handling of the brush – small strokes closely following the form in the lit areas, against looser, succinct brushwork in the shadows. This differentiation is missing here – everywhere the brushwork is fluid and broad, and even in the lit side of the face shows the shapes only cursorily – and combined with the use of thickly-applied paint this gives them a compact appearance. At many places in the face the brushwork is clearly visible – bold strokes of dark paint form the lines marking the eyelids, broad and flat strokes of translucent paint mark the shadows below the nose, around the mouth and around the chin, and free, overlapped strokes of thin paint show the shadow to the right of the nose. This means that the modelling has remained sketchy, while lacking the subtle definition of plasticity that is characteristic of paintings done by Rembrandt himself. Summing up, it can be said that the manner of painting of the head reveals an awareness of Rembrandt's way of working (the scratchmarks in the hair, too, point in this direction, though Rembrandt used this device mainly in his earlier years). The other parts of the painting do not argue against the impression one gains that this is a work of modest quality whose attractiveness is due mainly to the inherent liveliness of the type of the young model. The brushwork in the clothing is leaden, and the outlining of the forms clumsy. In the almost uniform background there is none of the variation in structure and light and shade that in Rembrandt (and especially his paintings on panel) enhance the illusion of depth by the counterplay with lively contours.

The authenticity of this work (and of similar

paintings of young boys in fanciful dress) has rightly been doubted or rejected a number of times in the Rembrandt literature<sup>1</sup>.

It is unclear whether such pictures, which are obviously *tronies* rather than portraits, derive directly from works painted by Rembrandt. *Tronies* were already in the 1630s described as 'after Rembrandt', and it is not impossible that this painting too came about as a copy after one of his works. Another and perhaps more plausible possibility is that Rembrandt's influence was limited to the manner of painting and the choice of motif in a general way, and that the work should be seen as an independent production done in either his circle or studio.

At the end of the 18th century no. C 62 was being looked on as a work by Ferdinand Bol (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 1). As Bol can be counted among those working with Rembrandt only from 1636 onwards, an attribution to him would mean that the date of 1633 inscribed on the painting is incorrect, and the inscription a later addition (see however below). Since Waagen<sup>2</sup> suggested Govaert Flinck as the author of the Leningrad *Bust of a boy* (no. C 63), the idea has gained ground that this artist might be the author of most of the paintings of youths in fanciful costume (C 62, 63, 64, Br. 187, 188 and 189)<sup>3</sup>. Closer examination shows that this assumption cannot be supported unreservedly, since it is obvious that different hands are involved. There are however enough technical and stylistic similarities with the production of Rembrandt and his studio to make it probable that no. C 62 too was produced by a studio associate. The Rembrandt signature on the picture may then have been applied by the associate himself, as it is not unlikely in view of analogous cases where this appears to be so (see Introduction, Chapter V, pp. 105–106), and the date of 1633 may be taken to be a trustworthy indication of the year the painting was made.

The period spent by Rembrandt in the house of Hendrick Uylenburgh in the first half of the 1630s prompted Wijnman<sup>4</sup> to think that the latter's son Gerrit might have been the sitter in 'six portraits of a lad of about eight years of age' as well as the model for the *Cupid blowing a bubble* (no. A 91). This is an improbable assumption to make, not only because the term 'portrait' is being used wrongly but also because the same model certainly did not sit for all six of these works. That models were used for such *tronies* appears however from the fact that Uylenburgh's wife is known to have been portrayed as an oriental woman in a painting that was referred to as a *tronie* in the estate of the painter and art dealer Lambert Jacobsz. (see H. L. Straat in: *De Vrije Fries* 28, 1925, p. 73).

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Engraving by Lambert Antoine Claessens (Antwerp 1763 – Rueil 1834) inscribed *F. Bol pinx. – Portrait de F Boll – L.A. Claessens sculp.* The hair falls down to the shoulder on both sides, and the cloak gapes open at the front revealing part of a tunic.
2. Hofstede de Groot<sup>5</sup> reports an etching by an anonymous artist.

## 7. Copies

None.

## 8. Provenance

- Coll. [Abraham Saportas], sale Amsterdam 14 May 1832, no. 79 (700 guilders to Baron van Brienem).
- Coll. G. Th. A. M. Baron van Brienem van de Grootelindt, sale Paris 8–9 May 1865, no. 30 (25,000 francs to Baron de Rothschild).
- Coll. Baron James de Rothschild.
- Coll. Baroness Nathaniel de Rothschild, Paris.
- Coll. Baron Edouard de Rothschild, Ferrières.

## 9. Summary

Although there is clearly some resemblance between no. C 62 and Rembrandt's work, the execution is too flat and too coarse for the painting to be accepted as authentic. The similarities there are of a general kind and concerned with painting technique. The painting appears to derive from work by Rembrandt, either directly as a copy or more probably as an independent work. The painting seems to have been done in Rembrandt's circle or even his workshop, possibly in 1633.

### REFERENCES

- 1 W. Martin, 'Rembrandt-Rätsel II', *Der Kunstwanderer* [3] (1921–22), pp. 30–34, esp. 30.
- 2 G. F. Waagen, *Gemäldesammlung in der kaiserlichen Eremitage*, S. Petersburg 1870 (2nd edn), p. 187, no. 843.
- 3 Br.-Gerson 186.
- 4 H. F. Wijnman, 'Rembrandt en Hendrick Uylenburgh te Amsterdam', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 43 (1956), pp. 94–103, esp. 101–103.
- 5 HdG 490.

## C63 Bust of a boy

LENINGRAD, THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, CAT. NO. 724

HDG 492; BR. 186; BAUCH 151; GERSON 131

### 1. Summarized opinion

A fairly well preserved work painted under Rembrandt's influence, possibly in his workshop. It appears to have been altered in shape and size.

### 2. Description of subject

A boy is seen to the waist with the body turned three-quarters left and the face almost square to the viewer. The figure is lit from the left and quite high up, and a shadow is cast to the right onto an almost neutral, dark background. He has a round face, and dark, curly hair standing out to both sides. His tall, wine-red cap is ornamented at the rim with a chain, and on the left with a jewel in which is tucked a greenish plume. He wears gold earrings with pear-shaped pendants, and there is a string of pearls round his throat below which can be seen the top edge of a white, pleated shirt. He wears a wine-red jacket or cloak adorned with braiding at the chest, where it is held closed by a few buttons; over the top edge of this garment a striped shawl is draped loosely over the shoulders. Between the open panels of the cloak one sees a brown-yellow, belted undergarment.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in August 1969 (J. B., S. H. L.) in good daylight and out of the frame. Four X-rays, covering the whole painting, were available.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval with a segment missing at both sides, 67 × 47.5 cm. The present shape is obviously not the original, as appears also from the presence at c. 11 cm from top and bottom of four L-shaped notches in the edges. These may be connected with a Louis XIV shape (a rectangle with narrower semicircles added at the ends) that was given to an originally rectangular panel before it received its present shape. A join is seen at 9.6 cm from the lefthand edge; a crack runs immediately to the right of this at the bottom. Back cradled.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light brown shows through in the temple on the right, in the shadow cast by the cap on the forehead, and in the right background.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Fairly good, though there are retouches in the shadow of the nose where paint has been lost, and small flakes of paint are missing in the hair to the right. There is broad overpainting on and to both sides of the join. Damages have also been worked over along the curved edges, and were obviously caused by contact with an oval frame. Craquelure: none seen.

DESCRIPTION: The painting is typified by a relaxed, and in the clothing even somewhat nonchalant treatment; in the latter case the paint is in general applied thinly, and today the grain of the panel is apparent at many places. The relief of thick paint is found in the catchlights on the pearls and, to a lesser extent, here and there in the shawl.

In the lit parts of the face a slightly yellow-tinted flesh colour is applied heavily on the forehead, the cheekbone and the adjoining part of the nose on the left and to the left above the mouth. By the nose there is an abrupt transition from this flesh tone to a likewise quite thick pink used for the tip of the nose, in which a solid highlight is set in white. A thinner pink is placed on the cheeks. In the eyes, treated with scant precision, the outline of the upper eyelids is done in brown and the bottom edge in a mixture of pink and flesh colour. In the eye on the left dots of pinkish red are set in the corners, while in the other eye this is done only at the inner corner. The white of the eye has a greyish-white tint; the irises are shown cursorily in dark grey and brown, and the pupils in black, with a tiny spot of light on the left. The eyebrows are indicated by means of reiterated strokes of grey-brown. The nostrils consist of dabs of red paint; red is also used in the lips, and a little pink in the lower lip. The strongly curved, almost black mouth-line is placed on top of the red, somewhat broader on the left than on the right. The shadow on the right along the temple is executed in thin paint through which can be sensed the brown of an underlying layer; in the cheek below this the flesh tint of the lit part merges into grey followed by a slightly murky, greenish brown.

The hair is painted with partly visible, curling brushstrokes in dark brown and dark grey, and on the left can be sensed something of an underlying brown; the small earrings are shown with a small stroke of ochre yellow, with the droplets in grey.

In the cap partially translucent red paint is used, applied with quite broad, short strokes; a more opaque pinkish red is used for the edges of light, green for the plume and ochre-yellow for the chain with dots of white paint for the catchlights. Very thick spots of white are placed on the pearls of the necklace, otherwise sketched with curved strokes of grey. The shirt, too, is shown roughly in grey and white, partly using long, curved strokes and partly with short crosswise strokes to indicate the pleats. The shawl is for the most part ochre yellow, with on the right a somewhat unarticulated transition to the shadow in dark brown. In the light the sheen on the folds is indicated with long, thin strokes; to the right a pattern is shown in red, and on the left in grey and white crosswise strokes. Ochre yellow occurs again in the buttons and braiding on the cloak, and in the undergarment where it is placed over a brown tint (perhaps to suggest gold brocade). The jacket or cloak has the same wine-red colour as the cap, and is likewise done in fairly translucent paint with broad and rapid strokes. To the lower right paint that has built up at the end of short, broad strokes produces a dark and irregular ridge; the part remaining below this is filled in with paint applied in a variety of directions using small strokes. The present patchy appearance of the cloak, like that often seen in passages painted with red lake (cf. for example nos. A 27 and A 37), has probably become more pronounced over the years.

The figure is placed in front of a brown-grey background that is darkest in tone towards the top. On the right the paint is sparsely applied using a probably rather dry brush, so that the ground shows through in and around the strokes. On the left the paint covers more fully, and possibly the overpaintings here also continue beyond the strip along either side of the join between the two parts of the panel.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

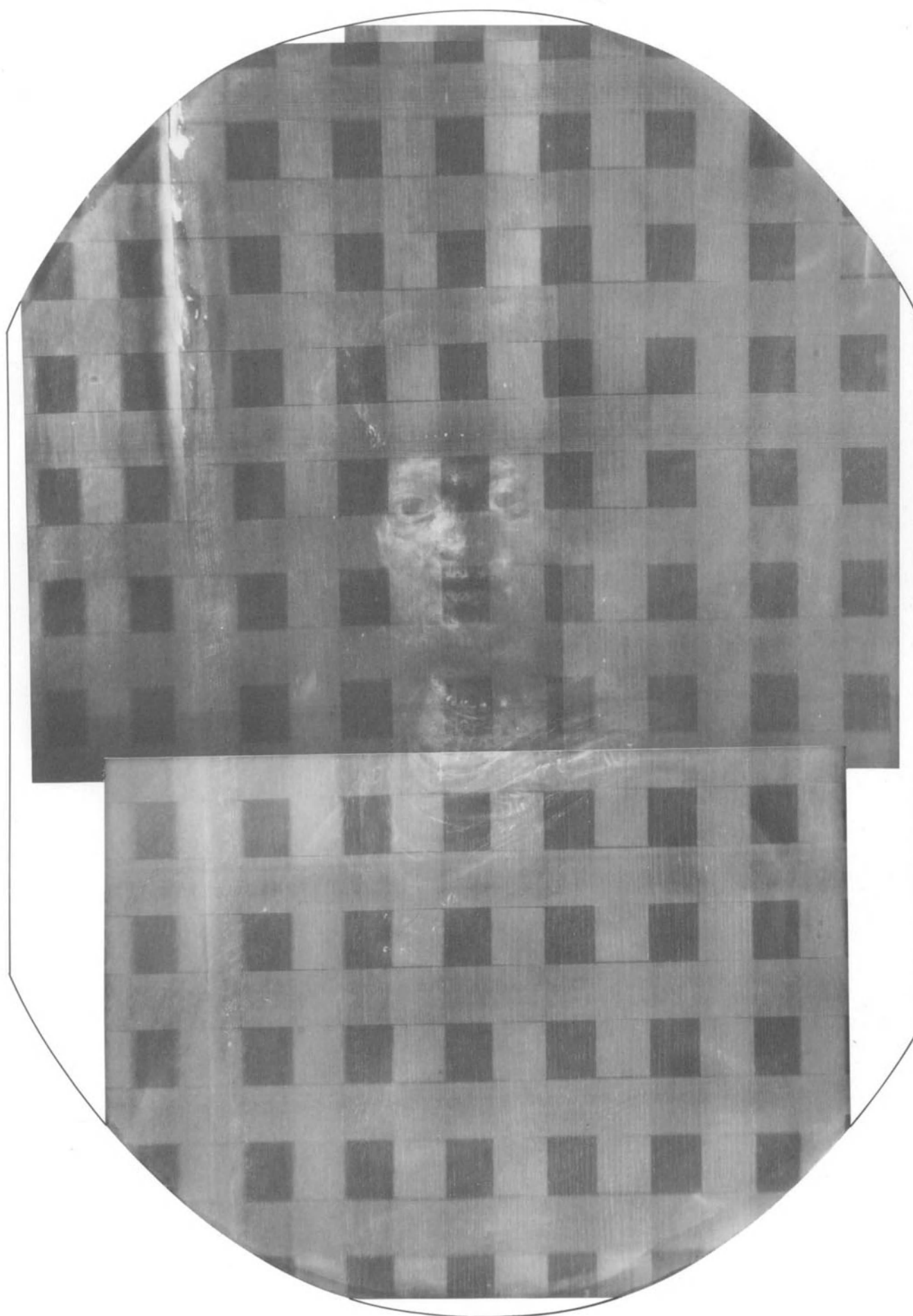
The radiographic image, which is impaired by the cradle, matches what one expects from the paint surface. Priming used in restoration along the join shows up light.



Fig. 1. Panel 67 × 47.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



*Signature*

None.

*Varnish*

No special remarks.

**4. Comments**

As the back of the panel was planed down during cradling it is impossible to be certain if there was bevelling and if so how this ran – which would tell more surely what the original shape of the panel was. It seems likely that it was originally a rectangle rather than a broad oval, as suggested by the present shape at top and bottom. The figure would then have been in a rather wider frame than it is now, and have been on the small side. (For the consecutive changes of format see *Support*, DESCRIPTION.) The execution is marked by a free and frequently translucent use of paint, and by a warm colouring in which the red dominating the clothing is played off against the brown-black of the hair, the strong white of the shirt, the mixed tints of the shawl, the golden brown of the tunic and the brown-grey tones of the background. There is a great directness to the brushwork which contributes to the painting everywhere so that the impression is of an homogeneous whole. The treatment is broad and energetic, and sometimes, especially in the execution of the costume, dissipates into nonchalance.

As to the question of whether this can be seen as an authentic work by Rembrandt, it has to be said that even in the paintings he did with bravura there is still a more incisive characterizing of forms and materials. In particular, the rendering of the clothing falls below the level one feels one can expect of Rembrandt; the confused treatment of the pleated shirt, the vague and sparsely-articulated shaping of the string of pearls, the shawl and the buttons and braiding on the cloak provide perhaps the most immediate evidence of an approach to the task that is not his. The same applies to the handling of the head, with its pronounced use of red and pink in the flesh tints. Presumably because of the broad and casual paintwork Waagen posited Flinck as the artist<sup>1</sup>, and Gerson too<sup>2</sup> called this and similar pictures 'in the style of Govaert Flinck'. In this interpretation it is assumed that the painting was produced in Rembrandt's immediate circle: this is not unlikely, and it may even have been done in his workshop. So far as our knowledge of Flinck's early work goes, there seems to be no clear connexion.

It is possible that the red garment trimmed with braiding at the front should be seen as a 'Polish jacket', and the mention of an (admittedly smaller-format) painting of a 'Polakje' that appeared in a

sale at The Hague in 1769 (Lugt 1781), no. 25 and was described as a Rembrandt may relate to a similar picture. For Wijnman's supposition that this painting depicts a son of Hendrick Uylenburgh, see the *Comments* on no. C 62.

**5. Documents and sources**

None.

**6. Graphic reproductions**

None.

**7. Copies**

None.

**8. Provenance**

– Bought by the Empress Catherine II for the Hermitage in Leningrad between 1783 and 1797<sup>3</sup>.

**9. Summary**

No. C 63 is a summarily and even somewhat superficially painted work in which red, in a variety of shades, plays a dominant role to an extent unusual for the young Rembrandt. Consequently the painting cannot be seen as an authentic work by him. Waagen was the first to attribute it to Govaert Flinck, a suggestion that has since met with a certain amount of approval. The idea that the work stems from Rembrandt's immediate circle is likely.

## REFERENCES

- 1 Catalogue of the Hermitage, 1863, no. 843; G. F. Waagen, *Gemäldesammlung in der kaiserlichen Eremitage*, S. Petersburg 1870 (2nd edn), p. 187, no. 843.
- 2 Br.-Gerson 186.
- 3 Y. Kuznetsov in: *Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn. Paintings from Soviet Museums*, Leningrad [c. 1971], no. 5.

## C64 Bust of a boy

ENGLAND, PRIVATE COLLECTION

HDG 494; BR. 191; BAUCH 159; GERSON 161

### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved painting that may have been produced in Rembrandt's workshop.

### 2. Description of subject

A boy is seen down to the chest with the body almost in left profile, but the face almost fully towards the viewer; the gaze is directed towards the left. His curly, reddish-brown hair falls to the shoulders, and to the right leaves exposed an ear with an earring with a pear-shaped drop. Over a white shirt, the top of which is visible at the throat, he wears a dark green garment ornamented with lighter green braiding on the shoulder and on the chest. The figure is lit from the left, against a neutral brown-grey background. Around the figure can be seen the spandrels of an incomplete oval framing.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in June 1971 (B. H., P. v. Th.) in good daylight and in the frame.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 46.9 × 36.6 cm. Thickness c. 1.2 cm. The back shows narrow, steep bevelling along the bottom and sides.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Not observed with any certainty.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: So far as can be judged through a badly yellowed layer of varnish, the painting gives the impression of being in sound condition apart from a little damage along the right-hand edge. Craquelure: local shrinking cracks in impasto accents in dark paint, for example in the clothing.

DESCRIPTION: The paint is opaque almost everywhere, and only in the hair on the extreme left, in the eyebrows and in the shadow of the lower eyelid on the left can one glimpse something of an underlying layer of brownish paint. The lit parts of the face are thickly painted, as is the reflexion of light on the shadow side, the dark areas and accents in the hair and in the eyes, the shirt and, especially, the side of the shoulder facing the light and the braiding on the clothing. In all these areas of impasto the brushstroke can be readily followed. In the lit parts of the face the flesh tints are applied with broad strokes that roughly follow the shapes; the edges of light on the lower eyelids and the accents of light on the nose are done carelessly with small streaks of light paint. In the upper half of the face a mainly reddish brown is used for the roughly-indicated shadows. The eyebrows are done with coarse strokes of brown paint placed over a translucent zone. The borders to the upper eyelids are done with similar insensitivity; the lower border of that on the left runs broadly from the inner corner of the eye to where it touches the iris, thereafter becoming a very thin line. To the right the edges disappear into the very dark area of shadow against the nose. The round irises are done in brown, and the white of the eye rather more thickly in greys. Whitish catchlights are placed at the top right border of the thickly-painted black pupils. The lower eyelids consist of arc-shaped strokes of whitish and pink paint, merging to the lower

left into a translucent zone over which has been placed a stroke of reddish brown paint. The shadow along the nose is interrupted by a touch of ochre-coloured paint (indicating the edge of the nasal bone) that towards the right merges into a thin pink on the cheek. The wing of the nose on this side lacks a convincing plasticity, and the nostrils, which comprise on the right a thick dab of black and on the left a stroke of red, are equally ineffective. A fairly bright red has been used for the lips and merges into the surrounding flesh tones; they are separated by an impasto mouth-line that widens slightly at the corners. Below the mouth there is a heavy shadow accent, in a thick brown paint that is also used for the shadow on the jaw and throat. Reflexions of light along the jawline and beneath the chin are applied in a somewhat lighter tint. The curling hair consists of broad, loose strokes of a ruddy brown and black; to the extreme left a brownish underpainting shows through to some extent.

The white of the shirt has narrow strokes of thick paint; in the shadow the paint is thinner, and mixed with some green. The jacket is executed in various shades of green. In the lit areas narrow strokes, set partly one on top of the other in thick paint, follow the curve of the shoulder; the highest light is on the even more thickly painted braiding, done in a rather lighter green. The back and sleeve have long strokes roughly indicating the form, in a thin green-black. The undifferentiated, round contour of the back cuts slightly into the adjoining part of the painted oval framing.

The background is in a brown-grey, very dark at the top and becoming lighter further down; brushstrokes are just visible, mostly running from top right to bottom left. The oval framing is painted in a very dark brown-grey. The curved edges are not cleanly drawn, and that at the lower left runs almost entirely into the background.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

None.

#### *Signature*

At the lower left in a thick dark brown (<Rembrandt.ft.1634>). The letters are cramped and clumsily formed; the *R* is placed slightly higher than the other letters. The signature does not make an authentic impression.

#### *Varnish*

There is a heavy layer of yellowed varnish.

### 4. Comments

The fact that the attribution of this work to Rembrandt has – though not without some reservations – continued to be given a certain credence up to now seems to be due more to tradition and the presence of a (dubious) signature than to the qualities of the painting itself. The rendering of plasticity in the head rests mainly on a rather unsubtle contrast between light areas and heavy shadows and accents. The lit parts of the face do not have the modelling, built up with variously-placed strokes of thin and thick paint, that one is used to in Rembrandt's work of the 1630s; here the light paint is spread out broadly and casually over the forehead, nose and cheeks, with carelessly-applied

Fig. 1. Panel 46.9 × 36.6 cm



accents of light on the lower eyelids and nose. The shadows are painted opaquely in either a ruddy brown or (along the jaw and in the neck) in brown interrupted by a muddy reflexion of light. One misses here the brown underpainting showing through, which invariably in the shadow passages of Rembrandt's heads painted on panel lends translucency. The rendering of form in the eyes, nose and mouth is sketchy and insensitive, and thus in total contradiction to Rembrandt's way of working which, especially in the 1630s, was marked by the attention and precision given to the subtle tracing-out of edges and billowing curves.

The depiction of the clothing, too, is poor. In the white shirt, and in the lit shoulder and braiding, the paint is applied thickly without this making any contribution to a satisfactory rendering of materials. The adjoining upper edge of the green garment follows an uncertain course, and the outline of the upper body against the background is similarly inarticulate. So far as the heavy varnish allows assessment, neither these contours nor the opaque and drearily-done background add any feeling of depth to the picture; the same must be said of the spandrels of a painted framing seen in the corners, which are likewise too slipshod in execution to be able to serve any illusionistic purpose. It is not impossible that the figure was originally shown in a completely oval framing – the narrow, steep bevelling seen along three sides at the back of the panel is unusual, and may have been done during a subsequent cutting-down of the panel.

To sum up the foregoing one can say that this is a work of very mediocre execution, the attribution of which to Rembrandt must be seen as untenable. Its physical appearance makes it likely that it is of 17th-century origin, and it cannot be ruled out that such work was produced in his workshop.

In view of the motif, it is one of the group of *tronies* of boys in fanciful (perhaps Polish) costume that includes the paintings no. C 62 and no. C 63, which similarly cannot be regarded as authentic works by Rembrandt.

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

None.

## 8. Provenance

– Coll. Sir Luke Schaub, sale London 26 April 1758 (Lugt

1004), no. 30: 'Rembrandt. A Young Man's Head, its Companion' [cf. no. 29: 'Vandyck. An old Man's head, 3 gns'] (£32. 11s. to the Duke of Portland).

– Coll. Duke of Portland, Welbeck Abbey, recorded there for the first time in the catalogue of 1831.

## 9. Summary

The execution of the work is in all respects too coarse and too superficial to justify an attribution to Rembrandt. The painting belongs among the weaker representatives of pictures of boys in slightly exotic and possibly Polish costume, none of which can so far be seen as authentic beyond any doubt. The possibility that this work was produced in Rembrandt's workshop must be allowed.



**C 65 Portrait of Jean Pellicorne and his son Casper** (companion-piece to no. C 66)

LONDON, THE WALLACE COLLECTION, CAT. NO. 82

HDG 666; BR. 406; BAUCH 533; GERSON 176

Fig. 1. Canvas 155 × 122.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



### 1. Summarized opinion

A generally well preserved work by an unknown artist working under Rembrandt's influence and probably in his workshop. It may be dated early in 1633.

### 2. Description of subject

A man is seen full-length, sitting turned to the right in a red-upholstered armchair, with the upper part of his body upright and his legs spread a little apart. He has one hand stretched out towards a pouch, presumably containing coins, to which is attached a letter with (illegible) writing; this is held by a boy who stands to the right of the man with his right foot placed ahead of the left in a pose that shows that he has just run up to the man. Both of them look up from their action; the man's face is almost square-on to the viewer on whom the gaze is fixed, and the raised face of the child is also turned mainly towards the viewer. The light falls from the left onto the figures, the backrest of the chair and onto the corner of a table, seen in the left foreground and covered with a red cloth; patches of light and shade alternate on the planked floor.

The man, bearded and moustached, wears a broad-brimmed black hat, and is dressed in a doublet and hose striped in black and grey, black stockings and black shoes with rosettes and yellow-tinted soles. His garters, too, are decorated with rosettes. The further arm is hidden in the folds of a black cloak; this is wrapped round the body and covers the armrest of the chair at the front, and the man's thigh. The hems are trimmed with braiding. The dark costume is enlivened by a flat, white pleated collar and one visible cuff, both trimmed with lace. The boy wears a doublet and hose in a warm grey tint, adorned with silvery buttons and aiguillettes; a slash in the sleeve reveals a purplish-brown lining or undersleeve. Around his neck he has a collar with drawstrings, which like the cuff is trimmed with lace; his yellow shoes have purple bows.

A chimneybreast can be vaguely seen in the left background, where the curved outline of the hood, a decorative moulding and two small pillars can be made out. To the right, above the boy's head, there is a painting in a narrow, dark frame; the main features of the picture can be identified as a man wearing a turban, a woman facing him and a small figure (presumably that of a child) standing between them; in the left background there is a door with an arched top, from which someone is watching.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in May 1968 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) and again, after cleaning in 1971, in the autumn of 1976 (J. B., E. v. d. W.), in moderate daylight and artificial light, in the frame and on the wall. Four X-ray films, together covering the area of the sitters' heads and hands, were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, 155 × 122.5 cm. In the area covered by the available X-rays there is no join apparent (unlike the pendant no. C66). Since the companion-piece must have undergone a slight reduction in size (see that entry) the same may be assumed to have happened in this case as well.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Because of the incompleteness of the radiographic material available the cusping cannot be measured.

Threadcount: 12.8 vertical threads/cm (12.2–14), 17 horizontal threads/cm (16.2–18). The horizontal threads show a great many thick places, and thus give the impression of being weft threads; if this is the case, the warp runs vertically. Thread density and weave characteristics rule out the possibility of this canvas and that of the companion-piece (no. C66) coming from the same bolt.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: An ochre colour shows through locally in the floor, above and below the bar connecting the chairlegs, and may be the ground.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: The condition can, since the painting was cleaned in 1971<sup>1</sup> be judged better than previously. Apart from limited paint loss apparent in the radiographic image, it seems to be good, and there is no clear trace of the damage that might be assumed to have taken place in the past, from Michel's comment (in 1893) that 'les toiles ayant été roulées, leur conservation laisse à désirer'<sup>2</sup>. Probably the objects in the background were once more readily legible. Craquelure: an irregular pattern of cracks is spread evenly over the painting. DESCRIPTION: The paint is applied in general opaquely and almost without relief. This is equally true of the two heads; in the man's there are heavier shadow accents than in the others, including the pendant. The brushstroke is however blurred, even in the man's head, and other than along the righthand side of the nose the transitions from light to shade are very gradual. In association with this, the rendering of form in the eyelids, the ear, the wing of the nose and the jaw is, especially on the lit side of the face, very painstaking and quite flat. This shortcoming, which in the man is compensated for by the generally quite lively expression in the face, is more plainly evident in the boy, in whom there is little definition of plasticity. Here, the tint used for the face is lighter than in the man. Just as with the heads in the companion-piece (no. C66), we find it coupled with a certain colourfulness – there are bluish shadows to the right by the temple and cheekbone, around the eyes and around both corners of the mouth; a quite firm red is used in the tip of the nose and, especially, in the mouth. The hands are painted with greater élan than the heads, and in those of the man with a deft characterization of form. In the boy's hands the contours are in many places set down using curved strokes of dark paint that in the case of the three fingers to the left of the pouch coincide with those of the background.

The costumes are competently executed. Apart from the hat, which is shown broadly as a dark shape, the man's dress is treated with a fair amount of detail, though without this distracting from the unity of its appearance. The main tone is black, enlivened with stripes and subdued sheens of light in grey. The collar and cuffs are executed with great care. In the collar the distribution into light and shadow is indicated broadly in white and dark grey, on top of which the shadow side of the folds is added with long, thin strokes; the pattern of the lace is rendered using tiny touches of white and various tints of grey.

The black that dominates in the man's dress and in the background is counterpointed by a number of warm tints applied in more or less self-contained areas more towards the edges of the picture. The boy's costume is a purplish brown-grey, and the pouch he is holding presents a greenish ochre colour. The backrest of the chair is a brown-red that, at the side decorated with copper studs, becomes a deep yellow-brown. The tablecloth is painted in dull red mixed with a little

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



thin ochre yellow that, in the fringe hanging down in the shadow, is applied with casual brushstrokes. The legs of the chair are done in a brown-grey tint set against the more greenish grey of the shadows on the floor. In the most crisply lit part of the floor, to the right, the planks have a brown-yellow tint on which the structure of the grain has been added in brown.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### X-Rays

In general the radiographic image gives no reason to assume major changes in the composition. The contours of the man's collar can, it is true, be seen to have undergone some alteration during the course of the work – to the right of the head the upper limit was originally somewhat lower down, and on the left where the upper border and the lower edge coincide a dark reserve left in the background, which at that point contains radioabsorbent pigment, indicates that the collar was at first intended to be wider, at a stage where the collar itself had not yet been worked up in radioabsorbent paint. Moreover, a slight swerve has finally been added to the upper border of the collar, probably through dark paint belonging to the background having, at a later stage, been carried over this contour. Linked with these observations is another – that the part of the background that can be seen between the lower edge of the hat and the collar is noticeably light in the X-ray, giving reason to suppose that the background once had a lighter tone at this point than it has today.

In the lit parts of the man's face one can see a pattern of relatively short, merging strokes, suggesting that the modelling was set down less broadly than one might expect from the surface at this point; in the boy's face there is less differentiation in the brushwork image, and in this it matches the final result.

Over the whole surface covered by the available X-rays there are short, vaguely-edged stripes, standing diagonally. These also occur in the X-rays of the companion-piece, and in neither case are they connected with the picture – probably what one has here is relatively thin patches or lacunae in a ground applied to the canvas with a knife. One can also detect scattered, small black patches with sharp edges, these edges corresponding to the craquelure pattern in the paint layer and indicating that the paint has flaked off here and there.

#### Signature

At bottom right in dark paint (<Rembrant. f (followed by a configuration of three dots)>). Though giving a fairly firm impression, the manner of writing does seem a little unusual, especially that of the *R* which is open to the left and whose bowl continues to the right with a hardly pronounced angle into a tail, as well as that of the highly uncharacteristic *m* which has linking strokes starting low down between the three verticals. The letters are noticeably irregular in their placing. What is more, the location of the signature, in the lower righthand corner in a strongly contrasting colour and on a relatively small scale, is hard to reconcile with Rembrandt's habits. The spelling 'Rembrant' (without the *d*) does in fact occur (apart from that in the 1632 *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* in The Hague, no. A 51) a number of times in 1633 and a further time in 1634 (in the Madrid *Sophonisba*, no. A 94), sometimes similarly combined with a configuration of three dots after the *f* (as in the *Christ in the storm* in the Gardner Museum, Boston, no. A 68).

#### Varnish

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

The attribution of this painting and its companion-piece (no. C 66) to Rembrandt has never been doubted in the literature. Yet there are serious reasons to distrust it. In forming a judgment, one must first of all agree that there is no cause to doubt the traditional identification of the sitters. A pair of miniature portraits on copper by Cornelis van Poelenburgh in the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, known to represent Jean Pellicorne and Susanna van Collen (figs. 7 and 8), shows unmistakably the same sitters at about the same age, this time in pastoral costume (though the woman was originally rendered in a dress similar to the one in no. C 66; see C. F. Bridgman, P. Michaels and H. F. Sherwood in: *Studies in conservation* 10, 1965, pp. 1–6). The couple's identity makes it possible to arrive at an approximate dating for the paintings. Jean Pellicorne and Susanna van Collen were born in 1597 and 1607 respectively and (as we have been kindly informed by S. A. C. Dudok van Heel in a letter dated 5 December 1979) their children Anna (not Eva Susanna, as the literature has it) and Casper in December 1626 and June 1628 respectively; there were two children who died in infancy, in 1630 and 1632, and the next child to survive was born in April 1633. If one estimates the ages of the children at, successively, 6–7 years and 5–6 years, then one arrives at a dating of around 1632/33 for the paintings; April 1633 would seem in any case to be a *terminus ante quem*. This means that for comparison with Rembrandt's work one must consider in particular the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* of 1632 in The Hague (no. A 51), the *Portrait of the shipbuilder Jan Rijcksen and his wife* in Buckingham Palace (no. A 77), the *Portrait of a man rising from his chair* in Cincinnati (no. A 78) and its pendant in New York (no. A 79), all from 1633, and the portraits of the Soolmans–Coppit couple in a private collection, Paris (nos. A 100 and A 101) and those of the Elisons in Boston (nos. A 98 and A 99) of 1634.

In making these comparisons one is struck by a number of similarities between the Pellicorne portraits and the Rembrandt works just mentioned. These involve partly the general approach to the rather cramped figures with their mostly closed contours and sometimes masked limbs. And in part they are more specific in nature, concerned with the handling of light (especially in the man's head and right hand), the avoidance of straight lines even in the powerfully-drawn contours of the footwarmer (in the portrait of the mother and daughter), or the way handwriting is suggested on the paper hanging from the pouch (compared with that in the *Shipbuilder*).

Fig. 4. Detail (1:1)

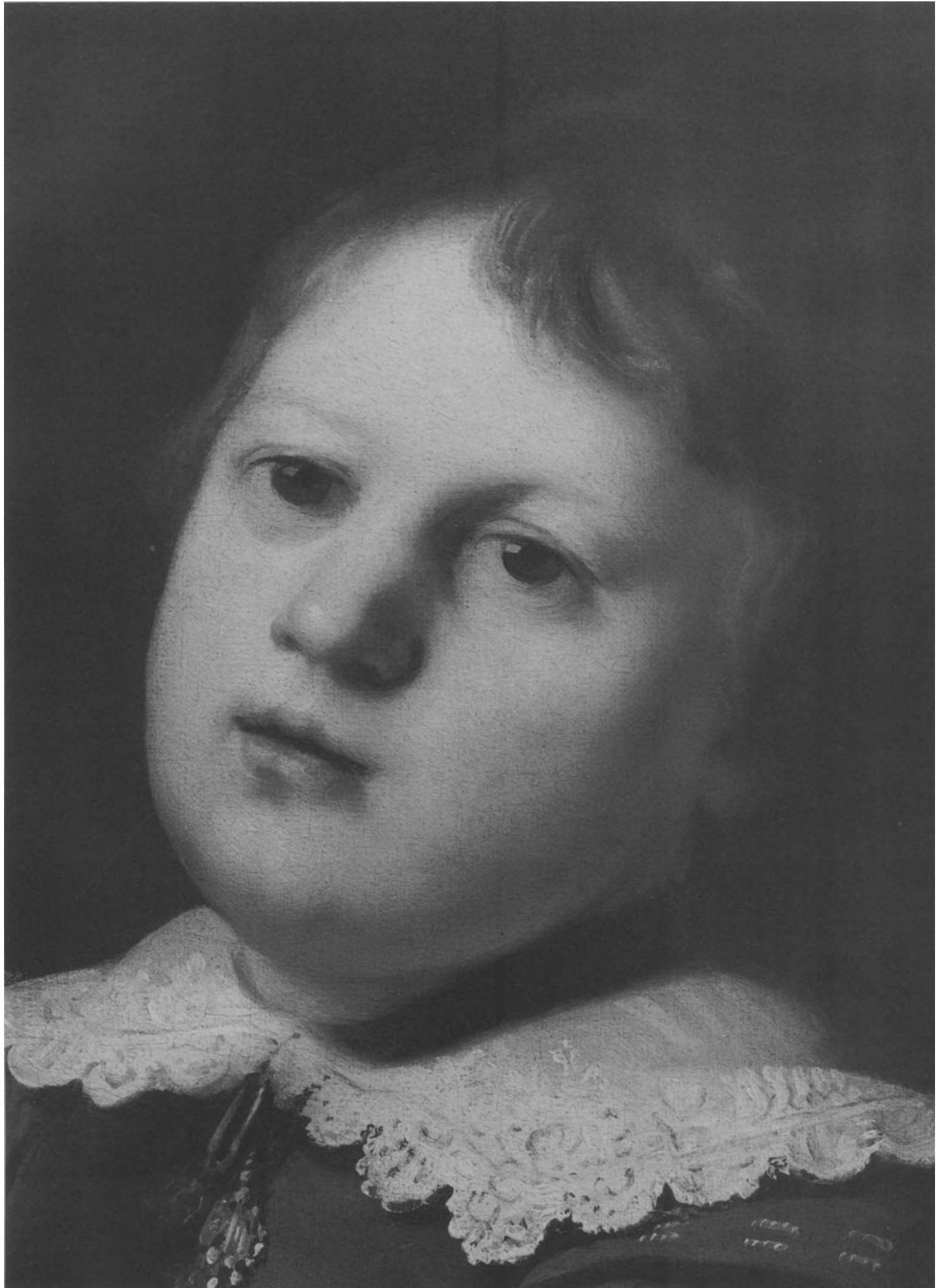




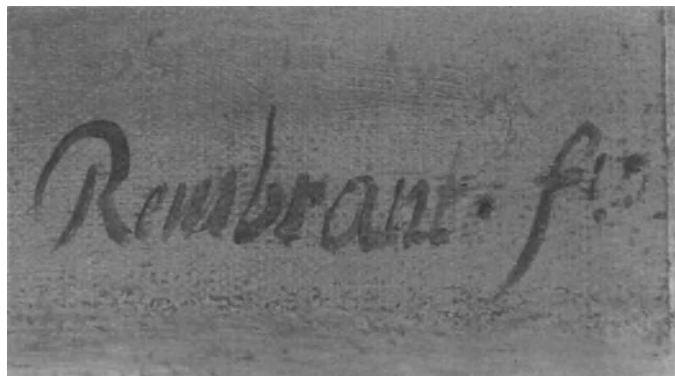
Fig. 5. Detail (1:1)



Against this there are however major departures from Rembrandt's work, in both conception and execution. Where the overall conception is concerned one cannot escape the impression that in the Rembrandt works just named the linear pattern and spatial definition of the figures are based to a large extent on the homogeneous rhythm of the principal contours, determined by the whole of the dark clothing. A comparison between no. C 65 and the *Portrait of the minister Johannes Elison* (no. A 98) is instructive in this respect – in the latter work a lively contour provides a succinct delineation of the figure, which is in a single three-dimensional diagonal vis-à-vis the picture plane; in the Pellicorne portrait the

continuity and distinctness of the contour is lost, and the painter seems unable to choose between a diagonal and a frontal pose, without a deliberately-decided turn to the body producing a dramatic effect. On the contrary, the turn of the father's head towards the viewer disrupts the dramatic situation, hinted at by the fleeting pose of the son; the latter is shown with one leg ahead of the other, seeming to run towards his father – yet he does so in a direction that has hardly any compositional, and certainly no effective spatial connexion with the placing of the father. As a device, the catching of a fleeting instant like this plays a great role in some of Rembrandt's portraits. In the man's portrait in Cincinnati the

Fig. 6. Detail with signature (1:1)



fact of the sitter rising from his chair creates a diagonal movement that, combined with the gaze fixed on the viewer, suggests a relationship between the sitter, the viewer and the static, seated woman shown in the companion-piece. In the *Shipbuilder and his wife* the viewer is not directly involved, by the direction of gaze of the subjects, in the action taking place within the closely-knit group of the two figures. But it is precisely a comparison with these two works that reveals how clumsily the formally incoherent conjunction of the two Pellicorne figures is broken by the contact with the viewer. The same is true, *mutatis mutandis*, for the companion-piece (no. C 66), where neither the mother nor the daughter – the latter having an abrupt but quite unmotivated turn to the head – pays any attention to the shared action of handing over a coin; this action is consequently not (as it would be in Rembrandt) translated into a dramatic situation in which the viewer may or may not be involved, but is reduced to an isolated motif with probably a symbolic significance. In the portrait of the mother and daughter the gaze of the sitters is moreover somewhat vague and not clearly directed at the viewer, so that the lack of mutual contact between them is not offset by a contact with the viewer. Typical of the lesser significance that the actions being depicted held for the painter is also the fact that three of the four heads are shown in exactly the same vertical position, giving the impression of the sitters posing stiffly; this is something that Rembrandt always avoids by having his figures – certainly those in men's portraits – tilting the head slightly to one side, in line with the movement of the body, as a result of their action (even though this may be as minimal as it is with the *Elison* portrait).

With the rendering of form and handling of paint, too, one can see a series of divergences from what we know of Rembrandt in similar paintings. In the latter the significant gestures – the way a lancet, a fan or a glove is held, the handing over of a letter – invariably have a depth-creating quality achieved by a fair measure of foreshortening. Here, on the

other hand, the gestures show a tendency to be parallel to the picture plane (especially in no. C 65), or the foreshortening has little effect (e.g. in the woman in the pendant); this can be termed definitely un-Rembrandtlike, and is more likely to be encountered in minor artists like Dirck Dircksz. Santvoort (cf. his *Governesses of the Women's House of Correction* of 1638, Amsterdam, Amsterdams Historisch Museum, inv. no. A 7402). Coupled with this relatively poor feeling for three-dimensional effect there is a lack of subtlety in the modelling. In the costumes, even in the collars and cuffs, the result has still been reasonably satisfactory. In the lace collars and cuffs there is – just as in Rembrandt – more effort at suggestion of form than at precise rendering; yet the end result is very different from Rembrandt's graphic treatment in which the pattern is drawn with streaks and dots of dark paint. In the woman's collar one notices that the light underpainting, brushed in various directions, normal with Rembrandt in collars of this kind is absent; when one compares the man's costume with the (practically identical) dress in, for example, the *Portrait of Marten Soolmans*, one sees how much freer and less precise the painting is there. In the flesh areas the nuance and atmospheric effect is more painfully absent than in the clothing, especially when they receive all or most of the light, and the linear skeleton of outlines is incapable of satisfactorily suggesting the plastic structure. The last applies in particular to the hands of the mother and the two children, but also to their heads. The schematic, flattening drawing of the eyes and the unsatisfactory modelling of the nose are obtrusive especially in the mother's face, which takes on a masklike character as a result, and is very far indeed from the curving and receding surface that Rembrandt knows how to suggest, modelled carefully in the pattern of the brushwork and the tonal values he uses – even in a head turned towards the light (usually a woman's head facing left). Where stronger shadow accents have been used, such as in the man's head and hand, these form tongues of a dark tone that, together with the quite flat, lit areas, still do not really create an impression of rounded plasticity. The artist has tried to produce this kind of effect in the fingers of the father and son, by means of dark edging lines; but since these border the forms on different sides with the same degree of stress they are not convincing as the fingers' own shadows or cast shadows, and fail all the time to achieve the effortless effect that such details have in Rembrandt. Characteristic of the shadow areas, particularly in the heads of the woman and the children, is also the use of relatively colourful paint, in a way one does not find to the same extent in

Fig. 7. C. van Poelenburgh, *Portrait of Jean Pellicorne* (1:1). Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery



Fig. 8. C. van Poelenburgh, *Portrait of Susanna van Collen* (1:1). Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery



Rembrandt's work. In general one is struck by the fact that the most colourful areas – the clothing of the two children – are placed well away from the centre. Though this might be interpreted as, while admittedly unusual in Rembrandt, nevertheless explicable through the nature of the commission, this does not apply to the brown-red of the man's chairback in no. C 65. A glance at the *Portrait of a man rising from his chair* (no. A 78) shows us how much Rembrandt, in a similar subject, neglected the form at the edges of his composition, and subdued the colours; a comparison of Pellicorne's chair and the very similar one in the Elison portrait (no. A 98) further leads one to the conclusion that in a situation like this Rembrandt geared the effect of light and shadow in the furniture not only to a three-dimensional effect, but also to unity with the space behind which, while vague, was still indicated atmospherically and with depth. Even if one assumes that the background in the Pellicorne portraits has darkened with age, and that the indications of the chimneybreast and a painting on the wall in no. C 65 and of a table in the companion-piece were originally more readily legible, it is unlikely that the space behind the figures here ever had the kind of atmospheric quality and suggestion of depth that one sees in Rembrandt's large portrait paintings from the 1632 *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* to the 1641 *Portrait of Cornelis Anslo and his wife* in Berlin (Br. 409).

There are, then, such fundamental differences between nos. C 65 and C 66 and comparable works

by Rembrandt that an attribution to him must be seen as ruled out. One must rather think of an artist in his immediate circle who, however (possibly as a result of being trained elsewhere), had a different approach to form and a different manner of painting. One probably has to assume that he was one of the assistants in Rembrandt's workshop who helped to execute the numerous portrait commissions in the years 1632 and 1633. For there can be hardly any doubt that these paintings too were done in Rembrandt's workshop. This is indicated by a number of features that can be termed Rembrandtesque, already mentioned above, as well as by a number of close similarities to other portraits produced close to Rembrandt. There is, for instance, a certain resemblance to the Stewart Gardner *Portrait of a couple* (no. C 67) in the concentration of light and colour on one side of the composition, giving the tilted head of the son Casper a strong likeness in form and tonal values to that of the woman in the double portrait; the greenish shadow tints of the latter woman's head are similar to those in the head of Susanna van Collen, and the lower hem of her dress, done with dots, and that of her daughter are reminiscent of the contours of the hose and the rosettes on the shoes of the man in the double portrait. Though the difference in scale makes comparison difficult, one may wonder whether one and the same assistant may not have been responsible for all three of these paintings. In another respect there is however a resemblance with the New York *Portrait of a woman* (no. C 69); this lies

particularly in the treatment of the right hand of Susanna van Collen, which in its round, rather flat shape is strikingly similar to the right hand in the New York painting. One may, on the grounds of a similarity like this, wonder whether the execution of the Pellicorne portraits is the work of more than one hand. If that were the case, one would be faced with a sharing of work of the kind that was standard practice in the contemporary and later workshops of portrait painters (Mierevelt, Van Dyck, Lely and Rigaud, for instance). In that situation it was however normal for the master to draft the composition and to paint the head, while the accessories were executed by assistants. In the Pellicorne portraits, just as in the Stewart Gardner *Portrait of a couple* and in the New York pair of pendants, there is no clear indication of this. In none of these cases does the design of the whole composition seem to have been by Rembrandt, and the heads are not, in their execution, so far from the rest of the painting nor so close to Rembrandt's work that it is possible to recognize his hand in them. The similarities between the *Portrait of Susanna van Collen* and the New York *Portrait of a woman* – which also extend to a certain linear, masklike quality to the two heads, though they do not appear to be by a single hand – seem rather to be explained by an eclecticism of a kind one might expect in a production process where a number of assistants worked under the supervision of a master fairly independently of each other but under his influence, and took part in a mutual interaction.

A final feature common to the two Pellicorne portraits and to a number of portraits that seem to have been painted in Rembrandt's early years of activity in Amsterdam by other hands in his workshop are the signatures. Just as, for instance, the New York companion-pieces (nos. C 68 and C 69) carry an almost genuine-seeming signature 'RHL van Ryn 1632', matching the formulation of Rembrandt's signature in that year, but in a place unusual for him, so the Pellicorne portraits have, in an unusual placing and in remarkably small script, an almost genuine-seeming signature 'Rembrant. f.', followed on the woman's portrait by an incomplete date. (It seems not entirely certain that the two inscriptions are by the same hand, and perhaps that on the man's portrait has been appended later in imitation of that on the woman's portrait.) This formulation, and in particular the spelling 'Rembrant' (without the *d*) matches a habit of Rembrandt's in, especially, the year 1633. Added to a dating of 1632 or up to April 1633 that can be deduced from the number and ages of the children, these inscriptions could indeed point to the date of 1633 – at least if one assumes that Rembrandt

allowed his assistants to append his signature to their products, something that seems probable in other instances as well (cf. in particular no. C 71, and Introduction, Chapter V, p. 105). There is no name that suggests itself in particular as the author of the Pellicorne portraits.

Iconographically, nos. C 65 and C 66 are rather unusual, and not all that easy to explain. In the first place, separate portraits of a father with the son and a mother with the daughter did occur not infrequently in Antwerp around 1630 (e.g. in the work of Cornelis de Vos and Antonie van Dyck), but they were quite uncommon in the Northern Netherlands. In the 16th century they were less unusual, probably due to the fact that they matched the mediaeval manner of having donors portrayed on the side-panels of triptychs. Secondly, the action of the sitters must be described as unusual and even a little obscure. It is clear that the mother is handing the daughter a coin, possibly indicating her right to a dowry. Even less obvious is the relationship of the father and son to the money-pouch held by the latter; the obvious assumption is that the father has handed it to the son – as a symbol of the family's wealth? – but the pose of the child, who has just run up, would almost give the impression of his bringing the pouch to his father (something that is quite unlikely). The question arises of whether this action has anything to do with the subject of the painting shown on the wall. This can be read, after the cleaning of 1971, as representing *Hagar's dismissal*; the figure looking out of an open door would then be not an old man, as K. Roberts<sup>1</sup> believed, but Sara. An emblematic interpretation of this episode (cf. P. Picinellus, *Mundus symbolicus*, lib. III, no. 211, ed. Cologne 1695, p. 184) saw this as the shielding of Isaac from the baleful influence of Ismael, thanks to Sara's perspicacity. Smith<sup>3</sup> thought that the painting was meant 'to contrast Abraham's abandonment of his illegitimate son to Jan Pellicorne's concern for his rightful heir'. Since Abraham was obeying the command of God when he sent Hagar and Ismael away, it must be seen as out of the question that this action might have been given a negative interpretation. If it is right that it relates to Pellicorne's concern for his son, then one can accept that the significance lies in a similarity, and that in the biblical account the concern for Isaac – Abraham's rightful heir – is placed to the fore.

A detail whose significance can be determined more closely thanks to a study by De Jongh is the basket of grapes standing on the table beside Susanna van Collen (cf. E. de Jongh in: *Simiolus* 7, 1974, no. 4, pp. 166–191). It is, first of all, a reference to the biblical text 'Thy wife shall be as a fruitful vine by the sides of thine house' (Psalms,

128:3), according to De Jongh 'a text that was constantly being cited and paraphrased in the 17th century'. On the basis of a contemporaneous family portrait (attributed to Thomas de Keyser, previously in Berlin and lost during the Second World War) De Jongh advances the possibility of a multiple meaning, with the grapes standing not only for fruitfulness but also for the purity of marital love.

Jean Pellicorne, born in Leiden in 1597, was a wealthy merchant in Amsterdam, where he died after 1653. He married Susanna van Collen (or van Ceulen) there in 1626. At the sale of the estate of the painter and art dealer Louys Rocourt, Amsterdam 23 June 1627, he was named as 'Jan Pellecorn' buying 'een Roverije' (a robbery). The two portraits were probably bequeathed to the eldest son Casper; in the inventory of the estate of his widow (in 1711) the family portraits were indeed mentioned as a group, but not described individually (see 5. *Documents and sources*).

### 5. Documents and sources

As we have been kindly informed by S. A. C. Dudok van Heel, of the Amsterdam Municipal Archives Department, the inventory dated 3 January 1711 of the estate of Clara Valckenier (1630–1710), widow of Casper Pellicorne who died in 1680, has the description: '18 Portraiten van de familie en een wapenbort, die mevrouw de weduwe Pieter Rans Valckenier [i.e. Eva Susanna Pellicorne] sal hebben en door den Hr Pels zijn helft aan haer wert vereert. 2 Portraiten van vader en moeder en een schoorsteenstuk van een doot kint, dat de Hr Adriaen Pels daer tegen sal hebben' (18 portraits of the family and a coat of arms, that the widow of Pieter Rans Valckenier shall have, with Mr Pels's share that he gave over to her. 2 Portraits of father and mother and a chimney piece of a dead child, that Mr Adriaen Pels shall have in exchange). Clearly (see 8. *Provenance*) nos. C 65 and C 66 belonged among the first group of eighteen.

### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

### 7. Copies

None.

### 8. Provenance<sup>4</sup>

– Through the marriage of Eva Susanna Pellicorne (1670–1732), daughter of Casper Pellicorne and Clara Valckenier, with Pieter Rans Valckenier inherited together with the companion-piece by Adriaan Valckenier, Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies, and then by his daughter Anna Catharina Valckenier, married to Jhr. Jan van de Poll. Following the death of Anna Catharina Valckenier sold together with the pendant in Amsterdam on 14 (according to catalogue, but actually 21<sup>5</sup>) November 1842 (35 045.- guilders to dealer Chr. J. Nieuwenhuys, Brussels).

– Coll. King William II of the Netherlands. Sale The Hague, 12 August 1850, no. 84 (together with the companion-piece

for 30 200 guilders to S. M. Mawson for the fourth Marquess of Hertford).

– Coll. the fourth Marquess of Hertford and left to his illegitimate son Sir Richard Wallace in 1870. Bequeathed by Lady Wallace to the Nation, as part of the Wallace Collection, 1897.

### 9. Summary

Comparison with Rembrandt's portraits and group portraits from the early 1630s leads to the conclusion that the differences in approach and execution are such that the current attribution to him cannot be maintained. Since the influence of Rembrandt's style is unmistakable, one has to assume that it was painted by an artist in his circle. The latter probably worked in Rembrandt's workshop, and if the inscriptions on the paintings were appended contemporaneously in the way that Rembrandt signed his works the date must be set at 1633 (and, from genealogical data, placed early in that year).

### REFERENCES

- 1 Cf. K. Roberts, 'Cleaning and restoration at the Wallace Collection 1962–1972', *Burl. Mag.* 115 (1973), p. 56.
- 2 E. Michel, *Rembrandt. Sa Vie, son oeuvre et son temps*, Paris 1893, p. 140.
- 3 D. R. Smith, 'Rembrandt's early double portraits and the Dutch conversation piece', *Art Bull.* 64 (1982), pp. 259–288, esp. 262 note 10; *idem*, *Masks of wedlock. Seventeenth-century Dutch marriage portraiture*, Ann Arbor 1982, pp. 119–120.
- 4 *Wallace Collection Catalogues, Pictures and Drawings*, London 1928, pp. 232–233.
- 5 S. H.[art], 'De Pellicorne portretten van Rembrandt geveild: Bravo!', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 56 (1969), p. 189.

## C66 Portrait of Susanna van Collen and her daughter Anna (companion-piece to no. C65)

LONDON, THE WALLACE COLLECTION, CAT. NO. 90

HDG 667; BR. 407; BAUCH 534; GERSON 177

### 1. Summarized opinion

A generally well preserved work done by an unknown artist under Rembrandt's influence, and probably in his workshop. It can be dated 1632/33.

### 2. Description of subject

A woman sits facing three-quarters left in an armchair, with to the right of her a small girl seen mainly from the side. Both are shown full-length and are looking straight at the viewer, the girl with her head fully turned. The woman wears a black coat ('vlieger') of a shiny fabric with a pattern of tendrils and numerous strips of sewn-on, black braid; her bodice is embroidered with tendrils in gold thread. On the back of the head she has a small cap only the lace edge of which is partly visible to the front; to the right hangs a pearl earring. A wide flat ruff, cuffs with Flemish bobbin lace, gold bracelets and rings complete her rich attire. From a moss-green purse with gold drawstrings she has just taken a coin, and is giving it to the girl. The latter wears a shiny red-brown dress with a flower pattern. An open overskirt is held back and fastened behind her back by a bow with gold embroidery; her shoulder-caps, sleeves and belt are also worked with gold thread. Around her neck and shoulder lies a three-layer, lace-trimmed collar, and the visible left sleeve has a lace-trimmed cuff. The underskirt is in a copper-coloured material that falls in heavy, shining folds, and is decorated with gold and green-blue braid. Her jewellery consists of a headband, pearl-drop earrings and a gold bracelet.

In front of the woman there is a footwarmer, partly covered by the folds of her skirt. The background is very dark. On the right, vaguely indicated, is a table bearing a small yellow basket with dark bands that seems to contain grapes.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in May 1968 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) and again, after the 1972/73 cleaning, in the autumn of 1976 (J. B., E. v. d. W.) on the wall and in the frame, by moderate daylight and artificial light. Four X-ray films together covering the central area with the heads and hands were received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, 155 × 123 cm. As the X-ray shows, there is a horizontal join running across above the centre, level with the tip of the girl's nose. From the incomplete date at the lower right it must be concluded that the canvas was once a little larger, at least on the right.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Because of the incompleteness of the radiographic material available the cusping cannot be measured. Threadcount: above the seam, 14.3 vertical threads/cm (11.5–16.5), 14.3 horizontal threads/cm (13.5–15.5); below the seam, 13.4 vertical threads/cm (12–16.2), 13.5 horizontal threads/cm (13.5–14). The vertical threads show more, and longer and shorter thick places than the horizontal threads. Because of the direction of the seam, the weave structure and the more even density of the horizontal threads one may take the warp to be in the horizontal direction. The canvases above and below the seam probably came from the same bolt of canvas, in view of the similarity in the weave and threadcount for the warp threads. Thread density and weave characteristics rule out the possibility of this canvas and that of the companion-piece (no. C65) coming from the same bolt.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Not seen for certain.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Since the painting was cleaned in 1972/73<sup>1</sup> the condition can be judged better than before, and in general is good. There is no clear trace to be found of the past damage one might imagine from the comment by Michel in 1893 that 'les toiles ayant été roulées, leur conservation laisse à désirer'<sup>2</sup>. An overpainting that we noted in 1968 at the lower edge, partly masking the signature, has now disappeared.

DESCRIPTION: As with the companion-piece (no. C65), the paint is applied very evenly and opaquely, and the brushwork is scarcely apparent. There is some relief in the decoration in the woman's bodice, in the chains and bracelets and in the child's sleeve.

With the even application of paint goes a careful treatment of the figures that lends them an appearance of homogeneity. The least successful in this respect are the faces, where in the shadows quite pronounced though blended tints have been used. In the child's face in particular the detail is rather linear, to such an extent that one wonders whether the heavy outlining of the eyelids has not been gone over subsequently. The woman's face has a smooth, closed paint surface, in which a few brushstrokes can be detected only on the forehead. There are greenish tints on both temples and, other than to the left, around the mouth; the shadow on the right otherwise consists of dull yellow-grey and reddish tints that run one into the other. The shadow to the right along her nose is quite heavy, and ruddy by the wing of the nose that is marked with a stroke of red. There is a quite pronounced blush on the cheeks; the lips are red, and the mouth-line in the shadow is shown with a very dark red. The shadows around the eyes are indicated very precisely, as are the eyes themselves. The upper eyelids are marked with small dark strokes, and the iris surrounded with a small black line that here and there becomes a little vague.

The neck and collar are separated from one another by a definite line of shadow in brown, and the shadow to the right of the head is in an opaque and relatively dark brown-grey. The piping at the edge of the collar is accentuated with small curved strokes of white except at the upper left. Neither at the surface nor in the X-rays is there any trace, in this collar, of the underpainting in bold strokes of white which is frequently encountered with Rembrandt. The cuffs are done for the most part in a blueish grey that changes to a white only low down, by the hands. The lace is rendered with closely-placed, short strokes of blue-grey, black and white, in a way that hardly suggests a recognizable pattern. The contours of the quite plump hands are accentuated, insensitively, with black.

The girl's face is painted smoothly and somewhat schematically, over a light underpainting that shows through in thin patches, and the detail is even more linear than with the woman. The cheeks are pale, the shadow on the right compact and ruddy in tone; there are none of the greenish tints seen in the woman's face. Quite a lot of pink is used in the eyelids, the iris is brown and the pupils a deep black; here, again, the mouth-line is done on the right in a dark red.

Compared to the other sitters, including those in the pendant, the girl's costume is among the most successful passages in the two paintings. In the sleeve numerous small touches and strokes in yellowish and reddish ochre are placed over a dark red, and in the upturned overskirt the reverse side of the fabric is rendered in a mixture of brown tints on which there are



Fig. 1. Canvas 155 × 123 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)

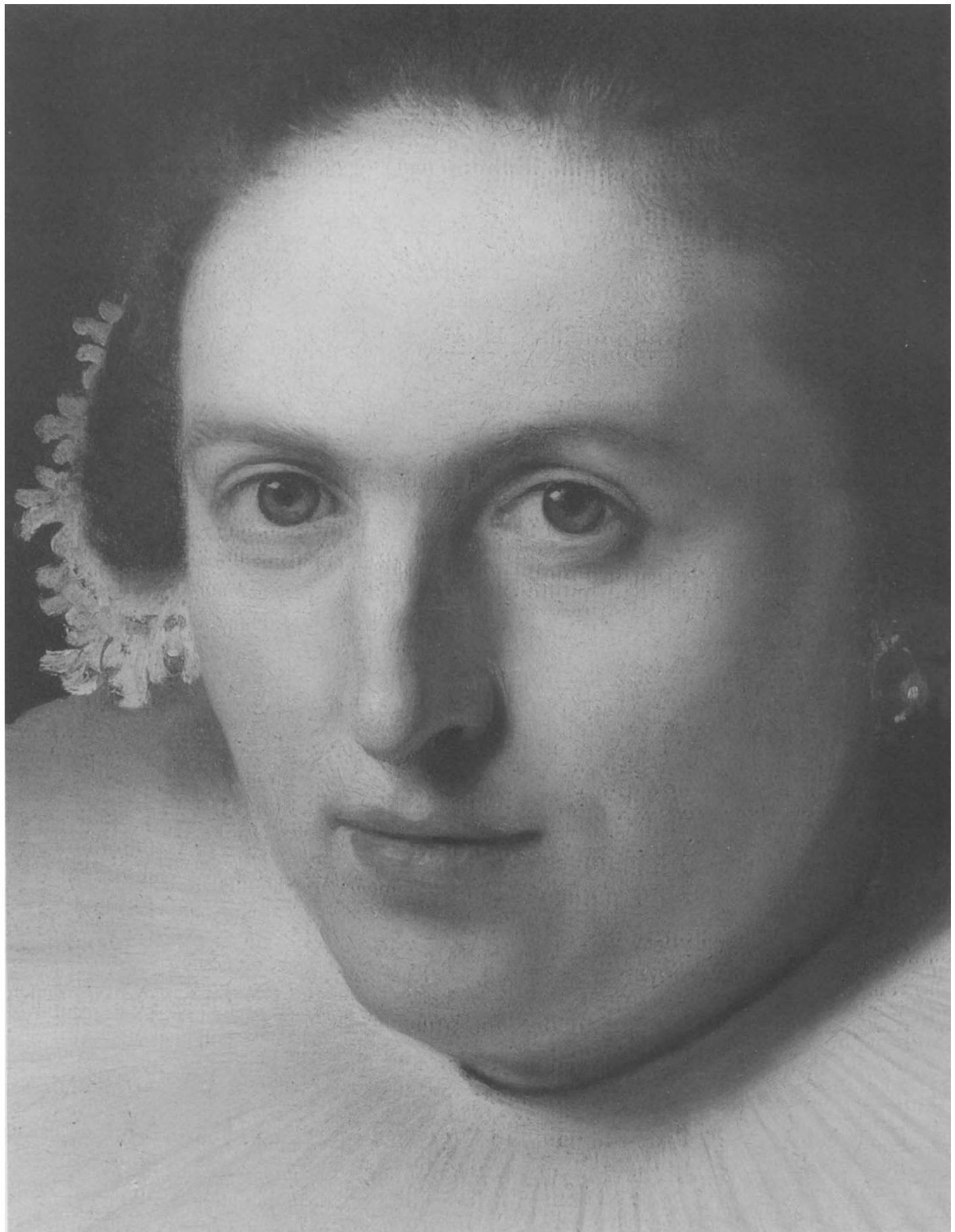


Fig. 4. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 5. Detail (1:1.5)



strokes of a light ochre colour to give the sheen; for once the brushwork is here broad and forceful.

The background is almost black, and the brushwork very even.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The radiographic image gives no reason to suppose that any major changes were made in the composition; the most apparent alteration is in the contour of the girl's face on the left, which from the cheekbone down to and including the round of the chin was originally fuller.

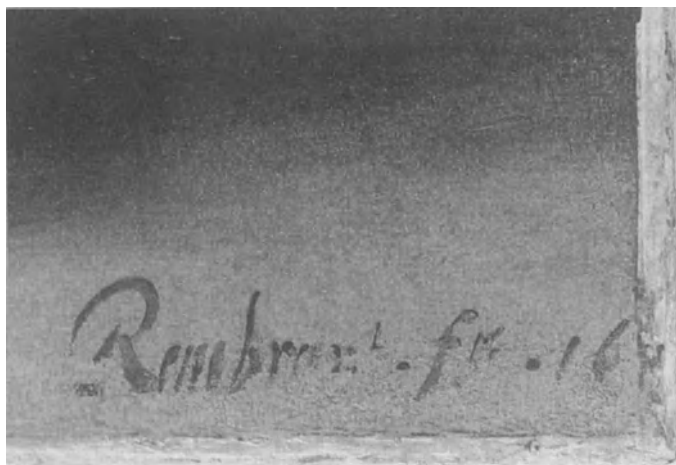
In the woman's face the distribution of radioabsorbent pigment practically coincides with what one expects from the surface; as with the painting of the man, there is rather more of the pattern of brushstrokes to be seen. A fairly large amount

of paint containing white lead has been applied on the forehead, with strokes running from top left to bottom right; to the right a few strokes have been placed at right angles to close off the swell of the forehead on the shadow side. Above the nose and on the cheek on the left there are short brushstrokes that follow the modelling. The image of brushwork in the girl's face to a large extent matches that seen in the woman's face; there is rather more radioabsorbent pigment used on the right, in the cheek. In the woman's collar it is quite apparent that the pleats were from the outset set down using strokes running radially; no use has been made here of a broad underpainting with strokes running in various directions.

#### *Signature*

At the lower right in dark paint and curtailed by the present edge of the canvas <Rembrandt.f (followed by two strokes that

Fig. 6. Detail with signature (reduced)



should perhaps be read as a *t* . 167. As with the signature on the companion-piece (no. C 65), and for the same reasons, this signature prompts serious doubts as to its authenticity.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### **4. Comments**

See no. C 65.

#### **5. Documents and sources**

See no. C 65.

#### **6. Graphic reproductions**

None.

#### **7. Copies**

None.

#### **8. Provenance**

See no. C 65.

#### **9. Summary**

See no. C 65.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 K. Roberts, 'Cleaning and restoration at the Wallace Collection 1962-72', *Burl. Mag.* 97 (1973), p. 56.
- 2 E. Michel, *Rembrandt. Sa vie, son oeuvre et son temps*, Paris 1893, p. 140.



**C67 Portrait of a couple in an interior**

BOSTON, MASS., THE ISABELLA STEWART GARDNER MUSEUM, INV. NO. P2189

HdG 930; BR. 405; BAUCH 531; GERSON 130

Fig. 1. Canvas 132.2 × 109.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



### 1. Summarized opinion

A fairly well preserved painting that was probably done by an assistant in Rembrandt's workshop in 1632/33. It must have been substantially reduced on the left at some time, and the composition supplemented by the addition of a chair.

### 2. Description of subject

A couple are seen full-length, the man standing and the woman seated, in an interior where the light falls from the left. The man stands square-on, his body turned slightly to the left, in the middle ground a little to the left of centre, with his left leg slightly forward. He looks straight at the viewer. Beneath a wide cape he holds his right arm with the hand on his hip; his left arm hangs down in front of the body, holding his right glove in a gloved hand. He wears a black doublet, black kneebreeches, dark grey stockings with garters adorned with bows on the outside of the calves, and shoes with large rosettes. He has a pleated collar and a broad-brimmed hat.

The woman sits on the right in front of him in a chair placed askew and facing left. Her right leg, the outwards-tilted foot of which can be partly seen beneath the skirt, is stretched out. Her slightly tilted head is turned three-quarters left, with the gaze ahead. She grasps the armrest of the chair with her right hand with the arm stretched; her left elbow leans on the other armrest. Her gloved left hand holds the other glove. Above a black skirt she wears a colourful bodice embroidered with flower and bird motifs. Her 'vlieger' overgarment, woven with a waffle pattern, falls open wide and is held together with a gold chain. She has wide, lace-decorated cuffs, and a large ruff. Double rows of pearls encircle her right wrist and her throat. Her hair, combed straight back, is held together at the back of the head by a small cap with an upstanding lacy edge from which, near the ear, hangs a small gold pendant.

Opposite the woman, partly visible and seen from behind, is an obliquely-placed wooden chair with a red cushion.

The background on the left is formed by a wall parallel to the picture plane, the lower part of which is grey in colour and may either be a painted dado or, to judge from what could be a fringe at the bottom edge, consist of cloth. Above this there hangs on the wall a drawing or print, with rods at top and bottom, on which in an almost circular framing a landscape with towering cliffs and a few small figures can be vaguely seen. The wall has a moulding partly covered by the hanging drawing or print; the wall forms, at about the centre of the picture, a roundish corner and then runs obliquely to the right for a short distance. Here, in the semi-darkness, there is a doorway, with a lozenge-shaped framed board hanging above it. To the right of this is a dark door with an arched top. This part of the interior is slightly higher up than the level on which the two figures are placed; two steps – visible behind the man's legs and at right angles to the wall – lead up to this. Behind the steps the wall is wood-panelled; in front of this there is a waist-height partition that seems to run diagonally to the left of the woman and parallel to the picture plane to the right of her. The floor consists of wood planks that for the most part lie parallel to the picture plane; only on the right are they at right angles to it.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 9 October 1970 (B. H., P. v. Th.) in good day-

light and with the aid of a photoflood lamp and an ultraviolet lamp. Twelve X-ray films, together covering the whole of the painting, and infrared photographs of the signature and wall-decoration were received later. Examined again on 2 March 1983 (E. v. d. W.).

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 132.2 × 109.5 cm. In the X-rays there is distinct cusping along the bottom, top and righthand side, but none on the left. A vertical join runs at about 5 cm from the lefthand edge; the weave of the strip of canvas on the left is the same as that of the main section.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: At the top there is primary cusping with a pitch that varies between 9 and 10 cm; apart from discontinuities due to secondary cusping, it extends c. 10 cm into the surface. At the righthand side the pitch varies between 8.5 and 10 cm and the deformations extend to c. 17 cm. At the bottom the pitch varies between 9 and 11 cm, while the cusping extends to a depth of about 17 cm. At the lefthand side the narrow strip of canvas to the left of the vertical seam shows some weave deformation, which may be due to imperfections in the sewing rather than to secondary cusping. (If the latter were the case, this would provide evidence that the original size of the painting was not reduced later.) Threadcount: 14.5 vertical threads/cm (14–15), 13.5 horizontal threads/cm (13–15). As the vertical threads show greater evenness in density, they are likely to be the warp. This supposition is borne out by the fact that the seam in the canvas runs vertical.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Shows through very vaguely, as a grey-brownish colour, in thin parts of the background.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: In reasonably sound condition, though a little worn in places; the woman's hair, in particular, seems to have suffered. A number of fine, mainly vertical cracks in the canvas can be seen when a lamp is held behind it. Craquelure: there is an evenly-distributed but irregular canvas-type craquelure over the entire surface.

DESCRIPTION: The paint is, in general, applied thinly. Only in the lit part of the woman's bodice and in her gloves is any relief to be seen; the weave of the canvas is apparent in relief almost everywhere. The brushwork is often draughtsmanlike in the figures, and extremely precise in the rendering of form. In the background and accessories (the chair on the right) the brushwork is rather more free, and delimits the forms less sharply.

The man's head is painted without visible brushstrokes and to a uniform thickness, in a predominantly ruddy flesh colour with a yellowish brown on the forehead. The light and shadow areas show remarkably gradual transitions, and the almost white highlights on the nose and upper eyelid on the left likewise merge into their surroundings. The eyes are treated almost identically, with careful modelling and a clear construction; strokes of pink, on which a rim of moisture is suggested with a little white, border the lower eyelid and brown strokes the upper lid, and the round, black pupils stand in brown irises outlined distinctly. The yellow-grey white of the eye continues below the irises. Both eyes have a small catchlight, and a little red is placed in the corners. The grey eyebrows are hatched at the top with small strokes to indicate the hairs. The brown cast shadow of the nose forms, together with the grey shadow on the moustache, the darkest part of the face, the curving surfaces of which are brought out well by the lighter shadows. The man's right nostril is dark brown, placed

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 4. Detail (1 : 2)



in a slightly ruddy surrounding area. The contours of the moustache and beard are vague; the hairs are rendered with tiny strokes of brown and grey. The lips, painted with a little pink, have a clear shape but no sharp outline, and the broad dark-grey mouth-line is similarly unsharp. The cast shadow from the head on the collar is in an opaque greenish grey. The folds in the white collar are drawn regularly with long lines of grey and brown, and the lace edges are, where they are seen in the light, likewise regularly rendered with small dots of white paint placed side-by-side; the collar was reduced slightly on the left at a late stage by a minor extension of the background. The construction and draping of the clothing can be clearly followed, through the differences of tone and the grey highlights. As in the case of the collar, large parts of the contours, especially of the legs, have been corrected by autograph retouches in about the same colour as that of the background. The white cuff is shown cursorily, as are the brown gloves.

The woman's head receives the full light, and is done opaquely in a pale flesh colour with a fair amount of pink. The curves of the face are convincingly suggested by light shadows that tend towards a green near the temple. The eyes are shaped rather less convincingly than those of the man. The lids are indicated with hesitantly-drawn brown strokes. Black pupils are placed in brown irises (which have suffered somewhat). The white of the eye continues beneath the irises, as it does with the man. A quite strong red is set in the corners of

the eyes. A dark-brown nostril stands out distinctly against the strong shadow beside the wing of the nose, painted in a lighter brown. The roundness of the lower lip is suggested forcefully by a long white highlight that contrasts with the almost black mouth-line. The chin and cheek areas are fluently done, with a highly effective reflexion of light onto the jaw from the white collar. The hair (which shows some abrasion) is painted in various tints of brown. The lace cap and collar are done painstakingly and thoroughly, but the great regularity makes them seem rather dull; the lace cuffs, too, are flat and lacking in imagination. The gloves, however, are pleasantly done in a fairly thick paint, and given a fringe of pinkish red. The flower and bird motifs on the bodice are executed quite precisely, with thick and colourful paint ranging through pink, blue-green, yellow, ochre and white. The chain is suggested quite effectively, with thick ochre-coloured dabs. The hand resting on the chair-arm is executed in flat flesh colours and lacks convincing structure and modelling. The dark parts of the clothing are executed more thoroughly than with the man; the catchlights on the folds in the sleeves are indicated with fine, sinuous strokes of grey. The waffle-pattern in the overgarment is done very consistently and competently. The lefthand contours of the skirt, hand and sleeve have been corrected in a manner comparable to that found in the man, but here connected with a large pentimento (see *X-Rays*). The woman's chair with its carmine-red, fringed cushion is rendered with carefully-done detail.



Fig. 5. Detail (1:2)





The planked floor is in a sandy brown, with long dark brown lines for the joins and a rather lighter brown for the grain of the wood. The whole area is handled rather drearily, and the rendering of materials is weak.

The chair on the left (which as will be argued below is a later addition), with its limply-shaped red cushion, has coarse brushwork; its shape is hesitantly rendered, and partly defined by retouchings along the contour. The cast shadow painted over the paint used for the floor has a rather unconvincing form. The painted dado or wall-hanging is painted in a slate grey, with no detectable brushstroke. The wall above it is done, around the man, in an opaque brown-grey; further up, the surface becomes more lively in its treatment, and slightly translucent. The lines on the print or drawing are done in dark brown, and supplemented with blue-grey, cloudy areas. The steps and panelling of the raised floor section are indicated broadly, with long and rather slackly drawn lines for the joins and shadows. In the dark grey background to the right can be seen only one or two very vague shapes.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

Apart from the join in the canvas and the cusping, already mentioned under *Support*, the following features can be seen in the radiographic image:

1. Between the man and the woman there is the light shape of a child, whose left foot is concealed by the dark image of the woman's skirt. This child (a boy, to judge from the hair falling over the ears and the short jacket) holds a stick raised in his right hand. The left arm rests on the woman's thigh. His gaze is directed a little to the left, and downwards. The amount of detail, especially in the head, makes it likely that this child was not only underpainted but also at least partly completed.
2. The hem of the woman's skirt, standing out dark against the light floor, runs obliquely upwards towards the man's foot set in a reserve. This differs from what is seen at the surface, where the hem falls lower down and the tilted foot and wide, strangely-shaped cast shadow (for which there is no reserve in the light floor) have been added.
3. The woman's collar shows, above the shoulder, a doubling of the edges from which it may be deduced that it originally followed a curve at this point.
4. The direction of the woman's gaze has been altered. She was looking initially further to the left side.
5. In the lower lefthand corner there is a confusedly-shaped, dark form in a reserve, stretching from about 7 cm from the lower edge of the painting to almost below the rear wall, and extending to the right to below the man's right foot. In the upper part of this form one can recognize the shape of an animal, possibly a small dog leaning forward towards the right with its tail raised, a rear leg outstretched and the back curved; the head would then project into the lower half of the shape in which one can, it seems, make out less distinctly (because the shadows cannot be separated one from the other) an animal lying on its side with the head to the right and the paws pointing downwards. The radiographic image gives no indication of these forms having been worked up with radioabsorbent paint.
6. There is virtually nothing to be seen in the X-ray of the chair in the lefthand lower corner, or of its cast shadow; there is no reserve left for these in the light floor.
7. As has been seen at the surface, the contours of the man's legs have been slightly altered. The edge of his hat has a rather narrower reserve for it in the background paint than is occupied by its final form.

In the upper part of the radiographic image there are dark

strokes that can be explained by the use of a knife when the ground was being laid down.

#### *Signature*

The signature now visible, <Rembrandt.f (followed by an oblique stroke and a pair of dots) . 1633.>, is on a relatively recently-applied paint layer; both appear dark under the UV lamp. This signature is done in a very dark grey, with thin, uncertain strokes. The suspicion that the later layer of paint hides another signature is confirmed by an infrared photograph, in which one can see broad traces of an *R* followed at some distance by traces of the word *van* and then the clearly-apparent name *Ryn*. This signature, which can be filled out to read *RHL* (in monogram) *van Ryn*, is written rhythmically and fluently with a broad brush, and resembles authentic Rembrandt signatures from 1632 (see also under 4. *Comments*).

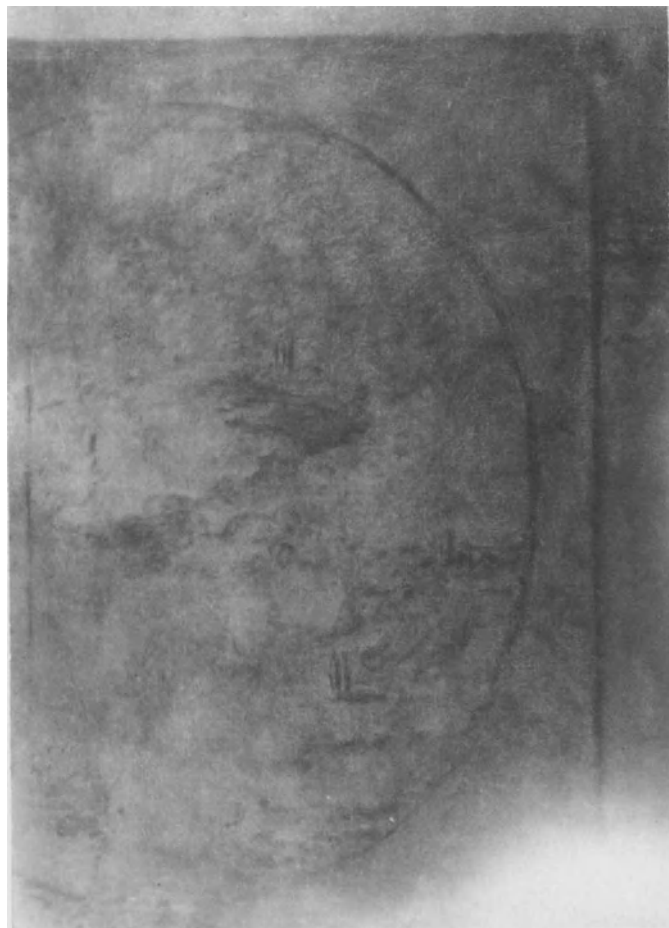
#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

Before discussing any other aspects of the painting one has first to say that it has not been preserved in its original form. It must have been considerably larger to the left, as may be seen from a join that today runs parallel to the lefthand edge at about 5 cm from it. The canvas to the left of this join shows the same weave as that to the right, from which one may deduce that the narrow strip on the left belongs to the original canvas and is the remainder of a much larger piece. The cutting-off of the portion to the left must have been done at a time when the ground and paint layer were already fully hardened; when the canvas was stretched in its present format, no cusping was produced along the lefthand edge. It is impossible to say with any certainty how big the canvas was initially; if the two sections were of the same width, the total width of the painting would have been about 209 cm with a height of 132.2 cm, but something a little narrower seems more likely. When the format was being changed the chair on the left – for which no reserve was left in the paint of the floor – must have been added to balance the composition. One has to wonder, however, whether this was done by a later hand, or by the author of the painting himself. An argument for the latter might be the numerous retouches made to the surrounding paint, that to some extent determine the contour of this item of furniture (especially that of the baluster-like feet); this way of doing things reminds one of the way large parts of the contours of the figures have been dealt with. One may however conclude that the chair was added by a different hand, from two things – in the first place, the fact that the execution is coarse and uncertain compared to that of the remainder of the painting, and secondly the fact that the rendering differs so much from what an early 17th-century chair actu-

Fig. 6. Detail, infrared photograph (reduced)



ally looked like that one has to assume that whoever painted this passage was unfamiliar with the object in question. As Mr F. Liefkes of the Amsterdam Rijksmuseum has been kind enough to inform us, a chair of this kind should have ball-shaped feet, the crossbar between the legs set lower down, and a link between the frame of the seat and the front legs such that the latter fit not *under* but *into* the frame. Taking all things together, one may assume that the reduction in the size of the canvas and the addition of the chair took place at a later time.

One cannot say even approximately when the change in format took place; it must be assumed that the painting at all events had its present size by 1809 (see 8. *Provenance*). What was probably the original type of composition can be found in family groups by artists such as Willem Duyster, Pieter Codde and Hendrik Pot (cf., for instance, Codde's *Family group* of 1642 in Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum inv. no. A 2836), though they worked in a smaller format. One can however find analogies for the present composition too, for example in Gerard Dou (cf. *Portrait of a couple* of c. 1635 in Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum inv. no. A 90, with a landscape added later by Nicolaas Berchem) and in Thomas de Keyser (cf. *Portrait of a couple* of c. 1630, reproduced by Smith<sup>1</sup>, fig. 2).

The most remarkable fact revealed by the X-rays first published by Walsh<sup>2</sup> is that there was between the man and the woman a figure – at least partially completed – of a boy with a stick raised in his right hand. Walsh's idea that the boy is brandishing a whip is plausible, though less credence can be given to his supposition that he is playing with a spinning-top. Not only do neither the X-rays nor the paint surface show any hint of a top – though that need not be seen as clinching evidence –, but in particular the depictions one knows of children with spinning-tops (in pictures of children's games by Breughel (Vienna) and others, as well as in numerous 17th-century winter landscapes) show that tops were generally played with out-of-doors, and that children (apart from the very youngest) bent forward slightly and seldom raised the whip above their heads. It is far more likely that, as Smith<sup>1</sup> believed, the raised whip must be connected with a shape that the X-rays show as a dark reserve at the lower left, and that can be read as two dogs fighting or as a dog and a cat. There is hardly any doubt that such animals represent sinful lustfulness. This motif occurs, in the form of a single dog that a boy is about to beat with a whip, in a *Family group among Roman ruins* by Jan Baptist Weenix in Kenwood House, London (mentioned by Smith in this connexion); in the form of a dog and cat, very similar to the shape of the reserve in no. C 67, it can be found in Gabriel Metsu's *Portrait of the Valckenier family* in Berlin (Staatliche Museen Preussischer Kulturbesitz, cat. no. 792); and in the form of two dogs in a *Musical party* by Pieter de Hooch in the Wellington Museum, London (P. Sutton, *Pieter de Hooch*, Oxford 1980, no. 117, pl. 120). There is every indication that the animals in no. C 67 were never developed further than an underpainting in non-radioabsorbent paint, for the X-rays show no light traces inside the dark reserve. One has to assume that the author himself painted this out at the same time as he removed the figure of the small boy. The latter then probably was given a place elsewhere in the composition, in the lost lefthand section, and it is possible that the same thing happened to the squabbling animals. It is interesting in this respect that, as can be seen in the X-rays, the woman was initially looking well to one side but now has her gaze more or less straight ahead. One gets the impression that she successively watched the incident (which should be interpreted as a symbolic episode) in both positions; and even if she was not following this particular incident, one can assume that she is looking at something in the lost half of the composition; the interpretation offered by Smith for her gaze as expressing 'unselfconscious reverie' is open to doubt.

Fig. 7. Detail with signature, infrared photograph (slightly reduced)



Meanwhile, the painting does even in its present, fragmentary state offer enough grounds for judging whether it was painted by Rembrandt. The answer has to be that it was not. At first sight the handling of chiaroscuro in the interior, in particular, shows great similarity to his work. But even in that respect closer examination shows that there is a substantial difference from his way of representing interiors. The *Portrait of the shipbuilder Jan Rijcksen and his wife* in Buckingham Palace (no. A 77), also dated 1633, may admittedly not be the most appropriate candidate for comparison because of its scale and layout – but it does show how much more animated and painterly Rembrandt's treatment of elements in an interior is, how freely these elements are used, and how closely related they are to the figures in order to help locate them both in space and in the picture area. One can find similar characteristics in Rembrandt's earlier paintings – in *The artist in oriental costume* in the Petit Palais (no. A 40) and, in a different way, in the *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* (no. A 51) – as well as in later works such as the *Portrait of a standing man* of 1639 in Kassel (Br. 216). In the *Portrait of a couple*, on the other hand, the treatment is smooth and lacking in vivacity; the taut lines that border the print or drawing on the wall and the steps behind the man form an over-emphatic linear element; the shadowed part of the interior on the right bears no clear spatial relationship to the space to the front, and the steps leading to it interfere in an obtrusive way with the man's legs. Even less Rembrandtlike are the design and execution of the figures. While the man's appearance, with his stumpy proportions, may embody something of Rembrandt's idiom, the same cannot be said for the left arm which dangles lamely in an illogical position. The way the definition of the figure is based on sharply-edged contours (to which great care is devoted) progressing in a series of small, curving sections is inconceivable in Rembrandt; utterly unlike him, too, is the way this contour is accompanied in the two legs and the rosettes on the shoes by numerous small black dots (which along the breeches must represent buttons),

and the lace edge of the collar likewise has numerous separate dots of white. The result is that the figure appears as almost a silhouette, enlivened with a great many small refinements but more or less the opposite of what Rembrandt achieves in integrating his figures into an atmospheric chiaroscuro. The man's head is marked by a certainly not ineffective and careful treatment, but this seems excessively painstaking and diagrammatic compared with the much broader manner of painting, rich in suggestive power, that one finds with Rembrandt in heads on a comparable scale (cf. for instance the portraits – admittedly done on panel – of Jacques de Gheyn III and Maurits Huygens done in 1632 and now in Dulwich College and Hamburg respectively, nos. A 56 and A 57). A similar painstaking treatment, verging on the decorative, is seen in the woman's figure, especially in the rather flat cuffs, the long sinuous grey sheens (with scant plastic effect) on the sleeves, and the very meticulously-done waffle motif in the overgarment. In this figure, too, the discrete nature of the mass of detail gives an un-Rembrandtlike effect, and lends the lighting a prosaic rather than an atmospheric quality. Placing such a sharply-lit figure with its bright local colours at the edge of a composition must be described as untypical of Rembrandt. Summing up, one may say that though the painting does to a certain extent have a Rembrandtesque character, it shows significant differences when compared with his work that render a Rembrandt attribution unacceptable.

This is borne out not only by the execution – the approach to the group portrait, too, clashes with what one knows of Rembrandt in this field from the 1630s and 1640s. In the 1632 *Anatomy lesson*, and 1633 *Shipbuilder and his wife*, just as much as in the Berlin *Portrait of Cornelis Anslo and his wife* of 1641 (Br. 409) and the *Night watch* of 1642 (Br. 410), a shared action lends the composition a dramatic character; in only two of the four works is an occasional link established with the viewer, and even then this is through a subsidiary figure. Even if the composition of no. C 67 was not quite as static in its original form as it is today, the man gazing impassively at the viewer is wholly uninvolved in any shared action of the group. The conventional poses that result were interpreted by Smith<sup>1</sup> (who supported the attribution to Rembrandt) as 'a basic conflict between the formal and psychological conventions of Dutch portraiture and his [Rembrandt's] own instinct for narrative' (op. cit., p. 268). Looked at in the light of the stylistic disparities found between no. C 67 and Rembrandt's work, one may assume that the conflict described by Smith was not operating within Rembrandt's own

mind but reflects a difference between his approach and that of another artist.

Who this other artist was it is impossible to say for the moment. The general character of the composition and particularly the use of chiaroscuro are evidence that he was strongly influenced by Rembrandt. Although he may have received his training elsewhere, a painting such as the *Portrait of a couple* would seem to have been painted by an assistant in Rembrandt's workshop. Apart from the picture's overall stylistic aspect, there is some evidence for this. In the first place, the woman's pose – which is certainly not a very common one – shows a striking resemblance to that in the *Portrait of a woman seated* in Vienna (no. C 80) that while it cannot like the associated man's portrait (no. A 45) be attributed to Rembrandt himself still must have been produced in the latter's immediate circle. Both the angle at which the two slightly tilted heads are seen, and the identical pose of the two hands, point to a direct connexion between the two paintings. The question of which of them may have formed the prototype for the other is hard to answer. That it is more likely to have been the woman's figure in the Stewart Gardner Museum may perhaps be deduced from the X-ray. In neither painting does the woman's right arm lie relaxed on the armrest of the chair, and in no. C 67 the explanation may be that the left arm of her son (since painted out) passed underneath it, as the light traces of his cuff and hand, visible in the X-ray, show. One must perhaps suppose that the resulting position of the woman's arm, which is not entirely logical, was followed in the Vienna portrait.

A last item of evidence for the connexion with Rembrandt's workshop – though a problematical one – is provided by the signature that appears on the painting beneath the evidently non-genuine one with the year 1633 that is now visible. The underlying inscription, apparent only by infrared, shows – insofar as it is legible – similarities to Rembrandt's usual 1632 signature 'RHL (in monogram) van Ryn'. It is not entirely clear what significance can be attached to this inscription, and still less why the place it occupies was later overpainted and provided with another signature evidently based on Rembrandt's signature as used in 1633. The Braunschweig *Portrait of a man* (no. C 70) offers a remarkable analogy for the latter, though there one finds a measure of explanation in its possibly being matched to the inscription on the companion-piece. In the case of the Stewart Gardner double portrait there is no such explanation, though the underlying inscription may be seen as one more indication of a connexion with Rembrandt's workshop, suggesting a date in 1632 or 1633.

There is for the time being nothing to be said about the identity of the artist. As appears from the stylistic peculiarities described above, he had probably been trained in a style of painting different from that of Rembrandt. As Bode<sup>3</sup> has already noted, the composition of the painting reminds one somewhat of a work by Thomas de Keyser, though the latter's hand is nowhere to be recognised in it. Perhaps one must imagine that the painter belonged among Rembrandt's assistants who helped him execute the numerous portrait commissions of 1632 and the following years. In this respect it is perhaps not without significance that in the portraits of Jean Pellicorne and his son and of Susanna van Collen and her daughter in the Wallace Collection (nos. C 65 and C 66) one finds features somewhat reminiscent of the Stewart Gardner double portrait. So far as the difference in scale allows a comparison, there is a similar liking for draperies whose contour is accompanied with stippled accents (in the skirts of the mother and daughter), for perseveringly-done patterns (in the striped material of the father's doublet and breeches) and for concentrating a strong and rather sharp light in the righthand part of the composition, which makes the tilted head of the son appear similar to that of the woman in no. C 67. The tendency to define forms in the darkly-shaded parts with a certain descriptive matter-of-factness (especially to the left in the man's portrait, and in the background there) also makes one think of the double portrait. In the use made of colour it is most of all the greenish greys in the shadow parts of the women's faces that offer resemblances. Even if, because of the unmistakable differences that weigh against this, one finds no reason in these resemblances for attributing the works to one and the same hand, they may at least be seen as an indication that assistants imitated not only the master but also each other.

The sitters appear to be about 30 years of age, and would thus have been born around 1600. Their identity was no longer known when the painting was owned by the Hope family at the end of the 18th century; it then formed part of a collection of Dutch and Flemish paintings that had been assembled by members of the family in the 18th century (see *8. Provenance*). It was mentioned in the 1842 catalogue of the sale of the portraits of Jean Pellicorne and his wife attributed to Rembrandt (nos. C 65 and C 66), and called on that occasion 'Het portret van Burgemeester Pancras en zijne Vrouw, in eene Schilderij bij elkander, in het Cabinet van de Heere Th. Alex Hope te Londen' (The portrait of Burgomaster Pancras and his Wife in a single painting together, in the cabinet of Th. Alex Hope, Gentleman, of London). If this designation is cor-

rect one would have to consider Gerbrand Claesz. Pancras (1591–1649; eight times burgomaster of Amsterdam between 1639 and 1644 and his wife Aeltge Michielsdr. Blaeuw (1593–1644), but the age of the sitters seems on the low side. Moreover, the name of ‘Burgomaster Pancras’ seems to have occasionally been used in England in the 19th century as a label for unknown sitters (cf. W. R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt*, Stuttgart–Leipzig 1909, Kl. d. K., pp. 553, 134). Waagen<sup>4</sup> describes the painting (in its present state, with two figures) but does not name the subjects. In recent times I. H. van Eeghen<sup>5</sup> has mooted the possibility of no. C 67 being identical with a portrait by Rembrandt of the cloth merchant Jan Pietersz. Bruyningh (1599–1646) and his wife Hildegond Pietersdr. Moutmaker (1599–1640), described in the 1648 inventory of the former’s estate as ‘een Conterfeijtsel van Jan Pietersz. Bruyningh en zijn huijsvrouw zal: van Rembrandt’ (Strauss *Doc.*, 1648/1). The author here herself offers the counter-argument that the couple belonged to the Waterland Mennonite community, and must therefore be expected to be more simply dressed than the subjects of the painting. The chances are, moreover, that in 1648 the picture was still larger and showed more than two figures. For the time being the problem must be regarded as unsolved.

It may be said that the interior depicted (leaving aside the chair that was added later) is shown in greater detail than the backgrounds in this kind of group portrait, which were mostly indicated following general formulas. As the architect H. J. Zantkuyl has been kind enough to inform us, the complicated architectural features – with floor planks running in different directions and with a raised part onto which two doors open – does not match any standard design, and can only be understood as the incidental outcome of reconstruction work that must have been reproduced with unusual fidelity in the painting. Another noteworthy feature is the drawing (or print) hanging on the wall, which is of an unknown type. The subject seems to be a landscape with cliffs and a high horizon, and is plainly not a map as has generally been assumed. In both cases, however, it probably represents the world as the stage to which the moralistic message contained in the scene applies, as is often the case with maps or landscapes shown in 17th-century paintings of interiors.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

Hendy<sup>6</sup> reports that the painting ‘was acquired by Henry Hope, a Scotsman who settled in Amsterdam during Rembrandt’s lifetime’. It is unclear what evidence this statement is based on. A Hendrick Hendricksz. Hope, butcher, bought a house on the Zeedijk in Amsterdam in 1657, which he sold again before 1662 (J. E. Elias, *De vroedschap van Amsterdam*, Amsterdam 1903–1905, vol. II, p. 941 note g). Possibly this Hendrick Hope was the same as Henry Hope, a Scots Quaker who had Archibald, the son of his marriage to Anna Hope (Hop, Hoop), baptized in Rotterdam in 1664; he fled his creditors in 1680 by settling in London where he died shortly afterwards (M. G. Buist, *At spes non fracta. Hope & Co. 1770–1815*, The Hague 1974, p. 4). We know of no evidence of when the painting came into the possession of the Hope family. It was not listed in the estate of John Hope (1737–1784), nor was it among the paintings that his widow Philippina van der Hoeven had sold in Amsterdam on 10/11 August 1785, nor yet again among those that, according to a list dated 20 April of that year, she kept for herself (ms. in RKD, The Hague; cf. also no. A 68 under 8. *Provenance*).

– Coll. Henry Hope (1737–1811), an unmarried cousin of John Hope, with whom from 1762 he was a partner in Hope & Co. He built the Paviljoen Welgelegen in Haarlem in the 1780s, and moved to London with his collection in 1794. Cf. ‘Catalogue A of Pictures in the House no. 1 the corner of Harleystreet off Cavendish Square belonging to Mr. Henry Hope . . .’, London December 1795 (signed) Henry Hope: ‘Rembrandt – Family piece – 500.-’ or ‘Do. – Family piece – 300.-’ (Buist, op. cit. p. 489); one of these must have been so-called ‘*Rembrandt and his wife Saskia*’ now at Buckingham Palace (see below). Mentioned in ‘Catalogue of pictures bequeathed to Henry Philip Hope, 10 April 1809’ (ms. in RKD, The Hague) under ‘Schedule or Catalogue of Dutch and Flemish Pictures which I [i.e. Henry Hope] have in contemplation to bequeath by my Will . . . to Henry Philip Hope Esq . . .’: ‘1. Rembrandt, Portraits [height × breadth] 5 ft. 3 Inc. × 4 ft. 6 Inc. [= 160 × 137.1 cm]’ (probably measured including the frame). Henry Philip (1774–1839) was one of the sons of John Hope, and died unmarried. Henry Hope must have changed his mind and after his death in 1811 (cf. J. W. Niemeijer in: *N.K.J.* 32, 1981, p. 169) two auctions of paintings from his estate took place; the second included what could mistakenly be identified as no. C 67 – London (Christie’s) 27–29 June 1816 (Lugt 8932), 3rd day no. 85: ‘Rembrandt – The portraits of the Burgomaster Pancras, and his wife’ (£ 300 – 6 to Lord Yarmouth). This picture was however the so-called *Rembrandt and his wife Saskia*, now at Buckingham Palace and attributed, convincingly it seems, to Bol by C. White (*The Dutch pictures in the collection of her Majesty the Queen*, Cambridge–London etc. 1982, no. 27). No. C 67 remained apparently in the Hope collection.

– Possibly in the collection of Dutch and Flemish paintings of Henry Philip’s older brother Thomas Hope (1769–1831) and exhibited by the latter in a Gallery added to his house in Duchess Street in 1819/20 (D. Watkin, *Thomas Hope 1769–1831 and the Neo-Classical idea*, London 1968, pp. 121–122).

– Coll. Henry Thomas Hope (1808–1862), son of Thomas, certainly by 1853 when the painting was lent to the exhibition at the British Institution (no. 13: ‘Dutch Lady and Gentleman – Rembrandt’). In 1849 he transferred the contents of Duchess

Street to The Deepdene, near Dorking, Surrey (Watkin, op. cit., p. 36). Subsequently coll. of his widow Adèle Bichat.

– Through their daughter Henrietta Adela, who married the 6th Duke of Newcastle, a life interest was inherited in 1884 by their second son Lord Francis Pelham Clinton-Hope, who exhibited a collection of 83 paintings at the South Kensington Museum in 1891–1898 (*The Hope Collection of pictures of the Dutch and Flemish schools, with descriptions reprinted from the catalogue published in 1891 by the science and art department of the South Kensington Museum*, London 1898, no. 64) and obtained permission from Chancery to sell them in 1898<sup>6</sup>.

– Bought by dealers A. Wertheimer and P. & D. Colnaghi.

– Acquired from Colnaghi through Berenson in 1898 by Mrs Isabella Stewart Gardner (1840–1924).

## 9. Summary

The painting must have been substantially reduced on the left, and now shows only part of the original composition; the chair on the left is a later addition, intended to balance the composition on this side when the canvas was reduced. The figure of a boy visible in the X-ray, who stood between the man and the woman in an at least partially completed state, was painted out by the artist himself (and probably shifted to the lost lefthand part of the canvas). The boy held a whip raised, probably to strike two squabbling animals for which a reserve (seen in the X-ray) is left in the paint of the floor.

The execution and conception of the part that remains indicate that the attribution to Rembrandt cannot be maintained. The predominantly smooth manner of painting, everywhere lacking in power, and the treatment of the contours and chiaroscuro, differ too much from his work. The artist had probably undergone training elsewhere when he came into Rembrandt's workshop. There can be little doubt that the work was painted there. The present signature and the inscription hidden beneath it make it probable that the work dates from 1632/33.

## REFERENCES

- 1 D. R. Smith, 'Rembrandt's early double portraits and the Dutch conversation piece', *Art. Bull.* 64 (1982), pp. 259–288; Idem, *Masks of wedlock. Seventeenth-century Dutch marriage portraiture*, Ann Arbor 1982, pp. 118–126.
- 2 J. Walsh, Jr., 'Child's play in Rembrandt's A lady and gentleman in black', [*Annual Report of*] *Fenway Court, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum 1976*, Boston 1977, pp. 1–7.
- 3 W. Bode, *Studien zur Geschichte der holländischen Malerei*, Braunschweig 1883, pp. 403–404.
- 4 [G. F.] Waagen, *Treasures of art in Great Britain II*, London 1854, p. 115.
- 5 I. H. van Egghen, 'Drie portretten van Rembrandt (Bruyningh, Cater en Moutmaker), Vondel en Blaeu', *Jaarboek . . . Amstelodamum* 69 (1977), pp. 55–72, esp. 68–69.
- 6 P. Hendy, *European and American paintings in the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum*, Boston 1974, p. 201.



**C 68 Portrait of a man** (companion-piece to no. C 69)

NEW YORK, N.Y., THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, ACC. NO. 29.100.3  
BEQUEST OF MRS H. O. HAVEMEYER, 1929. THE H. O. HAVEMEYER COLLECTION

HDG 624; BR. 167; BAUCH 360; GERSON 120

Fig. 1. Canvas 112 × 89.3 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



### 1. Summarized opinion

A moderately well preserved painting that despite strongly Rembrandtesque features can be attributed to the same hand as its less Rembrandt-like companion-piece and, together with the latter, may be looked on as produced by an assistant in Rembrandt's workshop in 1632.

### 2. Description of subject

A man, seen almost to the knees, stands facing very slightly to the right. He is clad in black with a pleated collar and white cuffs trimmed with lace. A cloak, open to the front, hangs over his shoulders. He holds his right hand against his chest, while his gloved left hand grasps the other glove. The light falls from the left, and the figure casts a vague shadow to the right onto the rear wall.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 17 April 1969 (J. B., B. H.) in adequate light and in the frame, with the aid of a single X-ray film of the head; nine copyfilms, together covering the whole painting, were received later, as well as two mosaic prints from neutron-activation autoradiographs.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 112 × 89.3 cm. Single piece. Perhaps folded out further than before at the bottom, where a strip about 1.5 cm wide has been coarsely painted-in.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: On the right- and lefthand sides of the canvas there is no cusping to be seen. At the top there is cusping varying in pitch from 10 to 12 cm, and extending inwards some 19 cm. The pitch of the cusping at the bottom edge varies between 8 and 12 cm, with a depth of about 15 cm. Threadcount: 13 vertical threads/cm (11.5–15), 14 horizontal threads/cm (13.5–15). The weave shows numerous thick places, more in the vertical than the horizontal direction. There is a great similarity in horizontal threadcount and yarn quality with the canvas of the companion-piece (no. C 69), so that it may be assumed that both came from the same bolt of canvas. Because of the even horizontal thread density in both canvases, and of the presence of more thickenings in the vertical threads, it can be assumed that the warp is horizontal.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Not seen.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Microscope examination carried out by Mrs C. M. Groen showed a ground consisting of three layers, similar to that described under C 69.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Locally quite badly overcleaned, especially in the black of the cloak but less so in the doublet beneath the collar. There are paint loss and restorations in the dark area in the upper background, to left and right along the edge (probably along the ridge of an earlier stretcher). Perhaps slight overcleaning in the head, though it is uncertain whether this can be blamed for the fact that the eye on the left, for instance, shows some lack of cohesion. Along the bottom edge a strip about 1.5 cm wide has been coarsely painted-in to match the rest. Craquelure: an evenly distributed, irregular pattern.

DESCRIPTION: The background is vigorously brushed at the lower right and left – to the right in dark grey, elsewhere and especially along the contour of the figure in lighter grey. Above the right shoulder and head up to the top edge the grey paint is more thinly applied, and again becomes darker in tone. To the right, level with the dangling hand, the background paint seems to lie over part of the black clothing (see below under *Neutron activation autoradiographs*).

The brushstroke is clearly visible in the yellow and reddish flesh colour, particularly so on the forehead and along the temple where the paint is laid on thickly. The opaque colour on the shadow side tends towards orange, especially at the forehead.

The eye on the left has an iris in blue and grey, with a touch of red on the right in the black pupil. Virtually the same red occurs again in the inner corner of the eye. The two almost flat areas of the white of the eye are bordered at the bottom by a broad pink line and at the top by a rather more reddish line. The colour of the upper lid is, successively from left to right, a pink, a greyish-white pink, and a darker pink. At the top this eyelid is bordered by a line in subdued pink above which is placed a second line of brown. Above the latter there is a grey tone as an extremely cursory indication of the eyebrow. Below the eye the creases in the eyepouch consist mainly of strokes of brown, plus a little pink.

In the righthand eye the iris, painted in a similar fashion, has a somewhat greyer colour. The white of the eye is here less flat, since there is heavier shadowing towards the dark corner. The second, brown line is missing by the upper lid. The creases of skin in the eyepouch are here painted over a brownish tint using a light flesh colour. The quite thickly painted nose, with a clearly visible brushstroke, has a catchlight placed on the tip. A stroke of ochre yellow is placed on the shadowed wing of the nose to show reflected light. The man's right nostril is a dark carmine red, while the shadow part of the wing of the nose is in a somewhat lighter red.

The moustache is shown with small strokes of yellow-brown paint, some of which run out over the lip. The lips are in a dull pinkish red, with a lighter highlight on the lower. The mouth-line, painted like the nostril in carmine red, shows up distinctly. In the yellow-brown of the tuft of beard on the chin below the lip there are fine lines in a cool grey. The collar is executed with long, grey strokes, with squiggly white highlights.

The cloak is executed in black paint (now in poor condition), and the doublet in black-grey with hands of black. The paint of the grey cuffs is somewhat worn. The hand on the left has a pale flesh colour; in the shadows greyish-red and greenish tints have been used. The gloves on and in the hand on the right are in grey; the paint here has suffered.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Five cross-sections were prepared by Mrs C. M. Groen.

1. From sample taken in the background at 46.5 cm from top and 12.8 cm from left edge; showed on top of the ground one layer of greyish brown paint containing white lead, fine black pigment and occasional red particles.

2. From sample taken in the background at 18 cm from top and 8 cm from lefthand edge; showed on top of the ground one layer of greyish brown paint of the same composition as described under no. 1.

3. From sample taken in the collar at 42.8 cm from top and 30.1 cm from lefthand edge; showed on top of the ground a white layer with some colourless translucent particles.

4. From sample taken in the lower part of the dress at 32.6 cm from the right hand edge and 5.6 cm from bottom; showed on top of the ground three black layers, the first no doubt the

underpainting, the middle one being the darkest used as a main means to indicate the colour and the top one probably used for the glove.

5. From sample taken in the lower lip at 42.8 cm from left-hand edge and 37 cm from top; showed two layers on top of the ground, one consisting of organic red with an occasional blue particle, the other a mixture of vermilion, organic red, some yellow ochre and white pigment.

#### *X-Rays*

There is a canvas weave pattern in a number of dark areas (probably the result of the material used for lining) that interferes somewhat with the radiographic image, as do the stretcher and crosswise battens. On the left and at the bottom and top there are strips that were plainly painted later.

In the background the areas at the lower right and left that have been described as vigorously brushed at the surface show up clearly and quite light. To the right the contour of the reserve left for the figure does not entirely match that apparent at the paint surface – the projection for the elbow (?) now visible was evidently painted partly over the background, and the projection visible in the X-ray has its greatest depth lower down where (as may also be seen at the surface) the background has been extended towards the left; downwards, the reserve runs more steeply in the X-ray than the border of the black, painted to the right over the background, that is bounded just above the bottom edge by a contour that bends to the left. The conclusion that must be drawn from this – that the background was here painted a second time – would also explain why the cast shadow (relatively dark at the paint surface, yet showing up quite light in the X-ray) lies over a lighter area the brushstrokes of which are still visible at the surface.

To the right along the head, where the background shows up in part quite light and with a distinct brushstroke, the space for the hair and collar was left somewhat cramped; both of the latter are seen to extend out over the painted background. This applies hardly if at all to the convexity of the cheek, the contour of which is seen clearly and even has a dark line (evidently a gap scarcely covered over by the paint of either the cheek or the background). A similar dark discontinuity appears between the jaw and cheek on the right and the adjoining collar.

The highest lights in the head show up in the X-ray image in a peculiar way. Partly – at the left on the forehead and cheekbone – the light patches give the impression of resulting from broad brushstrokes; partly – especially on the tip of the nose – they offer the image of fine strokes applied in a hatched pattern. It is remarkable, too, that the centre part of the forehead and other parts of the head presenting an intermediate tone provide a quite flat tint, so that the image as a whole shows an almost terrace-like pattern of even fields. One gets the impression that this quite even, intermediate tint comes from an underpainting containing white lead. A similar image may be seen in the collar (in which there is, besides lightish patches that partly match light strokes in the uppermost paint layer, a similar broad indication in a mid-tint) and especially in the two cuffs and the right hand, the shapes of which – seen solely as a mid-tint – only partly correspond to those seen at the paint surface and in which the detail apparent at the surface is entirely missing and the chiaroscuro borders take a different line.

In view, finally, of the scant connexion between the distribution of light in the head in the surface paint and the position of the maximum radioabsorbencies, one suspects that the latter, too, may be due to an underpainting.

#### *Neutron activation autoradiographs*

An early exposure (ZH 4, fig. 3) shows the emission of, inter alia, manganese as a component of umber. When the reserve for the figure is compared with that in the X-ray this is found to match, indicating that the light paint of the background contains umber. In the shadows in the head, in the hand on the left and in the drawing of the collar umber must be present to a high degree in the paint used for working these up. This autoradiogram shows, to a lesser degree, what is seen rather more clearly in a later exposure (ZH 9, fig. 4) – a dark, convex shape to the left of the head that continues in a form above the head; the idea of a hat comes to mind, but the shape seems almost too large to match the figure as such.

The later exposure (ZH 9) shows the emission from, inter alia, phosphorus as a component of bone black and mercury as a component of vermilion, the latter mainly in the head. The bone black evidently forms part of both the paint used at a late stage for showing detail (mostly in the doublet) and that in the underpainting of the clothing. Included in this underpainting are both a small part of the collar on the right and part of the cloak revers projecting from beneath it; these were evidently subsequently covered over by the paint of the background, as they are today. One also sees a projecting part of the cloak just above the level of the hand on the right that (to judge from the X-ray and the earlier autoradiogram) was also covered by the background paint but was subsequently repainted on top of the background in almost identical form. In the underpainting, too, the cloak is cut at right angles by the bottom edge, while in the surface paint it is given a rounded outline, curving inwards.

#### *Signature*

In darker grey over the grey of the background on the right, level with the part of the cloak wound over the arm <RHL. (in monogram, probably followed by a high-set dot) *van Ryn* / 1632>. Though there are few specific objections that can be offered to its reliability, the very cautious and even way the paint has been applied, and the over-meticulous shaping of the letters and figures, do not give any great impression of spontaneity. Comparison with the signature on, for instance, the *Portrait of Joris de Caullery* in San Francisco (no. A 53), which this signature resembles from the viewpoint of shape and placing, makes the difference in degree of spontaneity between the two very clear.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks. The thick varnish described by Gerson<sup>1</sup> has since been removed.

#### **4. Comments**

Together with its companion-piece (no. C 69) this portrait was unknown until it was sold – as anonymous – with a number of portraits owned by the Van Beresteyn family in 1884 (see 8. *Provenance*). As Dutuit<sup>2</sup> reports on the basis of a letter sent to the *Indépendance Belge*, both paintings were ‘... plus ou moins détériorés en certaines places par la poussière... Pendant l’exposition qui a précédé la vente, des amateurs, en grattant un peu la poussière, avaient découvert sur les deux toiles la signature ‘R. H. van Ryn’ et la date de 1632... Les amateurs cependant n’avaient fait part à personne

Fig. 3. Neutron activation autoradiograph ZH 4





Fig. 4. Neutron activation autoradiograph ZH 9

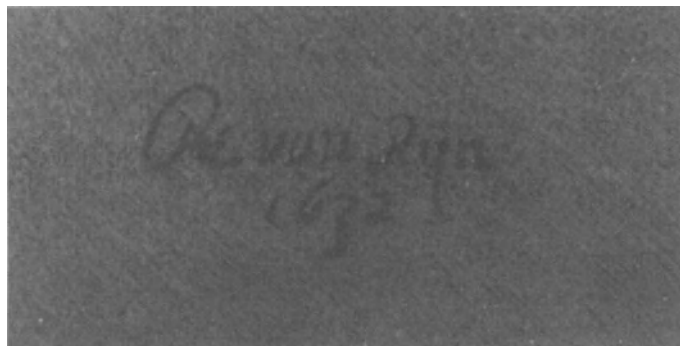




Fig. 5. Detail (1:1.5)



Fig. 6. Detail with signature (1:1)



de leur découverte, espérant sans doute en bénéficier eux-mêmes. Au moment de la vente, les enchères s'élevèrent rapidement, pour ces deux toiles, à 40 et 50,000 florins. C'est alors que la famille Beeresteyn, étonnée, apprit l'origine de ces deux oeuvres capitales. Elle se mit aussitôt à les disputer et poussa les enchères à 75,000 florins (158,000 francs), prix auquel elle est resté propriétaire de ces tableaux.' From 1884 onwards the two portraits were generally accepted as the work of Rembrandt, until Burroughs<sup>3</sup> attributed them to Jacob Adriaensz. Backer. This attribution, based on a relatively superficial comparison with work by Backer and on the mistaken belief that he had been a pupil of Rembrandt, won no credence and was emphatically rejected by Held<sup>4</sup>. Gerson<sup>5</sup> accepted the man's portrait as being by Rembrandt, but thought that in the woman's portrait the 'technique and expression . . . are absolutely dissimilar to those of the male portrait . . . The obvious conclusion is that the female portrait was painted by another artist of less originality and power.' As we shall argue later, this interpretation provides no satisfactory answer to the problem of attribution or, especially, to that of the relationship between the two paintings. Since the latter plays a great part in a judgment, both paintings will be discussed below, first separately and then in combination.

The man's portrait, in itself, presents a difficult problem, and the far from ideal state of preservation makes a judgment even harder. Undeniably it does present a number of very Rembrandtlike features when it is compared with knee-length portraits by him from the very earliest years in Amsterdam, especially the Kassel *Portrait of a man trimming his quill* of 1632 (no. A 54), the San Francisco *Portrait of Joris de Caullery* of 1632 (no. A 53) and the *Portrait of a man (Krul?)* of 1633 in Kassel (no. A 81), all likewise on canvas, and the Los Angeles *Portrait of Marten Looten* of 1632 (no. A 52) which is on panel. The first of the similar features is the handling of light in the head, where particularly the sensitive shading on the forehead achieves an effect regularly used by

Rembrandt and where in general the distribution of light and shade is in line with his habits. The treatment of the tonal values in background is also strongly reminiscent of that in the works just mentioned, though it has to be said that none of these shows such a pronounced cast shadow to the right of the figure – something that Rembrandt did use (for the first time?) in a bust from 1632 (the New York *Portrait of a 40-year-old man*, no. A 59). The treatment of the clothing (which can no longer be properly assessed in the black part of the cloak) is also, in its rendering of form largely by means of animated contours, very like that commonly found in Rembrandt. As the changes seen in the X-rays and autoradiographs show, the artist devoted a great deal of attention to this, as usually did Rembrandt. And yet the end result makes one harbour doubts about an attribution to Rembrandt himself – the projecting areas on either side of the body seem overdone, and in particular it is not clear how on the right the cloak draped over the forearm can manage to stick out quite so far (in a way that does not link up with the position of the hand on that side). Despite the lively contour the structure of the figure is generally lacking in cohesion, and the body seems disproportionately massive in relation to the head; a comparison with, for instance, the *Portrait of Marten Looten* will show how much more Rembrandt was able to arrive at a convincing unity in his figures, seen in a pose that is all-of-a-piece. Much the same applies to the execution of the flesh areas, especially the hands. The reticent treatment of the latter does indeed bring Rembrandt to mind, yet in characterization of form they are much inferior to comparable hands done by him; the relatively fine detail in the lace of the cuffs results in a somewhat fragmented picture lacking in power. The treatment of the head is, at first sight, more powerful, yet this too has features that do not point to authorship by Rembrandt. It is marked on the one hand by fairly broad brushstrokes in the lit flesh areas (culminating in the lit cheekbone and ear), and on the other by fine strokes used in almost a draughtsman-like way and not really achieving an effect of plasticity (as, particularly, can be seen in the eyepouch on the shadow side of the face, and in the moustache). The eyes, in themselves painted with suggestive power, betray (for example in the red lower edge to the righthand eyelid and the switches of colour within the eyelid itself) a preference for a colouristic effect that seems almost coquettish, and can also be seen in the nose area and in the shadow tint that tends towards an orange. A preference like this is not to be found in Rembrandt's portraits from 1632, though it does remind one of his 1631 *Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts* in the Frick collection (no. A 43). In

general however one has to say that in his portraits one sees far more suggestion of plasticity and spatial differentiation, achieved with greater economy of means. The doubts as to Rembrandt's authorship are not lessened when one examines the X-rays. The presence of repeated corrections to the contours does not, by itself, provide any argument for or against; but in the head there is nothing of the image invariably found in the X-rays of Rembrandt portraits, built up from numerous fine brushstrokes. Instead, the image is here dominated by the terrace-like structure described earlier, in which the most radioabsorbent paint seems to have been applied either with partly broad and partly fragmented strokes or as a draughtsmanlike hatching (on the tip of the nose), and stands out against a rather flat intermediate tint. This points to a way of underpainting that is unknown to us from Rembrandt's work.

From the very first sight the female portrait (no. C 69) makes a far less Rembrandtesque impression. This is mainly due to the head. With its broad opaque areas of shadow – larger and giving stronger contrast than is found in comparable female portraits by Rembrandt – and its emphatically-outlined lit side, and through the rather arid drawing of the eyes and the singular colour effect of a purplish pink that is used in the nose and mouth area, it makes the bloodless impression of a waxwork. But in other aspects, too, this painting differs from works by Rembrandt – and often in the same way as does the man's portrait. This applies to both the structure of the figure and the pictorial execution. The internal cohesion of the figure is just as weak as it is in the companion-piece; the link between the arms and the body, and most of all the foreshortening of the arm on the left, are unclear in construction and do not achieve a three-dimensional effect. The same is true, in fact, of the rendering of the whole of the costume, when one appreciates what Rembrandt himself made of the precisely similar costume in 1633 (cf. the New York *Portrait of a woman in an armchair*, no. A 79). Both in the underpainting (insofar as the autoradiographs provide an impression of this) and in the final execution the costume is so lacking in plastic dynamic and three-dimensional significance that it becomes impossible to recognize Rembrandt's hand in either the design or the execution. Even in such elementary matters as the foreshortening of the necklace the rendering fails; in the wide collar the painter has, in spite of several changes in the shape, been unable to cope with the composition, and the way the head sits on the shoulders is far from convincing. The most Rembrandtlike feature is the hand resting on the

table, which has fairly lively modelling and effective accents in the dark shadows placed between the fingers; it differs so strongly from the other hand, with its flat, round shapes, that one would here, if anywhere, be tempted to think that Rembrandt himself had intervened. In line with this – though there is of course no proof – is the fact that the hand on the right, according to the X-rays and autoradiographs, originally occupied a lower position in the underpainting and only subsequently was moved to its present location. Only later still was the table, absent in the initial composition, painted around the hand (without it achieving a clear spatial relationship to the hand, the volume of the body or the obliquely-receding rear wall!). This latter operation reminds one forcibly of what Rembrandt himself did at least once (in the New York *Portrait of a woman in an armchair*, already mentioned), and it is conceivable that it was due to Rembrandt's intervention.

If, from the differences from Rembrandt's work just described, one may conclude that the woman's portrait can be entertained even less that that of the man for an attribution to Rembrandt, two questions then arise – are the two paintings from the same hand, and how do they relate to Rembrandt's work? Where the first of these points is concerned, Gerson's conclusion that the male and female portraits are from different hands cannot, understandable though it is, be accepted. It is mainly the X-rays that argue against this. The way the heads are seen to have been underpainted is absolutely identical in both, and in both it differs from what we know from X-rays of Rembrandt portraits in the terracelike structure with a flat intermediate tint. Yet at the paint surface, too, the two paintings do, while there are evident differences, also show similarities. In both the linear animation of the contours of the clothing is disproportionate to their significance from the viewpoint of bulk and three-dimensionality. Both heads have a certain colourfulness in common. The use of rather formless highlights that repeatedly occurs in the woman's costume – in the sash, in the decoration of the puffed sleeves and in the lace edging of the cuffs and collar – is found again (though on a smaller scale) in much the same way in the fragmented treatment of the lace on the man's cuffs. Together with this there is a singular self-containedness of the shadow areas in various parts of both paintings, making no convincing contribution to a suggestion of shape or substance. This applies more to the woman's head than to the man's – though there too the shadow side of the face presents a rather flat appearance – but in the man's right hand and cuff this typical feature is just as distinct as in, for instance, the woman's left hand,

Fig. 7. Circle of Rembrandt, *Portrait of a man*. Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Staatsgalerie Schleissheim



Fig. 8. Circle of Rembrandt, *Portrait of a woman*. Munich, Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Staatsgalerie Schleissheim



where the three-dimensional effect of a curling edge (used successfully by Rembrandt on repeated occasions) has not been achieved. The most plausible, and because of the X-rays the almost inescapable conclusion is that – apart perhaps from Rembrandt's own intervention in the woman's left hand – a single artist was responsible for both these paintings, and that the indisputable differences (relating mainly to the heads) must be seen as the outcome of a certain eclecticism, and of the differing ideas or prototypes that the artist had in view.

This being so one may move on to the question of whether more can be said about the artist who executed both paintings. In view of the undeniably Rembrandtlike features they present there can be little doubt that he has to be looked for in Rembrandt's workshop. Assuming that the female portrait contains more clearly individual characteristics than does the male – the latter being obviously a closer imitation of the master's Amsterdam portrait style –, one may detect similar features in another studio work. Where structure and execution of the head are concerned there is – both in the X-ray and at the paint surface – a striking similarity with the San Diego *Bust of a young man in gorget and plumed cap*, dated 1632 (no. C 55). The line of the facial contour, the linearity in the indication of eye and mouth, the rhythm of the eyebrows and creases around the eyes, and especially the self-containedness of the opaque areas of shadow (separated from the lit areas by a line of demar-

cation that meanders across the face), can be described as very similar in both paintings (cf. Introduction, Chapter III, figs. 42 and 43). The differences that exist between them pertain mostly to the colour-scheme – the relatively strong pink, for instance, that is found in the lit part of the face in the New York woman's portrait does not recur in the San Diego *Young man*. Yet one should seriously consider the possibility that both paintings are from the same hand, who would then also have to be held responsible for the – admittedly more Rembrandtesque – man's portrait. It seems inadvisable at this stage to go beyond identifying this small group of works as a possible nucleus of a workshop assistant's production in 1632. In as far as the San Diego *Young man* has some affinities with works for which we suggest an attribution to Isack Jouderville, especially the Windsor Castle *Young man in a turban* (no. C 54), one may feel tempted to consider that artist the author of the group to which the New York portraits belong. Given the degree of plasticity achieved especially in the man's portrait, this must however be termed highly unlikely, though Jouderville is known to have painted portraits later in his career (see Introduction, Chapter III).

There is reason to suppose that the Rembrandt signatures on studio paintings which often, in formulation and form, match his own signature in the years in question but in the manner of writing vary greatly one from the other and also from his own

signature, were appended by the assistant executing the portrait, and are thus in a sense reliable; they are evidence of the workshop from which the paintings came, and of the year in which they were painted. One may then assume that both these portraits do indeed date from 1632.

But the two paintings also contain some information as to how such portraits came into being. Apart from a Rembrandtesque, isolated male portrait inscribed 'RHL van Ryn 1632' (Br. 168; Shelburne, Vermont, Shelburne Museum) and an isolated female portrait unknown to us but perhaps a little later marked 'Rembrandt f.' (HdG 866, cf. W. R. Valentiner, *Rembrandt*, Stuttgart–Leipzig 1909, p. 205; Nantes, Musée des Beaux-Arts, cat. 1913, no. 544) – with which there are numerous similarities in composition and motifs – it is mainly the connexion with two companion-pieces in Schleissheim (Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, inv. nos. 574 and 571; our figs. 7 and 8) that suggest that in Rembrandt's workshop this kind of portrait was done by various hands after common prototypes. One can only speculate as to the nature of these prototypes. It is certainly noteworthy that the traces of a hat like that worn by the young man in Munich also seem to be visible in the autoradiographs of the New York male portrait. It seems certain that the two New York portraits can be looked on as the result of a workshop production in which a large number of hands were involved. It is conceivable that these included that of Rembrandt himself; as has been pointed out above, he may have been responsible for the woman's left hand in its present position, which could have prompted him to have the table added. The degree to which Rembrandt intervened in the production of portraits remains difficult to assess; in this case it must, in view of the marked idiosyncrasies common to both pictures, have been very limited.

The identity of the sitters is uncertain, since it has proved impossible to identify them as members of the Van Beresteyn family from whose ownership the portraits came<sup>6</sup>.

### 5. Documents and sources

None.

### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

### 7. Copies

None.

### 8. Provenance

Together with the companion-piece (no. C 69):

– Coll. Jonkheer G. van Beresteyn van Maurick, Kasteel Maurik, Vught, sale Vught 22–25 October 1884, apparently among the anonymous portraits sold under nos. 17–46b (75 000 guilders, bought in). Sold before 1897.

– Coll. H. O. Havemeyer, New York. Bequest of Mrs H. O. Havemeyer, 1929.

### 9. Summary

Despite its in many respects Rembrandtesque character, the man's portrait and, even more obviously, its companion-piece (no. C 69) show so many differences from authentic Rembrandt portraits from the earliest Amsterdam years that an attribution to him must be looked on as ruled out. In both portraits these differences involve the general structure of the figure, which lacks cohesion and has little plastic dynamic or three-dimensional effect, as well as the pictorial execution which generally – especially in the woman's portrait – has little succinctness of detail. That they are, in spite of differences evident particularly in the heads, mainly from one and the same hand is clearest from the way the heads have – on the evidence of the X-rays – been underpainted. In the female portrait one finds, in the treatment of the head, some features that recur in the San Diego *Young man in gorget and plumed cap* (no. C 55). It is conceivable that the same studio assistant was responsible for this picture and the two portraits in New York. The somewhat different character of the man's portrait – which prompted Gerson to attribute the latter to Rembrandt and the former to a follower – may be explained by the artist basing himself in this portrait more on his impressions of Rembrandt's early Amsterdam portrait style. Other portraits from Rembrandt's workshop give, because of their similar composition the impression that a variety of assistants worked from shared prototypes. Rembrandt himself may have intervened to a limited extent in the execution of no. C 69, as is suggested by the way the woman's left hand has been painted. The inscriptions on the two paintings were probably appended by the painter who executed them, and the date of 1632 may be looked on as accurate.

The sitters must, for the time being, remain nameless.

### REFERENCES

- 1 Gerson 120; Br.-Gerson 167.
- 2 E. Dutuit, *Tableaux et dessins de Rembrandt, Supplément*, Paris–London–Leipzig 1885, p. 53.
- 3 A. Burroughs, *Art criticism from a laboratory*, Boston 1938, pp. 168–171.
- 4 Julius S. Held, book review, *Art Bull.* 22 (1940), pp. 37–43, esp. 41–42.
- 5 Gerson 120 and 121; Br.-Gerson 167 and 331.
- 6 E. A. van Beresteyn, *Genealogie van het geslacht Van Beresteyn*, The Hague 1941, p. 135.

## C69 Portrait of a woman (companion-piece to no. C68)

NEW YORK, N.Y., THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, ACC. NO. 29.100.4

BEQUEST OF MRS H. O. HAVEMEYER, 1929. THE H. O. HAVEMEYER COLLECTION

HDG 625; BR. 331; BAUCH 459; GERSON 121

### 1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved painting that though less Rembrandtesque than its companion-piece (no. C68) can be attributed to the same hand and, together with the latter, may be seen as the work of an assistant in Rembrandt's workshop in 1632. The execution of the woman's left hand suggests that Rembrandt may have been involved to a limited extent in the production of the portrait.

### 2. Description of subject

A woman is seen knee-length, standing facing three-quarters left. She wears a high-waisted black garment, with a brocade belt, with wide, puffed sleeves with lengthwise slashing, and a lace-trimmed white wheelruff and cuffs. There are jewels in her hair, which stands out to the sides, in the ear, around her neck, across her breast and around her wrists. In the right hand she holds a black fan with a gold chain, while her left hand rests on a table covered with a dark green cloth. The light falls from the left, and the figure casts a shadow on the table and a wall visible behind it; to judge from a moulding seen on the right (above which there is a hint of sheet of paper hanging between rods), this wall does not run parallel to the picture plane.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 17 April 1969 (J. B., B. H.) in good daylight and in the frame, with the aid of one X-ray of the head, available in the museum; six copyfilms, together covering the whole painting apart from strips along the edges (especially the bottom) were received later, as well as two mosaic prints from neutron activation autoradiographs.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 112.5 × 88.8 cm. Single piece.  
SCIENTIFIC DATA: On the right- and lefthand sides of the canvas there is hardly any cusping to be seen, though it is measurable as a pattern of vague curves (the depth into the canvas cannot be measured). This is probably secondary cusping. At the top, there is cusping with a pitch ranging from 11 to 13 cm, extending inwards some 17 cm. The pitch of the cusping at the bottom varies between 10.5 and 13.5 cm, with a depth of c. 18 cm. Threadcount: 12 vertical threads/cm (11–13.5), 14.1 horizontal threads/cm (14–14.5). The weave shows numerous thick places, more in the vertical than the horizontal direction. There is a great similarity in horizontal threadcount and yarn quality with the canvas of the companion-piece (no. C68), so that it may be assumed that both came from the same bolt of canvas. Because of the even horizontal thread density in both canvases, and of the presence of more thickenings in the vertical threads, it can be assumed that the warp is horizontal.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: None seen.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Microscope examination of one cross-section carried out by Mrs C. M. Groen showed the ground to consist of three layers, the bottom one being a light colour, the middle one reddish (red ochre?) and the top layer containing white lead with a black pigment (charcoal?) and some yellow and red particles.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Reasonably well preserved, and generally better than the companion-piece (no. C68). According to the X-rays there is some local paint loss in an almost vertical band above the ridge of the nose, in the rope of pearls round the righthand wrist and in the cuff above it, as well as here and there along the edges. Some retouches in the background. Craquelure: an evenly distributed, irregular pattern.

DESCRIPTION: The background, in which the brushwork is scarcely visible, is a quite dark grey, and becomes lighter and cooler in tone towards the lower left. To the upper right architectural motifs are hinted at in a black-grey.

The pale flesh colour in the head is painted quite thickly; the brushstroke is visible on the forehead and below the eyes. The rather flat, opaque shadow side is executed in brown and greenish brown, gradually merging into the light pink of the cheek, chin and nose.

The eyes are drawn with excessive care. The lower edges are a light pink, while the contours of the upper lids are shown with lines of brown, with varying sharpness. In both eyes the white of the eye is shown by a grey on the righthand side. The grey irises, with flicks of light grey for the catchlights, do not have a sharp outline. In the corners of the eyes there is a little pinkish red. The eyebrows are painted very thinly, in light grey and some ochre-brown. The surroundings of the brows are, like the nose, cheek and chin, slightly pinkish. A little white is used on the tip and ridge of the nose. The dark nostril is indicated with the same purplish pink that is used for the mouth-line; the lips, too, are a purplish pink, though in a lighter shade.

The hair consists of a sharply outlined area of brown, with traces of streaks of darker and lighter brown. The pearls in the jewellery of the cap are greyish; at this point the paint is in a poor state of preservation, though the white catchlights are still clearly apparent.

The rather flat, light-grey pleats in the collar are separated one from the other by strokes of grey; the lacework along the edge is suggested with grey-white dots and strokes that hardly suggest a coherent pattern. The dress is a black-grey; where there is a sheen of light on the material a somewhat lighter grey has been used. Detail is drawn-in with black paint. The brocade parts of the dress are worked up with highlights in grey, ochre-yellow and light yellow, and the same colours recur in the chain round the neck and in the mounting and chain of the woman's fan. The execution of the cuffs resembles that of the ruff and orange-brown edges act as cast shadows on the wrists.

The hand on the left is quite flat and pale in colour, and the shadow and shapes of the nails are a light brown-grey. The other hand is painted rather more thickly, with stronger modelling. The flesh colour of the thumb tends towards an orange, and that of the other fingers to pink. The fingers are heightened with white, and the shadows between the fingers are in a dark brown. There are dark brown cast shadows on the dark, dull green of the tablecloth.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Three cross-sections were prepared by Mrs C. M. Groen. The first, from a sample taken in the background (9.1 cm from the lefthand edge and 14.4 cm from the top), showed two layers, the bottom one a grey brown containing some white lead, ochre and a very little red pigment, the top one a black. The second, from an incomplete sample taken in the tablecloth in the area of an earlier version of the hand on the right (24 cm from the righthand edge, 8.9 cm from the bottom), showed two layers, the bottom a flesh colour containing white lead, some organic red, translucent brown and orange-coloured pigment, the top a dark layer containing a greenish-blue pigment, some red and white pigment in a



Fig. 1. Canvas 112.5 × 88.8 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray

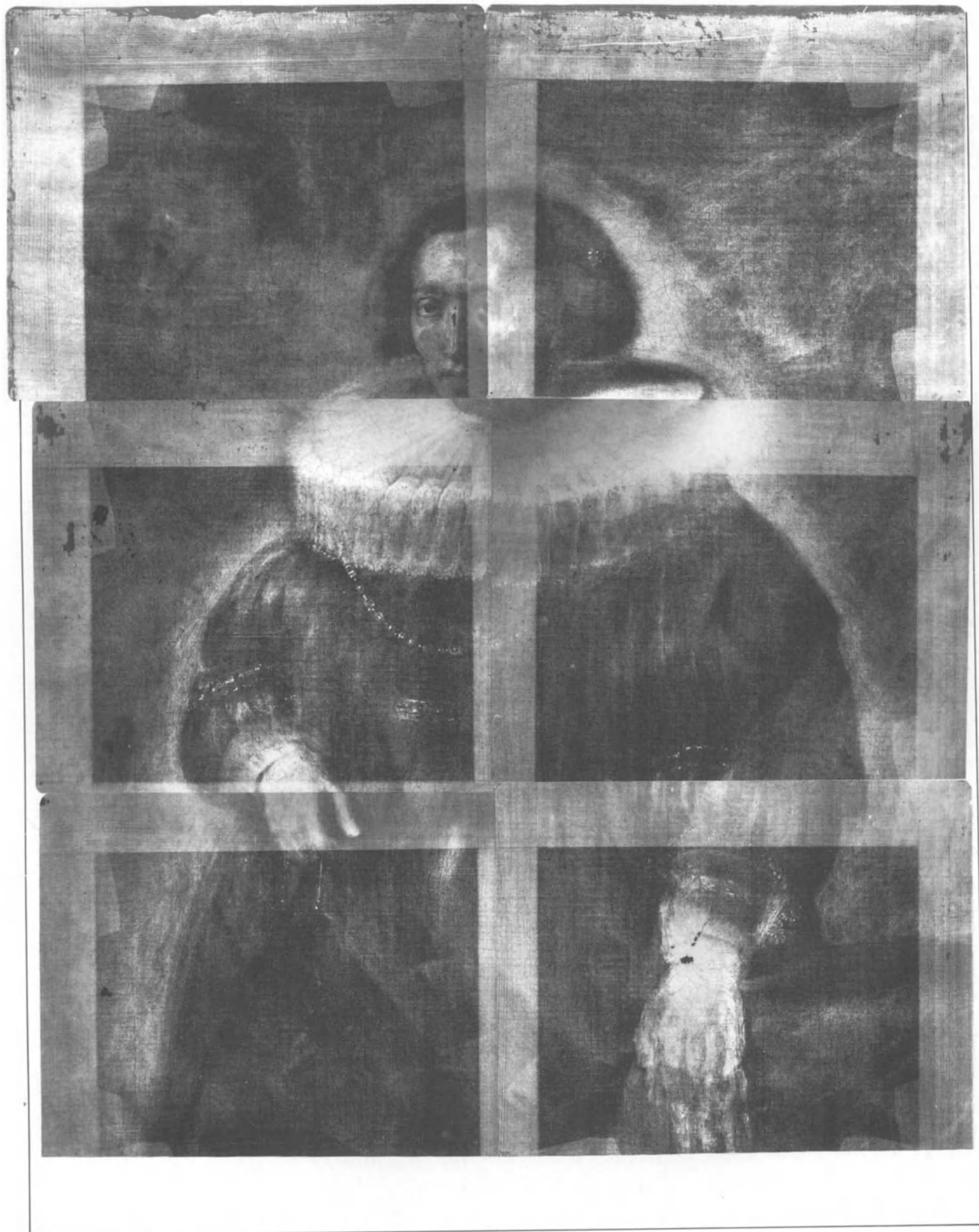


Fig. 3. Neutron activation autoradiograph ZJ 6



Fig. 4. Neutron activation autoradiograph ZJ 9





Fig. 5. Detail (1:1.5)



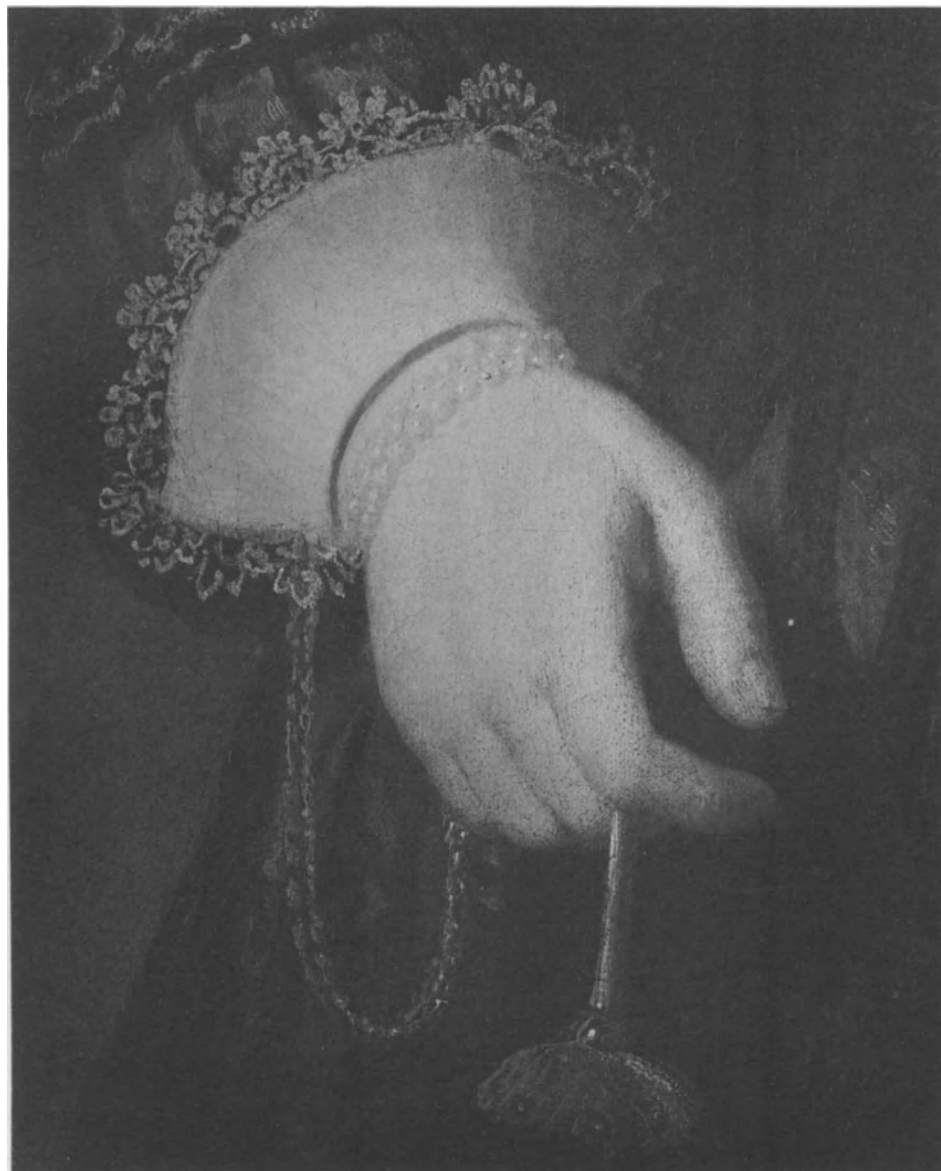
brown, discoloured binding medium. Evidently, the hand was in its first version not only executed in an underpainting (not represented in the sample) but also in flesh colour. The third, from a sample taken from the lower right in the table area where the table was painted over the background at a late stage (see below), showed four layers that are described as respectively (from bottom to top), a red layer (possibly part of the ground), a non-continuous black layer with coarse particles that seem to be glass, another reddish layer of the same composition as the first and containing orange-red, white and dark-brown pigments, and a top layer showing azurite particles in a brown, discoloured binding medium with the addition of yellow ochre and a very little black. The slightly abnormal structure of the sample may be due to the fact that it was taken near the edge of the canvas.

#### *X-Rays*

In a number of respects the radiographic image differs from what might be expected from the paint surface. The greater part of the contours is rimmed by a noticeably light band in the background. The ruff has been extended at least once and probably twice, over both the clothing and (on the right) the background. To the right a narrower reserve was left for the shoulder, and it has plainly been extended over the background, as has the part of the skirt seen below the cuff.

Below the indistinct image of the left hand (probably mainly visible in the underpainting) and in part interfering with this there is an image of the same hand (in an underpainting?) placed lower down. In connexion with this, a light stripe running crosswise through the present cuff may be read as an indication, done in underpainting, of the cuff in a lower

Fig. 6. Detail (1 : 1.5)



position, and a similar, associated light stripe runs along the lefthand contour of the present cuff. What can be seen of the hand on the left likewise appears to be wholly or largely an underpainting.

In the face one is struck by the fact that the lightest areas are spread rather unevenly over the lit flesh passages, and that on the forehead and righthand cheek, alongside the highest light, there is a half-tone similar to that found in the X-ray of the companion-piece (no. C 68).

Paint losses show up dark (cf. *Paint layer*, CONDITION).

#### *Neutron activation autoradiographs*

A late exposure (ZJ 9, fig. 4) shows inter alia the emission from phosphorus as a component of bone black, used not only for the detail in the costume in a late stage but also for the underpainting of the clothing. The latter is the case, for instance, with the righthand contour of the forearm on the right, where there is the dark image of loose strokes that were subsequently covered over by the paint of the background. On the puffed sleeve of the upper arm one can see firm black lines that evidently belong to the slashed sleeve shown in the under-

painting but do not coincide with the present slashes; along the seam of the puffed sleeve there are dark and also (probably produced by scraping away the black paint) light marks that do not match the present-day shape and must have belonged to a preparatory phase. The outline of the hand on the left is determined by a rather sketchy black that probably forms part of the overpaint; it seems as if the end of the handle of the fan was visible at that stage, lying against the thumb. Only a relatively narrow strip of the cuff shows up light; obviously a thicker white is limited to this, and the remainder of the cuff was intended to allow underlying black to show through a thinner white.

The lefthand contour of the skirt shows up, probably through the black of the underpainting, as a fluent and fairly straight line. At the surface this contour is less straight, and runs further to the right; evidently the paint of the background has here been placed over the underpainting of the clothing. The hand on the right appears in its present position, but also in the lower position already seen in the X-ray, rimmed by a plainly evident black that must have belonged to the underpainting of the skirt, of which – further to the right – may be



Fig. 7. Detail (1:1.5)



seen the contour that is today covered over by the table. Remarkably enough there are no clear traces to be seen of the black underpainted sleeve such as one would, bearing in mind the earlier position of the hand, have expected to find; one probably has to assume that the first hand was abandoned in an early stage in which the costume was underpainted only in certain areas, and where the sleeve was not yet underpainted in black. The shifting of the hand must, in view of the reserve left for it in the black of the skirt, be seen not in connexion with the addition of the table, but rather with the need to shorten the (indeed very long) arm; the second hand would then, like the first, initially be designed as hanging free, and the table subsequently painted around it. This supposition is confirmed in an earlier exposure (ZJ 6, fig. 3), in which there is a strong emission of copper as a component of the dark green of the tablecloth; one sees in this a noticeably generous reserve for the second hand, indicating that the hand was already completed and had to be kept.

The enlarging of the ruff seen in the X-rays is found to cover a part of the chain necklace already painted along the right-hand lower side.

On the evidence of parts of the background appearing rather dark along the head, there was intended to be, at a point a little to the right of centre, an end to the receding wall seen on the right. The ornamentation on the wall above the moulding running along this wall shows up clearly as a sheet of paper hanging between rods.

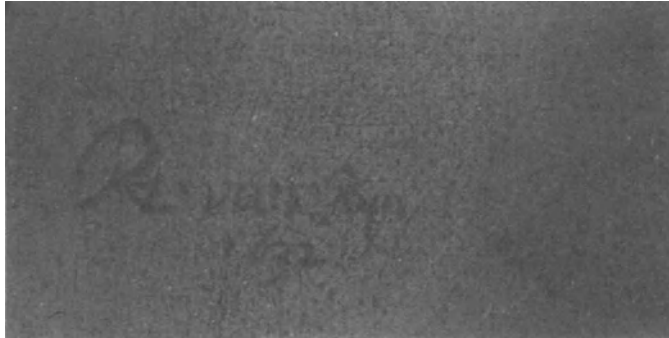
#### *Signature*

In darker grey over the grey of the background to the right, just above the table <RHL (in monogram, followed by a small stroke running diagonally upwards to the left) *van Ryn* / 1632>. Even more than with the signature on the companion-piece (no. C 68), one is struck by the somewhat force nature of the letters and figures. As in that case, one gets the impression that it could be based on a signature like that on the San Francisco *Portrait of Joris de Caullery* (no. A 53).

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

Fig. 8. Detail with signature (1 : 1)



#### **4. Comments**

See no. C 68.

#### **5. Documents and sources**

None.

#### **6. Graphic reproductions**

None.

#### **7. Copies**

None.

#### **8. Provenance**

See no. C 68.

#### **9. Summary**

See no. C 68.

**C 70 Portrait of a man** (companion-piece to no. C 71)  
BRAUNSCHWEIG, HERZOG ANTON ULRICH-MUSEUM, CAT. NO. 232

HDG 733; BR. 159; BAUCH 354; GERSON 119

Fig. 1. Panel 63.5 × 47.3 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved painting from the same hand as no. C 71, probably done in Rembrandt's workshop in 1632 by one of his close followers. It is uncertain whether it was originally oval.

### 2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen to just above the waist, with the upper body turned three-quarters right and the head a little towards the viewer. He wears a ruff and a black doublet of ornamented material; on his left shoulder can be seen a curling contour, probably that of the rever of a cloak. The light falls from the left.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in October 1968 (J. B., B. H.) under satisfactory daylight and in the frame. Five X-ray films, four covering the whole of the painting and the fifth the head, were received later. Examined again in November 1982 (J. B., E. v. d. W.) in good light and in the frame.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 63.5 × 47.3 cm. Thickness 0.6 – 0.8 cm. Comprises three planks, widths (l. to r.) 9.9, 27.9 and 9.5 cm. Back bevelled with a straight edge along the bottom over a width of c. 3 cm, and very slightly at the right. It must thus be seen as possible that the panel was originally rectangular.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) showed the centre plank to have 185 annual rings heartwood (+ 4 sapwood), the heartwood dated 1431–1613. Statistical average felling date 1633 ± 5. Growing area: Northern Netherlands<sup>1</sup>.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Yellowish brown, as seen in patches along the righthand contour of the face and hair.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn<sup>2</sup> found one ground layer, which he describes as yellowish grey, containing white lead, ochre and an oily or resinlike medium – all components one usually finds in the imprimatura, while the usual components of a chalk and glue ground are not included in his description (which, remarkably enough, is repeated for the companion-piece, no. C 71).

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good apart from a few local paint losses, the most serious at the upper left in the forehead. Craquelure: fine, vertical cracks can be seen mainly in the more thickly painted areas.

DESCRIPTION: The background is painted entirely in opaque grey paint, with an ochrish tint here and there, in which quite short brushstrokes can be made out to the right and left. To the left this grey darkens. Along the lefthand shoulder outline the paint is applied rather more thickly over a relatively wide zone, probably in connexion with the extension of the background to correct an over-generous reserve left for the figure. On the left, along the hair, the paint is laid down quite thickly, and determines the hair contour. To the right it does not completely adjoin the paint of the hair and cheek, so that a little of the ground becomes visible at this point.

In the lit parts the head is painted with short strokes in a light flesh colour. A thin layer of a warm colour – tending towards light pink or an orangish ochre colour – is placed on top of this, so that the underlying brushwork is largely hidden. Highlights on the forehead and nose are not set down separately, but form an integral part of this layer. A grey that darkens to the right forms the transition to the shadow on the forehead, in which an opaque grey merges into a brown tinged with orange. There is no appreciable difference in the thickness of the paint layer between the lit and shadow parts of the face.

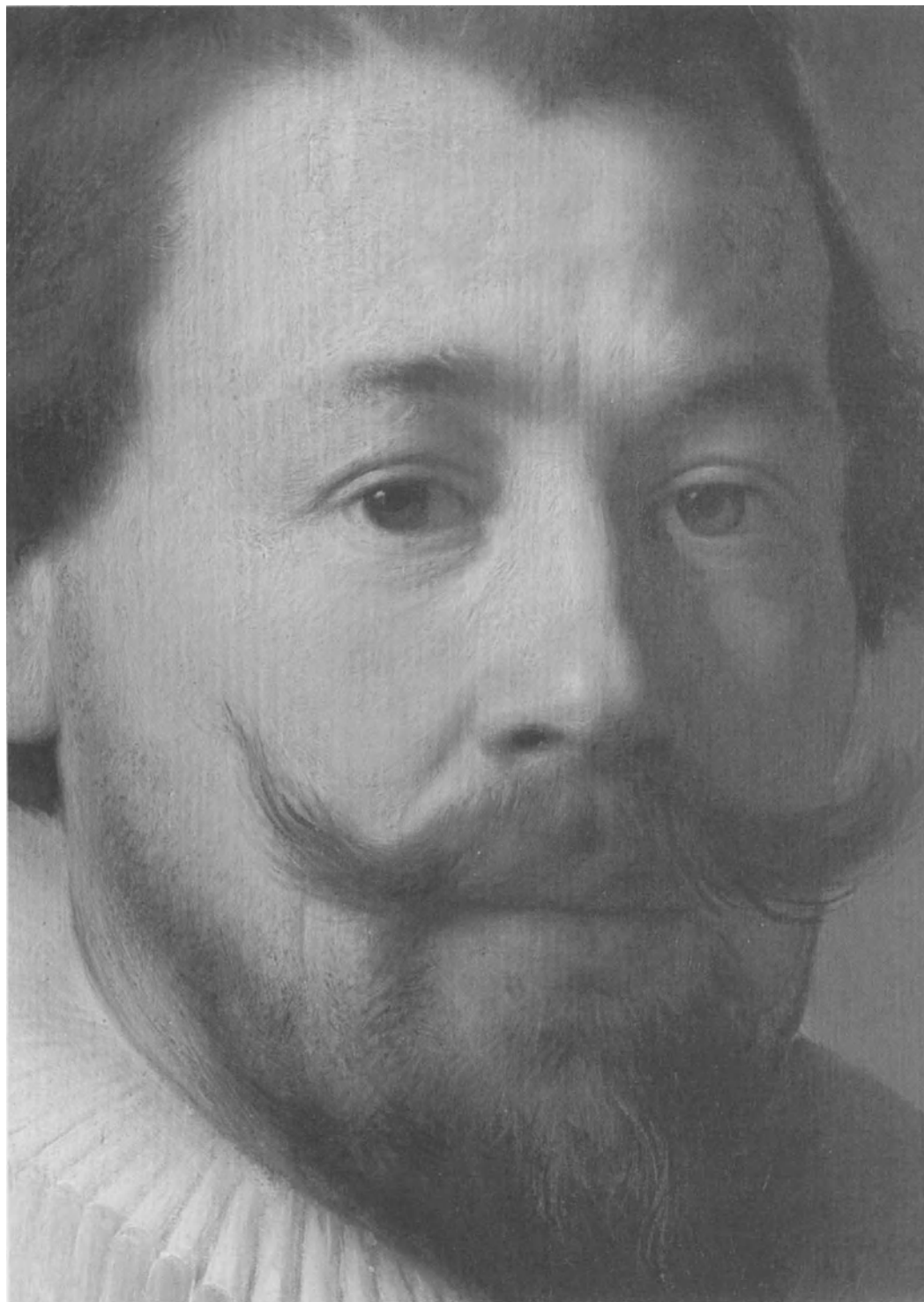
The upper eyelid of the eye on the left is bordered at the top by a red-brown line, and at the bottom by a grey line that loses sharpness towards the lefthand end. The under-edge of the eye is marked with flesh-coloured paint containing a little red. The wrinkles in the eye-pouch are shown with grey strokes of little suggestive power; to the right of this a touch of broken white penetrates into the corner of the eye, which is shown with a dot of red. The white of the eye is a broken white on the left, and greyish on the right. The iris, with an unsharp outline, is placed in grey over a brown underpainting, and is lightest to the lower right; opposite this there is a white catchlight alongside the pupil, which is done in a fairly thick black (and is placed too high). The grey eyebrow becomes vague at the top, due to the topmost layer of flesh colour having been brushed over it slightly.

The upper eyelid of the other eye has a hard line of thick brown as its upper margin, merging slightly upwards. The upper eyelid itself is painted in a fairly dark, orangey-brown flesh colour; to the right and left this runs out into a grey-brown that tends towards olive green and that lies as an opaque layer over a large part of the shadow side of the face. On the lid, as a catchlight, there are extremely fine, horizontal strokes of grey that lend it a metallic sheen. The iris is painted, in the grey white of the eye, in a sharply-edged darker grey – lightest, again, at the lower right, opposite the catchlight – and the pupil (larger than that in the other eye) in black. The under-edge of the eye is executed in the same orangey-brown flesh colour as the eyelid together with a little grey, with a narrow, light stroke as the catchlight; the indistinct structure of the corner of the eye is camouflaged by a dark area of shadow. In the patch of light on the shadowed cheek a little orangey-brown flesh colour is laid over a thin grey.

The ridge of the nose is painted very smoothly with light touches that merge into the surrounding paint. The smoothly-worked wing of the nose on the left is pink, and the nostril almost black as is the indication of the other nostril (placed remarkably far over towards the right). The moustache seems to have been done partly wet-in-wet with the flesh colour, and some of the long brown and greyish hairs are, on the near cheek, covered over by the top layer of flesh colour. The confused mass of hair in the beard is done mostly in dark grey, with one or two strokes of ochrish paint. On the cheek the growth of beard is indicated with small, squiggly grey strokes. The pink and vaguely-edged lips have indistinct catchlights, and the mouth-line is formed by a single, continuous line of black. The ear is shown broadly, in a fairly thick pink and yellow. The contour of the cheek is marked on the right by a dark-grey line that becomes double below the moustache. Between the two lines one can see translucent paint that evidently belongs to the underpainting.

The neck is painted with coarse strokes of an orangish paint that run through from the ear to below the beard. The hair is indicated with curly strokes of black over a thin, translucent brown that forms part of the underpainting; in the lit lefthand side of the forelock there is an ochrish brown that covers more fully.

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



The upper surface of the ruff is underpainted with bold, light strokes running diagonally down towards the lower right, but is very precisely worked up with an indication of the pleats in grey with light edges. In the black of the clothing there is the brown of an underpainting showing through to the right; further to the left, sheens of light are rendered with strokes of grey, and strokes and spots of thick black are used to show the ornamentation on the material. The contour of the shoulder on the right stands out sharply against the grey paint of the background, and lies over it.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

In the radiographic image the underlying brushwork in the lit parts of the face, observable at the surface, show up clearly. They provide a coherent picture, though they are placed in various directions (not always related to the forms being depicted). In the distribution of highlights one notes a number of unexpected concentrations of radio-absorbency – for instance on the extreme left on the cheekbone, close to the tip of the nose and on the lower lip.

Matching what is seen at the paint surface, there are dark



Fig. 4. Detail with signature, infrared photograph (1:1)



patches and lines along the righthand contour of the head, as well as between the neck and collar.

The shape of the shoulder on the right shows a dark reserve that makes no allowance for the projection now seen there; this is obviously painted over the broadly-brushed paint of the background at that point.

The *R* of a signature appears, lightish, in the right background.

#### Signature

On the right, a little below centre, there are two signatures superimposed:

1. <*RHL* (in monogram) *van Rijn.*/ 1632>. This signature is rather difficult to make out in the infrared photograph (fig. 4) published by Nicolaus<sup>3</sup>. The monogram appears to have been done coarsely, the letters of the *van* are unevenly placed and the shape of, for instance, the two *n*'s cannot be termed characteristic. The authenticity is not, so far as any judgment can be made, evident.

2. The second signature, <*Rembrandt f*> with a diagonal stroke below it (fig. 5), is placed on top of a thin overpainting done in paint that, as Nicolaus<sup>3</sup> reported, can be described as coarse compared to the other pigments used in the background, and that exposes only the 163 of the first signature. This second signature cannot, because of the characterless form and awkward script, most evident in the *f*, be regarded as authentic (see also under 4. *Comments*).

#### Varnish

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

The problems presented by this man's portrait can hardly be seen in isolation from those associated with the accompanying woman's portrait (no. C 71), and these comments will for that reason cover both works.

These two paintings had already by the early 18th century won a considerable reputation (see 8. *Provenance*), and the attribution of both to Rembrandt has been maintained quite recently by Klessmann<sup>4</sup>. It had however already been challenged by Gerson<sup>5</sup> who thought, in 1968, that one could note 'a remarkable difference between the male and the female portrait'. He observed – not wholly wrongly – in the man's portrait a 'lively

Fig. 5. Detail with signature (1:1)



underpainting which is smoothed down on the surface', and accepted it as an original the background and signature of which had been retouched. The woman's portrait, on the other hand, he regarded as possibly the work of a pupil, mainly because of its 'enamel-like surface quality'. This judgment is quite understandable; at first sight, the man's portrait comes, in its arrangement in the picture area and its handling of light, far closer to Rembrandt's works – especially his *Portrait of a 40-year-old man* of 1632 in New York (no. A 59) – than does the woman's, where the head is turned slightly more away from the viewer than is usual for Rembrandt, thus catching an unusually large amount of the light falling from the left. Yet on closer examination one has to say that the two portraits are not done by different hands. Not only were the two panels undoubtedly intended for companion-pieces – the backs are worked in an identical fashion, and both show the remnants of straight bevelling (prompting the thought that they may have originally been rectangular) – but the execution in both of them also reveals decisive resemblances, and the same similarities to and differences from that of authentic Rembrandt portraits. In both works the manner of painting is in the first place marked by distinct and to some extent animated brushwork used to set down areas in the lit parts of the faces. Compared with similar passages in Rembrandt, those in the Braunschweig portraits show two differences, the first of which concerns the brushwork itself and is most clearly evident in the X-rays. With Rembrandt the strongest lights clearly mark the most brightly lit areas (on the forehead, nose and lit cheek), and the brushstroke either matches the roundness of the form being depicted (cf., for instance, the X-rays of the *Portrait of a 40-year-old man*, already mentioned, or those of the New York *Portrait of a woman* of 1633, no. A 83), or follows the direction of the incident light (cf., for example, the X-ray of the Frankfurt *Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq* of 1633, no. A 82). In the two Braunschweig portraits the brushstrokes go in vari-

ous directions, and reveal a certain amount of indecision as to their function in indicating form. What is more, while they do mark out the illuminated passages, the places where the paint is applied most thickly – and thus where there is the most radio-absorbency to be seen in the X-ray – correspond to a far lesser degree to the most strongly lit areas, so that in the X-rays one finds apparently arbitrary concentrations of white. What is however most typical of the Braunschweig portraits is the fact that these brushstrokes using light paint no longer lie on the surface – they have been gone over (and partly filled in) with a warm-coloured, thin layer of paint that leads to what Gerson called, in the woman's portrait, an 'enamel-like surface quality'. The brushwork texture characteristic of Rembrandt's portraits, and the significance this has in suggesting form, is consequently largely lost. This is most evident in the woman's portrait, where the face – partly, too, because of the position of the head vis-à-vis the light that the artist has chosen to use – takes on almost the nature of a mask. Yet in the man's portrait, too, this has led in the lit side of the head to a lack of plastic differentiation that is unknown in portraits by Rembrandt.

There is a fundamental similarity between this treatment of lit areas and that of the shadow passages. Although the underlying brushmarks are absent, here too the paint takes on the character of a less or more opaque layer (appearing rather light in the X-ray of the woman's portrait) of a partly warm colour. This is quite unlike the alternation found in Rembrandt of thicker light and thinner brownish passages that tend towards the translucent and can often be recognized as an underpainting. The extent to which this alternation is important for suggesting form and atmosphere is demonstrated by, for example, both the portraits by Rembrandt already mentioned (in New York and Frankfurt). Compared to them even the backgrounds in the Braunschweig portraits reveal a similar paucity of pictorial structure – there is invariably a mixed colour tending to opacity, and nowhere does one find a boldly-brushed cool grey contrasting with a warm, thin brown – and in the costumes a scarcely effective indication of detail and a contour that makes little contribution to the plasticity of the figure. The typical use of colour – differing from that of Rembrandt – is manifest even in the signature on the woman's portrait, done in a greyish brown into which a white seems to have been mixed and (most unusually) showing up as light in the X-ray. Because of this typical use of colour one gets the impression that the signature could very well belong to the original paint layer. Even the almost elegant, over-careful way it is written would fit in

with the temperament of the artist, evident from the extremely accurately-outlined reserves that he leaves at many places in the paint of the background (e.g. for the man's hair, which is bordered by a reserve of this kind on the left, and not by paint placed over that of the background). Curiously enough there is, along the lefthand contour of the man's face, a gap left between the paint of the cheek and that of the background through which can be glimpsed small parts of the underlying ground and (beneath the moustache) a small patch of brown underpainting. In general, however, both portraits are marked by extreme carefulness that becomes finickiness in such un-Rembrandtlike details as the hairs of the man's beard or the woman's eyelashes. This excess of care in execution is coupled with a certain lack of rhythm, in the brushwork, of structural cohesiveness in the figures and of suggestion of the material in the hair and clothing.

Alongside these idiosyncratic features and weaknesses, which must be termed so basic that they rule out an attribution to Rembrandt, there are however other observations that make it plausible that the two portraits were produced under his influence and in his immediate circle. This is most obviously true of the man's portrait. The similarities in layout and handling of light, already mentioned, with the New York *Portrait of a 40-year-old man* – which was certainly always oval in shape – are such that one has to conclude that this, or a totally similar work, formed the prototype for it. There is no such prototype to be found for the woman's portrait; Rembrandt's female portraits from the early 1630s show, as we have said earlier, the face invariably a little less towards the light and more towards the viewer, which leads to more lively contrasts of light and shadow. This is the main reason why the idea that these might be copies made in Rembrandt's workshop after lost originals by him (and the manner of painting would not contradict this notion) is not really acceptable. There can, however, be hardly any doubt that the paintings were produced in his studio. Alongside the differences already alluded to, the manner of painting – especially as this appears in the X-rays – also presents unmistakable resemblances, most of all in the way the works are underpainted. A detail like the alteration made to the lace lobes of the woman's cap compared to a light underpainted version is seen in identical fashion in Rembrandt's *Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq* in Frankfurt. And finally the conclusion arrived at from dendrochronological examination that the middle plank of the panel on which the woman's portrait is done came from the same tree as the middle plank of the panel for the Chicago *Old man in a gorget and black cap* (no. A 42), datable at

1631, is a very strong pointer to production in Rembrandt's workshop.

Since we can take it, with reasonable certainty, that Rembrandt's pupils were already in 1632 being entrusted with the painting of portraits (see Introduction, Chapter III, p. 59), this makes this notion the more plausible in respect of nos. C 70 and C 71 as well. Unhappily it is not yet, in this instance, possible to point to any particular pupil as the author, or even to attribute other works to the same hand. A painting like the *Portrait of a young woman* in a private collection (no. C 81) seems to stand in a similar relationship to Rembrandt as the two works in Braunschweig, and in one detail – the gold chain – shows a definite similarity to the woman's portrait; yet in the manner of painting there are no resemblances strong enough to warrant an attribution to one and the same hand.

One of the authors (E. v. d. W.) remains hesitant to reject the two paintings. Although aware of the unusual features mentioned above, especially where the smooth execution of the faces is concerned, he senses in the brushwork of the underlying layers – in the faces and in passages such as the lace, hair and background – a temperament so close to that in accepted paintings that he cannot rule out the possibility that Rembrandt himself executed these paintings.

A separate problem in its own right is the question of the signatures on the two paintings, each on its own and the two taken in combination. As has already been said, the careful but somewhat weakly written signature with the date 1633 on the woman's portrait matches that painting so well in colour and character that one is inclined – even though the inscription was evidently not placed on the background while the paint was still wet – to assume that it was done by the artist himself; this is an assumption that is of course possible only if one is prepared to suppose that pupils were allowed to place the master's name on their works in the form in which he himself was using it at that particular time (see also Introduction, Chapter V). If that was in fact so, then one would in the case of the man's portrait expect either no signature at all – it must have been not unusual to sign only one of a pair of companion-pieces – or a similar signature. Neither is the case; underneath an overpainting on top of which the signature seen today is for the most part placed there is an earlier signature 'RHL van Rijn 1632' (fig. 4), again similar to Rembrandt's usage in that year. But it is still not authentic because of that, since the monogram in particular seems to be coarsely written, and the other letters too are rather ungainly. In any event the writing is very different from that on the woman's portrait and, whether one

assumes that the inscription on the latter or that on the man's portrait was earlier, it is just as hard to imagine that they are done by the same hand as that one signature was added later in imitation of the other. The only possible answer – though a highly theoretical one – might be that Rembrandt (despite the somewhat aberrant writing) himself appended his own, current signature to a man's portrait done in 1632 by a pupil, and then left it to the same pupil to put the signature – again in its then current form – to a woman's portrait done by that pupil in 1633. Aside from these speculations, one can readily imagine that the 'RHL van Rijn 1632' signature on the man's portrait was at some time altered to 'Rembrant f' in order to match it to that on the woman's portrait. A remarkable analogy for this is offered by the signature on the *Portrait of a couple* in the Stewart Gardner Museum (no. C 67), though in that – equally puzzling – case there was no companion-piece that might have prompted the alteration. The most important aspect of this signature problem is the question of what, from the two inscriptions, one can deduce as to the date of the two portraits. One cannot but reason, from the resemblance to Rembrandt's own portraits, that the years given in the inscriptions are plausible, and the results of dendrochronology support this view.

The paintings were in 1744 and for a long time afterwards taken to be portraits of Hugo de Groot (1583–1645) and his wife Maria van Reigersberch (1589–1663). H. Riegel<sup>6</sup> however commented as long ago as 1882 that they had been catalogued in 1710 as nothing more specific than 'zwei sehr schöne Portraits', and he rejected the identification as Hugo de Groot and his wife on the grounds of the age of the sitters and of comparison with the many portraits there are of Hugo de Groot. It is certainly noteworthy that as early as the 18th century the portraits of mere burghers should have been purchased by royal collectors.

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

1. Pastel 60 × 46 cm, signed and dated *Louise pinx 1791*, The Hague, Paleis Huis ten Bosch. Princess Louise of Orange-Nassau (1770–1819), the daughter of Prince William V, married Karl-Georg of Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel in 1790.

## 8. Provenance

From the collection of Duke Anton Ulrich (1633–1714), which

was housed in the castle of Salzdahlum near Wolfenbüttel that was completed in 1694 but subsequently further extended. Mentioned in 1710<sup>6</sup> for the first time as being there in the 'Sanctum Sanctorum'<sup>7</sup>. Transferred to Paris in 1807 (there is a 'Musée Napoléon' seal on the back, as there is on that of the companion-piece).

## 9. Summary

For all the resemblances to Rembrandt's portraits from the early 1630s, neither no. C 70 nor its companion-piece no. C 71 can be attributed to Rembrandt himself, because of a manner of painting that differs from his and is apparent both in the face and in the background and clothing. Both paintings must have been done in Rembrandt's workshop by one and the same pupil, probably in 1632 and 1633 respectively. Where the dating is concerned, the (enigmatic) inscriptions on the paintings do seem to provide accurate information. It is uncertain whether the paintings were originally oval.

## REFERENCES

- 1 Cf. Bauch, Eckstein, Meier-Siem, p. 489.
- 2 Kühn, p. 196.
- 3 K. Nicolaus, 'Makro-und Infrarotuntersuchung der Signatur von Rembrandts "Männlichem Bildnis" in Braunschweig', *Maltechnik-Restaur* 79 (1973), pp. 40-43.
- 4 R. Klessmann, *Die holländischen Gemälde. Kritisches Verzeichnis . . .*, Braunschweig 1983, pp. 164-165.
- 5 Gerson 119 and p. 162; Br.-Gerson 159 and 338.
- 6 H. Riegel, *Die niederländischen Schulen im herzoglichen Museum zu Braunschweig*, Berlin 1882 (Beiträge zur niederländischen Kunstgeschichte II), pp. 233-246, nos. 131 and 132.
- 7 A. Fink, *Geschichte des Herzog-Anton-Ulrich-Museums*, Braunschweig 1967, pp. 39-40, 42, 132.

**C71 Portrait of a woman** (companion-piece to no. C70)  
BRAUNSCHWEIG, HERZOG ANTON ULRICH-MUSEUM, CAT. NO. 233

HdG 846; BR. 338; BAUCH 465; GERSON –

Fig. 1. Panel 63.6 × 47.3 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray





### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved painting from the same hand as no. C 70; probably done in Rembrandt's workshop in 1633 by one of his close followers. It is uncertain whether it was originally oval.

### 2. Description of subject

A woman is seen to just above the waist, facing three-quarters left. She wears a white ruff, and has a close-fitting double gold chain round her throat. She wears a white winged cap edged with lace. In her black costume shouldercaps can be made out to the right and left; the front is closed with numerous gold buttons. The light falls from the left.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in October 1968 (J. B., B. H.) in satisfactory daylight and in the frame. Five X-ray films, four covering the whole of the painting and the fifth showing the head, were received later. Examined again in November 1982 (J. B., E. v. d. W.) in good light and in the frame.

#### *Support*

**DESCRIPTION:** Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 63.6 × 47.3 cm. Thickness 0.9 to 1.1 cm. Comprises three planks, with widths of (l. to r.) 11.2, 29.7 and 6.4 cm. Back has straight bevelling along the bottom edge over a width of c. 4 cm, so that allowance must be made for the possibility of the panel having originally been rectangular.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch and Dr D. Eckstein, Hamburg) showed the centre plank to have 179 annual rings of heartwood; dated as 1419–1597. It was found that the wood of the panels of nos. C 70 and C 71 did not come from the same tree, but that the centre plank of no. C 71 is from the same tree as the centre plank of the Chicago *Old man in a gorget and black cap* (no. A 42; cf. also Vol. I, pp. 684–685); the youngest annual ring of the latter was dated as 1599 and the earliest possible felling date can be put at 1619.

#### *Ground*

**DESCRIPTION:** Yellowish brown, showing through in the background and to some extent on the right in the hair.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** See no. C 70.

#### *Paint layer*

**CONDITION:** Good. Craquelure: long horizontal and short vertical cracks in the white of the collar and, to a lesser degree, in the lit flesh areas.

**DESCRIPTION:** The background is painted at the lower right in an opaque yellowish grey-brown that merges upwards into a rather darker and more translucent grey-brown in which the remainder of the background is done.

The treatment of the lit parts of the head differs hardly at all from that in the companion-piece (no. C 70). Here too a thicker, flesh-coloured paint with a visible brushstroke is covered over with a pinkish layer. The shadow on the forehead begins as a dirty grey, changing at the temple into a more brownish colour.

The upper lid of the eye on the left is bordered with a grey-brown line at the top. Above this are brownish lines that merge into the eyebrow done in fine, grey strokes. The eyelid itself is executed in a reddish paint that to the left becomes a

brown-yellow; in the middle a highlight is shown in a pinkish white. The eyelashes are, remarkably, indicated with short strokes of black. The lower edge of the eye is shown in pink with, on the extreme left, a stroke of yellow-brown. A touch of pinkish red is placed in the corner of the eye. The somewhat translucent grey used for the white of the eye becomes thicker and lighter towards the left. The iris, done in greyish paint over a brown underpainting is bordered on the right, along a lighter zone, by a vague line in dark grey. To the left of the black pupil there is an oblong catchlight in light grey. A few pinkish lines are placed above the eye-pouch. The righthand eye is painted in similar fashion, but with more pronounced main lines. There is a spot of red in the iris below the pupil.

The extremely carefully modelled nose is painted, in the shadow, in grey with a little red and pinkish red. The catchlight on the ridge is in an off-white, and that on the tip in a stronger white. There is no difference in handling of paint or in colour between the ridge of the nose and the lefthand cheek. The upper lip is a greyish red in fine, hatched strokes, the lower lip a pinkish-red with freely placed and rather confused indications of highlights. A small stroke of red is placed on the mouth-line, which is drawn with three carefully-placed strokes of brown-grey. The shadow under the mouth has the same thickness of paint as the surrounding lit areas; to the right, it continues in greys with a yellowish-white reflexion of light along the jawline. On the far right one can see clearly an earlier version of the cap, extending rather further to the left (cf. *X-Rays*).

The hair is done for the most part in dark grey paint; a reddish-brown underpainting can be detected on the right in the somewhat lighter grey edge of the hair. The cap is painted using light grey strokes and edgings of white over a darker grey. Opaque brown-yellow strokes run over the flat areas, following the curve of the head. The lace is done in a fairly thick off-white paint over which squiggly lines of grey-brown – matching the colour of the background – indicate the pattern. Light paint shows through between the lobes of the lace, covered over with paint that is slightly darker than the rest of the background; evidently the artist has here touched-out a version of the lobes laid out somewhat differently in the underpainting. To the left of the cap these retouches extend a fair distance into the background.

The collar is, like that in the companion-piece, in a broken white with white edgings and is painted very precisely. The double chain, like the buttons on the dress, is indicated in thick ochre yellow with light-yellow catchlights, with scant suggestion of shape. There is some ornamentation in the black clothing, indicated in grey in the same way as in the companion-piece though in rather thinner paint. The contour of the shoulder on the right follows a rather lumpy line, and the black seems to overlap the grey-brown of the background at various places.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** None.

#### *X-Rays*

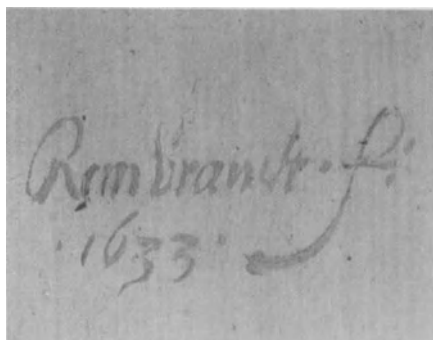
In the lit parts of the face the X-rays show short, fine brushstrokes that are also apparent at the surface. The greatest concentrations of radioabsorbency occur at the left on the upper lip (running obliquely upwards), on the ridge and tip of the nose, below both eye-pouches and – placed remarkably far to the right, in view of the way the light falls – on the forehead. The reflexion of light on the jaw to the right also shows up in the radiographic image. The shadow passages are not entirely dark, corresponding to the opaque and obviously slightly radioabsorbent paint that is also used here for the most part.

Along the cap one can see, in a pale tint, the first lay-in for

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1)



the lace border, stretching further out to the left into the background than it does today, and also running a little further downwards on the left and right. Other features of an earlier lay-in can be seen where the cap overlaps a larger part of the cheek than it does now, and where the lower border of the collar runs about 1 cm higher up than the present one. Both the cap and the collar were evidently underpainted with paint that was not strongly radioabsorbent.

The signature shows up lightish.

#### *Signature*

To the right below the centre, in greyish brown (<Rembrandt. f. 1633.>). The letters are carefully done, but there are breaks in the brushed script that are unusual for Rembrandt; they show a certain, equally uncharacteristic, ornateness that culminates in the shape of the first 3. Given, moreover, the fact that the greyish-brown paint appears to be radioabsorbent (see *X-Rays*) – this never occurs with light brown paint in Rembrandt signatures – the inscription offers too many unusual features to be considered as authentic.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### **4. Comments**

See no. C 70.

#### **5. Documents and sources**

None.

#### **6. Graphic reproductions**

None.

#### **7. Copies**

None.

#### **8. Provenance**

See no. C 70.

#### **9. Summary**

See no. C 70.

## C 72 Portrait of a man in a broad-brimmed hat (companion-piece to no. C 73)

BOSTON, MASS., MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, ACC. NO. 93.1475

GIFT OF MRS FREDERICK L. AMES IN NAME OF F. L. AMES

HDG 732; BR. 197; BAUCH 369; GERSON 159

### 1. Summarized opinion

A quite heavily restored painting that despite a general similarity to Rembrandt's work differs from it so much stylistically that it cannot be regarded as autograph. Like the companion-piece no. C 73, it was probably painted in Rembrandt's workshop in 1634 and by the same hand as no. C 82.

### 2. Description of subject

A man is seen to the waist, with the body turned three-quarters right and the head more towards the viewer. He has a short, dark beard and moustache, and wears a broad-brimmed hat, a pleated collar with lace edging, and black clothing in which no detail can be made out. The light falls from the left, and a shadow is cast on the rear wall to the right.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 6 October 1970 (B. H., P. v. Th.) in good daylight and out of the frame. Four X-ray films together covering the whole painting, and a fifth of the head, were received later. Examined again on 2 March 1983 (E. v. d. W.).

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 70 × 53.4 cm. Three planks; according to information kindly supplied by Dr John Walsh (letter dated 1 October 1982), the two joins – that are virtually invisible to the naked eye and can be made out only in the X-rays – are at 12.2 cm from the lefthand and 14.2 cm from the righthand side. Back cradled; no traces of bevelling.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch, Hamburg) provides a date for the middle plank, which has 165 annual rings (+ 7 counted on the heartwood side), at 1442/9–1613. Earliest possible felling date 1628. Growing area: Northern Netherlands. The lefthand plank is from the same tree as the lefthand plank of the companion-piece (no. C 73); their mean curve can be dated at 1461–1599/1600.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Light ochrish yellow, visible at many points especially in the forehead by the hatbrim and on the righthand temple, in the split of the lace collar, in the hair and in the background.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Worn, particularly in the black of the clothing that, bearing in mind the lack of any differentiation, may have been overpainted, but also in the shadow areas of the face where there appear to have been retouches. Craquelure: in the thick white parts of the collar as very fine cracks, otherwise none seen.

DESCRIPTION: In the lit part of the head the highest lights are placed over an ochre-yellow paint layer, though without providing in combination with this a convincing suggestion of plasticity (which may have to do partly with the state of preservation). Pink is used on the cheek. The eye on the left is weakly drawn; the upper lid is shown with lines of black, and a vertical limit is placed in the corner to the left (probably restoration plays a part here as well). The eyelid itself has, on

the right, a purplish colour apart from which virtually no paint has been applied, so that the ground or underpainting governs the colour at this point. The white of the eye is a white on the left, and a thin grey on the right with the ground contributing to the tone. The ground also plays a part in the grey iris, especially to the right. The black pupil has a tiny whitish catchlight on the left. The forms of the other eye are drawn patchily, in black and a purplish red, over the ground. The white of the eye is a dirty grey, and the iris a darker grey tinged by the underlying ground. The whole eye has, in its present worn state, a weak rendering of form.

The eyebrows are painted with black hatching over grey. In that on the left the hatching is rather finer than on the right, where it is in fact coarse; on both right and left the strokes run from upper left to lower right. In the area of shadow round the bridge of the nose the ground is virtually exposed, with the quite thick yellowish paint of the lit side of the nose forming a strong contrast with it. The ridge of the nose has light catchlights in white, as there are on the tip and, to the left of this, on the wing of the nose where a horizontal stroke has been placed. The symmetrical structure of the nose is marred by a restoration that is responsible for a black shadow along the ridge consisting of a variety of strokes running downwards in a vague curve. The colour of the wing of the nose in shadow is determined largely by the ground; the black (restored) nostril lies isolated within this. The shadow half of the face is painted thinly and is worn, and restoration has given it a patchy appearance. The moustache is painted, on the left, with small, relaxed strokes of black and brownish grey, and quite successfully typed; a reddish grey is also used in the shadow on the right. The mouth-line consists of a long, broken thin line, with the convexity shown on the lower lip with various strokes of red, though these scarcely help to create any satisfactory suggestion of plasticity. In the beard the hairs are done in black placed over a tone determined mainly by the ground. The ear is shown very cursorily in an ochrish flesh colour. The hair projecting from beneath the hat is very dark, and especially at the border between hair and forehead the ground strongly affects the colour.

In its lit areas the collar is painted with long strokes running with the pleats, in fairly thick white paint; in the shadows there is a flat grey. The ends of the lace trimming are indicated with impasto edgings of light, and have a few small scratchmarks. In the shadowed parts of the lace a dark grey paint has been used. The rendering of form is broad.

In its present form, the black clothing presents practically no tonal differentiation, and the black of the hat is similarly flat and almost without indication of form. The contours of the clothing take only a vague curve; on the right the slanting outline is placed strikingly low down.

The background has, in the lighter passages, an almost even grey with no evident brushstroke. In the dark area to the left above the shoulder, and in the cast shadow to the right, the paint is applied more thinly and the brushstrokes – which allow something of the ground to be seen – are distinguishable. SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

In general the radiographic image – apart of course from that of the cradle, which is obtrusive – matches what might be expected from the paint surface. One notices, however, that along the contour of the body on the right, in the background, there are long, broad strokes showing up lightish where today one sees the thin, dark paint of the cast shadow. One has perhaps to assume that the latter is an afterthought, and was painted over part of the background that had already been

Fig. 1. Panel 70 × 53.4 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray





Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1)



painted-in light; in that case the broad strokes, appearing light in the X-ray, that run along the outline of the hatbrim and, remarkably, along the rim of the cast shadow, must also come from a comparatively late stage.

#### Signature

In the lower right background, in black paint (<Rembrandt. f./1634.>). The letters are unevenly spaced, and are themselves hesitant and somewhat shaky; the *R* is open on the left. The inscription does not inspire confidence.

#### Varnish

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

Up to now the attribution of this painting and of the accompanying woman's portrait (no. C 73) to Rembrandt has never been doubted; yet as we shall show below, there is every reason to do so. At first sight one may even wonder whether both portraits are from the same hand. The present appearance of the male portrait is so much less coherent (in the head) and so much poorer (in the clothing) than that of the woman that this, too, could be doubted; the difference can however in part be explained by the extent to which the paint layer of the male portrait has suffered. The pictorial cohesion has, because of this, been lost to such an extent that it takes some effort to recognize in this painting the rather cavalier manner of painting that typifies the woman's portrait. There can however be no doubt that in both instances the same skilful but somewhat coarse hand is at work, even though the woman's portrait is the more successful of the two. That the two paintings do at least form a pair is evident from dendrochronology examination of the panels. This has shown that both contain wood coming from the same tree-trunk; for this reason alone they presumably stem from the same workshop, and were intended as companion-pieces.

When one tries to arrive at a closer definition of the manner of painting of the two portraits one sees that it incorporates a number of elements that one

recognizes from Rembrandt's own portraits, but that these are used coarsely with a rather heavy emphasis on the linear. In the case of the male portrait there is, in the distribution of light and shade but also in the pictorial resources employed, a general resemblance to the Pasadena *Portrait of a 41-year-old man* of 1633 (no. A 86) or to the Los Angeles *Portrait of Dirck Jansz. Pesser* of 1634 (no. A 102), or even a *tronie* like the 1633 *Self-portrait in a cap* in Paris (no. A 72). In the head, especially, the drastic retouches must have had a deleterious effect on the suggestion of plasticity achieved, particularly in the whole shadow side of the face. Yet one gets the impression that some of the present-day, hardly convincing relationship between the two eyes, the strange, purplish colours that occur in both of them, and the flabby drawing of the beard, moustache and hair were features of this painting from the outset. This applies with even greater probability to the spatially rather ineffective contours of the body and hat, and to the shadow cast on the rear wall by the latter (probably an after-thought – see *X-Rays*) which is placed unusually high up and thus interferes with the contour in a way unknown in Rembrandt, without creating a three-dimensional effect. The relatively well-preserved collar – which makes scant contribution to an effect of depth or volume – shows in the way impasto light accents are applied a degree of negligence that differs dramatically from the treatment one sees by Rembrandt in comparable passages, which is disciplined in comparison and clearly related to the form (cf., for instance, no. A 81).

The last-named tendency to a measure of coarseness in the rendering of form can be seen even more readily in the associated female portrait, which has survived better. This makes its Rembrandtesque character, in layout and handling of paint, very evident in both the freely-brushed background and the figure itself, but at the same time clearly demonstrates the individual character of the discrepant handling of paint. The difference between this and that of Rembrandt is clearest in the rapid, coarse rendering of the gold chain and other jewellery, in the internal detail of the clothing, done with fairly linear strokes of thick black and grey, and in the likewise rather coarse rendering of the lace collar. In the skilfully done head, which has a very Rembrandt-like alternation of thickly-painted flesh tones and translucent areas, one is struck by the linear self-containedness of, especially, the drawing of the eyes (emphasizing their almond shape) and a certain degree of autonomy in the colour accents in, for example, the upper lip and the sharply-outlined irises and in the use of a purplish red for drawing the eyes (as also occurs in the man's portrait). The most

noticeable linear element is formed by the numerous scratchmarks which, made deep down into the wet paint on the forehead, lend form to the otherwise rather amorphous painting of the hair in a way never encountered in Rembrandt's Amsterdam portraits.

The unavoidable conclusion is that the painter of these two works was not Rembrandt himself but was – bearing in mind the very Rembrandtesque features of conception and execution – one of his immediate circle, and most probably operating in his workshop. He may thus have been one of the assistants who, already in 1632, were helping Rembrandt to carry out the numerous portrait commissions he had received. Because of the similarity of execution, the female portrait in Edinburgh (no. C 82) may be attributed to the same hand. The latter, like the paintings in Boston, bears an unreliable Rembrandt signature and the date 1634; this date is in keeping with the style of dress and coiffure seen in all three of the paintings, as well as with the results of dendrochronology. As has been said elsewhere (see Introduction Chapter V, p. 105) it is conceivable that the assistant carrying out the work in the studio himself appended a Rembrandt signature and date. In the case of the Boston portraits the inscriptions are so little like each other that they can hardly have been written by the same hand. It may be that, as can be assumed in the case of other pendants, one of the two signatures was added subsequently; if so, that on the male portrait – which has a very uncharacteristic appearance – is the more likely candidate.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

- Coll. Baron de Seillière, Paris.
- Coll. Duchesse de Sagan, Paris.
- Sold in 1891 to dealer Cottier, New York.
- Coll. Frederick L. Ames, Boston (Mass.), donated to the museum by his widow in 1893.

#### 9. Summary

Notwithstanding some difference in pictorial cohesion between this painting and its companion-piece (no. C 73), due in part to the less satisfactory

state of preservation of the male portrait, there can be no doubt that the two were done by the same hand. The panels can, on the grounds of dendrochronology, be regarded as intended for a pair of pendants.

The manner of painting is marked by the Rembrandtlike character of the pictorial means employed, but these have been used so coarsely, with a lack of three-dimensionality especially in the man's portrait and with strong linear accents and numerous scratchmarks made in the wet paint in the woman's, that the Rembrandt attribution must be rejected. It may be assumed that both works were painted in Rembrandt's workshop by the same assistant who did the female portrait in Edinburgh (no. C 82), and in 1634. This date is found on all three paintings, as part of inscriptions that are not from Rembrandt's hand. It is certainly in keeping with the style of dress depicted, as well as with the approximate dating of the panel for the man's portrait, as obtained from dendrochronology examination.

## **C73 Portrait of a woman** (companion-piece to no. C72)

BOSTON, MASS., MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, ACC. NO. 93.1474

GIFT OF MRS FREDERICK L. AMES IN NAME OF F. L. AMES

HDG 848; BR. 346; BAUCH 482; GERSON 160

### **1. Summarized opinion**

A well preserved painting that despite a general similarity to Rembrandt's work differs from it so much stylistically that it cannot be regarded as autograph. Like the companion-piece no. C72, it was probably painted in Rembrandt's workshop in 1634 by the same hand as no. C82.

### **2. Description of subject**

A woman is seen to the waist, with the body turned a little to the left and the head rather more towards the viewer. She wears a diadem-like headdress with pearls and a jewel in her hair, a triple rope of pearls around her throat and a double gold chain across the breast; one end of the latter ends at a round jewel attached to a lace collar consisting of three layers. The sleeves of her black gown are slashed. The light falls from the left, and the background is neutral.

### **3. Observations and technical information**

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 6 October 1970 (B. H., P. v. Th.) in good daylight and out of the frame. Four X-ray films together covering the whole painting, and a fifth of the head, were received later. Examined again on 2 March 1983 (E. v. d. W.).

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 69.8 × 53.7 cm. Comprises three planks; according to information kindly supplied by Dr John Walsh (letter dated 1 October 1982), the two joins – that are virtually invisible to the naked eye and can be made out only in the X-rays – are at 12.7 cm from the lefthand and 13.8 cm from the righthand side. Back cradled; no traces of bevelling.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch, Hamburg): the righthand plank has a count of 79 annual rings (+ 1 ring counted on the sapwood side and 25 on the heartwood side), datable as 1422/47–1527/28. The centre plank has 211 annual rings (+ 1 ring counted on the sapwood and 1 on the heartwood side), datable as 1391/92–1603/04. The lefthand plank comes from the same tree as the lefthand plank of the companion-piece (no. C72), thus confirming that the two panels were meant to form a pair. These planks' mean curve can be dated at 1461–1599/1600.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Light ochre colour, readily seen in the background, in the shadow part of the hair, in the scratchmarks, in the rope of pearls and the neck, by the right side of the mouth-line and showing through at numerous other places. SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good, and appreciably better than that of the companion-piece (no. C72). Craquelure: small and mainly horizontal cracks on the forehead, plus some fine cracking in the thicker parts of the nose and collar.

DESCRIPTION: The lit part of the face is quite thickly painted, in a markedly pale flesh colour. In the highest light on the forehead the brushstrokes are clearly visible, running in various directions. Towards the shadows the paint becomes much thinner, and the ground can be clearly seen. The eyes are quite

heavily outlined in black and a purplish red. That on the left has a lower border to the top lid consisting of a double line, suggesting the lashes. Towards the corner some red is used, while in the corner itself there is a small dot of clear white. The lower edge to the eye is shown with fairly thick pink paint that continues along the corner of the eye. The white of the eye is an off-white colour, the iris grey with an ochrish light at the bottom centre and outlined in black. There is a round white catchlight in the black of the round pupil. The righthand eye is executed in similar fashion, and the white of this eye is fairly thick on the left. The corner, in shadow on the right, is vaguely formed and the ground can be glimpsed. The eyebrows are in grey with a little hatching in black; in the shadow parts the brown of the ground can be detected. The nose is painted in a pink flesh colour, with a white highlight on the ridge and a fat, strong white for the catchlight on the tip. The nostrils, in a very dark grey, lie in the zone of shadow where reddish-grey paint is placed over an underlying light ochre-brown. The mouth-line, like the nostrils, is in dark grey, varying in width and thickness. The lips are done in various shades of red, and it is noticeable that the upper lip is partly bordered sharply by the flesh colour; the lower lip has sheens of light in white. In the shadows at the corner of the mouth on the right the ground contributes to the tone. The shadow part of the cheek consists of greyish and grey flesh-coloured paint, through which the colour of the ground is everywhere apparent. Along the jaw-line there are strong reflexions of light that, together with the pronounced dimple in the cheek, bring about a strong suggestion of plasticity.

The pearls round the throat are painted in a grey tone with white catchlights placed in all cases at the same point, rather more impasto in the highest light than in the shadow. Between the pearls are placed dabs of black paint for the shadows, where again the ground shows through; along the neck and line of the throat an underlying brown strongly influences the tint. The whole makes a somewhat confused impression, with little suggestion of form.

On the left the hair is painted in a thin, cloudy greyish paint over the ground which remains visible; on the right in the shadow black and dark brown have been used, and the ground lies partly exposed. Other than in the shadows, the structure of the hair is accentuated by numerous squiggly scratchmarks made in the wet paint; these run some way out into the paint of the forehead. The jewel in the hair is painted – with no great suggestion of three-dimensionality – in black, white and an ochre colour.

The collar is painted with deft strokes that are almost invariably apparent, and to a great extent wet-in-wet; where only one layer of collar lies over the black costume it is in a grey-white with black showing the lace pattern, and where there is more than one layer, superimposed, a warmer and thicker white is used with grey and grey-brown for the pattern. Some of the tiny motifs are shown almost only in relief. The lobes right at the bottom are in some instances defined coarsely by the black of the clothing. The highest lights are mainly to the right, shown in thick licks of white paint, relatively sparingly but very effectively. The black on the lowest lobes of the lace and to the right is applied extremely freely. The jewel is done in black, grey, white and ochre colour, like that in the hair and with as little suggestion of plasticity. The chain consists of thick clumps of ochre-coloured paint, with finer touches of yellow and a little dark red. The costume is in black with a substantial amount of internal detail painted in thicker black and grey, and on the left stands out sharply against the background. The latter is brushed freely in a thin grey on the left, with the brownish tint of the underlying ground contri-

Fig. 1. Panel 69.8 × 53.7 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray

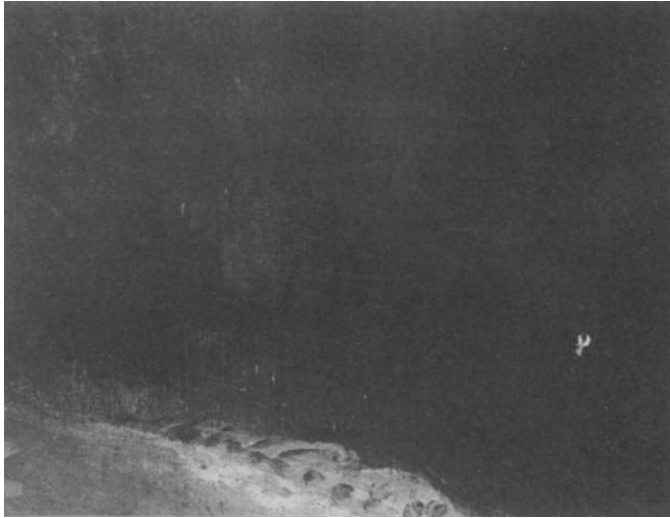




Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1 : 1)



buting to the tone almost everywhere. Around and to the right of the head the background is a dark brown, with the ground showing through and lying exposed by the shoulder-line at a few places. Along the contour of the collar and below the pearl eardrop on the left there are some autograph retouches that, in a colour slightly different from the remaining paint, help to delimit the form.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The radiographic image, impaired somewhat by shadows from the cradle, matches to a great extent what might be expected from the paint surface.

#### *Signature*

At the right above the shoulder in black paint <Rembrandt f/1634>. The letters and figures are very unevenly spaced, and their form is uncharacteristic – sometimes wide, sometimes narrow and in no instance spontaneously written. Does not make a reliable impression.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

### **4. Comments**

See no. C 72.

### **5. Documents and sources**

None.

### **6. Graphic reproductions**

None.

### **7. Copies**

None.

### **8. Provenance**

See no. C 72.

### **9. Summary**

See no. C 72.

## C 74 Portrait of a youth

FORMERLY NEW YORK, N.Y., COLL. THEODORE FLEITMAN

HdG 762; BR. 154; BAUCH 350; GERSON 113

### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved work that can probably be dated in the later 1620s, and that shows some though not a decisive similarity to the work of Jan Lievens from those years.

### 2. Description of subject

The youth is seen to the waist against a dark background, turned a little to the left, and looking towards the viewer. A pleated collar is worn over a dark costume the righthand sleeve of which can be seen to have a decorative striped pattern. The light falls from above and slightly from the left.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 13 September 1976 (J. B., S. H. L.) in good light and out of the frame, with the aid of an ultraviolet lamp.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Canvas, lined, 66.2 × 51.6 cm. The weave, apparent in relief at the surface, seems to be relatively fine.  
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Seems to show through fairly light at one thin point in the lock of hair above the eye on the right.  
SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Generally good, so far as can be judged through the layer of varnish; the paint has been flattened during relining, as can be seen from the compressed relief of the brushstrokes particularly in the collar. In the cheek on the right some scaling paint has been fixed and there is a retouch. Further retouches can be seen along the edges, and here and there in the background. Craquelure: an evenly-distributed, irregular pattern is seen in the light areas.

DESCRIPTION: Observation is seriously hampered by the layer of varnish. The background is an almost uniform dark grey, showing a somewhat lighter area only along the body contour on the left where the brushstrokes run parallel to the latter.

In the head some brushwork can be seen only below the eyes and above the top lip – elsewhere the paint surface is totally smooth. The paint is applied carefully and fluently in a variety of tints – a probably reddish flesh colour, some pink on the cheek, nose and middle area below the nose, and a thin grey in the eye-sockets, eyebrows and the shadows that also – where they are dark – contain a brown-grey. The eyes are outlined distinctly with pink, a colour that also occurs in the inner corner of the eye on the right. In each of the dark and rather flat irises there is a carefully-formed and lozenge-shaped catch-light. The cast shadow below the nose, in a dark brown that includes the indication of the nostril, lies along the grey-brown of the shadowed underside of the nose. The mouth, with a fairly light pink lower and a pinkish-red upper lip, is modelled carefully, especially in the upper lip using a grey that fades away upwards from its sharp boundary with the lower lip. The stubbly growth of beard is marked with tiny dots of brown. On the left a grey-seeming zone runs along the contour of the cheek, where the flesh colour is placed thinly over the paint of the background.

The hair is shown in a thin, cloudy brown with a little dark

grey. A somewhat lighter and slightly translucent area, containing small strokes of rather darker paint, is found only to the right above the eye.

The collar is executed in a partly quite thick white and a little grey, terminating in rather scuffing strokes against and over the quite thin black of the clothing, in which one can on the right make out parallel, sinuous strokes of grey.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

None.

#### *Signature*

None.

#### *Varnish*

A thick layer of yellow varnish hampers observation.

### 4. Comments

It is hard to say to what extent the rather dull, timid impression the painting makes today is due to its very dirty condition. The sensitive and competent modelling of the mouth makes one suspect that the effect of plasticity in other parts of the face would gain from a cleaning of the picture. The treatment of the eyes would however seem even then to remain rather prosaic, painstaking and predominantly linear. While these qualities already in general give little encouragement to attribute the work to Rembrandt, the treatment of the mouth (in itself, successful) differs totally from his habits – there is no distinct mouth-line, for instance, and the same may be said of the distribution of light and shade under the nose, which involves a lighting different from that normally adopted by him in his portrait heads facing left (usually those of women). The hair, painted with little pronounced character, similarly does not point to Rembrandt. A comparison with the Rembrandt man's portrait most suitable for this (because it has the same lighting) – the 1632 *Portrait of a young man* in a private collection in Sweden (no. A 60) – clearly demonstrates these differences, as well as the disparity in the overall effect of contrast which in no. C 74 is played down rather than exploited in the way common with Rembrandt.

It is not really clear, therefore, how the attribution to Rembrandt came to find acceptance until quite recently. Even Bauch<sup>1</sup> still accepted it; he did however rightly point out that the same model, with the characteristic, slightly asymmetrical eyes, is portrayed in fanciful costume with a cap and fur-trimmed cloak, in a painting in the Los Angeles County Museum (cat. 1954 no. 49, our fig. 3) that is attributed to Jan Lievens; there is a second version of this work in Courtrai (Von Moltke *Flinck*, nos. 96 and 88 of the rejected attributions, with illus.; Schneider-Ekkart, p. 341 ad no. xxvii). Gerson<sup>2</sup>

Fig. 1. Canvas 66.2 × 51.6 cm



Fig. 2. Detail (1:1)

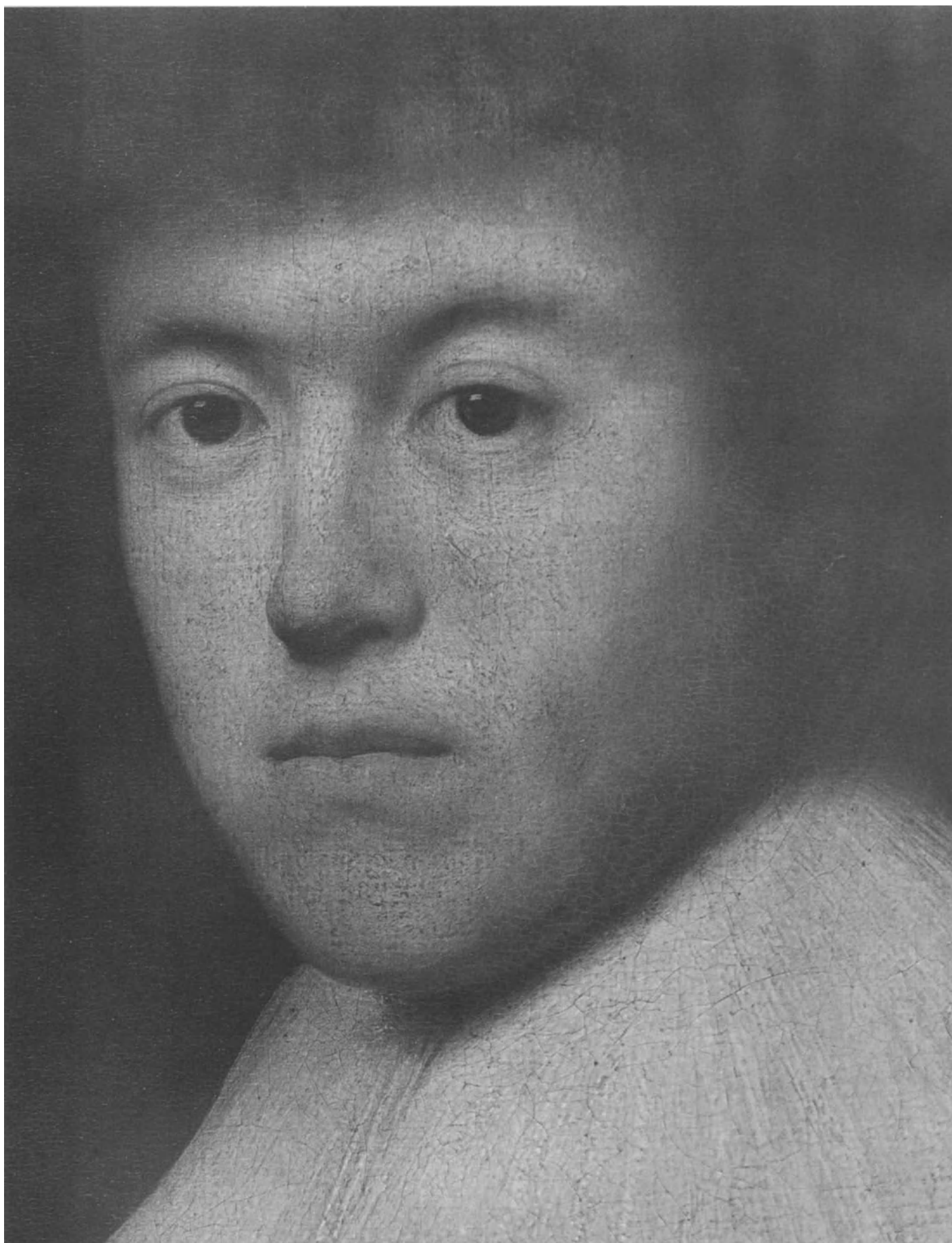




Fig. 3. Attr. to J. Lievens, *Portrait of a young man*. Los Angeles, Cal., Los Angeles County Museum of Art



concluded from this that no. C 74 was by Lievens. Though the arguments for this are not convincing – it is by no means evident that no. C 74 is from the same hand as the Los Angeles painting, nor that the latter can be attributed to Lievens – this conclusion does have its attractions. No. C 74 shows a certain general likeness to Lievens' *Portrait of Constantijn Huygens* (Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, inv. C 1467, on loan from the Musée de la Chartreuse, Douai; fig. 4), though this is far more animated than no. C 74. There is more resemblance to the signed *Portrait of a young man in gorget and cap* (Rembrandt?) in the coll. D. Cevat in S. Peter Port, Guernsey (exhib. *Rondom Rembrandt*, Leiden 1968, no. 25; Schneider-Ekkart, no. 264b). This latter painting, which can be dated in the later 1620s, offers a similar handling of the lighting especially in the (unusual) modelling of the mouth, though here too one fails to find the exaggeratedly careful approach to a suggestion of plasticity that seems to typify no. C 74 in its present state. Given the variety of styles practised by the young Lievens, and the markedly formal portrait character of no. C 74, it is impossible to draw any firm conclusions from these differences and similarities; but an attribution to him cannot be ruled out. As to date, the collar worn in no. C 74 (a 'falling' ruff) does occur in the 1630s, but by then was no longer fashionable. A dating in the later 1620s is the most likely, and the most acceptable if Lievens was indeed the author. Such a dating does

Fig. 4. J. Lievens, *Portrait of Constantijn Huygens* (detail). Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, on loan from the Musée de la Chartreuse, Douai



not conflict with the otherwise, of course, inconclusive impression that the canvas on which the work is painted has a relatively fine weave.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

- Sale of coll. Paley and others, London (Christie's) 16 June 1900, no. 65 (£666. 16s. to Colnaghi).
- Dealer P. & D. Colnaghi, London.
- Dealer N. Steinmeyer, Cologne.
- Coll. Theodore Fleitman, New York.

#### 9. Summary

This competent but over-carefully done portrait does not show any resemblance to Rembrandt's portraits from the 1630s, in either manner of painting or handling of light. An attribution to Lievens that has been advanced is not wholly persuasive, but certainly cannot be ruled out. A date in the later 1620s seems the most likely.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 Bauch 350.
- 2 Gerson 113; Br.-Gerson 154.



**C75 Portrait of a 47-year-old man**

PARIS, MUSÉE DU LOUVRE, INV. NO. RF 3743

HDG 668; BR. 165; BAUCH 356; GERSON 125

Fig. 1. Panel 61.1 × 45.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



### 1. Summarized opinion

A fairly well preserved painting that shows the influence of Rembrandt's Amsterdam portraits but differs from them too much in approach and treatment to be attributed to him. It was probably done during the earlier 1630s, conceivably in Rembrandt's workshop.

### 2. Description of subject

A man is seen to just above the waist, with the body three-quarters to the right and the head turned rather more towards the viewer. He wears a broad-brimmed hat, a white ruff, and a black costume in which can be made out a cloak hanging over the shoulders. The light falls from the left, and the figure casts a vague shadow on the rear wall to the right.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in September 1968 (S. H. L., E. v. d. W.) in good light and out of the frame, with the aid of an X-ray film of the head, collar and shoulders, a copyfilm of which was received later.

#### *Support*

**DESCRIPTION:** Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 61.1 × 45.5 cm. Thickness *c.* 0.6 cm. Three planks, with the joins at 9.5 cm from the righthand and lefthand sides. The righthand plank has a short vertical crack at the top, at about 17 cm to the right of the centre. The back of the panel shows a few woodworm flight-holes. Along the entire edge of the oval there is bevelling over a width varying from 0.6 cm (at the top) to 3.3 cm, plus at the top a further, wider bevel with a straight edge. Though it is impossible to be sure in what sequence these bevellings were done, it seems as if the wider, straight one at the top is the older, and that the panel was subsequently made into an oval. Since in all known instances of originally rectangular panels being made oval the oval has never later been bevelled round the edge, one could assume that the panel was supplied to the artist in its present, oval form. This assumption is supported by the fact that the brushstroke in the background partly follows the curve of the edge (see *Paint layer*).

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** According to information kindly provided by Prof. Dr J. Bauch, Hamburg (letter of 5 March 1981), dendrochronology has led to a dating for all three planks. The youngest is the centre plank, showing at the bottom 160 annual rings heartwood and 9 rings sapwood and datable as 1451–1610/1619. Statistical average felling date 1630 ± 5.

#### *Ground*

**DESCRIPTION:** A light brown shows through in thin areas in the background and in shadow parts of the face.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** None.

#### *Paint layer*

**CONDITION:** Good, apart from insignificant local retouches and slight wearing in thin areas; the front of the ruff has a few dark lines that can be put down to restoration. It is hard to see on what Bauch's opinion<sup>1</sup> that it is 'nicht gut erhalten' was based. Craquelure: very thin cracks in the thickest passages.

**DESCRIPTION:** In general the paint is applied thinly, and the grain of the panel is visible; only in the lit parts of the face and collar is there a slight degree of impasto.

At the left and top the background is done in a thin, dark grey; so far as can be seen, the brushstrokes appear to follow the curve of the oval panel. In a band along the crown of the hat the grey covers more fully. To the right the grey lightens downwards, and is thicker close to the head than further over to the right; here, the brushstrokes run in a variety of directions. By the righthand edge of the ruff, and adjoining it, there is a patch of slightly different, thicker grey where an over-generous reserve left for the ruff was evidently incorporated in the background by means of an autograph retouch.

The flesh colour in the lit parts of the face is applied partly with short strokes and partly – mainly in the thickest passages (the tip of the nose, the cheek and the cheekbone) – with strokes placed in various directions. On the cheek the flesh colour merges into a pink.

The eye on the left presents, in the carefully-modelled white of the eye done in a grey-white to grey paint, a sharply-edged grey iris and a likewise precisely round black pupil, in which there is a white catchlight consisting of two separate touches of the brush. Some red in the corner of the eye merges into the pink of the lower edge of the eye. The lid, modelled in grey-white and pink, is bordered at the bottom by a reddish-brown line made up from a variety of strokes, and at the top by brown-grey strokes used to indicate the fold in the skin. The paint in the eye-socket, darkest above the corner of the eye, is a slightly translucent reddish brown.

The righthand eye is dealt with in a similar fashion, and forms a quite clearly-defined and in part opaquely-painted island in the area of shadow. The latter comprises a thin and somewhat translucent brown; in the cast shadow from the nose this is mixed with a carmine red that occurs again in the shadow below the nose and in the nostrils (which are somewhat unhappily placed in relation to each other). The mouth-line consists, to the right and left, of strokes of carmine red linked by two strokes of a lighter red. The lips are painted using small, vertical strokes of red. The moustache is shown with strokes of brown and grey, and the hair close to the summarily-indicated ear on the left with grey; below the latter, thin strokes of translucent paint suggest the stubbly growth of beard along the jawline. The goatee beard is rendered in greys with small strokes of white.

The lit part of the ruff is painted with a measure of impasto, while the shadows have a thinner grey to dark grey. The piped edges are indicated partly with crisp lines of white, and to the right with (partly restored) lines of grey. In the black costume there is some differentiation between the cloak and the doublet, using a fairly opaque dark grey; the hat is painted in black and a very dark grey. The contours of the dark clothing stand out rather stiffly against the background.

**SCIENTIFIC DATA:** None.

#### *X-Rays*

The background appears rather light along the underside of the hat-brim, with narrow light edges on the right along the ruff (where, as already noted at the paint surface, the reserve was originally more generous) and on the left along the shoulder (where the reserve was originally bounded by a contour further up).

In the face the strongest lights are on the tip of the nose and to the left of this on the cheek. In these highest lights the X-ray also shows more of a dabbing brushwork than strokes placed side-by-side. The moustache appears dark, and there was evidently an almost complete reserve left for it in the flesh colour, though none for the edge of the wing of the nose and the adjoining fold of skin.

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1)



In the costume there is the lightish image of grey that contains a certain amount of white lead.

There is no sign of a first lay-in of the ruff in a broad underpainting. The border of the ruff against the neck appears, in its final form, to be a correction of another version.

#### Signature

In the right background level with the mouth, in darker grey over that of the background (<Rembrandt. f (followed by two oblique strokes high up)/1632>). Apart from the fact that in the year 1632 Rembrandt invariably used the signature *RHL van Rijn*, the slack shaping of the letters and (very evidently) of the figures, and the weak relationship between them, raise doubts as to the authenticity of the inscription. Gerson<sup>2</sup> remarked on 'the rather uncommon position', and thought there might have been a retouch (by Rembrandt himself); there is however no trace of an earlier and better signature. Foucart<sup>3</sup> thought of an imitated inscription, and this is all the more plausible in view of the formulation, unusual for the year 1632. In the left background, at the same height, there is <AE 47.>; this is probably contemporaneous.

#### Varnish

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

There is not the slightest reason to doubt that the painting is a fairly well preserved work from the 17th century that has presumably kept its original oval shape. It is less certain, however, whether it can – as it always has been in the literature – be attributed to Rembrandt. At all events the signature and date of 1632 that appear on the painting cannot be seen as reliable; the characterless letters and the weak shape of the figures make this unlikely, quite apart from the remarkably high positioning and the formulation, differing from all the reliable signatures on paintings from 1632. The placing of the signature may have been dictated by the indication of the sitter's age already present on the left.

So although the date of 1632 cannot be regarded as definite, one has on the grounds of style and dendrochronology examination to assume that the painting was done in the earlier 1630s, and in Rembrandt's circle. The latter is suggested by the

overall approach to the subject, the distribution of the lighting in the figure and background, and the manner of painting in the head where the thin shadow passages are differentiated from the thicker, lit areas that have impasto for the highest lights. The reason why the painting is nonetheless unacceptable as a Rembrandt work lies in an accumulation of differences from the image presented by all of the authentic portraits from the early 1630s – differences that can in part be described as slight, yet in part also be interpreted as fundamental.

The first fundamental discrepancy is in the interpretation of form, as seen at the paint surface. The appearance of the head is dominated by strong, linear elements that partly serve to create an extremely precise definition of plastic form. The eye in the light, especially, is in all its components so crisply delineated and so emphatically modelled that it forms a strongly illusionistic element. This differs from the treatment of the lit eye in Rembrandt's portraits, where precision is counter-balanced by an atmospheric effect that ensures the optical cohesion between the different components. In places where the painter of no. C 75 paid no attention to, or was unable to achieve, a clear effect of plasticity, this cohesion is wholly lost. The moustache – which in Rembrandt always forms a whole with the upper lip and is often painted wet-in-wet with the flesh colour – here seems, through being excessively 'self-contained', to have been stuck on; the same may be said of the hair next to the ear, indicated as it is by a number of weak brushstrokes lacking in suggestive power. One realises how important the spatial relationships between plastic forms, suggested in Rembrandt's portraits by reflected light, are when one looks at the shadow side of this head, where reflexions of light are entirely absent and where the cheek has a flat, indifferent contour against the background; within this shadow area, the eye forms something of an isolated element. It is perhaps due most to this that the plastic structure of the face as a whole is unconvincing. One may even get the impression that the nose (its nostrils set unfortunately in relation to one another) is turned further to the right than the rest of the head. A detail such as the border between the collar and the neck on the left, which is wholly unsuccessful despite a local correction, is further evidence of the same weakness in coping with form.

Seen in this light, technical divergences from Rembrandt's habits, too, take on the significance of evidence arguing against his authorship. The rather painstakingly-painted ruff is not, either at the surface or in the X-ray, seen to have a broad, light underpainting. The highlights in the face do show,

in the paint relief, traces of the brush, but without any vivacity created by brushstrokes placed one beside the other. In the radiographic image the strongest concentration of light is not, as it normally is, seen below the eye and down to the cheekbone with the pink cheek under this appearing darker, nor along the full length of the nose; it is here exactly on the cheek, and only at the tip of the nose. The catchlights in the eyes are not, as they usually are, in the upper left of the iris opposite a lighter patch in the lower right – both are wholly inside the pupil, and the grey iris has an almost even colour. In the black costume, and especially in the cloak over the left shoulder, there is an unusually large amount of flat, opaque grey that appears lightish in the X-ray.

Because of all these points taken together, and most of all because of the different (and three-dimensionally weak) rendering of form, one has to rule out an attribution to Rembrandt. It can however certainly be supposed that the artist was familiar with Rembrandt's work, and one cannot discount the possibility that he worked in the latter's studio.

Since before 1826 this man's portrait has almost always been together with the *Portrait of Cornelia Pronck*, now also in Paris (no. C 79), the two paintings have until now been looked on as companion-pieces. They are certainly not – the two works are a poor match in style and composition, and the panel of the woman's portrait was probably originally rectangular. While fully acknowledging this, Foucart<sup>3</sup> wrongly thought there was documentary evidence for the pictures being a pair (see no. C 79, 5. *Documents and sources*). They plainly belong among the numerous paintings that have been made into pairs, probably in the 18th century. The identification of the sitter in no. C 75 by I. H. van Eeghen as Albert Cuyper, the husband of Cornelia Pronck<sup>4</sup>, was based on the assumption that the painting was the companion-piece to her portrait (no. C 79) and must therefore be considered unfounded.

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

None.

## 8. Provenance

– Together with no. C 79, coll. Baron van Lockhorst, Rotterdam 1826. Brought to England by Mr Galli, according

to a handwritten note in the RKD copy of the catalogue of the Wynn Ellis sale (see below).

– Together with no. C 79, coll. Wynn Ellis, sale London (Christie's) 27 May 1876, no. 83 (£661.10s. to Warneck).

– Dealer E. Warneck, Paris. Not, as was the supposed pendant (no. C 79), in the sale of coll. Baron de Beurnonville, Paris 9–16 May 1881.

– Together again with no. C 79 in coll. Henri Péreire, Paris; donated to the museum, though retaining a life-interest, in 1930. Passed to the museum in 1933.

## 9. Summary

No. C 75 is a fairly well preserved painting that though never up to now doubted as being a Rembrandt work is certainly not from his hand. This is evident from the (compared to his portraits from the early 1630s) weak structure and poor three-dimensionality of the head, and from a number of discrepant characteristics of technique. The author was subject to Rembrandt's influence and conceivably worked in his studio. The signature and date are not authentic, and the painting cannot be dated more precisely than in the earlier 1630s. The *Portrait of Cornelia Pronck* (no. C 79) has wrongly long been regarded as the companion-piece to this man's portrait; the identification of the sitter as Albert Cuyper that is based on this assumption must therefore be discarded.

## REFERENCES

- 1 Bauch 1966, 356.
- 2 Gerson 125; Br.-Gerson 165.
- 3 J. Foucart, *Les peintures de Rembrandt au Louvre*, Paris 1982, pp. 25–26, 89.
- 4 I. H. van Eeghen, 'De echtgenoot van Cornelia Pronck', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 43 (1956), pp. 111–112.



## C76 Portrait of a man with a sheet of music

WASHINGTON D.C., THE CORCORAN GALLERY OF ART,  
WILLIAM A. CLARK COLLECTION, ACC. NO. 26.158

HDG 760; BR. 174; BAUCH 362; GERSON –

### 1. Summarized opinion

A not entirely well preserved painting that may be looked on as an old copy after a lost original.

### 2. Description of subject

A man is seen almost to the waist, with the body turned a little to the right. In his left hand he holds a roll of paper on which can be seen a stave of music with notes. He is dressed in black and wears a 'falling' ruff. The light falls from the left, so that his broad-brimmed hat throws a shadow on the forehead and the figure casts a shadow to the right onto the rear wall.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 14 April 1970 (J. B., S. H. L.) in moderate light, in the frame and with the back covered over.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, c. 64 × 45.5 cm. Two sections seen, with a join about 11.5 cm from the lefthand side. Back cradled.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish brown is exposed along the grey of the white of the eye in the righthand half of the eye on the left, and in a gap between the underside of the chin and the collar, and shows through in the shadow side of the face and the upper half of the background.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Apart from a little local paint loss, it is mainly wearing and in-painting in the black of the clothing and the shadow parts of the face and hand – plus a little in the shadow of the collar – that impair the condition of the paint surface. Craquelure: in the collar there is a pattern of fairly regular horizontal cracks and less regular vertical cracking.

DESCRIPTION: The background is painted in grey over a partly visible ground using wispy, more or less straight strokes the direction of which is – mostly in the upper half – determined to some extent by the contour of the figure.

In the eye on the left the lower edge of the lid is indicated in, from left to right, light brown, grey-black and brown, but the brushwork lacks any convincing effect of plasticity; this is also true of the brown strokes along the upper edge. The iris, in dark greys and without any lit area opposite the rather amorphous catchlight, has on the right a hard and irregular border against the flat grey used for the white of the eye, leaving parts of the ground exposed downwards and to the right. The indistinct structure of the corner of the eye, shown in brown, may be due in part to wearing.

The righthand eye has, along the lower edge of the eyelid, a broad stroke of flat brown that though pronounced has little plastic effect, and does not lead into a corner to the eye. A similar brown, locally very thick and occasionally revealing a little dark red and the yellowish brown of the ground, forms the cast shadow from the nose.

The mouth-line, formed from strokes of black, ends on the right in strokes of brown. The pink, mixed with a little grey, of the upper lip merges to the right into the (worn) brown

shadows. The lower lip has a rather brighter red, with a little pink on the light.

The edge of the collar is indicated with curling, rather ungainly strokes of grey. The rather thick white paint on the left next to the head has the imprint of a weave of canvas.

The hand with the roll of paper is painted on top of the black of the clothing, but is not visibly different in its manner of painting from the remainder of the work.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

None.

#### *Signature*

In a fairly flat grey above the shoulder <Rembrandt.f: | 1633>. The *f* is only partly visible, due to wearing. The lack of certainty in the writing is evident especially in the curved shaft of the *b*, in the *d* and in the *t*. Because of the absence of spontaneity, the letters and figures do not give the impression of authenticity, though they may well have been copied from a genuine signature. Without further study there is no reason to assume that the signature was appended at a later date.

#### *Varnish*

No special remarks.

### 4. Comments

Although the state of preservation of the paint layer does not allow a proper assessment of the original appearance in all areas, there is enough evidence in the well preserved passages to rule out an attribution to Rembrandt. Though the means used do broadly match Rembrandt's habits, the way they are applied overall gives the impression of an inadequate understanding of the form being portrayed, and of the pictorial intent. This applies both to the background, in which the rather patchy use of paint fails to lend luminosity or a suggestion of depth and against which the contour of the hat is flabby in its execution, and to the treatment of the face. The shadow part of the head is hardly suitable for assessment because of the wearing, though one notices the absence of a grey glaze as a transition between the lit flesh areas and the brown shadows and the absence of a greyish reflexion of light along the cheek contour (which now seems extremely weak). In the lit area the brushwork, though far from timid, is not really effective, and nowhere achieves the swelling curves of volumes or the fading away of these into the half-shadows that is automatically suggested in a Rembrandt original. This is true of the whole of the cheek area, of the drawing of the eye and the wing of the nose (which is almost absent) and of the placing and form of the catchlights in the eye and on the nose. In the eye there is a jarring note in the hard grey of the white of the eye, forming an insensitive edge to the iris – and moreover leaving large gaps exposing the ground. Much the same occurs between the underside of the

Fig. 1. Panel 64 × 45.5 cm



Fig. 2. Detail (1:1)



chin and the collar, where the artist perhaps mostly demonstrates his inability to render form when depicting what he has observed. The way the edge of the collar is dealt with is most unsatisfactory, and quite unlike Rembrandt's captivating treatment of this motif.

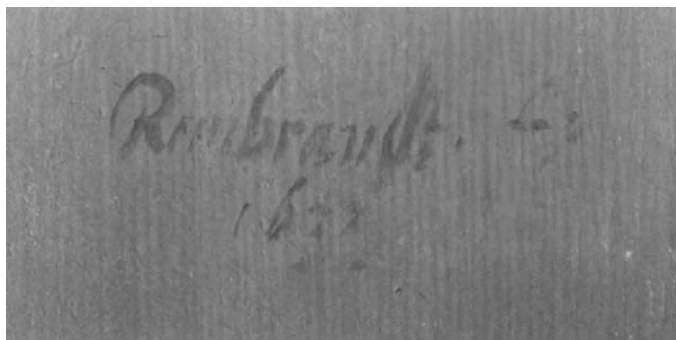
It is true that comparison with, for example, the *Portrait of Johannes Wtenbogaert* (no. A 80), also dated 1633, reveals an astonishing degree of similarity. In line with Wtenbogaert's age his face is shown slightly more wrinkled than that of the sitter in no. C 76, but apart from this each motif, each accent in the latter's face has its equivalent in the other picture. This makes all the clearer the fundamental difference between the two pictures. The

very motifs that in the *Wtenbogaert* result in a striking suggestion of solid bulk and luminous space appear ineffective in no. C 76; the tonal values and brushwork fail to achieve the intended result, in the eyes in particular but virtually – as far as the condition allows assessment – in the whole picture including the background. Although the idea of a studio portrait by an assistant cannot entirely be ruled out, it seems more satisfactory to explain the exact correspondences with Rembrandt's work on the one hand and the considerable difference in quality on the other by assuming that one is dealing here with a faithful copy of a lost original. Even the signature could well be a reproduction of an original one. The manner of painting gives no reason to doubt that the

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1)



picture dates from the 17th century – as is also testified by the use of a light ground – and if it is a copy after an original Rembrandt the possibility of it having been done in his circle need not be ruled out. The attribution to Rembrandt has up to now been rejected only by Gerson<sup>1</sup>, who unconvincingly suggested the name of Jacob Adriaensz. Backer as the author.

The picture poses a number of other problems. In the first place, the hand with the sheet of music is painted on top of the black paint of the clothing. Julius Held<sup>2</sup> believed it to be a later addition because of what he considered to be the awkward rendering of hand and arm and of the colours and surface structure. We have however not been able to find any significant material or stylistic differences between its execution and that of the rest of the picture. One might see it as an afterthought, which in a copy would be even more surprising than in an original. The added hand remains hard to explain, all the more so as reproductive prints exist both with and without it (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*). In the second place, but connected with the first problem, there is the question of whether the painting initially had the same format as it shows today. The figure is cut off abruptly by the relatively narrow framing, especially to the left, and the composition is rather unbalanced through the empty passage at the lower left – certainly in its present state – scarcely managing to form a counterweight to the strongly three-dimensional hand in the righthand half. A drawing – to all appearances 18th-century – in Frankfurt (see 7. *Copies*) reproduces the composition in exactly its present scope; two prints by Jan Stolker (1724–1785), an etching in an oval framing (with the hand holding the roll of paper), and a mezzotint in a quite narrow rectangular framing (without the hand) (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*) provide no clear evidence of the original format having perhaps been larger. The problem is complicated further by the fact that Stolker's estate in 1786 contained a painting attributed to Rembrandt the description of which matches no. C 76, but whose dimensions are

given as a good 8 cm taller and 17 cm wider (see 8. *Provenance*). If, as Hofstede de Groot<sup>3</sup> assumed, no. C 76 is identical with that painting, then it must have been reduced in size after 1786, though this seems to contradict what is shown in the Frankfurt drawing, unless the latter was produced after a reduction of the painting and after Stolker's death. Another possibility is that Stolker owned a larger original, now lost; in that case, too, one has to assume that the Frankfurt drawing was not done by Stolker, and after no. C 76. A third possibility of Stolker himself being the author of the copy we are discussing – suggested by the fact that copies by him after Rembrandt were described in the sale of his estate at Rotterdam on 27 March 1786 (Lugt 4010) – can be discarded as the manner of painting seems to be 17th century.

Various identifications of the sitter have been proposed – the rolled sheet of music paper plainly stamps him as a musician. De Hevesy<sup>4</sup> thought that he could recognize Nicholas Lanier (b. 1588), who was Master of the King's Music from 1625. Schünemann, supported by Benesch<sup>5</sup>, saw him as Heinrich Schütz (1585–1672); on the grounds of known portraits of Schütz there is something to be said for this notion, but unfortunately while he is known to have travelled from Dresden to Hamburg and Denmark in 1633, there is no knowledge of his having stayed in Holland as well. Finally Edith Greindl<sup>6</sup> and Valentiner<sup>7</sup> independently identified the sitter as Constantijn Huygens; this wholly unconvincing idea was rightly rejected by H. E. van Gelder<sup>8</sup>, but taken up again by Else Kai-Sass<sup>9</sup>. In the 18th century the identity of the musician portrayed was, at all events, unknown.

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Mezzotint by Jan Stolker (Amsterdam 1724 – Rotterdam 1785). Reproduced in A. Rosenberg, *Rembrandt*, Stuttgart-Leipzig 1909, 3rd edn, W. R. Valentiner ed. (Kl. d. K. II), p. 525 (not in Charrington). Shows the composition in reverse in a slightly narrower and, particularly, shorter frame, without the hand. Because of the excessively accentuated modelling, commonly found in Stolker's mezzotints (see under no. A 42), the reproduction is considerably coarsened and it is quite impossible to make out whether no. C 76 or another version provided the prototype.
2. Etching by Jan Stolker, signed in the background I: S. Shows the composition in reverse, in an oval frame. Kai-Sass<sup>9</sup> rightly pointed to a certain resemblance to the drawing mentioned in Frankfurt under 7. *Copies*.
3. Mezzotint by P. Louw (? – Amsterdam before 1800). A coarse rendering of the bust without the hand, in the same direction as the original. Probably based on 1. above.

## 7. Copies

1. Drawing, red chalk, lead, black chalk and wash, 24.3 × 18 cm. Frankfurt, Städelsches Kunstinstitut (no. 3855); previously coll. Ploos van Amstel. Reproduced in De Hevesy<sup>4</sup> and Kai-Sass<sup>9</sup>. Formerly attributed to Jacob Adriaensz. Backer, by De Hevesy to the Rembrandt School, and by Kai-Sass rightly dated later and tentatively attributed to Jan Stolker because of the indeed quite striking resemblance to the latter's etching (see 6. *Graphic reproductions*, 2). The style of drawing however makes it unlikely that Stolker was the artist. Despite a somewhat free rendering of, especially, the background, the drawing reproduces no. C 76 so faithfully that there is no reason to assume that it was done from another version, perhaps the supposed original. Its production must probably be seen in connexion with the interest in 17th-century art that existed in Cornelis Ploos van Amstel's circle, as is evident from the reproduction as prints and drawings of drawings and (sometimes fictitious) paintings (cf. the Stolker drawings mentioned and illustrated in entry no. A 12).

## 8. Provenance

Identified (perhaps wrongly) by Hofstede de Groot<sup>3</sup> with a larger painting (the original?) in coll. Jan Stolker, sale Rotterdam 27 March 1786 (Lugt 4010), no. 8: 'Rembrandt van Rhyn. Een Mans-Pourtrait, met een rol papier in de hand, op Paneel, hoog 28 breed 24 duim [= 72.8 × 62.4 cm] (zyn met de Rynlandsche Voet maat, van Twaalf duimen in de Voet, gemeten)'. (A man's portrait with a roll of paper in his hand . . . measured with the rhineland foot of twelve inches to the foot) (29 guilders).

– Dealer M. Knoedler & Co., New York, acquired in Russia<sup>10</sup>.

– Coll. W. A. Clark, New York. Donated with this collection to the Corcoran Gallery of Art in 1926.

## 9. Summary

Because no. C 76 is on the one hand amazingly close to Rembrandt's manner of painting and on the other fails to produce a convincing effect of plasticity and rendering of material, it may be assumed that the painting is an old copy after a lost original. The uncertainly-written signature lends support to this view. The original may have had a slightly different format.

The musician portrayed has not so far been convincingly identified.

## REFERENCES

- 1 Br.-Gerson 174.
- 2 J. S. Held, 'Rembrandt and Nicholas Lanier', *Burl. Mag.* 69 (1936), p. 286.
- 3 HdG 760.
- 4 A. de Hevesy, 'Rembrandt and Nicholas Lanier', *Burl. Mag.* 69 (1936), pp. 153–154.
- 5 G. Schünemann, 'Ein neues Bildnis des Heinrich Schütz', *Deutsche Musikkultur* 1 (1936/37), pp. 47–48; cf. B. Maerker, 'Rembrandts Bildnis eines Musikers – ein Schütz-Porträt?', *Deutsche Musikkultur* 2 (1937/38), pp. 329–345. O. Benesch, 'Schütz und Rembrandt', *Festschrift Otto Erich Deutsch zum 80. Geburtstag*, Kassel 1963, pp. 12–19; reprinted in English in: O. Benesch, *Collected Writings* I, London 1970, pp. 228–234.
- 6 E. Greindl, 'Un portrait de Constantin Huygens par Rembrandt', *Apollo, Chronique des Beaux-Arts*, Brussels, March 1942, no. 10, pp. 10–11.

- 7 W. R. Valentiner, 'A Still-life by Jacques de Gheyn', *The Art Quarterly* 18 (1955), pp. 158–163.
- 8 H. E. van Gelder, *Ikonografie van Constantijn Huygens en de zijnen*, The Hague 1957, p. 37.
- 9 E. Kai-Sass, *Comments on Rembrandt's Passion paintings and Constantijn Huygens's iconography*, Copenhagen 1971 (Det Kongelige Danske Videnskabernes Selskab, Historisk-Filosofiske Skrifter 5, 3), pp. 39–61.
- 10 J. D. Breckenridge, *A Handbook of Dutch and Flemish Paintings in the William Andrews Clark Collection. Catalogue of the Corcoran Gallery of Art*, Washington 1955, p. 35.



## C77 Portrait of a man

DRESDEN, STAATLICHE KUNSTSAMMLUNGEN DRESDEN, GEMÄLDEGALERIE ALTE MEISTER, CAT. NO. 1557

HdG 629; BR. 175; BAUCH 368; GERSON 147

### 1. Summarized opinion

A generally well preserved painting, probably done in Rembrandt's workshop by the same hand as no. C 56 (Govaert Flinck?) in 1633.

### 2. Description of subject

A man is seen almost down to the waist, with the body turned slightly to the right. He wears a wide lace collar over a black doublet buttoned at the front. The light falls from the left, illuminating the sitter and the righthand part of the rear wall.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 16 June 1970 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good daylight, and in the frame.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 67.5 × 52.3 cm. Thickness varies from 3.8 to 1 cm. Single plank. Back bevelled at various points, following the edge, from which it may be concluded that the oval shape is original.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Dendrochronology (Prof. Dr J. Bauch, Hamburg): measured at upper edge, 143 annual rings heartwood plus 25 annual rings counted oblique to the others on the heartwood side, and 11 annual rings on the sapwood side. No dating was possible. It could however be concluded that the wood came from the same tree that provided the panels for the Paris *Self-portrait in a cap*, also from 1633 (no. A 72), and the (undoubtedly later) *Landscape with a castle* in the Wallace Collection, London (Br. 451). A further 25 annual rings of heartwood have been removed from the latter panel compared to that of no. C 77, so that both panels must be seen as coming from the innermost part of a trunk; even if the annual rings could be dated, this would tell us nothing about the felling date. The ring pattern does not match that of the supposed companion-piece (no. A 82).

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A yellowish brown is fully exposed at a number of points at the edge of the collar.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn<sup>1</sup> found, in a cross-section from a sample taken from the background, a white chalk ground with on top of it a thin layer containing white lead – evidently the 'primuersel'.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good, apart from local retouched damages on the left running through and alongside the lefthand eye, a scratch in the left background and a patch on the left along the edge above the shoulder. Craquelure: none seen.

DESCRIPTION: The background has brushstrokes running in various directions, in greys that towards the left and top are dark and slightly translucent. The paint of the projecting locks of hair lies on top of that of the background.

In some parts of the head the paint is so thin that the grain of the wood is clearly apparent. This is true in a number of shadow areas on the right in the face, including the white of the eye, the area in the middle of the moustache, the lower lip and the lefthand part of the upper lip, the half-shadow at the throat, and the thin areas in the hair between the black strokes with grey and ochre-coloured highlights that indicate individual locks. In these thin parts one can see a colour that

ranges from a yellow-brown (that of the ground) via a brown (doubtless that of the underpainting) in, for instance, the righthand eye-socket and the lower lip, to a dark brown (likewise the underpainting) in the hair. A thick and very dark brown is used in the darkest areas of shadow – where, on the right, a lighter, opaque paint shows a reflexion of light – and in the mouth-line, which is built up from a number of strokes. The lefthand eyebrow is a dark grey, and the nostrils are almost black. The shadow in the eye-socket on the left is executed in a matt red and brown, and the crease in the cheek in a greyish brown-red.

The lit parts of the face have a clearly visible brushstroke that only here and there (round the eyes and in the nose) reinforces the modelling, using a flesh colour that is partly yellowish and, on the cheek, chin, nose and forehead above the man's right eye, partly pink. The moustache is in brown on the left and a darker brown on the right, placed partly over the paint of the cheek while this was still wet; the lit hairs are indicated with a few small strokes of yellow-grey on the left and some curling scratchmarks on the right.

The lefthand eye has a lower border in pink that merges towards the right into a brownish pink. The greyish white of the white of the eye lies slightly on top of this, and tiny clumps of white paint suggest the rim of moisture. (The pink in the lefthand corner of the eye and the strange course of the lines bordering the upper eyelid to the left can be ascribed to a restoration.) The iris is brown with a small round white catch-light and, opposite it, a light patch of ochre brown. In the eye on the right the iris is shown with a little grey that is sharply delimited to the left by the lighter grey of the white of the eye and to the right by a small line of grey.

The lit part of the collar is done in thick white, with the greatest impasto on the highest light and in the lace part, and otherwise with brushstrokes running in various directions. The pattern of the lace was placed in black on the white paint while it was still wet, other than in the lobe beneath the chin (where one half of the collar overlaps the other), where scratchmarks leave the underlying ground exposed. In the shadow part, the pattern is shown in the grey with small lines and dots of black. To the right the grey of the shaded part runs, without any sharp border, into that of the background. A heavy black shadow outlines the entire lower edge of the collar.

The doublet is painted in black and dark grey over a translucent brown, in strokes running mainly in one direction. Within this, patterns and buttons are indicated with darker and lighter greys and with black.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: Kühn<sup>1</sup> describes three samples. The white from the collar is white lead containing copper and silver. The brownish grey from the background consists of bone black and white lead with a little brown ochre or umber. The black from the collar consists of bone black with a little white lead and red lake.

#### *X-Rays*

None.

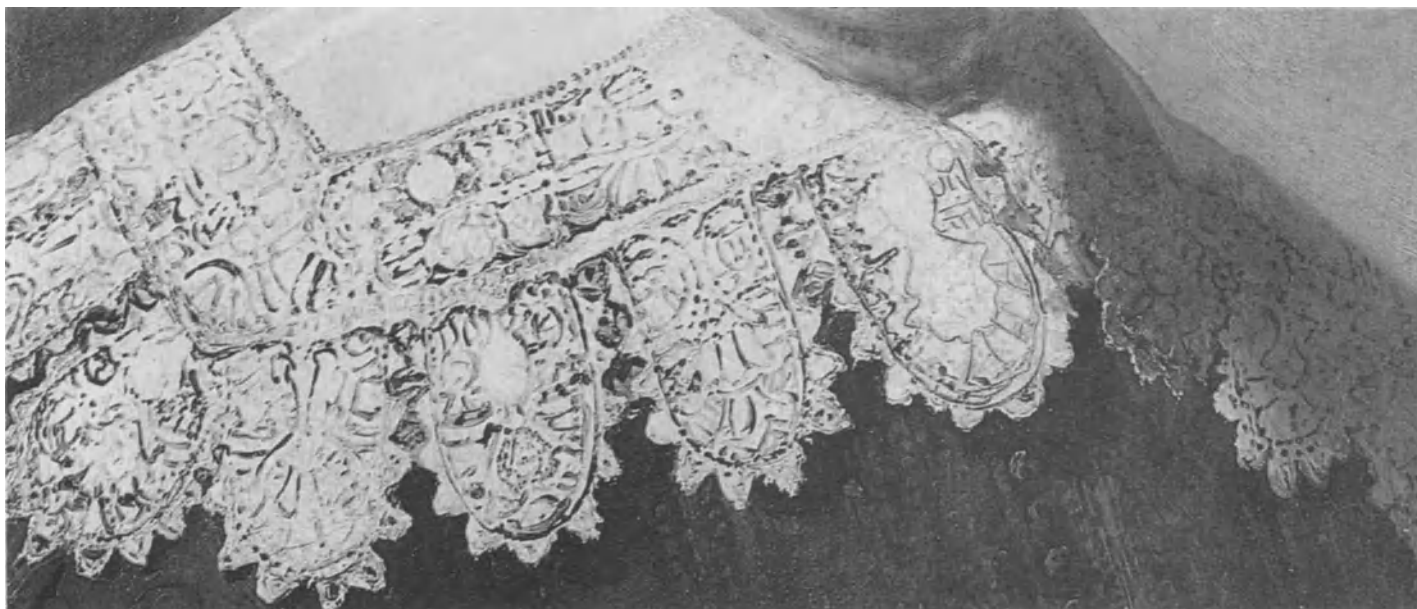
#### *Signature*

To the right, slightly below centre in grey <Rembrandt: f (followed by a sign that looks most like a v) / 1633:>. The letters and figures are in remarkably thin paint, placed over the relief of strokes of background paint when it was evidently already completely dry. As a result they are not all that distinct, as well as being rather uncertain in form and not entirely coherent; the top loop of the b appears to have been gone over. The stem of the f continues in an almost straight line well towards the left, running diagonally beneath the date. The inscription is

Fig. 1. Panel 67.5 × 52.3 cm



Fig. 2. Detail (1:2)



not typical enough of Rembrandt's signatures to be regarded as authentic.

#### Varnish

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

With its lively chiaroscuro, its use of colour and the technique employed this portrait shows a direct link with Rembrandt's portraits from the early 1630s, such as his *Self-portrait in a cap* dated 1633 in the Louvre (no. A 72), with which it furthermore shares the lively style of painting and the generous use of a ground that shows through in the shadow side of the face. There are also striking similarities with the head in the Kassel *Portrait of a man* (no. A 81), likewise from 1633, where an almost identical distribution of light and shade has been used. This comparison however makes it immediately clear that however close the two heads are, there is still a substantial distance between them. The powerful accents in that of the man in Kassel exhibit an individual rhythm in the brushwork, but at the same time achieve a strong suggestion of plastic form seen in depth; the rendering of the various parts and the physical appearance of the skin, eye-moisture and hair is wholly subordinated to the pictorial coherence. In the head of the man in Dresden the connexion between the parts is far more superficial. The paint surface shows great liveliness, but the brushstroke makes comparatively little contribution to the plastic structure of the head. The strokes used to set down the shadow accents, such as those below the eye-pouch and the fold running down from the nose on the left, remain flat; the lines indicating the eyelids have a somehow linear character and the eyes are almond-shaped gaps

with indistinctly shaped corners; moreover, the relation between the righthand and lefthand eyes is not convincingly presented. The separateness of linear elements is also manifest in the scarcely successful and occasionally superfluous scratchmarks (on the right in the moustache and, especially, in the middle of the lace collar) used in a way that is not found in Rembrandt in 1633. The lace collar as a whole is admittedly done with a certain bravura, but in the depiction of the pattern it lacks precisely the clarity of form that Rembrandt is able to suggest in a way that combines freeness and orderliness. The collar itself in the shadow to the right, without achieving any three-dimensional effect, is not a familiar feature of Rembrandt's work. The growing conclusion is that it was not Rembrandt himself, but rather a close follower, who produced this painting.

If one rejects the attribution to Rembrandt (which has never been challenged in the literature), then the question arises of what relationship linked the author and Rembrandt. One must assume that he was one of the assistants who helped execute the numerous portrait commissions in the latter's workshop in the early 1630s, and who also included the author of the New York companion-pieces (nos. C 68 and C 69), the author of the Pellicorne portraits (nos. C 65 and C 66), that of the Stewart Gardner *Portrait of a couple* (no. C 67), that of the Braunschweig companion-pieces (nos. C 70 and C 71), and that of those at Boston (nos. C 72 and C 73) and the woman's portrait in Edinburgh (no. C 82). In these instances there is reason to assume that it was the artist producing the painting who put the Rembrandt signature and date on it (cf. Introduction, Chapter V, p. 105); in this case one may suppose the same to be true, mainly because 1633 is *par excellence* a plausible year for the

Fig. 3. Detail with signature (1:1)



work – because of the great likeness to the man's portrait in Kassel, which is dated 1633 – and the inscription can thus hardly be a later addition.

The notion that this work is by an assistant would of course gain far greater plausibility if it were possible to point to works by the same hand that also appear to have been produced in Rembrandt's workshop around 1633. Though it is hard to be certain about this, there is at least one serious candidate, the *Berlin Bust of Rembrandt* (no. C 56). Though this painting has the special feature of having been considerably altered (by the author himself), mainly by the addition of a cap and its cast shadow, it shows even in its altered state a number of striking resemblances with the man's portrait in Dresden. These consist mainly of the nature of the clearly visible brushwork – in the background and in the face, and in both of these very varied in direction and not always clear in its function –, of the independence of the linear elements – for example in the eyes and in both the quite lively mouth-lines –, of the somewhat graphic treatment using thin brushstrokes in the hair and moustaches, and of the use of scratchmarks in wet paint (again a linear element) on a scale that one no longer meets in Rembrandt in 1633. In the slightly inert feeling to the contours, and in the modelling of the chin and nose areas, the two paintings show great similarities, as well as in the relationship of the figures to the backgrounds which, though it does suggest a certain depth, is less definite in these than one finds with Rembrandt. The Berlin painting, too, probably dates from 1633 or soon after.

One can hardly do more than speculate about the identity of the assistant concerned. It is tempting to think of Govaert Flinck who, one may assume, entered Rembrandt's studio in 1633 at the latest.

The similarities to the so-called *Portrait of Menasseh ben Israel* at The Hague, of 1637 (Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 213), one of Flinck's earliest dated portraits, are not such that his authorship of the Dresden and Berlin paintings can be regarded as proven. And yet one can, in the feeling for a lively

surface that prevails over the feeling for cohesiveness, recognize something of what one can term the essence of the Rembrandtesque Flinck; the almost exaggerated use made of the translucent underpainting and ground left visible is a feature one also finds in Flinck, most markedly in his *Bust of a young man with cap* of 1637 in Leningrad (Von Moltke, op. cit., no. 263). It must be looked on as, at the very least, possible that the Dresden man's portrait and the Berlin *Bust of Rembrandt* are works that were done by Flinck after his arrival in Rembrandt's studio, in 1633. This chimes well with what we know from Houbraken of his life. This author (who probably gained his knowledge from Nicolaes Anthony Flinck, Govaert's son) relates that Flinck came to Amsterdam, in company with the 8 years older Jacob Adriaensz. Backer after they had been apprentices together with Lambert Jacobsz. in Leeuwarden; since Backer must have received his first Amsterdam commission in 1633, one may assume that Flinck entered Rembrandt's studio in that year at the latest, at the age of 16 or 17, in order (to use Houbraken's words) that 'he became used to this [i.e. Rembrandt's] use of paints and manner of painting, which within this short time [one year] he was able to imitate so well that various of his works were looked on, and sold, as being from Rembrandt's brush'. One may assume, given the similar instances already mentioned of commissioned portraits probably being done by Rembrandt's assistants, that the Dresden work belongs to that category.

If no. C 77 may be seen as an early work by Flinck this throws fresh light on his early style. For even though the picture falls short in solidity of construction and rendering of plastic form, it shows an amazingly free treatment and a noticeably economic use made of pictorial means. The frequent working wet-in-wet points to it having been produced relatively rapidly, the sketchlike and mainly translucent underpainting contributing to the pictorial effect of the completed work. A free execution of this kind, allowing itself the deliberate nonchalance with which the collar is left to merge into the background on the right, mirrors a tendency that can be detected in Rembrandt's work from this period – for instance in the *Portrait of Johannes Wtenbogaert*, likewise dated 1633 (no. A 80) – but carries it further at the cost of pictorial unity. This feature would fit in well with what is found in much of Flinck's work from the later 1630s.

In the literature this portrait has long been taken to represent Willem Burchgraeff, and to have been a pendant to the Frankfurt portrait of his wife Maertgen van Bilderbeecq, also from 1633 (no. A 82). There can, indeed, be hardly any doubt

that no. C 77 had a companion-piece. But that this should be the *Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq* is not only unproven, but highly improbable. Willem Burchgraeff looked quite different – as can be seen from his portrait by Daniel Mytens (see no. A 82, fig. 6) – and the woman's portrait does not match no. C 77 in the construction of the panel, the composition or the artistic approach (see no. A 82, 4. *Comments*). The question of whom this portrait does depict must be left unanswered.

The painting belongs among the portraits that in the first quarter of the 18th century were already in a royal collection (that of the Elector of Saxony), and were evidently by then looked on as collector's items.

### 5. Documents and sources

None.

### 6. Graphic reproductions

1. Etching by Johann Anton Riedel (Falkenau-bei-Eger 1736 – Dresden 1816), Unterinspektor of the Electoral Gallery of Paintings at Dresden, inscribed: *Rembrandt. pi. – A. Riedel. del. et fec. / 1754*. A clumsy and broad reproduction, in reverse.

### 7. Copies

1. Canvas, rectangular 68.5 × 50.5 cm. Oslo, National-Galeriet, inv. no. 147 (photo in RKD).

### 8. Provenance

– Already listed in the inventory of 1722 as in the Kurfürstliche Gemäldegalerie<sup>2</sup>. Probably purchased for the Elector Friedrich August I of Saxony (reigned 1694–1733) by his minister Count von Wackerbarth.

### 9. Summary

In the treatment of light and shade in the head no. C 77 shows a close resemblance to portraits by Rembrandt from 1633, particularly the Kassel *Portrait of a man* (no. A 81). The effective suggestion of plasticity found in that work is however missing here – linear elements keep a certain degree of independence, and the rapid manner of painting produces more a lively paint surface than a firm structure to the figure.

The suspicion that one is dealing here with a work that an assistant painted in Rembrandt's workshop, probably in 1633 (as indicated by the inscription) is borne out by the stylistic similarity between this painting and the Berlin *Bust of Rembrandt* (no. C 56), which must date from the same period and which also, though closely akin to Rembrandt's work, cannot be looked on as autograph.

There is some reason to suppose that the assistant responsible for both these paintings was Govaert

Flinck, in whose work one can find a similar approach and treatment. Flinck must have entered Rembrandt's studio in 1633 at the latest, after finishing his apprenticeship with Lambert Jacobsz. in Leeuwarden.

There are no grounds for the common identification of the sitter with Willem Burchgraeff.

### REFERENCES

- 1 H. Kühn, 'Untersuchungen zu den Pigmenten und Malgründen Rembrandts, durchgeführt an den Gemälden der Staatlichen Kunstsammlungen Dresden', *Maltechnik/Restauro* 83 (1977), pp. 223–233, esp. 230.
- 2 HdG 629.

## C78 Portrait of a young man in a hat

LENINGRAD, THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, INV. NO. 828

HDG 777; BR. 196; BAUCH 371; GERSON 166

### 1. Summarized opinion

A painting that is, as far as can be judged, well preserved, and was presumably produced in Rembrandt's studio in or around 1634. It is not certain whether the panel was originally oval.

### 2. Description of subject

The man is seen almost to the waist, with the body slightly towards the left and the head turned a little to the right with the gaze fixed on the viewer. He wears a broad-brimmed hat with a silver-coloured (?) decorative band, a wide collar made entirely of lace with tasselled bandstrings, and black clothing in which it is probably possible to make out a cloak over his left shoulder. The light, falling from the left, produces a cast shadow of the hatbrim on his forehead. The background is neutral.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 20 August 1969 (J. B., S. H. L.) in good daylight and out of the frame. A complete set of X-rays (four films, and a fifth of the head alone), were available locally; prints of four of these were received later. Examined again in May 1982 (E. v. d. W.).

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 70.8 × 52.5 cm. Single plank. Back planed down to the thickness of 0.6 cm and cradled. There are no traces of bevelling, so it is impossible to check whether the panel has always been oval.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light brown shows through in the shadow below the bottom lip and that on the right alongside the nose, and is exposed in a small discontinuity between the lefthand contour of the collar and the hair.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: So far as can be judged through the heavy layer of varnish, good apart from small retouches along the lower edge and at the bottom of the chin.

DESCRIPTION: Only at a few places in the lit part of the head and collar and in the rather heavily painted ornamental band round the hat and in the tassels of the bandstrings is the paint so thick that it becomes impossible to follow the grain of the panel. The background is done in greys, somewhat lighter on the right than on the left and at the top, with a barely visible brushstroke.

In the head the paint is thickest on the left, by the nose; the jaw is painted on the left with long brushstrokes that follow the curve of the form. The shadow side of the face is in browns, dark by the nose and lighter to the right along the outline of the cheek, and a little flesh colour is used for the lit area between. Below the chin the light reflected from the collar is indicated in a lighter, opaque brown. Broad strokes of brown show the cast shadow of the hat on the forehead.

The brown upper edge and darker lower edge of the upper eyelid on the left, set down with a variety of strokes, and even more so the lower lid of the same eye done in pink with some white, merge into the pattern of neighbouring strokes in flesh

colour so that they are not seen as separate lines. The light brown iris presents a quite crisply-drawn brown edge; to the left of a similarly distinct pupil there is a fine, light spot to indicate a catchlight. In the inner corner of the eye there is a little pink alongside a patch of red.

The eye on the right is done in a similar manner, in matter tints. The iris consists mainly of a half-round stroke in brown-grey with a small stroke of brown below the weak catchlight lying to the left of the pupil. The lower eyelid and eye-pouch are painted with small strokes of flesh colour and browns.

The black of the nostril merges downwards into a small amount of red, a colour that recurs by the wing of the nose, below the middle of the nose and on the ridge. The ground shows through slightly in the brown of the cast shadow from the nose, above the moustache.

The lips are done in a light red, the curve shown by the brushstroke and the glisten of light on the bottom lip indicated with a trace of pink; the mouth-line continues to the left in black, and to the right appears to split into two. The moustache, in dark brown strokes placed over the flesh colour, casts a brown shadow.

The hair is executed mainly in dark brown with, especially on the left, an indication of curls in lighter browns and some greys. The lace collar is, in the light, executed in white with clear, broad brushstrokes, with the pattern indicated using slightly unsure, curving strokes and dots of grey-brown and a little dark brown; in the shadow areas in the centre and to the right, light and dark grey have been used. A zone of deep black suggests the shadow on the clothing.

The clothing itself is painted summarily in dark grey and black, with a glisten of light in grey, the hat in black with dark grey for the sheen; the ornamental band round the hat is done in white and grey, applied quite thickly.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The radiographic image matches to a great extent what one expects from the paint surface. The lightest image is that of the brushstrokes along the lit side of the nose, especially towards the tip. Besides the lit flesh areas, there is a rather light image of the shadowed white of the eye on the right and the illuminated lock of hair to the left, as well as of the edges of the background against the hat and along the hair on the right. There appear to have been minor corrections to the contour of the body on the left and to the hat on the right.

It is noteworthy that the moustache and the shadow it casts have no reserve left for them in the flesh colour (which shows up light), and have evidently been painted on top of it.

The lace collar is unusual in its appearance – its main shape is seen to be underpainted roughly and light, with broad and partly curving brushstrokes.

#### *Signature*

In dark, probably a very dark brown, paint on the right in the background alongside the shoulder (<Rembrandt ft. 1634>). Makes the impression of having been written firmly and coherently.

#### *Varnish*

A thick layer of yellow varnish hampers observation.

### 4. Comments

Taken as a whole, no. C 78 is in its manner of painting and presentation of the subject very close



Fig. 1. Panel 70.8 × 52.5 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray

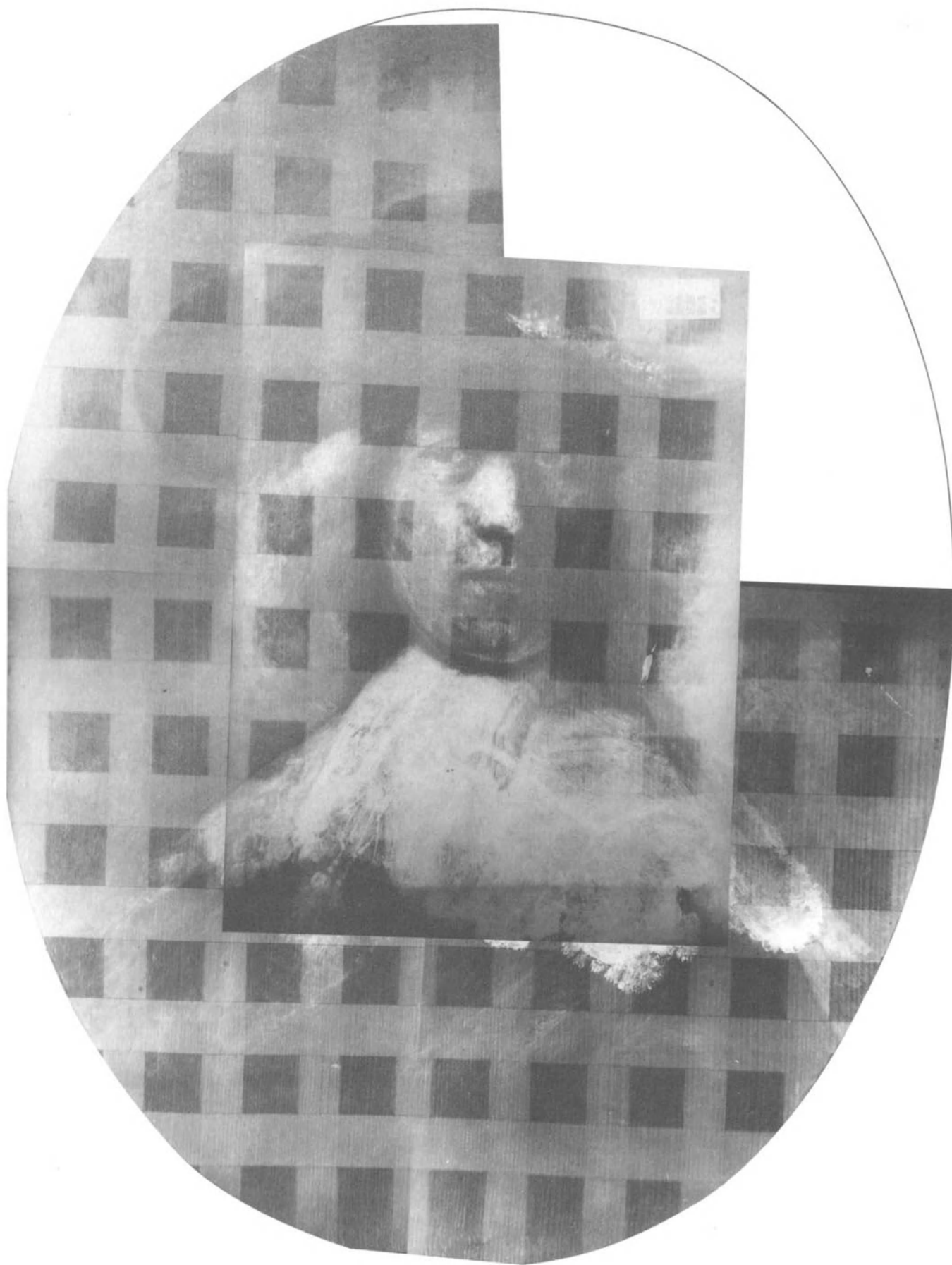
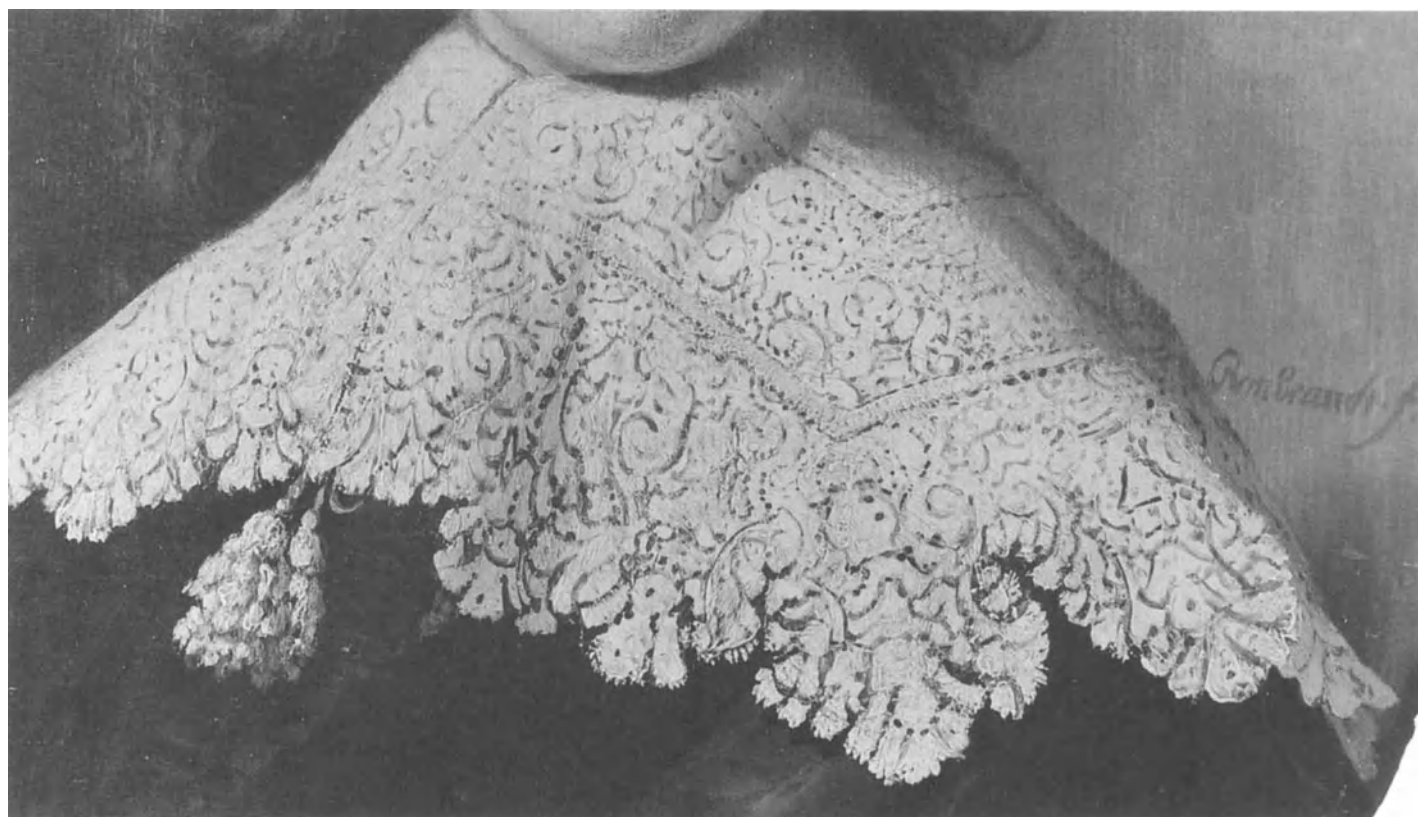


Fig. 3. Detail (1:2)



to portraits by Rembrandt from the years around 1634. The distribution of light and shade and the way these are rendered in thicker light and thinner brownish paint, and the way the brushwork serves the modelling (especially round the eyes), has to be described as highly Rembrandtesque. Doubt as to whether Rembrandt himself was responsible for the painting springs first and foremost from the general feeling of emptiness the painting produces. It would seem to be not only because of the present layer of varnish that one misses marked accents in the somewhat indifferently-painted face, and that the contrasts – mostly in the throat area but also along the outline of the shoulder and in the whole of the background – fail to produce a striking suggestion of space. On closer examination the way the lit part of the face has been painted reveals a remarkable degree of insensitivity, with a penchant for continuous brushstrokes that give a pronounced relief so that the rendering of form becomes noticeably broad. The way the lace collar is done reveals even more precise and definite hints that the painting must indeed come from a different hand. Not only do we not know, from any Rembrandt portrait, of a lace collar so coarsely and thickly underpainted as this one (evident from the surface, and most of all from the X-ray), but in particular the way of indicating the lace pattern is quite different from that of Rembrandt in or around 1634, and much inferior. A comparison with, for example, the 1634 *Portrait*

of *Marten Soolmans* (no. A 100) makes it clear how much more logically and firmly cohesive the rendering of material is there, and how much more confidently it is achieved: while there impasto paint has been used to accentuate the play of light on the white fabric and to emphasize the three-dimensional effect of the upstanding lobes of lace, the use of impasto in no. C 78 is quite chaotic – due in part to the very thick underpainting – so that the specific purpose of applying paint heavily is not achieved. Just as with the treatment of the lit half of the face, the body of the paint takes on an independence that is ineffective.

The unavoidable conclusion is that the Leningrad portrait offers, compared to Rembrandt's portraits, so great a discrepancy in intensity of interpretation of form and power of treatment, that the undeniable similarities have to be interpreted as the result of imitation by a painter in his immediate circle, and probably in his workshop. Looked at in this light, the strong resemblance in composition that this painting shows to Rembrandt's *Portrait of the artist* of 1632 in Glasgow (no. A 58) takes on the significance of the relationship between a prototype and an imitation.

When one thinks of the relatively large number of hands that were involved in what must have been the production of portraits flowing from Rembrandt's workshop, it is not easy to point to a work in which one can recognize the same hand as that in

Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1)



no. C 78. At most, one might think of the *Portrait of a woman* in Cleveland, dated 1635 (Br. 350), where the lace collar is underpainted in just the same way.

It has been suggested in the literature from 1897 until quite recently<sup>1</sup> that this male portrait would have had a companion-piece, namely the woman's portrait from the Duke of Sutherland's collection in the National Gallery of Scotland at Edinburgh (no. C 82). The two paintings do not however match each other from the viewpoint of composition; the layout is different (the woman is set higher in the frame) and the man has his body turned away from the woman, with the head turned towards her less than usual. The composition of the man's portrait is evidently not designed for having a companion-piece – the pose with the body turned slightly to the left and the head slightly to the right produces an almost frontal effect, emphasized by the man's gaze being fixed on the viewer. Rembrandt, as has been mentioned earlier, used exactly the same composition in his *Glasgow Portrait of the artist* (no. A 58) (as well as in informal *tronies*, cf. nos. A 29, A 33 and A 50). One may suppose that the similarity between the two portraits stems from the intention of portraying in each instance a bachelor, in an individual painting. The ornamental bands round the hat, which appear similar in both paintings (and which cannot be interpreted with certainty) are perhaps meant to indicate the sitters' unmarried status.

##### 5. Documents and sources

None.

##### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

##### 7. Copies

None.

##### 8. Provenance

– Coll. Hortense de Beauharnais, Duchesse de Saint-Leu; acquired for the museum with her collection in 1829.

##### 9. Summary

Though not easy to assess beneath the present layer of varnish, no. C 78 appears as a work that on the one hand is in manner of painting and approach extremely Rembrandtlike, and on the other lags well behind Rembrandt's portraits in artistic power and sureness in the suggestion of form. The similarity in composition to Rembrandt's *Glasgow Portrait of the artist* of 1632 (no. A 58) indicates that the author – working in Rembrandt's immediate circle, and probably in his workshop – took the pose in that painting as his prototype.

The painting evidently portrays a bachelor, and was not designed to have a companion-piece. It is impossible to tell whether the panel has been oval from the outset.

##### REFERENCES

- 1 W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt II*, Paris 1897, no. 114; Y. Kuznetsov in: *Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn. Paintings from Soviet Museums*, Leningrad [c. 1971], no. 6.

**C 79 Portrait of Cornelia Pronck**  
PARIS, MUSÉE DU LOUVRE, INV. NO. RF 3744

HDG 669; BR. 336; BAUCH 471; GERSON 126

Fig. 1. Panel 60.4 × 46.9 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray





### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved and probably originally rectangular painting; attributable to an unknown artist, probably from Amsterdam, and datable in 1630/31.

### 2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen to just above the waist, with the body three-quarters to the left and the gaze fixed on the viewer. She wears a winged cap with a lace edge, a wide ruff, a black overgarment ('vlieger') with shoulder caps decorated with a kind of fringe, and a bodice with numerous buttons and gold-coloured decoration.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in September 1968 (S. H. L., E. v. d. W.) in good light and out of the frame, with the aid of an X-ray film of the head and part of the ruff, a copyfilm of which was received later.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 60.4 × 46.9 cm. Thickness 0.7 to 1.2 cm, the righthand plank 0.5 – 0.6 cm. Three planks, with joins at c. 9.4 cm from the lefthand and c. 8 cm from the righthand side and the middle plank about 29.5 cm wide. The righthand plank evidently came loose and has been glued back c. 0.1 cm too low; a splinter of wood is missing from the righthand join, just below the top edge. The back shows a more or less horizontal bevelling at the bottom only – probably a rectangular panel has been subsequently sawn to form a smaller oval.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: According to information kindly supplied by Prof. Dr J. Bauch, Hamburg (letter of 5 March 1981) dendrochronology has provided a dating for the centre plank; this shows at the top edge 182 annual rings heartwood datable as 1431–1612, and 2 annual rings of sapwood. Statistical average felling date 1632 ± 5.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Not observed for certain. At most, visible as a light brown showing through in a thin area of the hair.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Good, apart from a few local retouches especially along the righthand join. Craquelure: a fine, regular pattern is seen in the thick parts of the head and ruff.

DESCRIPTION: The paint layer is opaque everywhere, and thickest in the lip parts of the face, the ruff and the white edges of the cap.

The background is executed in an opaque, almost uniform grey that becomes a little lighter only to the right above the shoulder and in a band on the right above the ruff and along the cap.

In the light and half-shadows the head is painted with distinct brushstrokes that model the forms, and that especially in the lefthand half run in quite long parallel curves following the shape of the eye-pouch. On both cheeks, on the nose and the chin and, to a slightly lesser extent, above the eyebrows a pink is mixed into the quite thickly applied flesh colour. White highlights on the tip and ridge of the nose (some in obliquely hatched strokes) and on the forehead mark the lightest areas.

The areas of shadow along and below the nose and at the temple on the right are painted smoothly and less thickly, but the paint covers completely. The eyelids are done with small strokes that follow the curve, in a flesh colour that is heightened with white at the centre and merges into thinner areas of shadow to the right; the eyelashes are indicated with black, and the lower edges of the eyelids with pink and a little white in which, on the left, small scratchmarks have been made to show the lashes. The sharply-outlined irises are a flat brown in which, against the edge of the black pupils, a tiny flick of white has been placed to give the catchlight. The eyebrows are done in a thin, opaque grey. A touch of carmine red is used to form the nostril, and strokes of the same colour show the pronounced bow of the mouth-line. The upper lip is formed by vertical strokes of red with a translucent light grey that suggests a sheen of light along the lower edge, and the lower lip by three strokes of red along and above the mouthline plus the same light grey applied with vertical strokes.

The thin, dark strokes used to render the hair leave a translucent brown exposed on the right. The cap is painted mainly in greys (lighter where the ruff can be seen through it), with light grey and white strokes to indicate the edges and tucks.

The ruff is set down in white, with long, wide strokes running diagonally down to the left; on the left this underpainting was (as may also be seen from the X-ray) taken rather further to the left, where it can be seen in relief beneath the paint of the background. The edges of the pleats of the ruff have been painted on top of the underpainting with long, somewhat irregular strokes. The shadows at the outer ends of the pleats are in greys, and the lower ends of the folds are indicated with short, curved strokes of white.

In the black of the overgarment round patterns have been applied in a thicker and deeper black. The fringe-like ornamentation hanging from the shoulder caps has occasional fine, white highlights. The black bodice seen at the front has a decorative pattern, shown in mostly thin ochre yellow, that continues out to the extreme edge of the panel. The buttons are executed in the same ochre-yellow, somewhat thicker along their lefthand edges, and have red catchlights.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The film available shows the greatest concentration of white in the face at places where the thickest and lightest highlights can be seen at the paint surface – on the tip of the nose and at the centre of the forehead. There are also rather isolated concentrations of white below each eye, on the ridge of the nose and along the underedge of the cast shadow from the nose. The isolation of passages like these, and the fact that they do not give a picture of small strokes placed alongside each other, represent differences from the radiographic image usually found in X-rays of Rembrandt's portraits. The areas of shadow in the face appear partly lightish, in line with the opacity they display at the paint surface.

The strongest concentrations of white in the ruff are to the right below the cap, and thus not on the most brightly lit side; the outer ends of the pleats show up fairly light. In a large part of the collar one can see the boldly-brushed underpainting that on the left – interrupted by a dark patch (the shadow of the cap) – extends somewhat further to the left than does the present contour. It is noteworthy that the part of the winged cap on the right, where lighter paint suggests the ruff showing through, appears as a dark area in the X-ray.

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1)



#### Signature

In the right background above the shoulder, wedged in between the ruff and the present edge of the panel, in dark paint <Rembrandt.f | 1633>. Both the spontaneity of the letters and figures, and their relationship to each other, leave so much to be desired that the signature and date cannot be regarded as authentic. What is more, the uncomfortable placing gives the impression of the inscription having been appended only after the panel had been reduced in size. Foucart<sup>1</sup> already called the inscription a coarse and relatively late addition.

In the left background, slightly below centre (and rather lower than the signature and date), there is the inscription <AET 33>; there is no reason to doubt that it is contemporaneous.

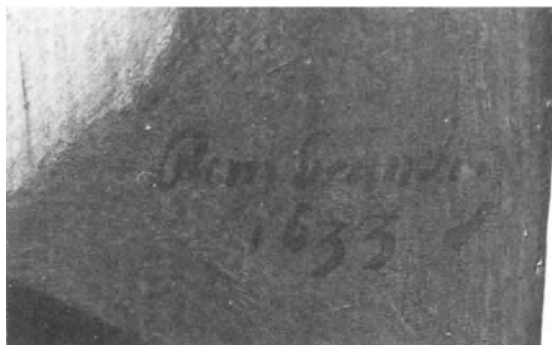
#### Varnish

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

The portrait has so far always been looked on as the companion-piece to the *Portrait of a 47-year-old man* (no. C 75), and the attribution to Rembrandt has been doubted only by Gerson<sup>2</sup> and rejected only by Foucart<sup>1</sup>. Neither assumption can be upheld. The panel used for the man's portrait has, to judge from the way the back is worked, probably been oval from the outset, while that of the woman's portrait can be assumed to have originally been rectangular – it shows the remains of a more or less horizontal bevel at the bottom. This was presumably altered in order to make it into a companion-piece for the man's portrait, and was done prior to 1826, the date

Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1)



at which both paintings are known to have been in the same ownership. The original format of the woman's portrait, which no longer shows any trace of bevelling at the left, right and top, will have been substantially wider and taller than the present oval.

Thus warned, one readily realises that the two paintings do not fit together easily as compositions – as Foucart points out the woman's portrait is on a somewhat larger scale – and also that they are not done by the same hand. While the man's portrait does display Rembrandtesque features – especially in the translucently-painted shadow areas of the head – this can hardly be said of the woman's portrait. In particular the opaque and smooth painting of the areas of shadow in the head, together with the pedestrian treatment of the costume (in both the contours and internal detail) point to a hand that has little in common with that of Rembrandt. One notes, too, a series of minor details that help to make a Rembrandt attribution unacceptable – the flat brown of the irises with the fragmented catchlights, and the highly unusual rendering of eyelashes by means of small scratchmarks (at the lower edge of the eye on the left). The X-ray confirms this adverse judgment – the patchy appearance of the largest concentrations of white, and the way they are placed only partly matching the distribution of light and dark resulting from the fall of light, together with the absence of small brushstrokes set side-by-side, are features one does not encounter in the X-rays of Rembrandt's portraits. As the paint surface gives one to expect, the shadow areas also appear rather light – unlike those in the radiographic image not only of Rembrandt's portraits but also (despite what has been said<sup>3</sup>) of the *Portrait of a 47-year-old man*.

A characteristic of the painter of no. C 79 would seem to be the quite long curving strokes placed below the eyes, in paint that contains little white lead (they are scarcely visible in the X-ray). These match the great importance he gives to the structure of the head set down with curved lines, extending to the shape of the mouth-line. This use of a fairly

simple linear system is foreign to Rembrandt's approach to form; it might be seen as evidence that the author of no. C 79 was a somewhat old-fashioned or perhaps even a somewhat older artist. In view of the identity of the sitter, it is likely that an Amsterdam painter was involved. For the moment it is impossible to identify him. Foucart rightly stresses that this artist, while familiar with Rembrandt's work, did not necessarily belong to his studio. There is no clue to the true date of the painting in the '1633' that appears on it but is not authentic. Given the fact that the sitter gave her age as 24 in January 1622 (see below) and that her age is indicated in the painting (and probably also on a label on the back, see 5. *Documents and sources*) as 33, then one may deduce that the portrait was probably done in 1630/31; this does not conflict with the result of dendrochronology examination of the panel.

According to an inscription on a label on the back of the panel, the sitter's name is Cornelia Pronck. Research by I. H. van Eeghen<sup>4</sup> and S. E. Pronk<sup>5</sup> has revealed that Neeltgen Cornelisdr. Pronck was the daughter of an Amsterdam gunpowder-maker and on 14 January 1622 was betrothed at the age of 24 to the merchant Albert Cuyper, aged 36. The latter, born in Elblag near Gdansk, traded in the Baltic and Moscovy and was a gunpowder-maker like his father-in-law; he died in Amsterdam in 1637, and in about 1662/63 his widow moved to Alkmaar where she died in 1667. Both were Roman Catholics. Portraits of them are mentioned, without an artist's name, in the estate of Cornelia's brother Jan Pronck when he died in Amsterdam in 1678 (see 5. *Documents and sources*).

### 5. Documents and sources

A label on the back of the panel has the inscription . . . / C( . . . ) pronck/ . . . 33. In the estate of Jan Pronck (c. 1612–1678) mention is made of '2 conterfijtsels van Albert Kuiper ende zijn huysvrouw' (2 likenesses of Albert Kuiper and his wife)<sup>6</sup>. There is no way of knowing whether no. C 79 can be identified with one of these.

### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

### 7. Copies

None.

### 8. Provenance

– Together with no. C 75, coll. Baron van Lockhorst, Rotterdam 1826. Brought to England by Mr Galli, according to a handwritten note in the RKD copy of the catalogue of the Wynn Ellis sale (see below).

- Together with no. C 75, coll. Wynn Ellis, sale London (Christie's) 27 May 1876, no. 84 (£136. 10s.).
- Dealer E. Warneck, Paris.
- Coll. Baron de Beurnonville, without no. C 75 in sale Paris 9–16 May 1881, no. 433.
- Together again with no. C 75 in coll. Henri Péreire; donated to the museum, though retaining a life-interest, in 1930. Passed to the museum in 1933.

### 9. Summary

The painting was probably reduced before 1826 from a rectangular to an oval format, presumably to make it into a companion-piece for the *Portrait of a 47-year-old man* (no. C 75) as which it has been regarded ever since. It is otherwise well preserved. The Rembrandt signature and date of 1633 appearing on the painting are plainly unauthentic, and the work differs substantially in style and handling of paint from Rembrandt's portraits from the 1630s. It is probably the work of an Amsterdam portraitist, and datable in 1630/31.

### REFERENCES

- 1 J. Foucart, *Les peintures de Rembrandt*, Paris 1982, pp. 25–26, 96.
- 2 Gerson 126; Br.-Gerson 336.
- 3 M. Hours, 'Rembrandt. Observations et présentation de radiographies exécutées d'après les portraits et compositions du Musée du Louvre', *Bulletin du Laboratoire du Musée du Louvre* 6 (1961), pp. 3–43, esp. 8.
- 4 I. H. v[an] E[eghen], 'De echtgenoot van Cornelia Pronk', *Amstelodamum. Maandblad* . . . 43 (1956), pp. 111–112.
- 5 S. E. Pronk Czn, 'De Amsterdamse koopliedenfamilie Pronk', *Pronk-stukken. Mededelingenblad van de Stichting Familiearchief Pronk* 5 (May 1974), pp. 99–130, esp. 109–111, 124.
- 6 S. A. C. Dudok van Heel, 'De kunstverzamelingen Van Lennep met de Arundel-tekeningen', *Jaarboek* . . . *Amstelodamum* 67 (1975), pp. 137–148, esp. 141 note 4.

**C80 Portrait of a woman seated** (companion-piece to no. A45)

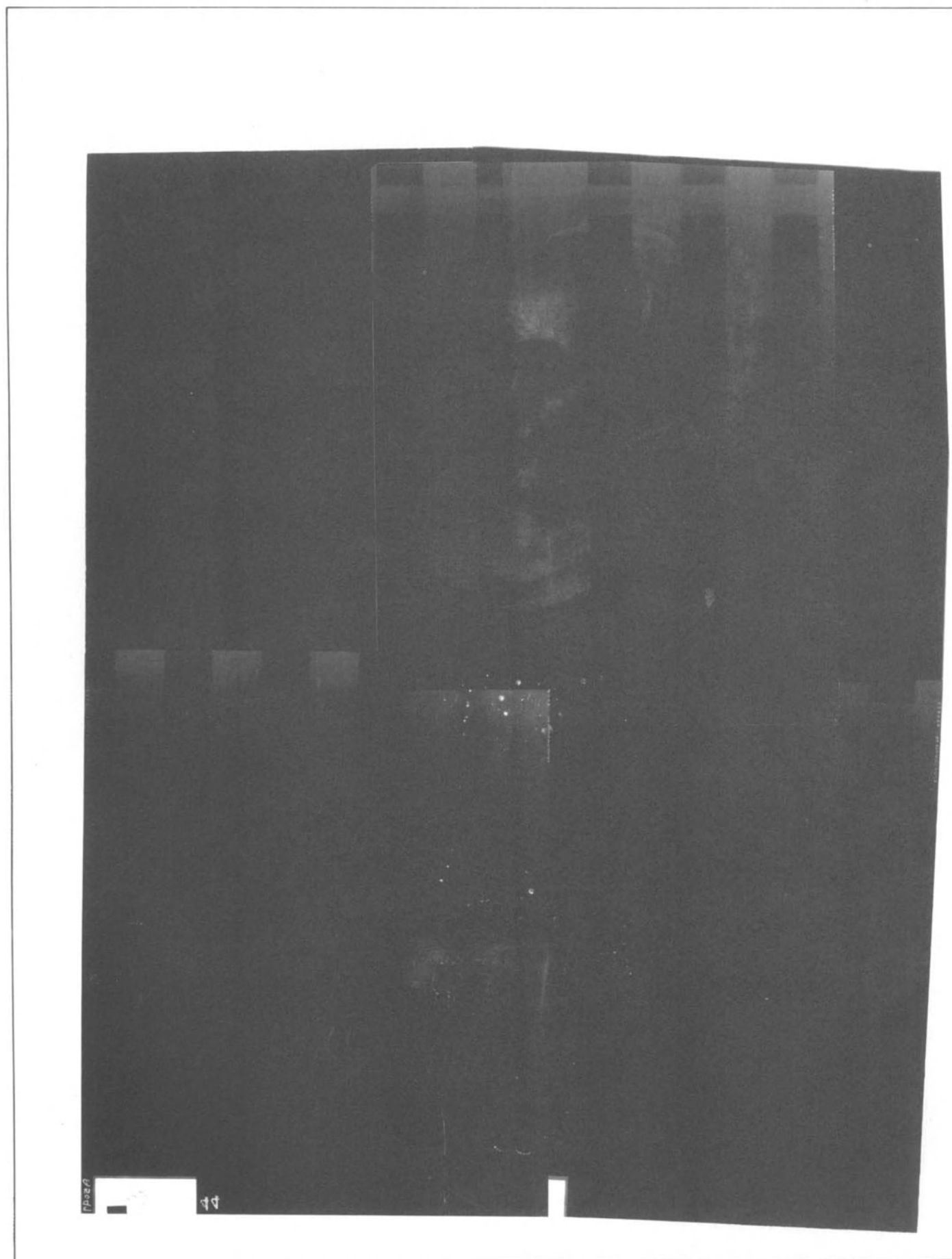
VIENNA, KUNSTHISTORISCHES MUSEUM, INV. NO. 409

HDG 883; BR. 332; BAUCH 470; GERSON 154

Fig. 1. Panel 90.6 × 68.1 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray





### 1. Summarized opinion

A well preserved painting that is undoubtedly intended as a companion-piece to a male portrait by Rembrandt (no. A 45) but cannot be attributed to him; probably painted in Rembrandt's workshop by an assistant in 1632/33.

### 2. Description of subject

A seated woman is seen almost to the knees, with the body, head and gaze towards the left. In her left hand, lying in her lap, she holds a pair of gloves. Her right hand appears to rest on a table, though the posture of the arm does not wholly match this. She wears a lace-trimmed cap, white, lace-edged cuffs, a wheel-ruff and, over a gold-embroidered bodice, a dark, tabard-like garment ('vlieger') trimmed with fur. She wears gold bracelets, and a ring with a stone on her right index finger. The background is almost uniform, lightest at the lower left and darkest at the top.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 27 May 1970 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good daylight and out of the frame, with the aid of a UV lamp and X-rays. Six X-ray films, together covering almost the whole of the painting, were received later from the museum.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Walnut panel (*Juglans regia*, according to Bauch and Eckstein<sup>1</sup>), grain vertical, 90.6 × 68.1 cm. Thickness c. 0.8–1 cm. Single plank. The panel is identical in nature and treatment to that of no. A 45.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: As in no. A 45, long brushstrokes can be seen in relief that may have to do with the preparation of the panel. A very little yellow-brown in the lower righthand corner.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Very good; a few darkened retouches in the background.

DESCRIPTION: The paint covers fully everywhere, with a fair degree of impasto in the highlights in the lace, the embroidery on the bodice, the gold bracelets and the upper edge of the gloves. The shadows in the clothing, too, are relatively thickly painted; in these the brushwork can be readily followed. In the face it is everywhere remarkably apparent, but does little to help in the rendering of plastic form. The strokes run in various directions, though predominantly from upper left to lower right, varying in width and length. The flesh colour is a pale yellow, with a quite strong red in the cheeks and the wing of the nose and, to a lesser extent, on the chin. A layer of thicker paint seems to be placed over a flesh-coloured basic tone, heaviest at the border of the cheekbone. In the cheek to the right the red is placed as fine strokes over the flesh tint. Catchlights have been set on the eyelids, the tip of the nose and the lower lip. There is a smooth transition to the brownish shadows by the throat. The contour of the nose is shown with thin strokes of a light flesh colour, somewhat pinkish at the tip; the wing of the nose, with a little reddish brown for the righthand contour, has little plasticity. Some grey is used for

the shadow at the tip of the nose and the shadow beneath it, while the nostril is indicated with a stroke of purplish brown. The lips are in various tints of pink, with predominantly horizontal strokes; the mouth-line is black at the centre, merging into a grey at the corners.

The iris of the eye on the right is blue-grey, with an indistinct righthand edge. The pupil is a dark grey-blue, with a catchlight in white set at the upper righthand edge. From the lefthand corner of the eye the border of the upper lid is shown with a stroke of light red that merges into grey and becomes vague as it runs towards the righthand corner. The upper lid is bounded at the top by lines of ruddy grey. The lefthand eye is painted in much the same manner; the catchlight here extends well out into the white of the eye. The directions of gaze of the two eyes do not seem entirely to match. The eyebrows are done vaguely in cool grey, here and there with fine, parallel, reddish strokes. The same combination of colours occurs in the hair, which is executed with long, thin strokes. Occasionally a brown undertone seems to be visible. The rendering of material is poor.

The hands present a clear brushstroke, following either the shape or the direction of the light. Especially in the hand on the left, however, the brushwork makes scant contribution to plasticity, and variations in the flesh colour and the shadows in grey and a muddy grey-brown likewise do little to suggest it.

It is noticeable that many of the accessories are painted thickly and stand out in relief – e.g. the gold bracelet at the woman's left wrist, and the upper edge of the gloves. The clothing is painted with varying degrees of success. The bodice, with ochrish strokes, streaks and spots over a dark grey is not wholly convincing in either modelling or rendering of material. While the lace cap is executed not unsuccessfully in a fairly flat bluish grey, and the lace edging in mostly thin white with animated thick rims, the cuffs are rather wooden in appearance and the lace on them is incoherent and crabbed. The whole lower part of the clothing is painted emphatically, but lacks any convincing rendering of material and bulk. The transition from the bluish-grey skirt to the yellowish-brown fur is lacking in sensitivity.

The background is painted in a cool grey that covers fully, with brushwork of varying degrees of distinctness, the strokes running in various directions. The paint layer is, apart from a zone around the head that is a little thicker, of uniform thickness. The indistinct shape of a table to the left also shows a blue-grey with a grey-green beneath it; the brushstrokes run around the outline of the hand, suggesting that it was painted earlier.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

In general the radiographic image matches what is expected from the paint surface. The face, where the brushstroke is very easily followed, presents a rather confused picture since the brushstrokes and the relationships of light to dark do not correspond to the rendering of plastic form in terms of light and shade. Concentrations of white, crisply outlined, appear on the cheekbone, above the woman's left eyebrow and on the chin. The red of the cheek coincides with a dark area in the X-ray, though this extends further downwards than the red in the paint layer and continues into the chin. Here, as at the top, there is a sharp borderline. The sharply limited dark patches probably indicate that a thinly applied basic flesh tone, containing little white lead, has been covered at some places with thicker flesh tints containing a lot of white lead, and at others with the red, laid down more thinly and showing up little if at

Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)



Fig. 4. Detail (1:1.5)



all in the X-ray. A similar explanation could be given for the dark contour lines along the forehead, chin and neck and along the hand on the left; it may be that here the contour of the first lay-in was respected when the painting was being completed, the thicker second layer keeping just inside the contour. Small corrections may be detected in the rear of the ruff and in the outline of the sleeve on the right. A light tint where the cast shadow falls on the collar makes one suspect that the white runs through beneath this, and that no reserve was left for the shadow at an early stage. The shape that looks like a table seems to have been added only in a second stage.

*Signature*

None.

*Varnish*

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

There is no doubt at all that the painting forms a pair with the male portrait also in Vienna (no. A 45). Physically, there is evidence for this in the panels, which in both instances are of an unusual kind of wood – walnut – and have been worked and even prepared with ground in identical fashion, as may be gathered from the closely similar traces of long brushstrokes visible in relief. In concept, too,

they seem to have been matched to each other – the man turns emphatically towards the viewer, making a gesture towards the woman portrayed in the pendant, whose gaze is (one may assume) directed towards him. Such a close mutual link is reminiscent of a frequently-encountered formula (cf. D. R. Smith, *Masks of wedlock. Seventeenth-century Dutch marriage portraiture*, Ann Arbor 1982, pp. 41ff). Rembrandt used this formula most markedly in a pair of portraits from 1633 now split between the Taft Museum, Cincinnati and the Metropolitan Museum in New York (nos. A 78 and A 79), where he emphasized the man's action; there, however, both sitters are looking at the viewer, the more common arrangement. This does not get away from the fact that the link between the sitters and the viewer – reminiscent of that met in group portraits – is in line with the dramatic tendencies noted in Rembrandt's portraits from his early Amsterdam years.

Ever since the two portraits came to light in a Paris sale in 1762 they have both been regarded as the work of Rembrandt; but this attribution would not seem to be tenable for the female portrait. One is forced to arrive at this conclusion first of all from

the manner of painting in the head as this appears from both the paint surface and the X-rays; the image here differs substantially from that in authentic Rembrandt heads, because of the different way paint is handled (see *Paint layer*). The brushstroke supports scarcely any suggestion of plastic form; the strokes, for the most part diagonal, do not mark the convexities of the forehead and cheekbone, the fine strokes of red on the cheek are ineffective and the mouth, nose and eye areas are not convincingly integrated, which is another reason why this head lacks plastic unity. The difficult task of suggesting modelling in a face turned almost straight towards the light – seemingly accomplished quite effortlessly by Rembrandt in Tulp's head in the 1632 *Anatomy lesson of Dr Tulp* (no. A 51) and, especially, in the woman's head in the 1633 *Shipbuilder and his wife* (no. A 77) – was beyond the artist's abilities, and even the linear construction of the foreshortening of the slightly tilted head has failed, particularly in the relationship of the eyes to one another and to the mouth. The colour-scheme, varying from cool greys – most marked in the irises – to a fairly strong red and showing such singular combinations as the cool grey and a reddish tint that occur in the eyebrows and hair, lacks the cohesion between flesh tints and local colours that is a feature of Rembrandt's heads. What has been said of the head indeed applies to the whole of the painting. The forms are described, but not integrated into a spatially satisfactory construction, nor into an atmospherically and colouristically satisfactory entity. The left hand rests – on a table? – but the elbow is raised in a strange way. The various components of the costume are not well inter-related, and the rendering is – especially in the cuffs and embroidered bodice – rudimentary. The quite heavy cool grey that repeatedly recurs in the colour-scheme, and that appears massively in the background, is never seen in Rembrandt's work to the same extent. The most successful passage is the hand on the right, where the brushstroke helps to model the plump form in a way that is closer to Rembrandt's treatment than anything else in the painting.

If it is consequently impossible to accept the woman's portrait as being by Rembrandt, one has to wonder what the relationship is to the companion-piece. Does it come from Rembrandt's workshop, or from somewhere else altogether? In itself, the latter possibility is not wholly out of the question – there are various examples of companion-pieces done by totally different artists, with the woman's portrait done earlier than the man's (cf. no. A 82) or, more commonly, the man's before the woman's. Yet it is not really likely that

the portraits in question were produced in different places. The identical treatment of the panels does not really provide clinching evidence for this, if one may assume that as a rule it was the person commissioning portraits who provided the panels or canvases (cf. Introduction, Chapter III). But the manner of painting, too, points more to an assistant working under Rembrandt's influence than one under anyone else's; apart from the pose of the woman being linked to that of the man, this is argued by the fact that though the manner of painting differs from Rembrandt's it is – especially in the hand on the right and in the costume – closer to him than to any other contemporary. On top of this, the woman's unusual pose is comparable only (so far as we know) though very readily to that in the *Portrait of a couple* in the Stewart Gardner Museum (no. C 67); and there can be no reasonable doubt that the latter was produced in Rembrandt's workshop. As in that case, one probably has to take it that the artist entered Rembrandt's workshop as an assistant, and based the woman's pose on a prototype he found there, either one by Rembrandt himself or, more probably, the Boston painting. There the pose appears, as one would rather expect, in the context of a group portrait (perhaps containing more figures in its original state than it does today), and the strange and slightly raised position of the woman's right arm can be explained by the fact that originally the arm of a son (later painted out) ran beneath it. Everything seems to point to the rather inexplicable pose of the woman in Vienna (on her unseen chair) being derived from that prototype. One would then have to assume that the artist was one of the assistants in Rembrandt's workshop who helped him execute the numerous portrait commissions he was receiving in his early years in Amsterdam. By reason of the approach to form and use of colour, which differ from those of Rembrandt, one may suppose that like others of these assistants (cf. in particular nos. C 65, C 66 and C 67) he had already had his training elsewhere. So far there is no other work that can be pointed to as being by his hand. If our datings are correct – the male portrait in Vienna in 1631/32 and the Stewart Gardner family group in 1632/33 – then the woman's portrait would have been painted no earlier than 1632/33, and thus later than the man's. A pose something like that of the woman in the Vienna portrait was in fact to be used by Rembrandt himself later on, in his *Portrait of Cornelis Anslo and his wife* of 1641, in Berlin (Br. 409).

However one interprets the exact relationship between the two companion-pieces, one thing stands out – the fact that neither of them is signed. This is unique for the man's portrait that is being

attributed to Rembrandt himself, but hardly less so for the woman's portrait that we are attributing to an assistant, bearing in mind the Rembrandt signatures that were probably appended by assistants to a large number of portraits done by the latter themselves (cf. nos. C 65, C 66, C 67, C 70, C 71, C 72 and C 73).

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

#### 7. Copies

1. Oak panel, dimensions unknown. Flushing, N. J., private collection. According to a label on the back, from the dealer Durand-Ruel, Paris and New York. Information from Durand-Ruel (letter to the present owner dated 8 July 1977) indicates that it was bought at the coll. Gustave Rothan sale, Paris 29–31 May 1890, no. 93, and sold on 9 June 1890 to Mr E. Kissel, New York.

2. Canvas 77 × 63 cm. Granada, Museo de Bellas Artes (on loan from the Museo del Prado, no. 2134). E. Valdivieso, *Pintura Holandesa del siglo XVII en España*, Valladolid 1973, p. 347, fig. 226.

#### 8. Provenance

Together with the companion-piece no. A 45, q.v. for fuller details.

\*– Coll. Gaillard de Gagny, sale Paris 29ff March 1762.

\*– Coll. Lebrun, sale Paris 21ff September 1774.

– In 1783 in the Imperial collection of paintings in Vienna.

#### 9. Summary

Though it was already looked on in the 18th century, together with the companion-piece, as a work by Rembrandt, and has always been accepted as such in the modern literature, this female portrait cannot, because of the differing rendering of form and execution, be regarded as his work. It was certainly intended as the pendant to no. A 45, as is evident from the use of the same, unusual type of wood – walnut – and from the poses of the sitters which are complementary to each other. To judge from the handling of paint it was executed, probably in Rembrandt's workshop, by an assistant who had already been trained elsewhere. It can be dated with fair probability in 1632/33.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 Cf. J. Bauch and D. Eckstein, 'Wood biological investigations on panels of Rembrandt paintings', *Wood science and technology* 15 (1981), pp. 251–263, esp. 254.

## C81 Portrait of a young woman

USA, PRIVATE COLLECTION

HdG 920; BR. 337; BAUCH 472; GERSON 155

### 1. Summarized opinion

A fairly well preserved work that was probably painted in Rembrandt's workshop in or around 1633.

### 2. Description of subject

The sitter is seen to just above the waist, with the upper body turned three-quarters left and the face and gaze rather more towards the viewer. The figure is set against an almost uniform, dark background, with the light falling from the left. She wears a white cap the wings of which have a wide lace edging; on the right, the side of the cap and part of her collar show through the thin material of the wing. A triple gold chain round her throat lies on top of a white wheel-ruff. The rest of her costume is black, and shows no detail.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined in October 1971 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in good daylight and in the frame; examined again, after cleaning, in September 1978 (B. H.) and February 1983 (J. B., E. v. d. W.). An X-ray film of the head and collar was available.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 62.4 × 50.4 cm. Thickness c. 0.65 cm. Back stained red and cradled; there is no trace of bevelling.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A yellow-brown can be seen on the left where the paint of the background does not entirely meet that of the ruff. The same tint shows through here and there in the corners of the eyes, in the lace on the cap and in the hair above the righthand temple.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Generally good, despite slight wearing in the background. In the face, especially on the forehead and below the lefthand eye, there are vertical blisters and restored paint losses. Along the edges of the panel the paint has crumbled away at numerous places. Craquelure: in the lit areas of the face, as minute vertical cracks.

DESCRIPTION: The paint is in general not thickly applied, and there is impasto only in the ruff and, particularly, in the chain necklace which shows a marked relief. The background has an almost uniform dark grey tint, shifting to a somewhat lighter grey lower down. For the most part the paint of the costume lies a little over that of the background, though by the cap the contour of the lace is partly formed by reserves in the dark grey paint, which is rather denser at that point than elsewhere; a light underpainting can be seen here and there between the present lobes of the lace. A similar underpainting, rather yellowish, is exposed at places inside the lobes. An indication of the pattern of the lace in black lines is, most clearly on the left, hidden beneath a thin light grey over which white has been placed to show the rims of light. The translucent wing of the cap on the left has a flat thin light grey placed over an indication of the shape in darker and lighter greys. The wing on the right is executed with strokes in various greys placed

over a brown underpainting applied with long brushstrokes. In the hair some grey is used on top of a vague brown underpainting.

In the face the paint is, apart from some translucency at the corners of the eyes and in the shadow on the temple, opaque and applied with a distinct brushstroke in the lit passages. On the forehead the stroke runs from upper left to lower right, and below the eyes tends more to follow the shape of the eye-pouches. A fairly smoothly and fluently merging pink is used on the cheeks. The lit flesh areas are otherwise done in a light flesh colour, and the shadow areas in somewhat fuzzy and generally opaque greys with, on the temple, a brownish grey and a greenish haze; a fairly thickly-brushed grey represents – not entirely effectively – the reflexion of light along the jaw. A small stroke of brown borders the cap. A quite strong pinkish red is used (with a tiny catchlight in white) in the corners of the eyes, and occurs again in the lips; these are worked up with lights that create little plasticity, and are separated by a flattish mouth-line set down with a variety of strokes. The shadow below the mouth is painted opaquely and smoothly in grey and pink. The cast shadow below the nose is done in a red-brown, with a reserve left for it in the surrounding flesh colour.

The eyes have a fair amount of detail, and are for the most part executed in identical fashion. The limits of the upper eyelids are indicated with strokes of brown and greys; the lower edges are less distinctly shown, with curved strokes of pink and grey set against the light grey used for the white of the eye. The latter has a reserve left for the cast shadow from the upper lid, indicated in a red-brown. In the upper half of the irises there is a translucent brown – enclosing rather indistinctly-shaped catchlights, that on the right larger than that on the left – while the lower half has a grey with a dark grey edge on the right. Underlying black lines show through in the eyebrows.

The chain necklace shows thick ridges of light yellow over a dark brown, and runs to the right into a rather less thick brownish yellow that is limited at the top by a zone of dark brown. The cast shadow of the head on the ruff begins, at the left, as a dark brown that merges towards the right into a vaguely-shaped area of grey. In the lit part of the ruff the pleats are indicated with unobtrusive strokes in shades of grey over a light underpainting brushed in a variety of directions; the edges of light on the pleats are shown with spindly, rapid strokes of white that become rather more casual towards the left. The dark clothing showing through the ruff is suggested with touches of dark grey over a brown underpainting, with the edges of light on the pleats indicated cursorily. The black clothing has no internal detail, apart from a few oblique strokes of grey on the shoulder-cap to the right. On the left the contour against the background is singularly vague.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The radiographic image of the brushwork corresponds, in the face, to what can be seen at the paint surface. On the forehead the brush moves mainly from upper left to lower right; on the ridge and tip of the nose a few firm accents in radioabsorbent paint can be seen, and around the eyes a complex of quite long, curving strokes that merge downwards into similarly long strokes on the cheekbone. In the lower half of the face the distribution of pigment containing white lead has a rather indeterminate, patchy structure.

In the ruff the broadly-brushed underpainting and the light edges of the pleats placed over this subsequently both show up clearly in the X-rays; on the upper edge of the ruff to the lower



Fig. 1. Panel 62.4 × 50.4 cm



Fig. 2. X-ray



Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)



left there is a concentration of pigment containing white lead. The thickly-painted catchlights along the edges of the links in the gold chain offer the most noticeable lights in the radiographic image. At the lace trimming of the cap one can again see something of the initial lay-in, in the form of a strip probably consisting of an underpainting that shows up lightish. This is bordered, especially on the left, by a vague contour that coincides with the outer tips of lobes of lace visible at the surface. The X-ray image of this underpainting is at many places interfered with by small light accents set down at a later stage when the pattern of the lace was being worked up. The cradling on the back of the panel is clearly visible.

#### Signature

On the left level with the shoulder, in a grey somewhat lighter than that of the background (<Rembrandt f./1633>). The letters and figures form two lines both of which slope downwards to the right; they are clumsily shaped, and quite different from those of authentic Rembrandt signatures. The spelling 'Rembrant' does indeed occur in 1633, and also in 1634 (cf. nos. A 64, A 67, A 68 and A 94).

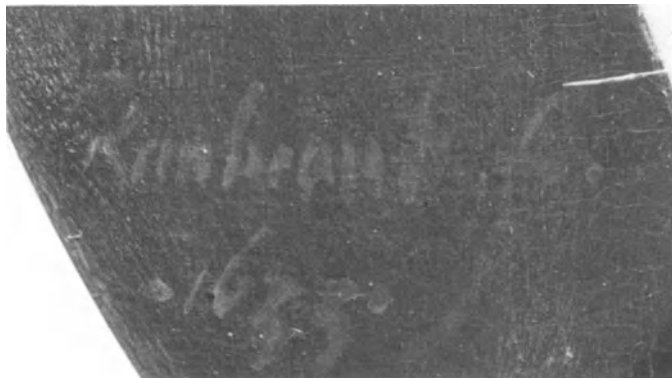
#### Varnish

A layer of old varnish that hampered observation was removed in 1978.

#### 4. Comments

The authenticity of this painting has up to now always been accepted in the literature. This is quite understandable in view of the many similarities in motifs and technique to Rembrandt portraits of the early 1630s, and especially from 1633. The clearest resemblances are to the Frankfurt *Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq* (no. A 82). The two portraits share a number of specific details, including in particular the 'view through' the wing of the cap on the right, with the side of the cap behind it and part of the upper edge of the ruff showing through the thin material – in both

Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1)



instances with the tone of the area of ruff lighter than the shadow on the ruff on this side. The works also show similarities in the method of painting the lace edging of the cap and the wide pleated ruff, particularly – as may be seen from the X-rays – in the preparatory stage. The lacy decoration is in both instances based on a rough lay-in in the form of a rapidly-brushed band that shows up fairly light. Over the outer edge of this the contour is, as can be seen at the paint surface, shaped partly by the dark background paint, and partly by means of strokes of white and grey plainly evident in the X-rays that, together with a dark internal detail, produce the rest of the pattern. In both paintings there is, in the ruff, a light underpainting done with broad strokes running in various directions, and over which the radially drawn indication of pleats was added during the 'working-up' stage. But in the two heads, too, the distribution of accents of light and shade, including the distribution of light within the irises and the area of reflected light on the cheek in shadow, is so alike that one has to conclude that there is some direct link between the two works, and that they were probably produced in the same workshop.

At the same time as all these similarities there are however such differences that it is difficult to attribute the works to one and the same hand. The most important difference must be the comparatively undifferentiated manner of painting in no. C 81, most evident in the fairly smooth and sometimes enamel-like shadows in the head, done in opaque greys. Particularly because of this the head lacks pictorial liveliness, and the resulting suggestion of plasticity and depth, that is typical of Rembrandt's portrait heads and is exemplified in the Frankfurt *Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq*. The brushwork in the lit areas, with its predominantly long and rather indifferent strokes, makes (as also can be seen from the X-rays) little contribution to modelling of the kind one can term typical of Rembrandt. A lack of three-dimensional effect is also due to the lifeless background, the weak body contours and the lack of

attention to giving any detail to the dress. Finally, the construction of the head as a whole – especially in the placing of the eyes in relation to each other – is not as convincing as it might be. The most plausible conclusion is that the painter of no. C 81, though familiar with Rembrandt's way of working and probably employed in his workshop, did not have the personal vision and pictorial skill needed to achieve a convincing result. Bearing in mind the strong similarity to work done by Rembrandt in this very year of 1633, it is hard to suppose that the inscription including that date is a later addition. As in a number of other cases one may assume that the – plainly not autograph – Rembrandt signature and the date were appended (with Rembrandt's approval) by the author of the painting. The placing of the inscription, between the outline of the figure and the present edge of the panel, might be evidence of the panel having always been oval. Against this there is the fact that there is no trace of bevelling and that the paint layer has crumbled at the edges, which could point to the wood having been sawn away at a later stage. The planed panel is still 0.65 cm thick at the rim, which would be a considerable thickness for a bevelled edge.

Stylistically the painting bears the same sort of relationship to Rembrandt's work as a number of other portraits from the early 1630s. In particular one is reminded of the Braunschweig *Portrait of a woman* dated 1633 (no. C 71) that is similar to no. C 81 on a number of points – especially the execution of the chain necklace – but so different from it in a number of essential aspects such as brushwork and use of colour that one cannot conceive of their being from the same hand. There is a greater resemblance to a work such as the *Portrait of Susanna van Collen and her daughter* in the Wallace Collection (no. C 66), where in particular the closed, continuous paint surface of the shadow side of the head, with a light greenish haze, is very like no. C 81. The resemblance is however still only of a general kind, and offers insufficient reason for an attribution to one and the same workshop assistant. There seems no adequate ground for Valentiner's assumption<sup>•</sup> that no. C 81 is a companion-piece to the *Portrait of a man in a red coat*, earlier in the Howard Young Galleries, New York (Br. 176); we have not been able to examine the latter painting.

##### 5. Documents and sources

None.

##### 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

### 7. Copies

None.

### 8. Provenance

- Coll. de la Hante, Paris.
- Dealer Smith, London; sold in 1850 to the Bishop of Ely for £130.
- Coll. Bishop of Ely, sale London 1864 (13 guineas to Smith).
- Coll. T. A. H. Poynder, Hilmarton Manor, Wiltshire from 1864.
- Coll. Sir John Poynder, later Lord Islington.
- Dealer A. Preyer, The Hague.
- Coll. Frederick Brown, New York<sup>1</sup>.
- Coll. L. M. Flesh, Piqua (Ohio).

### 9. Summary

The painting shows such similarities to Rembrandt's portraits from the early 1630s, particularly the Frankfurt *Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq* of 1633 (no. A 82), both in composition and motifs and in certain technical devices that there can be no doubt that it was produced in Rembrandt's workshop in or about 1633. On the other hand, the relatively smooth and only moderately effective execution rules out an attribution to him; the author was probably one of Rembrandt's workshop assistants.

#### REFERENCES

- 1 W. R. Valentiner, 'Rediscovered Rembrandt paintings', *Burl. Mag.* 67 (1930), p. 260.

**C82 Portrait of a woman**

EDINBURGH, NATIONAL GALLERIES OF SCOTLAND, ON LOAN FROM THE DUKE OF SUTHERLAND

HDG 859; BR. 345; BAUCH 479; GERSON 167

Fig. 1. Panel 70.9 × 53.2 cm





### 1. Summarized opinion

A very well preserved painting that was probably done in Rembrandt's workshop by the same hand as nos. C 72 and C 73, and in 1634.

### 2. Description of subject

A young woman is seen to just above the waist against a very dark background, the body and head turned a little to the left. In her hair she has a diadem-like headdress with pearls, a jewel and a sprig with flowers and leaves. She wears a black dress with a gold-coloured belt and a bow. In the middle of a double-layered lace collar there is a brooch from which a double rope of pearls hangs towards the right, with the other end attached to a bow on the righthand shoulder. A double row of pearls circles her throat. Where the collar meets at the front by the throat, a gold ring and a pearl hang from a cord knotted in a bow. She wears cluster earrings, plus on the right a composite jewel.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 3 June 1971 (B. H., P. v. Th.) in good artificial light and out of the frame, and again on 8–10 June 1983 (S. H. L., E. v. d. W.).

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, oval 70.9 × 53.2 cm. Present thickness c. 0.65 cm. No joins seen. Back planed flat and cradled, with no traces of bevelling visible.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: A light yellowish brown is visible at many places, especially in the shadows in the face and hair.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: Very good. Craquelure: fine, horizontal, parallel cracks on the forehead. In the collar there is a predominantly horizontal formation of cracking and, on the right, some shrinkage cracks.

DESCRIPTION: The lit part of the face is painted in pale flesh tints, with brushwork that is everywhere apparent. The strokes are mostly diagonal on the forehead, from upper left to lower right, but elsewhere – on the nose and by the eyes – follow the shapes of the face though without contributing to any effect of plasticity. They are invariably, irrespective of their location, equal in thickness and identical in character. The transitions to the shadow areas are smooth; the shadows themselves are grey, with a great deal of the ground showing through.

The eye on the left, almond-shaped, is limited at the upper edge on the left by a line of brown with black over it, and on the right by a red-brown line. The lower border is formed by a strikingly wide band of light flesh colour, that does little to suggest the form and continues to the right along the corner of the eye. The upper lid is rendered with a stroke of flesh-coloured paint, and bordered at the top by a line of light brown. Above this, in the eye-socket, a light grey-brown glaze has been used. The white of the eye is an off-white on the left and a light grey on the right, through which the ground shows slightly. The round iris is set on the light underlying ground in a translucent brown, with a little translucent grey to the right.

The pupil – not fully round – is painted in a thick black that to the left runs, as the shadow of the lid, into the corner of the eye. The white catchlight is placed, next to the pupil, on top of a stroke of black. The inner corner of the eye is indicated with a small spot of red and some grey. The eye on the right is painted in similar fashion, making a great deal of use of the ground showing through especially in the iris and the part above the eyelid. The inner corner is red, with a little light pink on and to the right of this. The eyebrow here comprises a very thin grey over the ground, which remains visible – here and there it is totally exposed – and has hatching in a very dark grey, running diagonally down from left to right. The lefthand eyebrow has a similar if somewhat less pronounced structure.

The shadow side of the nose is painted more smoothly in grey, extending upwards in a curve to reach the eyebrow area. The translucent cast shadow in brown with a little grey alongside and below the wing of the nose had a reserve left for it in the surrounding flesh colour. The nostrils, in brown, are rather shapeless. The mouth-line is set down in very dark grey with no visible brushstroke, and its shape lacks subtlety. The lips are rendered with touches of reddish and red paint that here and there leave the ground visible; the highlights on the lower lip are heightened with a pinkish white. The shadow below the mouth is flat, and lacking in suggestion. The strong reflexions of light on the chin and jaw are painted in a greyish flesh colour. A touch of light paint helps to suggest a dimple.

The hair combed forward over the forehead is painted with long strokes of a pale flesh colour with some grey, with the ground making a contribution at the upper right. In the hair on the top of the head, combed backwards, the colour of the ground can likewise be glimpsed. The hair hanging down on the left is painted in greys and a pale yellow-white colour, with confused strokes of quite thick and sometimes dry, lumpy paint. Towards the left, where the strokes lie over the background, a warm grey has been used. Touches of a greenish grey occur level with the temple. In the hair on the right use has been made of lines of black. The jewel in the hair is done in thick black with coarse white highlights, with the rim of light in a thick ochrish paint with dots of yellow. The rather indistinctly structured sprig with its flowers and leaves is painted mostly in grey and white. The pearls of the diadem are all painted with a touch of grey on which, alongside each other, there is a white and a black or dark grey spot, with here and there an ochre-coloured dab between the pearls. The pearls in the necklace are painted thinly in greyish white with a white highlight, invariably placed at the centre of the pearl. The earrings, like the jewel in the hair and the brooch on the breast, are in black with a thick contour in an ochre colour, with white catchlights. The jewel below the eardrop is in thick greys and whites, with a little yellow and a touch of light blue. The gold ring and pearl hang on a precisely-painted black cord that is repeated as a shadow on the collar in brown of the same shade as is used to show the patterns on the collar. In the underlayer of collar the pattern is done in black. The shadow of the upper layer of collar on the lower is in a yellowish grey, painted on top of the white. The costume is effectively and deftly rendered in a generally opaque black, with internal detail done in a grey on top of which there are, again, lines in black. The gold-coloured bow at the belt is, in the shadow, in an ochrish basic colour with on top of it indications of a pattern in thin and very dark grey and a little red. The highlights are applied as thick streaks of whitish yellow. The shape of the belt had a reserve left for it in the black, and in this one can see the underlying ground; on top of this strokes of a thin dark grey have been placed, with other detail done

Fig. 2. Detail (1:1)



Fig. 3. Detail with signature (1:1)



in ochre colour and black. The highest lights are applied as dots and strokes of whitish-yellow paint.

The background is a very dark grey, covering fully with scarcely any apparent brushstroke. The tone becomes somewhat lighter above the shoulder on the left.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### X-Rays

None.

#### Signature

In the lower left background, in very dark brown (<Rembrandt /f 1634>). The R, which is close to the edge, appears to be open on the left, and stands narrow; the other letters, too, are rather thin and shaky. The inscription as a whole does not make a reliable impression.

#### Varnish

No special remarks.

#### 4. Comments

In a general sense the painting is close to Rembrandt's portraits from around 1634, and on a number of points such as the play of the shadows and reflexions of light, and the clothing, it is skilfully done. When looked at more closely, however, there are several aspects – both of execution and of quality – that rule out an attribution to Rembrandt. In the lit parts of the face the paint is in remarkably pale flesh tints, applied without much delicacy of gradation. The impasto is devoid of variation, and the brushstrokes almost invariably have the same rhythm; as a result they contribute little to the plastic rendering of form. The same lack of gradation marks the way the eye passages have been painted. Where Rembrandt is able to give the lines of an eye area a spatial dimension – as, for instance, in the *Louisville Portrait of a 40-year-old woman* of 1634 (no. A 87) – the lines here are hard and insensitive; as a result, they emphasize the almond shape of the eyes in a way that is untypical of Rembrandt (but which does appear in the Boston female portrait, no. C 73). The lower borders of the eyes and the corners – where in Rembrandt one is used to finding a subtle indication of the receding surface

of the eyeball, and a sheen of moisture – lack any suggestion of plasticity. The harshness of outline is repeated in the way the irises and white of the eye meet, and in the rendering of the jewels and ornament. The manner of painting, in itself consistent, lends the work an unatmospheric quality, and gives it a stamp unlike that of Rembrandt's portraits.

A number of the features just mentioned can be found in the oval portraits of a couple in Boston, which also carry an unreliable signature (nos. C 72 and C 73). There, too, similar liberal use is made of the ground showing through, and there is an equal insistence on linear elements. The way plasticity has been achieved in the two women's heads – not so much by brushwork and nuances in the flesh tints that suggest depth as by quite vigorous half-shadows with strong reflexions of light and the addition of a dimple in the cheek seen in the light – is strikingly similar in each case. The way the eyebrows in the Edinburgh portrait are painted, with diagonal hatching in a single direction for both eyebrows, is remarkably like the corresponding passages in the Boston male portrait. In view of these striking similarities it can be assumed that one and the same assistant was responsible for all three of these paintings. It is not improbable that no. C 82 was, as the inscription says, painted in 1634, as can be assumed for the Boston portraits. The costume depicted, including the jewellery, is quite in keeping with the fashion of around that year, as is the presumably bleached hair. There is however no evidence from physical dating of the kind offered by dendrochronology for the Boston portraits.

It is likely that no. C 82 had a male portrait as a companion-piece. In the literature<sup>1</sup> the *Leningrad Portrait of a young man in a hat* of 1634 (no. C 78) is often looked on as being this pendant. However, this man's portrait – though admittedly of like format – is from the point of view of its pose not geared to a companion-piece. There is no point of contact in the pedigree of the two paintings.

#### 5. Documents and sources

None.

#### 6. Graphic reproductions

1. P. W. Tomkins (London 1760–1840) in: W. Ottley, *Engravings of . . . the Marquis of Stafford's collection . . .*, London 1818, pt III, 67.

#### 7. Copies

None.

#### 8. Provenance

– Probably coll. Comte de Merle, sale Paris 1–4 March 1784

(Lugt 3686), no. 55: 'Rimbrandt Van Rhyn. Le Portrait d'une Dame de distinction: elle est représentée de face, coëffée en cheveux, vêtue d'un habillement noir portant une grande collerette de dentelle qui lui couvre les épaules. Un collier de perles & des boucles d'oreilles, sont les accessoires intéressants qui contribuent à sa parure. Ce Tableau, d'un fini précieux, à l'imitation de Gerard Douw, est aussi d'une pâte & d'une fonte de couleur admirable: les demi-teintes y sont rendues avec toute l'intelligence & la justesse possible. Nous connoissons peu de morceaux de la qualité de celui-ci, & d'une aussi parfaite conservation: hauteur 26 pouces, largeur 19 pouces [= 70.2 × 51.3 cm]. B[ois].' (1500 francs to Paillet).

– Coll. Destouches, sale Paris 21 March 1794 (Lugt 5171), no. 14: 'Rembrandt Van Rhyn. Le portrait d'une belle femme Hollandoise, vue de face, & vêtue de la plus riche parure. Sa tête d'une carnation de blonde, est coëffée de cheveux simplement peignés, où sont ajustées des perles & une cocarde liseré en or. Un grand collet de dentelle couvre sa poitrine et ses épaules, en se détachant sur un habillement orné de ceintures & rosettes en broderies; deux rangs de perles qui font la parure de son col, ressortent avec une vérité surprenante. Ce morceau très-étudié présente un des portraits marquans qui soient sortis des mains de ce grand coloriste. Haut 26 pou. larg. 19 [= 70.2 × 51.3 cm]. B[ois].' (1000 francs to Paillet).

– Marquess of Stafford, later Duke of Sutherland, by 1808 (Britton, no. 138), hence by inheritance to Lord Francis Egerton, later Earl of Ellesmere, Bridgewater House no. 187<sup>2</sup>.

– Since 1946 National Gallery, Edinburgh, on loan from the Duke of Sutherland.

## 9. Summary

The painting shows a general similarity to Rembrandt's portraits from around 1634, but differs from them in manner of painting and is inferior in quality. The treatment of the lit flesh areas, for example, is lacking in nuance, and because of the way the paint is everywhere applied with an even thickness there is scant suggestion of form. The way the eyes are painted, and more generally the absence of atmosphere in the treatment of the head and figure, represent major differences from Rembrandt's way of working.

The portrait offers similarities with the portraits in Boston of a couple (nos. C 72 and C 73), to such an extent indeed that one has to think of their being from the same hand. Like these, no. C 82 probably has to be seen as the work of an assistant in Rembrandt's workshop. The date of 1634 carried by all three of these paintings is probably an accurate indication.

The oval *Portrait of a young man in a hat* in Leningrad (no. C 78) has wrongly been regarded as a companion-piece to no. C 82.

## REFERENCES

- 1 HdG 859, Br. 345, Bauch 479, Gerson 167.
- 2 C. Thompson, H. Brigstocke, *Shorter Catalogue, the National Gallery of Scotland*, Edinburgh 1970, p. 80.

# Corrigenda et Addenda to Volume I

# Corrigenda et Addenda to Volume I

## Chapter II, p. 21

Where Pierre Lebrun's description of the use of 'la pinceliere' and 'le pincelier' is quoted (note 38), the translation does not distinguish between the two and mentions twice 'the pinceliere'. The last word of line 22 of the second column should read 'pincelier'.

## A 15 Judas, repentant, returning the pieces of silver

ENGLAND, PRIVATE COLLECTION

By mistake, fig. 2 on p. 179 was made not after the original X-ray films but after a composite photographic print. As a result, it is difficult to verify the description of the X-rays in the reproduction; especially the reserve thought to have been left for 'a figure enthroned high up against the background', as described under *X-Rays* point 10 (p. 184), cannot be made out at all in fig. 2.

Fig. 2. X-ray





**A 17 An old man asleep by the fire,  
perhaps typifying Sloth**

TURIN, GALLERIA SABAUDA, INV. NO. 393

To be added to 8. *Provenance* on p. 207:

\*— Sale Paris (Lebrun), 21–22 July 1795 (Lugt 5350), no. 63: 'J. Liévins. Un philosophe assis et endormi dans l'intérieur de son laboratoire, devant son feu; il a la tête appuyée sur la main droite; ce tableau qui tient de la belle manière de Rembrandt, est gravé dans l'oeuvre du C. Lebrun. Hauteur 18 pouces, larg. 15. T. Il provient de la collection de Destouches, No. 18 du Catalogue.' (Lebrun 3231 frs.).

**A 21 Self-portrait**

THE HAGUE, KONINKLIJK KABINET VAN  
SCHILDERIJEN, MAURITSHUIS, CAT. NO. 148

On p. 229, the *Comments* mention the gorget depicted as presenting an iconographic problem. The same motif occurs however, alone or together with other pieces of armour, in Vanitas still-lives. Especially noteworthy is the depiction of a gorget together with a skull and various papers, partly in the shadow cast by a crumbled wooden partition, and with the inscription *Vanitas vanitatis*, by Jan Davidsz. de Heem, signed and dated 1629 (and therefore painted in Leiden), in the picture gallery at Liberec, formerly Reichenberg, in Czechoslovakia (see H. Seifertová-Korecká in: *O.H.* 77, 1962, pp. 58–60, fig. 1). If the gorget can rightly be associated with Vanitas, the portrayal in no. A 21 of youth as subject to transience would match that in the *Self-portrait* in the Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston (no. A 20), where jewellery and a cap with an ostrich feather would seem to have the same meaning.

**A 23 Bust of a young man**

CLEVELAND, OHIO, THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF  
ART, ACC. NO. 42.644, BEQUEST OF JOHN L. SEVERANCE

On p. 245 it was said that 'it is not easy to give a clear answer on the question of authenticity. While on the one hand the painting exhibits a great many features that we recognize from works that we consider to be genuine, it does not on the other fit in well stylistically with the paintings from 1632, the year given by the signature. Instead of the broad indication of form that typifies the Cleveland painting, the busts from 1632 show a more pronounced plasticity, with livelier contours and a stronger differentiation of tone lending the forms weight and a

tactile quality. The brushwork of these heads is also looser and freer, while the treatment of light and shade has greater subtlety.' The dilemma created by these differences on the one hand and unmistakably Rembrandtesque features in the brushwork and treatment of light on the other was solved by assuming that the painting was produced not in 1632 but in Rembrandt's Leiden years. Similarities to three self-portraits dated 1629 or datable in that year seemed to provide sufficient grounds for maintaining the attribution of the Cleveland *Young man* to Rembrandt, even though a work by Isack Jouderville in Dublin was said to be 'in terms of subject matter and conception . . . remarkably close to the painting in Cleveland' (p. 247).

When reconsidering the matter, we cannot help feeling that, while our observations were mainly correct, the conclusion was not. Now that we have gained a clearer insight into the artistic personality of Isack Jouderville and the role he played in Rembrandt's workshop both in Leiden and in Amsterdam (see the present volume's Introduction, Chapter III and nos. C 9, C 54 and C 58), the Cleveland painting's Rembrandtesque features no longer warrant a Rembrandt attribution. Similar features may in fact be found in other paintings that can be attributed to Jouderville. The way the mouth in the Cleveland *Young man* has been painted, for instance, is – as we said – strikingly similar to the Hague *Self-portrait* (no. A 21) but it recurs nearly identically in the Chapel Hill *Young woman* (no. C 58), a work that may be attributed to Jouderville and dated in 1632. With the same picture the one in Cleveland shows close similarities in the way paint is handled – in the fine hatchings along the lit side of the cheek and the neck. In other respects – an emphatic but relatively ineffective impasto at such points as next to the wing of the nose or the eye-pouch – it resembles strongly the Windsor Castle *Young man in a turban* of 1631 (no. C 54). With both these paintings the Cleveland *Young man* has indeed so much in common, not only with regard to specific details but also to general appearance, that it may safely be included in the group of *tronies* that Jouderville painted in Rembrandt's studio in 1631 and '32. In view of the inscription *RHL* (in monogram) 1632, which may (as we think now; see also Introduction, Chapter V) have been applied by the studio assistant who executed the work, a date of 1632 is most likely. An attribution to Jouderville was already suggested by W. Martin (in: *Der Kunstwanderer* 1921–22, p. 30).

If one accepts Jouderville's authorship of the picture, Richard Leslie's suggestion that he is the sitter (see Vol. I, p. 247) gains, of course, in plausibility.

## A 28 Jeremiah lamenting the destruction of Jerusalem

AMSTERDAM, RIJKSMUSEUM, INV. NO. A 3276

To be added to 8. *Provenance* on p. 283:

– Coll. Count Alexander Stroganoff, S. Petersburg, later Paris; *Catalogue raisonné des tableaux, qui composent la collection du Comte A. de Stroganoff* – à St. Pétersbourg, 1800, cat. no. 51: 'Rembrandt Van-Ryn. Le philosophe en méditation. Un vieillard vénérable, de la figure la plus noble, retiré au fond d'une grotte, assis sur un beau tapis, le coude appuyé sur un livre qui a pour titre la Bible, a l'air de réfléchir profondément sur les vanités de ce monde figurées par une quantité de vases d'or et d'argent, jetés négligemment devant lui. Hors de la grotte, on voit dans le lointain une ville en feu, des soldats qui montent à l'assaut, de malheureux habitants qui fuient. Ce tableau est fait avec une telle magie, que quoique d'une touche hardie, il a l'air à une certaine distance, d'être du plus précieux fini; et comme la plupart de ceux qui sont sortis de la palette de ce grand peintre, il est d'un très grand effet: mais ce qui est bien rare chez Rembrandt, c'est que la composition en est d'une noblesse à comparer à l'école Italienne. Il a été peint en 1630, date qui est au bas; Schmit l'a gravé dans sa manière. Il est sur bois, d'un pied neuf pouces sept lignes de haut, sur un pied cinq pouces trois lignes de large [= 58.4 × 46.6 cm].'

## A 32 Bust of an old woman

WINDSOR CASTLE, H.M. QUEEN ELIZABETH II

The opinion given on the picture's authenticity in volume I (p. 319) may be summarized as follows. '(...) Though the painting is not as a whole directly comparable to any other work by Rembrandt, the attribution is still acceptable: on the one hand on the grounds of the treatment of wrinkled skin . . . and on the other on the grounds of a powerful and vivid treatment of accessory items that would be improbable in, for example, Lievens (who might also be thought a likely candidate for the attribution because of the large amount of grey in the skin tints).'

When surveying afresh Rembrandt's and Lievens' production in and around 1630/31, one may well feel hesitant about accepting the conclusion given in volume I. Do the Rembrandt-like features really outweigh the Lievens-like ones? Whatever the answer to this question, the Windsor *Old woman* may be called a borderline case, and whoever of the two artists painted it came very close to the other. The problem is that among neither Rembrandt's nor Lievens' paintings from their last Leiden years can there be found a complete analogy to the modelling of the face (fig. 1), 'done painstakingly in small touches of the brush and mainly reproducing the broad shapes, leaving the details of the wrinkled skin to be suggested by the paint sur-

face' (Vol. I, p. 319). It must however be said that this treatment may be considered closer to Lievens' work from 1631 – the Ottawa *Job on the dunghill* (Schneider no. 20) and related heads of old men – than to anything in Rembrandt. In those works the brushstroke in the flesh parts is usually freer – suggesting a nervous temperament – but there are passages in the *Job*, such as the left hand of Job's wife (fig. 2), where the form and meaning of the brushwork comes very close. One may add to this that the amount of grey in the face of the Windsor *Old woman* is definitely more in line with Lievens' usage than with Rembrandt's, and the same is true of the rendering of the irises in a flat and evenly applied brown-grey. Finally, the slow rhythm of the figure's slack contour and the somewhat erratic grey sheen on the purple hood correspond to features that may be regularly found in Lievens' works from about 1631, figure compositions as well as *tronies*. Taken together, these observations would seem to tip the scales in favour of an attribution to Lievens.

This idea is seemingly contradicted by the fact that what was indisputably the same painting was described in Abraham van der Doort's catalogue (of c. 1639) of the collection of Charles I (Oliver Millar ed., *The Walpole Society* 37, 1960, p. 60 no. 101) as 'done by Rembrandt'. It should however be borne in mind that confusion as to attribution between works done by Rembrandt and Lievens precisely in 1630–31 arose almost immediately after they had been produced. This is clear from the 1632 inventory of Frederik Hendrik of Orange (cf. nos. A 12, A 24, A 38, A 39) but also from Van der Doort's catalogue. The latter lists three works as by Rembrandt, all three given to the King by Lord Ancrum and one of them being '... a young Scholler Sitting upon a Stool In a purple capp and black gown reading in a book by a Seacole fire a paire of tongs lyeing by . . .' (op. cit. p. 57 no. 84). This painting – which appears to be lost – was however listed as 'A student sittinge by ye fyer; done by Lievens' in 1649 (O. Millar ed., *The Walpole Society* 43 (1972), p. 304 no. 97). What is more, detailed information on what must have been again the same picture is given in Orlers' *Beschrijvinge der Stadt Leyden* of 1641 (cf. Schneider, p. 294), where it is described as a work by Jan Lievens and one that the Prince of Orange bought and presented to the British Ambassador who presented it in turn to the King of England. Of the other two paintings listed by Van der Doort as by Rembrandt, one is the Windsor Castle *Old woman* and the other may confidently be recognized in the Liverpool *Self-portrait* (no. A 33). There remains some uncertainty as to how the three pictures came into the hands of Sir Robert Kerr (Earl of Ancrum from 1633) who ful-

filled a mission to Holland in 1629 and who is recorded by Van der Doort as having presented them to the king. It is generally thought that he acquired the paintings when in Holland, which would be in keeping with Orlers' story about Lievens' *Student by the fire*. This would however imply a date of 1629 at the latest for the *Old woman* at Windsor Castle and the *Liverpool Self-portrait*, neither of which appears to be datable earlier than 1630/31 for reasons of style. On this problem and on the problematic label at the back of the Windsor Castle picture, see now C. White, *The Dutch pictures in the Collection of Her Majesty the Queen*, Cambridge etc. 1982, pp. xxxvi–xxxvii, 101–102 no. 158 with full documentation.

### A 35 Christ on the Cross

LE MAS D'AGENAIS, LOT ET GARONNE, PARISH CHURCH

To be added to 8. *Provenance* on p. 344:

\*— Coll. Dowager Philippe Charles de Schietere, née Fraula, sale Bruges 9 Mai 1781 (Lugt 3265), no. 68: 'Un très-beau Tableau d'une forme Centrée par le haut, le Panneau d'une seule piece, représentant Jesus-Christ attaché à la Croix. Ce Tableau mérite l'admiration des Connoisseurs, particulièrement la Tête du Christ, dont l'expression douloureuse est traité au suprême degré, peint dans l'année 1631, par Rembrandt. B Haut 38½, large 28 pouces [= 96.2 × 70.0 cm].' (39 francs).

### A 40 The artist in oriental costume, with a poodle at his feet

PARIS, MUSÉE DU PETIT PALAIS, CAT. 1907 NO. 925

The advantage of seeing a picture's paint surface and the corresponding X-ray reproduced side-by-side and on the same scale was granted even to the authors only after the book had been printed, and some conclusions were consequently arrived at only after volume I had appeared. In this case we overlooked a curious fact that becomes apparent on comparing the original (fig. 1), the X-ray mosaic (fig. 2) and the copy reproduced in fig. 7. Of the two pairs of legs and feet visible in the X-rays, the copy unmistakably shows the longer pair, i.e. before Rembrandt corrected them and placed the feet higher up. It must be concluded that this is what the original looked like after Rembrandt had completed its initial version. Obviously dissatisfied with the figure's proportions, he must subsequently have tried at first to remedy the defect by shortening the

legs before finally covering up the whole area by adding the poodle and the curious little mound on which it sits. It may not be mere chance that in a work of about the same date a similar full-length figure was, after corrections involving the shortening of the legs, drastically scraped away and hidden under a completely different painting (cf. the *Liverpool Self-portrait*, no. A 33). This figure, too, was copied or, at least, followed closely in a workshop picture which may be attributed to Isack Jouderville (see no. C 9 fig. 4). The possibility that Jouderville did also the copy after the *Artist in oriental costume* (no. A 40 fig. 7) cannot be ruled out.

In an attempt to establish a date for the addition – evidently by Rembrandt himself – of the dog, we attached much importance to the signature and date that appear in the left bottom corner of the painting. In spelling and script this signature appeared to offer points of resemblance to Rembrandt signatures of 1633, and we assumed therefore that Rembrandt revised his painting in that year and appended his signature and the date of 1631, this being the year in which the painting was completed in its first state (without the dog).

While 1633 remains a plausible date for the addition of the dog – see the comments on nos. A 66 and A 92 on Rembrandt's use of model drawings of dogs in 1633 and 1634 – one may well have serious misgivings about the authenticity of the inscription. On comparison with an authentic 1633 signature – see for instance nos. A 68 fig. 6, A 80 fig. 4 – the shape of the letters and numerals is far from characteristic and the internal cohesiveness of the inscription as a whole is weak. Our doubts are shared by Mrs R. ter Kuile-Haller and Ir. H. Hardy, handwriting experts of the Forensic Science Laboratory of the Minister of Justice, Rijswijk, who examined a number of Rembrandt signatures at the initiative of Prof. Dr W. Froentjes. It is hard to say whether or not the inscription was added by a later hand.

HDG 679; BR. 82; BAUCH 131; GERSON 48

### 1. Summarized opinion

A reasonably well preserved painting that presents sufficient resemblances to comparable works by Rembrandt from 1630 and 1631 to be accepted as authentic. It must have been painted in Leiden before Rembrandt moved to Amsterdam in 1631.

### 2. Description of subject

An old man, with grey moustache and beard and a frown-wrinkled forehead, is seen to just above the waist with the body turned three-quarters left. The head is turned sharply on the body to face a little towards the right, and the gaze is fixed on the viewer. He wears a black skullcap, and a cloak with a wide fur collar that at the throat just reveals a grey garment beneath. A gold chain hangs over his shoulders. The figure casts a vague shadow on the rear wall to the lower right; the background is darkest on the left.

### 3. Observations and technical information

#### *Working conditions*

Examined on 17 February 1983 (B. H., E. v. d. W.) in moderate daylight and good artificial light, and out of the frame, with the aid of four X-ray films covering the whole of the painting.

#### *Support*

DESCRIPTION: Oak panel, grain vertical, 59.5 × 51.2 cm. Thickness c. 0.8 cm. Single plank. Back bevelled fairly evenly over a width of 3–4 cm along all four sides. The back is covered with a dark paint that shows up lightish in the X-rays (paint loss in this layer appears dark).

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Ground*

DESCRIPTION: Yellow-brown, showing through especially in the brushmarks of the background, along the contours of the skullcap and at many places in the fur collar. The nature of the patches of wear suggest that the ground has a slightly rough surface.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *Paint layer*

CONDITION: The head is in good condition, as is the background. The black of the skullcap and in the cloak has suffered somewhat, and the shadow of the beard is also slightly worn. The layer of varnish hampers assessment of the extent of the wearing; one can however see that the patches of wear have been partly retouched with small and mainly vertical brushstrokes. Craquelure: in the thicker flesh tints there are small vertical cracks, and especially in the red-brown shadow tints of the face the paint shows irregular cracking.

DESCRIPTION: The paint is everywhere applied relatively thinly, with differing degrees of translucency and opacity. The vertical grain of the panel is visible everywhere in relief.

The background is brushed with very rapid, sometimes wavy strokes running in various directions, so that occasionally the ground can be seen between them. The grey paint around the head is the most opaque; on the left below the ear and on the right along the cheekbone this is a noticeably cool grey. A small patch of yellowish ground is exposed at the upper edge of the skullcap. Level with the ear on the right and the lobe of the ear on the left there seems to have been a correction

to the contour – the paint is somewhat browner at these points. Level with the lefthand shoulder, to the right of the signature and date, some reddish paint can be seen in a vague pattern of spots, apparently painted over patches of wear and – if this is the case – done by a later hand. The stem of the 6 in the date is done on top of the reddish paint, which would indicate that it was added to later. The direction of the brushstrokes, especially above the shoulder on the right, follow the shoulder line. The transition from the opaque grey round the head to the more translucently painted areas that surround it is gradual. In the righthand bottom corner the cast shadow from the figure is shown in darker paint; on the left, too, a zone of dark grey runs along virtually the entire edge.

The clothing is done with very free strokes, with the brushstrokes again allowing the ground to show through. The fur collar is painted in dark grey to black, with small strokes running in various directions. At the contours the strokes run partly out over the paint of the background; on the left they have been done wet-in-wet with the background, and form an only vaguely-defined outline. The division between the collar and the rest of the fur cloak is shown with a very dark black, to be interpreted as the shadow of the collar on the cloak. The undergarment is painted with relaxed strokes of cool grey, partly over the black of the fur collar, and enlivened with a little white. Low down it is shown with a darker grey in mainly horizontal strokes.

The chain is indicated cursorily, with everywhere strokes of black along the edges of the links and pendant to represent cast shadows. The base tint of the links of the chain is predominantly a dull yellow with touches of brown-yellow and yellow and streaks of white for the highest lights. The pendant is done in a yellowish brown, with tiny catchlights in white. By the shoulders the treatment of the chain is summary in the extreme – using on the right strokes and blobs of brown, and on the left a dirty yellow and light brown.

The skullcap is done with free strokes of black, with various shades of grey for the sheen of light. The paint of the head and beard shows a fairly even thickness, and nowhere are there areas of impasto. The brushstroke is free and open, clearly visible everywhere and done mostly wet-in-wet. In the head-dress, too, it seems to have been applied wet-in-wet – some of the black of the cap is mixed in with the hairs at the temple on the left. In the face the strokes mostly correspond, in direction and length, with the shapes and wrinkles being suggested, though occasionally they are set at right angles to these (for instance here and there in the forehead). On the nose they run obliquely towards the tip. The colour-scheme is quite varied – high up on the forehead the flesh colour is rather greyish, while at the transitions to the temples it is pink. Above the eye on the left there are thin strokes indicating white edges. By the frown-lines between the eyes a yellowish flesh tint predominates, with brown for the shadows; on the nose the amount of pink increases again. On the ridge and tip of the nose there are touches of white, worked into the wet paint. Below the eye on the left the grey tint seen in the forehead recurs, merging into a yellowish pink towards the grey-white of the side-whiskers. The cheek consists of pinkish and brownish strokes, with here and there a touch of red-brown. The fold in the cheek, by the wing of the nose on the left, is in a dull brown with on top of it a brown-red that occurs again, though thinner, below the lefthand wing of the nose. The transition from the wing of the nose to this brown-red stroke is made with a thin greyish paint. To the left of the moustache (which is done wet-in-wet with the flesh colour) there are strokes of a yellowish pink.

The transition from the lit forehead to the shadow side is formed by a confusion of strokes, some in a translucent brown

Fig. 1. Panel 59.5 × 51.2 cm

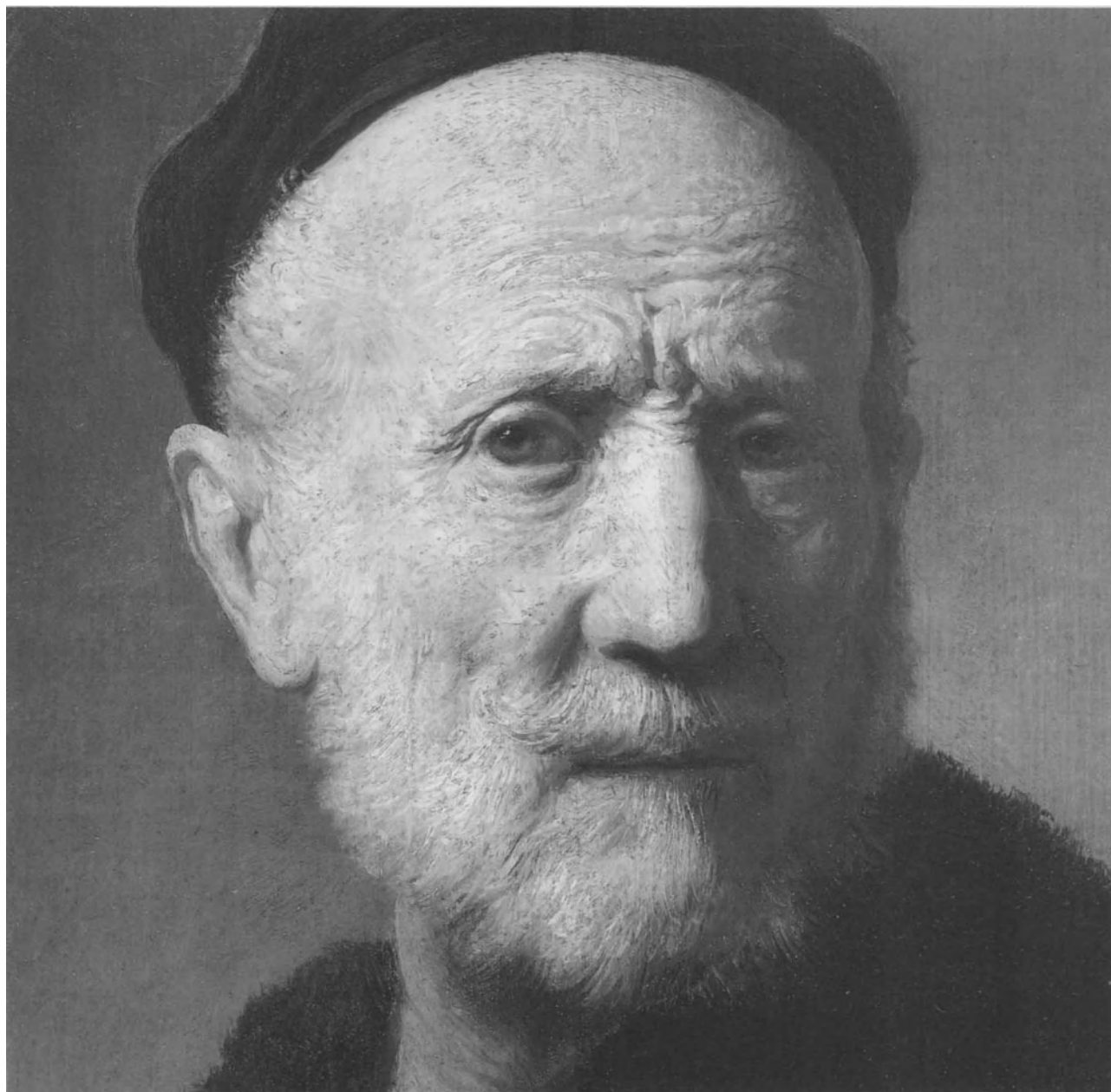


Fig. 2. X-ray





Fig. 3. Detail (1:1.5)



and others in a more opaque reddish brown; the shadow side of the forehead itself is done mainly in opaque grey. Along the temple there is a yellowish grey to show reflected light, and this continues downwards to just past the cheekbone. The opaque grey of the shadow becomes a little more ruddy along the nose, and somewhat greenish towards the mouth. The fold in the cheek on the right is applied loosely, and almost negligently, with strokes of black over a brownish tint. The grey of the beard is painted wet-in-wet with the black of the fur collar, so that spiky small strokes of black, belonging to the collar, also pick out the hairs of the beard.

The eye in shadow is shown summarily. A brown-red plays a part in the transition from the shadow of the nose to the partially lit area around the eye, where the plasticity of the eyelid and eye-pouch is highly effective. The lights on the eyelid and eye-pouch are shown with a yellowish grey. The white of the eye and the iris are indicated broadly with dull greys; the pupil is an irregular spot of black. Dark lines are

used to define the border between the upper eyelid and the iris, and to show the lefthand edge of the latter. The iris of the eye on the left is a yellowish brown with the pupil set in it wet-in-wet; the latter has a small white catchlight placed at the upper left. On the left the light grey used for the white of the eye runs some way over the iris. On the right there is a rather fluid transition between the iris and the white of the eye. In the corner of the eye there are touches of a carmine-like red and a vermilion red. The latter colour is again found in the upper edge of the lower eyelid, and in the pouch below it. On the upper lid there is a striking, and almost white, glancing brush-stroke. The upper lid is bordered by brown and almost wine-red strokes and dabs that run out into the crowsfeet towards the left. In the shadow below the eyebrow some black shows through, possibly part of the underpainting, and on top of this a greenish grey (which mainly determines the colour of this area) has been placed.

The transitions between the flesh areas and the hair of the

Fig. 4. Detail with signature (1:1)



head and side-whiskers, moustache and beard is not clearly defined, since the strokes and touches (some done wet-in-wet) merge gradually into each other. In the hair the brushstrokes follow the lie of the hairs. Just below the nose a little brown-yellow paint has been worked in, and above and below the mouth strokes of black together with grey and almost white strokes form the moustache and beard. The lips are done with thin strokes of brown, with the ground just showing through. The mouth-line is formed from a number of lines in brown and dark grey. The ear is shaped precisely in yellow and reddish flesh tints with ruddy brown for the shadows, with that in the shell of the ear merging gradually into the flesh tints. The neck is extremely cursory, brushed in a dull yellow-brown with scant suggestion of the curve. The shadow of the beard is in a murky, liver-coloured brown, applied in streaky brushstrokes along the fur collar.

SCIENTIFIC DATA: None.

#### *X-Rays*

The paint on the back of the panel that has already been described under *Support* shows up lightish in the X-ray; the bevelling can be seen at the left, top and bottom, and light and mostly more or less horizontal scratches evidently correspond to filled-in toolmarks on the back.

Because of the layer of paint of varying radioabsorbency on the back, the painted image on the front of the panel can be made out only vaguely. The background does not offer a distinct image, so the reserve left for the figure can be traced only partially. The head, too, presents little contrast, although the brushstrokes seen in various areas at the surface can be made out.

In the background the correction in contour below the ear on the left, already described, shows up comparatively light, undoubtedly as a result of the thickness of the paint used. A curved stroke that appears light by the edge of the undergarment does not entirely coincide with the edge of the latter, and matches an underlying brushstroke that can also be seen at the surface.

#### *Signature*

On the left level with the shoulder, in brown paint <RHL (in monogram) .1631>. The monogram differs little from the background in colour. At the bowl of the *R* there is a retouched damage. The horizontal stroke of the *L* is clearly apparent in relief. The dots after the monogram and the date are in a much darker paint than the monogram itself. The script is rather weak, and taking account of the suspicion that the stem of the 6 has been painted over a restored patch though the paint of

this stem does not differ from that of the rest of the date, it is possible that the date was added, or strengthened, by a later hand. No traces of an earlier original version can however be seen.

#### *Varnish*

An old and yellow layer of varnish, which from its patchy appearance under ultraviolet light is uneven in thickness, is admittedly transparent enough not to hamper observation, but the overall colour appearance is nevertheless bound to be affected especially where the shades of the flesh tints are concerned.

#### 4. Comments

The painting – which became available for examination too late for it to be included in Volume I – belongs, on the grounds of manner of painting and motif, quite clearly to a group of *tronies* that bear the stamp of Rembrandt's style during his last years in Leiden. It has been explained in Volume I how hard it is, between the works of this type regarded as being autograph, to find any stylistic link, and how many problems there are in deciding on whether they are autograph (see Introduction, Chapter I, pp. 7–9 of that volume, and our revised opinion of nos. A 23, A 32 and B 7 on pp. 838, 839 and 847 of the present volume). Time and time again, and in the case of the *tronie* being considered here, the judgment has to be based on comparison with other works of the same type, and the weighing-up of similarities and differences not only in the manner of painting but also, and especially, in the pictorial approach this implies.

A comparison can first be made with the little *Bust of an old man in a fur cap* dated 1630 in Innsbruck (no. A 29), to which no. A 40a shows the greatest similarity in its motif, mostly in the angle at which the face is viewed and the lighting in which the head is seen. Allowing for the difference of scale, one can say that a variety of aspects of the manner of painting found in the Innsbruck painting are seen again here. This applies on the one hand to the background in both paintings, where the distribution of light and shade, the free and energetic brushwork in the thinner areas and the more thickly applied areas of grey along the head form common characteristics, and on the other to some extent also to the two heads where one finds a comparable treatment almost feature by feature. In no. A 40a the brushstroke is indisputably more free and has a clearer graphic function that is partly ascribable to the larger scale on which the painting is done. The use of colour – with subtly balanced accents in red and pinkish tints – seems very similar; only the manner in which, in no. A 40a, the shadow side of the face is executed largely in an opaque grey is not to be

found in the Innsbruck painting. The clothing, finally, is in no. A40a – although somewhat worn and empty due to abrasion – especially in its relation to the background and in the cursory indication of the undergarment, certainly quite comparable with what can be seen in the Innsbruck work; it is only the contour that shows a tendency to a greater vivacity.

This liveliness of contour can be found to an even greater extent in the other painting to which no. A40a has to be compared – the Chicago *Old man in a gorget and black cap* (no. A42), a work that Rembrandt must have done after his move to Amsterdam late in 1631 (see Vol. I, p. 685). There a fresh dynamic is lent to the motif by the sharp turn of the head, and the contour wholly serves the spiralling movement that characterizes the figure. In its approach no. A40a could very well be looked on as a link between the Innsbruck painting of 1630 and that in Chicago from the end of 1631, and in manner of painting as well it occupies a midway position between the two. In the Chicago painting the brushwork is subordinated to a new discipline of the modelling function. In some parts, such as the crowsfeet beside the eye on the left, a plastic effect has been achieved so much in both instances by using the same devices, and with equal force of conviction, that one cannot escape the impression that these are works from one and the same hand. Even a detail like the gold chain is, in form and technique, identical in both cases. It seems justifiable to conclude that no. A40a was painted by Rembrandt, and done in Leiden in the first half of 1631. This is in keeping with the signature and date now visible, the authenticity of which is uncertain.

Rembrandt having painted no. A40a in 1631 would in two respects fit in well with the picture we have of his and Lievens' output around that year. The series of seven *tronies* that Lievens must have etched in that period (see Vol. I, p. 40 note 8) has a depiction of a very similar, or the same, model in very similar clothing (Hollst. XI, no. 36), and no. A40a is also able to shed fresh light on products from Rembrandt's own studio. One sees, for instance, that the *Bust of an old man in a cap* in 'The Hague' (no. B7), in the handling of the head, can be regarded as scarcely other than a coarser version of this motif, and the possibility left open in Vol. I that the painting in The Hague is by Rembrandt himself must be discounted (see also p. 847 of the present volume). In this connexion it is interesting that this painting is done on a panel that comes from the same tree that provided wood for two panels Rembrandt painted in Leiden (nos. A12 and A38). If the painting in The Hague was done in Rembrandt's Leiden circle, this may provide support to

the notion that its prototype, too, was painted during his period of activity in Leiden.

For comments on the identity of the model, who was used repeatedly by Rembrandt, Lievens and Dou, see entry no. A17. To this one may add that Bredius and Gerson<sup>1</sup> do not find it acceptable that this painting, dated 1631, depicts Rembrandt's father who died in April 1630.

## 5. Documents and sources

None.

## 6. Graphic reproductions

None.

## 7. Copies

Two copies are known to us, but they can make no claim to any special significance.

## 8. Provenance

- Dealer P. & D. Colnaghi, London.
- Coll. F. Fleischmann, London, at least 1905–1915<sup>2</sup>.
- Coll. Oscar Ashcroft; loaned by Mrs Oscar Ashcroft to the City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham, in the 1960s<sup>3</sup>.

## 9. Summary

Although the manner of painting in the head is somewhat freer and more graphic than in any other authentic *tronie*, no. A40a exhibits such a resemblance in treatment to the Innsbruck *Old man in a fur cap* dated 1630 (no. A29) and to the Chicago *Old man in a gorget and black cap* (no. A42) which must have been painted after Rembrandt's move to Amsterdam in late 1631, that it can be assumed that the painting was produced in between those two works, in Leiden in 1631 and by Rembrandt. On comparison it is plain that the *Old man in a cap* in The Hague (no. B7) must be a coarser derivative by a different hand.

## REFERENCES

- 1 Br. 82; Gerson 48; Br.-Gerson 82.
- 2 W. Bode and C. Hofstede de Groot, *Rembrandt VIII*, Paris 1905, no. 544; HdG 679.
- 3 Bauch 131.

Fig. 6. After Rembrandt, *Bust of a young man*. Formerly Gates Collection**A 41 Bust of a young man in a plumed cap**

TOLEDO, OHIO, THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART, ACC.  
NO. 26.64, GIFT OF EDWARD DRUMMOND LIBBEY

Among the photographs of anonymous paintings from the Rembrandt school kept in the RKD, The Hague, there is one of a picture (formerly in the Gates Collection) that turns out to visualize a previous state of the Toledo painting as we were able to describe it on the basis of the X-ray and also, in part, of traces of underlying paint that can be glimpsed through the present top layer. It conforms largely to our description, though the highest light does not (as we suggested) seem to have been limited to the neck area and right background, with only a secondary emphasis on the lit part of the face.

This discovery prompts two further remarks. In the first place, it has become questionable whether we were right in assuming that the present state of the original stems from 1631, the year indicated by the picture's inscription. This assumption was mainly based on the belief that the background had been repainted in its entirety and that the inscription had therefore to be connected with the completion of the picture in its final state. The idea one now gets of what the picture looked like in its original state rather suggests a homogeneous product of 1631 (and probably done already in Amsterdam).

The relatively broad treatment of the present cap and plume (cf. no. A 41 fig. 4) would seem to fit a date in the mid-1630s rather than an earlier one and the whole of the repainting of the picture would have to be moved to those years. One would then have to think of the background as having been redone for the greater part but not in its entirety. One may speculate that a painting like this was referred to in the list of Rembrandt's inventory in 1656 as 'Een vanitas van Rembrandt, geretukeert' (A vanitas by Rembrandt, retouched) (Strauss *Doc.*, 1656/12, no. 27; on the interpretation of young men wearing jewellery and a cap with an ostrich feather as representing Vanitas, see no. A 20 under 4. *Comments*).

Secondly, it should be noted that this is not the only instance of a previous state of a Rembrandt painting being reproduced in another picture. The latter may have been directly based on the original, as in the case of what must be a studio copy after the *Artist in oriental costume* in the Petit Palais, Paris (no. A 40 fig. 7), done before the addition of the poodle, or the small fragment attributable to Isack Jouderville that obviously reproduces a self-portrait now hidden beneath the top layer of the Glasgow *Self-portrait* (no. A 58 fig. 7; Introduction, Chapter III, fig. 28). The last-named copy was copied in turn (cf. *Burl. Mag.* 105, 1963, p. 229). It is therefore possible, but not necessary to assume that the painting reproduced here was done in Rembrandt's workshop and directly after the original. If it was, it would have to be dated between 1631 and c. 1635.

**B 7 Bust of an old man in a cap**

THE HAGUE, KONINKLIJK KABINET VAN  
SCHILDERIJEN, MAURITSHUIS, CAT. NO. 565

We concluded 'that an attribution to Rembrandt's circle or even to the artist himself and, in either case, a dating at c. 1630/31 are more likely than the idea of a more remote imitator' (Vol. I, p. 437). It must be commented that after the appearance of the *Bust of an old man*, no. A 40a, described above, the chances of no. B 7 being by Rembrandt himself have certainly not improved. Not only does the painting in The Hague repeat the general lay-out of the other work – including originally the high lit forehead, which means that the relationship cannot have been the other way round – but it also reproduces many features of the face in a much coarser and less successful way. Considering all the evidence available, it seems more logical to think of a follower in Rembrandt's circle.

## C6 The rest on the flight into Egypt

U.S.A., PRIVATE COLLECTION

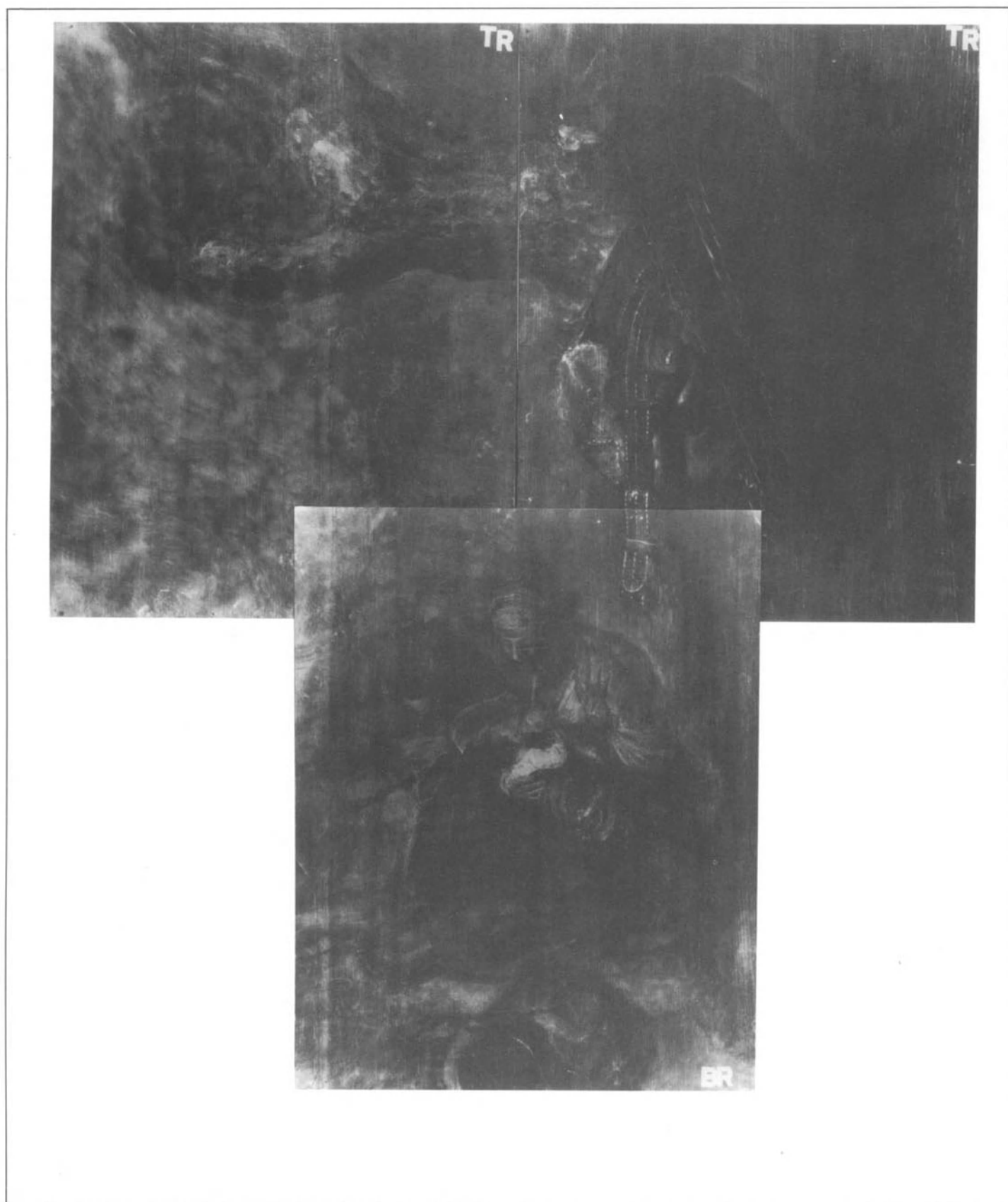
Fig. 1. Panel 77.6 × 64 cm



Stylistic analysis based on new comparisons and renewed examination of the picture (with the help of a microscope and infrared reflectography; J. B. and E. v. d. W., November 1985) have resulted in

more precise conclusions than we were able to offer in Volume I. We are now also in a position to illustrate these conclusions with adequate photographs.

Fig. 2. X-ray



When commenting on the *Good Samaritan* in the Wallace Collection (no. C 48), we already pointed to the correspondences in execution of the landscape between that picture and the *Rest on the flight into*

*Egypt*, and between these two paintings and signed works by Govaert Flinck dating from 1636 to 1640. Particularly telling in this respect is the *Portrait of Jacob Dircksz. Leeuw*, signed and dated 1636



Fig. 3. Detail



(Amsterdam, Doopsgezinde Gemeente; on loan to the Rijksmuseum from 1899 to 1952; Von Moltke *Flinck*, no. 211, Sumowski *Gemälde II*, no. 685). The way the trees in this picture are rendered and set off against the sky by means of discrete short strokes recurs strikingly similar in the middle-ground of the *Rest on the flight into Egypt*, though here the paint has been applied somewhat more thickly as is to be expected from a painting on panel (cf. figs. 3 and 4). The treatment of the foreground – in thin ochres and greys (applied in no. C6 partly with a fingertip, see fig. 5) – is very similar in both pictures and in the *Good Samaritan*, and there can be little doubt that Flinck executed the last-named picture and the landscape in the *Rest on the Flight into*

*Egypt* during his stay in Rembrandt's workshop in 1633/34.

Is Flinck to be held responsible for no. C6 in its entirety? The skillful illusionistic rendering of the still-life items, especially the wickerwork cradle, reminds one forcibly of Gerard Dou and is so far removed from any known work by Flinck that an attribution of these passages to a different hand becomes virtually inescapable. That Dou and Flinck did work on one and the same picture may be concluded from the description of an item in the estate of one Laurens Mauritsz. Douci in Amsterdam on 18 January 1669: '39. Een Josep en Maria van Gerrit Douw en Flinck – f 10.-' (A. Bredius, *Künstler-Inventare II*, p. 423). The experts respon-

Fig. 4. G. Flinck, *Portrait of Jacob Dircksz. Leeuw*, 1636, detail. Amsterdam, Doopsgezinde Gemeente



sible for the valuation were Ferdinand Bol and Gerrit Uylenburgh, who must have been well-informed on the matter in hand. Although there is no way of proving it, their description may well relate to no. C6. This however raises several questions – did Dou also paint the figures? did he contribute his share to the picture in Leiden before Rembrandt moved to Amsterdam, or did he settle temporarily there and collaborate with Flinck in 1633/34? There is, as far as we know, no evidence of Dou having left Leiden for Amsterdam. But are we then to assume that, contrary to common usage, Dou started by painting the figures and accessories in Leiden before the landscape was done?

Close examination of the paint surface has

yielded tentative answers to these questions. Not only do the basket cradle and the saddle with leather girth and bag, as well as the objects lying on the ground and the burdock leaves, proclaim more or less clearly Dou's authorship, the figures too are not incompatible with what one may imagine to have been that artist's earliest painting style. Specially interesting in this connexion is the minutely observed and delicately executed modelling of Joseph's right hand and the book it holds, and of Mary's ornamented dress and, particularly, her left foot, combined with a certain awkwardness in the drawing of both figures. Similar characteristics are to be recognized in a work such as Dou's signed *Astronomer* in Leningrad (no. 1012; our fig. 7),

Fig. 5. Detail (1:1)



which may with some confidence be assigned a date prior to 1636 (the earliest date inscribed on any known Dou painting). One also finds here a certain crudity in the flesh parts and a treatment of outlines (of textiles especially) that are very close to corresponding passages in the *Rest on the flight into Egypt*. Whether or not, (and if so to what extent) the second hand (i.e. Flinck) worked over part of the figures, is not easy to establish. This problem concerns especially Joseph's dress.

As is clear already to the naked eye and is confirmed by inspection under the microscope, the paint of figures and accessories is in most instances overlapped by paint belonging to adjacent areas of landscape, tree or ground. The reverse – which one would normally expect (see Volume I, pp. 25 ff.) –

is only occasionally the case (mainly where a dull green that elsewhere overlaps e.g. Joseph's book and Mary's skirt is overlapped by Joseph's dress, which makes one think that the latter was, entirely or in part, repainted). What is particularly interesting in this connexion is the fact that at places the paint of figures or accessories is not touched by that of landscape or ground; this is notably the case between the upper outline of the brown cloth and the cool grey of the ground (fig. 5), where a gap is left through which one glimpses an underlying beige. Similarly, a thin grey is visible next to a translucent brown at the righthand extremity of the stick. These observations – and more could no doubt be made – may be interpreted as evidence that the first painter (i.e. Dou) did not paint the

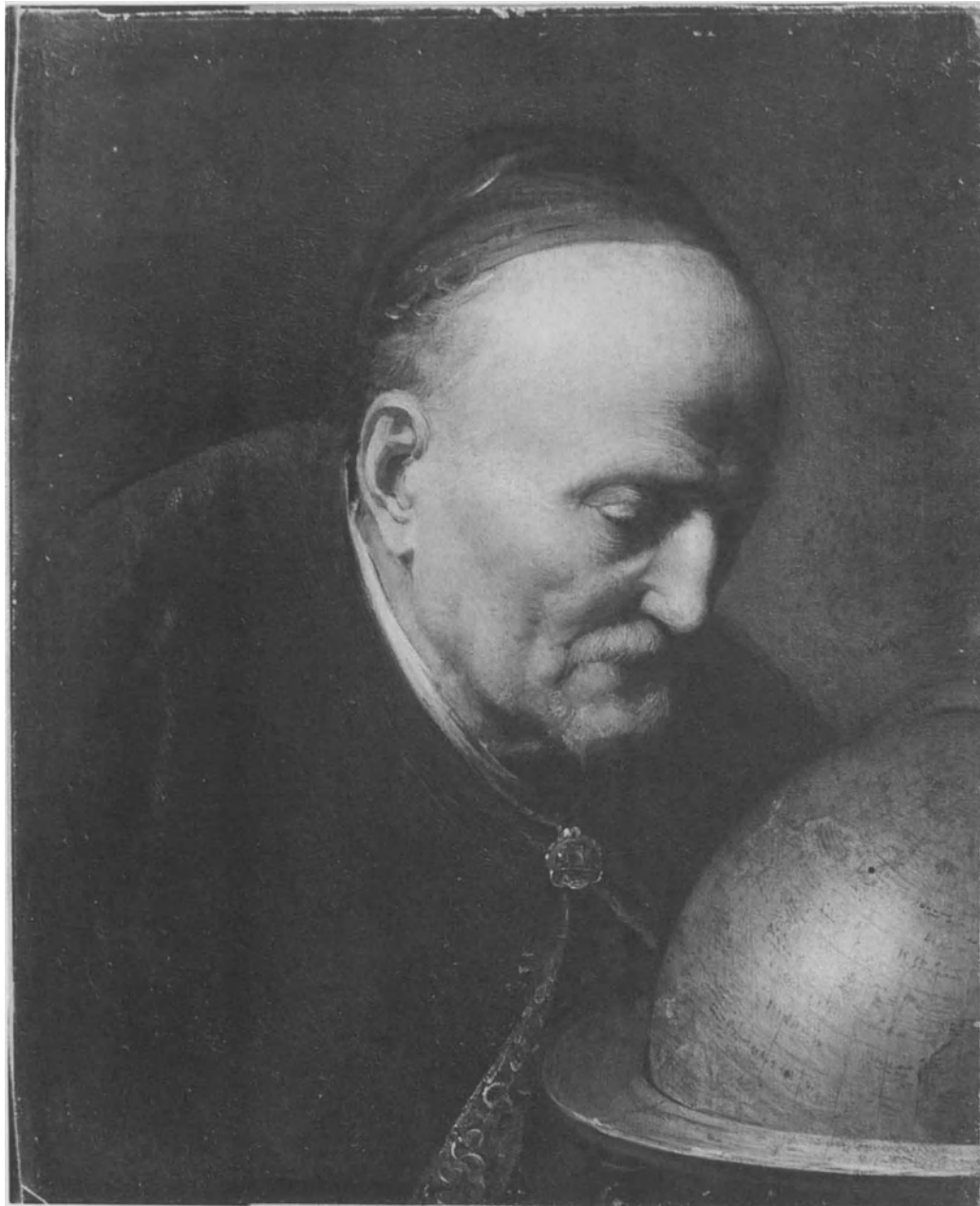
Fig. 6. Detail (1:1)



figures and accessories in isolation but provided them with a setting of some kind right from the start. That this setting, or at least part of it, took the form of a landscape may be deduced from the fact that on the left the light blue of the sky can be seen (along the edge) to continue underneath the paint of the present landscape vista approximately down to the borderline of the present foreground.

Two remarks remain to be made. One concerns the Virgin's feet. During restoration (about 1950?)

removal of overpaintings laid bare her left foot. Microscope examination makes it clear that higher up, underneath a patch of green (which clearly differs from the thin dull green used elsewhere in the foreground), a pinkish flesh colour can be glimpsed, in the shape of the partly visible right foot. Infrared reflectography confirms the presence of a second foot, though this does not show in the X-ray. The overlaying green continues over a superficial damage and is to all appearance due to a later addition.

Fig. 7. G. Dou, *Astronomer*. Leningrad, The Hermitage Museum

The other remark has to do with the peculiar appearance of the area of sky and tree at the top left. Particles of blue scattered over the strangely chaotic leaves indicate that this area was once covered over with paint of that colour, and it seems that this overpainting was only partly removed, the present border between sky and leaves being an arbitrary one. Whether this blue was applied later or already by the second hand (Flinck) remains unclear; nor could we distinguish it from the blue used for the lower part of the sky over which Flinck painted his distant trees.

To sum up, we may assume that Dou did a first version of the whole (or a large part) of the picture, most likely in Rembrandt's Leiden workshop. That the type of composition – a few figures under a tree – was not foreign to him even in later years

may be seen from paintings depicted in some of his studio interiors, especially in a representation of the Good Samaritan rendered in *A painter in his studio* that was with the Leonard Koetser Gallery, London, in 1973. If we are to assume that the similarity between the figure of the Virgin with Child with that in Rembrandt's etching B.62, datable in 1631/32, is more than fortuitous, both the etching and Dou's painting would have to be placed at the very end of Rembrandt's stay in Leiden in 1631. It may even be that the painting was not yet completed when Rembrandt took it with him to Amsterdam and had it partly over-painted by Flinck. The latter phase can be dated in 1633/34, during Flinck's stay in Rembrandt's workshop which, according to Houbraken, lasted one year.



**C 38 Bust of a young man** (commonly called  
a self-portrait of Rembrandt)

NEW YORK, N.Y., THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF  
ART, ACC. NO. 53.18, BEQUEST OF E. VANDER B. SCHLEY

The painting has perhaps to be seen as derived from the *Bust of Rembrandt* in Paris (Br. 29) before the latter was drastically changed by extensive over-painting.

**C 42 Bust of an old woman**

ESSEN, COLL. H. VON BOHLEN UND HALBACH

It seems possible to bring greater precision to our conclusion that the painting was done by an imitator. The extensive use of opaque greys, the superabundance of scratchmarks used to indicate a decorative pattern and numerous erratic wrinkles, and also the figure's poorly articulated outline are all features that remind one strongly of two other imitations that were already recognized as coming from the same hand – the *Travellers resting* in The Hague (no. C 12) and the *Man reading in a lofty room* in London (no. C 14). Though in a different context, the same features appear there in so identical a form, that there can be little doubt that all three pictures were done by one and the same imitator. This means that no. C 42, too, was probably produced in the Southern Netherlands, presumably in the late 17th or early 18th century. It is unfortunate that, owing to the extreme thinness of the original panel, dendrochronological examination will be virtually impossible.

**C 44 Bust of a young girl**

HELSINKI, SINEBRYCHOFF ART MUSEUM, THE FINE  
ARTS ACADEMY OF FINLAND, INV. NO. 85

While quoting the attribution to a Rembrandt pupil from the Leiden period given by Bauch in his 1966 book on Rembrandt (p. 48 no. 328), we overlooked the suggestion by the same author (Bauch 1960, p. 267 no. 191) that Isack Jouderville could be the author of the Helsinki painting. The attribution was adopted by the museum and E. van de Wetering came independently to the same conclusion (in: cat. exh. *The impact of a genius. Rembrandt and his pupils and followers . . .*, Amsterdam, K. & V. Waterman, 1983, p. 66 and footnote 37). See also the present volume's Introduction, Chapter III.



# Tables and Indexes

# Table of technical reference material

The following table lists available scientific reference material relating to paintings discussed in the present volume. The data themselves are included in the text of our catalogue entries. Other than for the dendrochronological data (listed on pp. 865–866) and the thread-counts surveyed in Chapter II (table B) of the Introduction, no effort has been made to give a survey of the individual information. As a specification of scientific data obtained and interpreted by different methods may easily yield misleading results, only the existence and amount of reference material are indicated, together with the places where it was examined and is currently kept. As for the X-rays listed, most though not all are in the museum's or owner's records as well as in our files, as originals, copy films or paper prints. X-Rays of the whole or virtually whole area of paintings are listed in a different column from those covering only part of the painting. Neutron activation autoradiographs have been taken only of paintings in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, and are kept there; a selection of reduced prints is in our files. A question mark indicates that the number of samples taken and cross-sections prepared is unknown to us. The institutes where research was carried out are

listed as follows:

Amsterdam	Central Research Laboratory
The Hague	Professor Dr W. Froentjes, assisted by Mr L. Kuiper, former restorer at the Mauritshuis, and Mr W. Verschuren, chief assistant at the Forensic Science Laboratory of the Ministry of Justice, Rijswijk (cf. De Vries, Tóth-Ubbens, Froentjes)
London	National Gallery Research Laboratory
Los Angeles	Los Angeles County Museum of Art
Munich	Doerner-Institut
New York	The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Research Laboratory
Oberlin	Intermuseum Laboratory
Ottawa	National Gallery of Canada, Restoration Conservation Laboratory
Paris	Laboratoire du Musée du Louvre

		Support		Ground and paint			Photographic documents					Remarks
		dendrochronology	canvas research	research institute	number of paint samples	number of cross-sections	complete	partial	Neutron activation autoradiographs	infrared photograph	U.V. fluorescent photograph	
A 43	<i>Portrait of Nicolaes Ruts</i> , New York, Frick Coll.	*		Munich	1	?	+				+	*mahogany panel
A 44	<i>Portrait of a man at a writing-desk</i> , Leningrad		+					+				
A 45	<i>Portrait of a man seated</i> , Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum	*					+					*walnut panel
A 46	<i>The apostle Peter</i> , Stockholm		+				+					
A 47	<i>The Rape of Europa</i> , New York, private coll.											
A 48	<i>Man in oriental dress</i> , New York		+	New York	4	4	+		+			
A 49	<i>Young woman in profile</i> , Stockholm		*					+				*no. 1:1 X-radiograph available
	Copy 1 of no. A 49, London, Nat. Art Coll. Fund						+					

TABLE OF TECHNICAL REFERENCE MATERIAL

		Support		Ground and paint			Photographic documents					Remarks
		dendrochronology	canvas research	research institute	number of paint samples	number of cross-sections	complete X-radiograph	partial	Neutron activation autoradiographs	infrared photograph	U.V. fluorescent photograph	
A 50	<i>Bust of a young woman</i> , Boston, Museum of Fine Arts									+		
A 51	<i>Anatomy Lesson</i> , The Hague		+	The Hague	12	2	+			+		
A 52	<i>Portrait of Marten Looten</i> , Los Angeles						+					
A 53	<i>Portrait of Joris de Caullery</i> , San Francisco		+				+					
A 54	<i>Man trimming his quill</i> , Kassel		+	Munich	3	1	+					
A 55	<i>Portrait of a young woman seated</i> , Vienna, Akademie		+				+					
A 56	<i>Portrait of Jacques de Gheyn III</i> , London, Dulwich Picture Gallery						+					
A 57	<i>Portrait of Maurits Huygens</i> , Hamburg	+					+					
A 58	<i>The artist as a burgher</i> , Glasgow, Burrell Coll.						+					
A 59	<i>Portrait of a 40-year-old man</i> , New York	+						+				
A 60	<i>Portrait of a young man</i> , Sweden, private coll.						+					
A 61	<i>Amalia of Solms</i> , Paris, Musée Jacquemart-André											
A 62	<i>Portrait of a 39-year-old woman</i> , Nivaa						+			+	*	*IR-detail
A 63	<i>Portrait of a 62-year-old woman</i> , Tel Aviv, private coll.											
A 64	<i>Young woman at her toilet</i> , Ottawa		+	Ottawa	?	1	+				+	
A 65	<i>Descent from the Cross</i> , Munich	*			1	?	+					*Spanish cedar panel
A 66	<i>Joseph telling his dreams</i> , Amsterdam	*					+				+	*paper
A 67	<i>Daniel and Cyrus before Bel</i> , England, private coll.											
A 68	<i>Christ in the storm</i> , Boston, Stewart Gardner Museum		+				+					

	Support		Ground and paint			Photographic documents					Remarks
	dendrochronology	canvas research	research institute	number of paint samples	number of cross-sections	complete X-radiograph	partial	Neutron activation autoradiographs	infrared photograph	U.V. fluorescent photograph	
A 69 <i>The Raising of the Cross</i> , Munich		+	Munich	1	?	+					
A 70 <i>Bellona</i> , New York		+	New York	11	11	+		+			
A 71 <i>Self-portrait</i> , Paris	+						+				
A 72 <i>Self-portrait in a cap</i> , Paris	+		Paris	1	1		+				
A 73 <i>Bust of a man in oriental dress</i> , Munich	+		Munich	1	?	+					
A 74 <i>Bust of an old man</i> , Queenstown, coll. Houghton	*										*paper
A 75 <i>Bust of a young woman</i> , Amsterdam	*		Amsterdam	2	2	+					*edges covered by enlargement panel
A 76 <i>Bust of a young woman smiling</i> , Dresden	+		Munich	5	1						
A 77 <i>Portrait of Jan Rijcksen and his wife</i> , London, Buckingham Palace		+				+					
A 78 <i>Man rising from his chair</i> , Cincinnati, Taft Museum		+	Oberlin	1	1		+				
A 79 <i>Woman in an armchair</i> , New York		+	New York	8	8	+		+			
A 80 <i>Portrait of Johannes Wtenbogaert</i> , South Queensferry, coll. Earl of Rosebery		+	London	*		+					*oral communication about structure of the ground
Copy 1 of no. A 80, Stockholm		*				+					*no 1:1 X-radiograph available
Copy 2 of no. A 80, formerly Hoevelaken, coll. van Aalst							+				
A 81 <i>Portrait of a man (Krul?)</i> , Kassel		+	Munich	3	1	+					
A 82 <i>Portrait of Maertgen van Bilderbeecq</i> , Frankfurt	+					+					
A 83 <i>Portrait of a woman</i> , New York	+					+					
A 84 <i>Portrait of a young woman</i> , formerly Santa Barbara											
A 85 <i>Saskia</i> , Kassel	*		Munich	4	?	+			+		*no dendrochronological measurement because of the extreme thinness of the panel

TABLE OF TECHNICAL REFERENCE MATERIAL

	Support		Ground and paint			Photographic documents					Remarks
	dendrochronology	canvas research	research institute	number of paint samples	number of cross-sections	complete X-radiograph	partial	Neutron activation autoradiographs	infrared photograph	U.V. fluorescent photograph	
A 86 <i>Portrait of a 41-year-old man</i> , Pasadena						+					
A 87 <i>Portrait of a 40-year-old woman</i> , Louisville						+					
A 88 <i>The Holy Family</i> , Munich		+		1		+					
A 89 <i>Ecce homo</i> , London	*		London	4	2	+			+ <sup>o</sup>		*paper <sup>o</sup> IR detail signature
A 90 <i>The incredulity of Thomas</i> , Moscow							+		+	+	*partial
A 91 <i>Cupid blowing a bubble</i> , Ascona, coll. Baroness Bentinck-Thyssen		+				+					
A 92 <i>Diana with Actaeon and Callisto</i> , Anholt, Museum Wasserburg		+					+				
A 93 <i>Flora</i> , Leningrad		+					+	*			*not in RRP files
A 94 <i>Sophonisba</i> , Madrid											
A 95 <i>A scholar</i> , Prague		*					+				*no 1:1 X-radiograph available
A 96 <i>Self-portrait in cap and fur-trimmed cloak</i> , Berlin	+					+					
A 97 <i>Self-portrait with helmet</i> , Kassel	*		Munich	5	?	+			+		*mahogany panel
A 98 <i>Portrait of Johannes Elison</i> , Boston, Museum of Fine Arts		+					+				
A 99 <i>Portrait of Maria Bockenolle</i> , Boston, Museum of Fine Arts		+					+				
A 100 <i>Portrait of Marten Soolmans</i> , Paris, private coll.											
A 101 <i>Portrait of Oopjen Coppit</i> , Paris, private coll.											
A 102 <i>Portrait of Dirck Jansz. Pesser</i> , Los Angeles	*					+					*edges covered by enlargement panel
A 103 <i>Portrait of Haesje van Cleyburg</i> , Amsterdam	*					+					*edges covered by enlargement panel
A 104 <i>Portrait of an 83-year-old woman</i> , London			London	6	3	+					

	Support		Ground and paint			Photographic documents					Remarks
	dendrochronology	canvas research	research institute	number of paint samples	number of cross-sections	complete X-radiograph	partial	Neutron activation autoradiographs	infrared photograph	U.V. fluorescent photograph	
B 8 <i>Half-length figure of a man in oriental dress</i> , Washington		+				+			+	+	
C 45 <i>Bathsheba</i> , Rennes						+	*				*not in RRP files
C 46 <i>Adoration of the Magi</i> , Leningrad	*					+					*paper
Copy 1 of no. C 46, Gothenburg						+					
C 47 <i>Flight into Egypt</i> , formerly London, coll. Lord Wharton											
C 48 <i>The good Samaritan</i> , London, Wallace Collection	+					+					
C 49 <i>Descent from the Cross</i> , Leningrad		+					+				
Copy 2 of no. C 49, Washington		*				+				+	*no 1:1 X-rays available
C 50 <i>Bust of John the Baptist</i> , Los Angeles						+			+	+	
C 51 <i>Old man in interior with staircase</i> , Paris	+					+			+		
C 52 <i>Bust of an old man</i> , Metz											
C 53 <i>Bust of an old man</i> , Kassel	+		Munich	4	?		+				
C 54 <i>Bust of a young man in a turban</i> , Windsor Castle											
C 55 <i>Bust of a young man in gorget and cap</i> , San Diego							+		+	+	
C 56 <i>Bust of Rembrandt</i> , Berlin	+					+					
C 57 <i>Bust of a young woman</i> , Milan							+		+	*	*IR detail signature
C 58 <i>Bust of a young woman</i> , Chapel Hill											
C 59 <i>Bust of a young woman</i> , Allentown							+		+		
C 60 <i>Bust of a young woman</i> , Private coll.											
C 61 <i>Young woman in a cap</i> , Private coll.											
C 62 <i>Bust of a boy</i> , Paris, private coll.											
C 63 <i>Bust of a boy</i> , Leningrad						+					



TABLE OF TECHNICAL REFERENCE MATERIAL

	Support		Ground and paint			Photographic documents					Remarks
	dendrochronology	canvas research	research institute	number of paint samples	number of cross-sections	complete X-radiograph	partial	Neutron activation autoradiographs	infrared photograph	U.V. fluorescent photograph	
C 64 <i>Bust of a boy</i> , England, private coll.											
C 65 <i>Jean Pellicorne and his son</i> , London, Wallace Collection		+					+				
C 66 <i>Susanna van Collen and her daughter</i> , London, Wallace Collection		+					+				
C 67 <i>Portrait of a couple</i> , Boston, Stewart Gardner Museum		+				+			+	*	*IR detail signature and background
C 68 <i>Portrait of a man</i> , New York		+	New York	5	5	+		+			
C 69 <i>Portrait of a woman</i> , New York		+	New York	3	3	+		+			
C 70 <i>Portrait of a man</i> , Braunschweig	+		Munich	1	?	+			+	*	*IR detail signature
C 71 <i>Portrait of a woman</i> , Braunschweig	+		Munich	1	?	+			+	*	*IR detail signature
C 72 <i>Man in a broad-brimmed hat</i> , Boston, Museum of Fine Arts	+					+					
C 73 <i>Portrait of a woman</i> , Boston, Museum of Fine Arts	+					+					
C 74 <i>Portrait of a youth</i> , formerly New York, coll. Th. Fleitman											
C 75 <i>Portrait of a 47-year-old man</i> , Paris	+						+				
C 76 <i>Man with a sheet of music</i> , Washington, Corcoran Gallery of Art											
C 77 <i>Portrait of a man</i> , Dresden	+		Munich	4	1						
C 78 <i>Portrait of a young man in a hat</i> , Leningrad							+				
C 79 <i>Portrait of Cornelia Pronck</i> , Paris	+						+				
C 80 <i>Portrait of a woman seated</i> , Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum	*					+					*walnut panel
C 81 <i>Portrait of a young woman</i> , USA, private coll.						+					
C 82 <i>Portrait of a woman</i> , Edinburgh											
A 40a <i>Bust of an old man</i> , Private coll.						+					

# Table of dendrochronological data

This survey of the dating of the wood of panels discussed in the present volume is based on dendrochronological examinations carried out by Prof. Dr J. Bauch, Prof. Dr D. Eckstein and Dr P. Klein, of the Ordinariat für Holzbiologie, University of Hamburg.

In cases where the presence of sapwood made it possible to pinpoint the boundary between heartwood and sapwood, an average felling date for the tree has been arrived at; depending on the age of the tree, allowance then needs to be made for  $20 \pm 5$  annual rings of sapwood.

In cases where no sapwood was present, and an unknown number of annual rings of heartwood may have been lost, the last ring of heartwood counted was used to arrive at the earliest possible felling date.

Regarding panels that consist of more than one plank the data obtained from the youngest plank are listed.

Unless stated otherwise, the wood comes from the Northern Netherlands.

In three cases (nos. A 72, C 77 and Br. 451; A 42 and C 71; C 72 and C 73), panels (or planks forming

part of them) are found to come from the same tree, thus indicating that they were supplied by the same joiner and, given the paintings' similarities in style, were probably painted on in the same workshop.

No dendrochronological examination could be carried out on panels other than oak. This is true of nos. A 43, A 97 (mahogany), A 45, C 80 (walnut) and A 65 (Spanish cedar).

Added note, January 1986. While this volume was in the press, Dr Peter Klein informed us (in a letter dated 23 December 1985) that the wood used for Dutch panels, instead of being of Netherlandish origin, has now been discovered to come from Northern Poland and was imported in Western Europe until the middle of the 17th century. This provenance involves a shift of the chronology by six years towards the present. As the number of sapwood rings is reduced to a median value of 15 instead of 20, the correction results in a net-shift of only one year towards the present. A table with the corrected values for the material dealt with in Vols. I–III will be included in Vol. III.

	last dated annual ring of heartwood	number of annual rings of sapwood present	conclusion as to felling date		other information	date panel was painted	
			earliest possible	statistical average		as inscribed on picture	as accepted
A 57 <i>Maurits Huygens</i> , Hamburg	1612	1		1631 $\pm$ 5		1632	1632
A 59 <i>40-Year old man</i> , New York	?	—	?			1632	1632
A 71 <i>Self-portrait</i> , Paris	1600	—	1620		because of age of tree one has to allow for 20 sapwood rings	1633	1633
A 72 <i>Self-portrait in a cap</i> , Paris	?	—	?		from the same tree as no. C 77 and Br. 451	1633	1633
A 73 <i>Man in oriental dress</i> , Munich	1611	—	1626			1633	1633
A 76 <i>Young woman smiling</i> , Dresden	1608	—	1623			1633	1633
A 82 <i>Maertgen van Bilderbeecq</i> , Frankfurt	1607	—	1627			1633	1633
A 83 <i>Portrait of a woman</i> , New York	?	1 (+ 1?)		?		1633	1633
A 96 <i>Self-portrait in cap and cloak</i> , Berlin	?	—	?			1634	1634
C 48 <i>The good Samaritan</i> , London, Wallace Coll.	?	—	?			1630	after 1632
C 51 <i>Old man in interior with staircase</i> , Paris	?	—	?			1632	1632 or later

TABLE OF DENDROCHRONOLOGICAL DATA

	last dated annual ring of heartwood	number of annual rings of sapwood present	conclusion as to felling date		other information	date panel was painted	
			earliest possible	statistical average		as inscribed on picture	as accepted
C 53 <i>Old man</i> , Kassel	1598	4		1614 ± 5	the lefthand plank comes from a very old tree of Southern Netherlandish origin	1632	?
C 56 <i>Bust of Rembrandt</i> , Berlin	1611	2		1630 ± 5	because of age of tree one has to allow for 20 sapwood rings	—	in or soon after 1633
C 70 <i>Portrait of a man</i> , Braunschweig	1613	4		1633 ± 5	idem	1632	1632
C 71 <i>Portrait of a woman</i> , Braunschweig	1597	—	1619		centre plank comes from same tree as centre plank of no. A 42, from which felling date is derived	1633	1633
C 72 <i>Man in broad-brimmed hat</i> , Boston, Museum of Fine Arts	1613	—	1628		right-hand plank comes from same tree as right-hand plank of no. C 73	1634	1634
C 73 <i>Portrait of a woman</i> , Boston, Museum of Fine Arts	1604	—	1619		see no. C 72	1634	1634
C 75 <i>47-Year old man</i> , Paris	1610	9	1630 ± 5			1632	in the early 1630s
C 77 <i>Portrait of a man</i> , Dresden	?	—	?		see no. A 72	1633	1633
C 79 <i>Cornelia Pronck</i> , Paris	1612	2	1632 ± 5			1633	1630/31

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320	C 19			
328		C 44		
330		A 55		
331		C 69		
332		C 80		
333	C 10	A 63		
334		A 62		
335		A 83		
336		C 79		
337		C 81		
338		C 71		
339		A 82		
340		A 84		
341		A 79		
342		A 101		



	<i>HdG</i>	<i>Bredius Br.-Gerson</i>	<i>Bauch</i>	<i>Gerson</i>
343	C 13	A 104	C 22	
344		A 87	C 25, copy 1	
345	C 21	C 82	C 27	
346		C 73		
347		A 99	C 30	
348	A 73		A 43	
349	A 48		A 44	
350	A 40		C 74	
351	B 8		A 54	
352			A 57	
353			A 56	
354	C 54	A 103	C 70	
355			A 60	
356			C 75	
357			A 59	
358			A 52	
359			A 53	
360			C 68	
361			A 80	
362			C 76	
363			A 81	
365			A 86	
366			A 78	
367			A 45	
368			C 77	
369	A 74		C 72	
371	C 26		C 78	
372	C 24		A 98	
373	C 53		A 100	
374			A 102	
375 A	C 55			
388	C 27			
390	C 25			
393	A 17			
403		A 51		
405	C 52	C 67		
406		C 65		
407		C 66		
408		A 77		
419		A 18		
420		A 10		
421		B 1, B 2		
422		C 11		
423		A 13		

	<i>HdG</i>	<i>Bredius Br.-Gerson</i>	<i>Bauch</i>	<i>Gerson</i>
424		C 13		
425		C 18		
426		C 18, copy 1		
427		C 14		
428		A 17		
429		C 15		
430		C 17		
431		C 51		
432		A 95		
440	C 6			
451			C 61	
452			A 50	
453			C 59	
454			C 57	
455			A 49	
456	C 31, copy 2		A 61	
458			A 62	
459			C 69	
460		A 6	A 55	
461			A 63	
462		A 31	A 83	
463		A 39	C 58	
464		A 47		
465		C 9		
466		A 38	A 82	
467		A 70		
468		A 94	C 60	
469			A 79	
470		A 91	C 80	
471			C 79	
472		A 92	C 81	
473			A 75	
474			A 76	
475			A 84	
476			A 104	
477			A 99	
478			A 101	
479			C 82	
480			A 87	
482			C 73	
486		A 3		
487		A 2		
488		A 9		

	<i>HdG</i>	<i>Bredius Br.-Gerson</i>	<i>Bauch</i>	<i>Gerson</i>
489		A 24	A 85	
490	C 62	A 25		
491		A 67		
492	C 63	C 45	A 103	
494	C 64	A 64		
499	C 44			
504		A 66		
525	C 56			
526	A 96			
529	A 20			
530	C 37		A 51	
531	C 34		C 67	
531 A		A 1		
532		A 4	A 77	
532 A		C 5		
533	A 14, copy 1	C 10	C 65	
534	A 97	C 8	C 66	
535		A 12		
536		C 7		
537	A 100	A 30, copy 1		
538		A 30		
539		A 16		
539 A		A 15		
541		C 46, copy 1		
542	A 19			
543	B 6	A 34		
543 A		A 35		
544		A 88		
545		C 48		
546		A 89		
547		A 68		
548		A 69		
549	A 22, copy 1			
550		A 65		
551		C 49		
552	C 36	A 90		
552 A	A 33	C 47		
556		C 12		
557	A 23			
564	C 38			
565			C 71	

	<i>HdG</i>	<i>Bredius Br.-Gerson</i>	<i>Bauch</i>	<i>Gerson</i>
566	A 71			
567	A 72			
570	B 5			
572	C 33			
573	A 58			
577	A 41			
584		C 49, copy 2		
591	C 39			
601		A 11		
602		A 26		
604		A 28		
605		C 16		
606	A 75			
607	A 85	A 36		
608	A 76	C 50		
609		A 46		
612	A 61			
624	C 68			
625	C 69			
629	C 77			
630	A 82			
631		C 2		
632		A 7		
633	A 53	C 22		
635	A 54			
636		C 23		
638	A 101			
645	A 98			
646	A 99			
654	A 57			
657	A 81			
659	A 52			
666	C 65			
667	C 66			
668	C 75			
669	C 79			
670	A 43			
672	C 20			
673	B 4			
674	C 30			
675	A 42			
676	B 7			
677	A 29			
678	C 29, copy 1			

	<i>HdG</i>	<i>Bredius</i> <i>Br.-Gerson</i>	<i>Bauch</i>	<i>Gerson</i>
679	A 40a			
681	C 28			
682	C 29			
685	C 42			
686	C 41			
687	A 27			
688	A 32			
691	C 60			
694	C 57			
695	C 58			
696	C 59			
697	C 61			
698	A 49			
699	A 50			
726	A 80			
732	C 72			
733	C 70			
736	A 78			
739	A 102			
745	A 56			
760	C 76			
761	A 59			
762	C 74			
769	A 86			
775	A 44			
777	C 78			
783	A 60			
785	A 45			
846	C 71			
848	C 73			
856	A 104			
859	C 82			
867	A 83			
873	A 84			
874	A 87			
875	A 62			
877	A 63			
881	A 79			
882	A 103			
883	C 80			
884	A 55			
920	C 81			
930	C 67			
932	A 51			
933	A 77			